An introduction to visual art in the present-day United States from the conquest period through about 1970, studied in relation to the social and historical context in which it appeared. The course aims to foster understanding of the ways in which American art and artists have contributed to historical discourses about nationalism—as well as class, gender, and racial and ethnic identities—since the onset of European colonization. In addition to providing a chronological overview of American art, this course will provide a basic introduction to modernism and the notion of the avant-garde, and will explore the development of styles such as abstraction, and technologies like photography, in modern American art. Travel to a local museum or to downtown Chicago will be required for at least one of the short papers.