**Wham! Blam!**
American Pop Art and Its Critics

Übung Cultural Studies (USA), 3 CP
050664 Aufbaumodul

**Lecturer:** PD Dr. Stefan L. Brandt

**Room and time:** GB 6/137 (Nord), Thursdays 14-16

**First session:** April 23, 2009

**Short description:** In the American 1960s, a new movement began to “storm” the citadel of ‘high art’ and challenge the established modes of artistry and art reception—Pop Art. Building upon concepts developed by British “pop painters” like Richard Hamilton in the Fifties, American Pop Artists utilized the mass-produced visual commodities of popular culture to create a new visual aesthetic. In particular, they removed the material from its original context, isolating the object and combining it with other objects. This course will deal with the key representatives of American Pop Art, especially Andy Warhol, Claes Oldenburg, Jasper Johns, Roy Lichtenstein, and Tom Wesselman, but also examine the work of artists like Robert Rauschenberg who functioned as transitional figures from Abstract Expressionism to Pop Art. Individual topics to be discussed are the “Factory,” Warhol’s celebrity portraits, the clash of ‘high’ and ‘low’ culture, the influence of billboards, the Great American Nude, California Pop, and photorealism. For an introduction to the major currents within Pop Art and Pop Art criticism, see *Pop Art: A Critical History* (ed. Steven Henry Madoff, Berkeley: Univ. of Calif. Press, 1997).

Grading: Quality of class participation counts 1/3; expert session 1/3; final paper of five to eight pages 1/3. Poor attendance or class participation will negatively affect your grade.

**Deadline for Final Papers:** Friday, October 30, 2009. Note: There is no (!) extension of this deadline.

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**Syllabus:**

23. April  
**Introduction: American Pop Art**

30. April  
**Minimalism and the Emergence of ‘Pop’ Aesthetics**
*Kiss* (1963/64, dir. Andy Warhol) & *Blow Job* (1963/64; dir. Andy Warhol), watch on [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)

07. May  
**The Foundations of Pop—Johns, Rauschenberg, and American Prototypes in the 1950s**
14. May | Andy Warhol and the Silkscreen Method  

21. May | Ascension Day (Christi Himmelfahrt)  
Relax and enjoy!

28. May | Nudity and Provocation—Tom Wesselmann  

04. June | Pentecost Holiday (Pfingsten)  
Relax and enjoy!

11. June | Feast of Corpus Christi (Fronleichnam)  
Relax and enjoy!

18. June | Advertising and Pop Art’s Comic Aesthetic—Roy Lichtenstein’s Early Works  

25. June | Pop Art Gigantism—James Rosenquist  

02. July | Soda Pop—The Art of Coca Cola  
Lawrence Dietz, from *Soda Pop: The History, Advertising, Art and Memorabilia of Soft Drinks in America* (1973)

09. July | Post-Abstract Expressionism: Lichtenstein & Oldenburg  


23. July | Neo-Pop in the 1980s—Jeff Koons, Barbara Kruger, Keith Haring, Cindy Sherman  

*All texts are in the course reader!*