

## **Honours Class 2009**

### **BioArt: contemporary art & the life sciences**

#### **Title: Conquering Life? Questions at the frontiers of art, philosophy and the life sciences**

#### **Lecturer: Boo Chapple**

**Time:** every Friday, April 17 – June 19 2009, 1 pm till 5 pm

**Location:** Gorlaeus Laboratory, Faculty of Science, Einsteinweg 55, Leiden

#### **Framework:**

In the 1970's Michel Foucault introduced the term *biopolitics* to describe the nature of politics in the contemporary era. An era in which the exercise of political power is increasingly concerned with the management of biological life. An era in which "the mechanisms of power are addressed to the body, to life, to what causes it to proliferate, to what reinforces the species, its stamina, its ability to dominate, or its capacity for being used." (Foucault: 1979) While not explicitly concerned with theories of biopower, this course is structured in such a way as to engage with these issues of management and control over life as they can be seen to function within the life sciences. Artists and artworks are chosen for their implicit, or explicit, engagement with processes of definition, management and manipulation of life towards extra-organismic ends.

#### **Methodology:**

The course will involve a combination of informal lectures/visual presentations by Boo Chapple and invited presenters, class discussions, reading and reflection (to be posted on the course blog, more information at the start of the course), and hands on laboratory exercises. Assessment will be based on class participation and weekly blog exercises. In order to address the different skills and experience of the science and humanities students they will be expected to help each other through the unfamiliar aspects of the course – the most effective learning often occurs when you have to teach something yourself. This will be taken into account in the class participation mark.

#### **Registration:**

Students can apply for the course before April 1<sup>st</sup> 2009 by contacting prof. dr. Rob Zwijnenberg: [r.zwijnenberg@hum.leidenuniv.nl](mailto:r.zwijnenberg@hum.leidenuniv.nl). Please note that the number of participants is limited. Participation has to be approved by Prof. Dr. Zwijnenberg.

#### **Organisation:**

This course is organised by *The Arts & Genomics Centre*. [www.artsgenomics.nl](http://www.artsgenomics.nl) or [artsandgenomics.blogspot.com](http://artsandgenomics.blogspot.com) (both partly Dutch, partly English).