



**CSU - Spring 2012**

**ART 492A: ART HISTORY SEMINAR**

***Representing the Atomic Age***  
**(3 credits)**

Instructor: Conny Bogaard  
Tuesday/Thursday 9:30-10:45 AM  
Location: Art 115

**Course description:**

This seminar will focus on the recent boost in Atomic Tourism as a manifestation of the interrelationship between tourism and culture. Atomic tourism started at the beginning of the Cold War when televised atomic bomb detonations swept the nation into an atomic craze. Miss Atomic Bomb beauty contests became media spectacles while American citizens learned how to duck and cover in case of a nuclear attack. The aesthetization of the political quickly became one of the hallmarks of Cold War culture. With the end of the Cold War nuclear sites were turned into tourist destinations and the Atomic Age was given a whole new visual vocabulary. Fascination with the technological sublime gave way to a desire to imagine the real. Yet, how to imagine the real when thinking of a totally devastating nuclear war? Special emphasis in this course is given to art projects that address ethical questions and aim at social change. The relationship between ethics and aesthetics will be discussed further by examining several atomic museums and their attempt to preserve and interpret nuclear histories. This seminar will be organized chronologically (from World War II to present day) and thematically (ethics, aesthetics, politics, visual culture). The format will be a combination of in-class lectures, required readings (TBA), student presentations and on-site workshops at the Rocky Flats Cold War Museum in Arvada.

**Topics Include:**

Recent boost in Atomic Tourism: nuclear vacations to Chernobyl and Fukushima  
Watching the Bombs go off: Nuclear Test Sites and the Spectacle  
Miss Atomic Bomb Beauty Contests: the Body as Virtual Battlefield  
Mythologies: How we Learned to Hate War and Love the bomb  
Nuclear War and Cinema: from Dr. Strangelove to Atomic Cafe  
Art & Science: The American Technological Sublime  
From Cold War to War on Terror: Ongoing Obsessions with the A-Bomb  
Photography in the fields of the bomb: Robert del Tredecchi and the Atomic Bomb Project  
Art for A Change: Kristof Wodiczko's Projection in Hiroshima  
American Atomic Museums as Contested Sites: Preserving and Interpreting the Atomic Age  
Rocky Flats and the Nuclear West: The Making of a New Atomic Museum

**Prerequisites:** Art students must have taken ART 212 to enroll in this class.

**Contact:** For questions please contact instructor by email, [cbogaard@rockyflatsmuseum.net](mailto:cbogaard@rockyflatsmuseum.net)