Topics in Art Worlds: Encountering Artworks that Engage Science

From Patricia Piccinini’s sculptures to SymbioticA’s fish brain robot, many visionary artists are focused on the power of science and technology in culture. This course will offer an overview of artworks that use and critique science and technology, with an eye to how we can study these works and think about the tasks these pieces attempt in society. While these artists do theorize about their own work, a nexus of academics’ critiques which include cultural theorists, art historians, philosophers, historians, and science communicators are also taking an interest in these artworks, so we will examine Stephen Wilson’s *Information Arts* and Robert Mitchell’s *Bioart and the Vitality of New Media* to get a sense of the ways these artworks are being approached. Then we will study some early proponents of this type of work including Joe Davis, Matthew Barney, and Patricia Piccinini. The course will end with some meditations on the institutions that fund art that engages with science and the way the media presents these artworks.

**Week 1: Introduction to Encountering Artworks that Engage Science**


**Week 2: Theorizing the Bioarts**


**Week 3: DNA as Protest: Microvenus**


**Week 4: Taking Care in Technoculture**


Week 5: Robots and Art

Week 6: Animals and Art

Week 7: Genetics and Art

Week 9: Semi-living Art and a Media Frenzy

Week 10: Art in the Service of Science?