

ART 428: 20th Century Art History

Summer Session 2, 2010, M - Th 10:30 - 12:45, 208 Powell (and 151 Davis)

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OFF. HRS: this is summer - whatever works!
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This class is required for most art majors. Other students may use it to fill an art history/museum studies elective requirement. It is not considered general education.

Description:

This course is an examination of the many exciting changes which have taken place in art in the 20th century and an attempt to correlate these changes with social and historical developments. In contrast to a survey course, rather than taking a movement by movement or artist by artist approach, I plan to focus on major themes. These will be art themes (as opposed to social or psychological themes). I think it will allow us to get a holistic sense of the whole century if we do it this way.

Methods: Another innovation for this course will be an emphasis on your role as active producers of the content you learn. You will be required to prepare power-point presentations (or comparable image/text formats) for every unit we cover. Although you will work individually on each program, you will be part of a critical reviewing group which will critique the presentations and choose one for online posting. I will personally read all the projects but posted presentations will be read by everyone in the class. You will also be responsible for the preparation of your own Artstor image groups. I will provide you with a base list of images for each unit but searching for and creating the image groups will be your responsibility. Artstor image groups can now be downloaded into power point so this will be an essential part of preparing your presentations. (We'll go over this in class.)

Grading: Each presentation will be graded on a 10-point rubric. I will prepare the rubric AFTER your first presentation is turned in. (The first one will not be graded.) In general terms, the rubric will be based on the completeness of your presentation with respect to the number of artworks and artists, relevance of selections, and organization and communication of ideas. The final presentation will be worth 20 points and will serve as the final exam. The second major contribution to your grade will come from class participation. This can take the form of active participation during class time, posting online comments related to the online presentations for class review, and thoughtful responses to the occasional "free-response" questions we will do in class.

Presentations: 3 graded at 10 points each = 30

Final presentation: 20 points

Class participation: 50 points (divided among participation in discussions, posted comments and free-response questions)

Total = 100 points

Textbook: Charles Harrison and Paul Wood, eds. *Art in Theory: 1900 - 2000. 2nd ed.* (Blackwell Publ.,2005).

Goals and Objectives:

- to develop and demonstrate visual and analytic familiarity with significant movements, artists, and ideas of the 20th century
- to recognize the roles of gender, economic systems, and politics in both the creation and reception of art
- to develop your ability to pursue independent research related to 20th century art, share your findings in a group context, and provide feedback to others engaged in a similar process

Web Sources:

class web site: www.radford.edu/rbarris (Link to the page for ART428)

ARTSTOR: www.artstor.org [class folder: ART428SUM2010; password: art428summer10]. If I do create image folders for the class, you will find them here. You will also have work folders in your own name under the class folder – the advantage of using the work folders is that I can access them if you have questions and want me to look at something.

Topics:

- I. Two artists and two directions: Picasso and Duchamp
- II. Abstraction versus representation: a 20th century dynamic
- III. The evolution of painting
- IV. The evolution of sculpture
- V. Politics, exhibitions, and new media

Course Behavioral Expectations

Abide by the Radford University Honor Code. This includes the avoidance of plagiarism on all writing assignments.

If you believe that you have a learning or other disability, you should go to the Disabled Student Services Office. They will give you paperwork to bring to me so that we can work out an approach to compensate for your disability. If you have other problems which do not fall into the domain of the DSSO but which are affecting your course work, you should come and speak to me.

Attend all classes — if for some reason you need to miss a class, I expect you to consult with me BEFOREHAND and we will work out a plan for making up the missed work.

No cell phones may be used in class. This includes texting, vibrating messages, and anything else related to the word “on.” You will be forgiven once for forgetting but more than once and you will be asked to drop the class.

Required Readings from *Art in Theory, 1900 - 2000*

Feel free to read much more than the selected readings. I've tried to choose enough readings to provide a basis for understanding a major 20th century dialectic: abstraction versus realism in some form. On another level, this can be characterized as a debate between the two reasons for choosing abstraction: as a means of avoiding imitation or mimeticism and as a means of challenging the definition of art.

Although the book is organized chronologically (and therefore my list of readings is also chronological), you do not need to read in order. Read for the ideas – their original statement and their recurring presence – and try to associate changes in ideas with changes in both the world and art. Most important of all: do not wait until the end of the course to do the reading. In fact, if you read everything the first week, it will give you a terrific grounding in the main themes of the course.

IB: Expression and the Primitive

5: Worringer, 66 - 69

6: Matisse, 69 - 75

7: Fry: 75 - 82

8 - 9: Kandinsky, 82 - 93

16: Malevich, 173 - 183

IIB: Cubism:

10: Kahnweiler, 208 - 214

11: Braque, 214 - 215

12: Picasso, 215 - 217

Section IIIB: Dissent and Disorder

1 - 6: Ball, Duchamp, Tzara, Huelsenbeck,
250 - 263

Section IIIC: Abstraction and Form

1 - 9: Arp through Malevich: 276 - 298

16: Doesburg, Lissitsky and Richter, 314 -
316

20: Ortega y Gasset, 323 - 332

Section IVA: The Modern as Ideal

7: Barr, 381 - 83

10: Mondrian, 387 - 393

IVB: Realism as Figuration

12: John Reed Club, 418 - 421

13: Diego Rivera, 421 - 424

[at least two more]

IVC: Realism as Critique

17: Benjamin, 493-499

18: Brecht, 499 - 502

[at least three others]

IVD: Modernism as Critique

6: Benjamin, 520-527

11: Greenberg, 539 - 549

12: Rosenberg, 549 - 553

VA: The American Avant-Garde entire section, 562 - 592

VIA: Art and Modern Life

7: Kaprow, 717 - 722

12: Williams, 729-734

13: Cage, 734 - 737

16: Oldenburg, 743-747

VIIA: Objecthood and Reductivism read all, 818 - 861

VIIIA and VIIIB: The Critique of Originality; Figures of Difference five from each, your choice

Test Yourself! Pre-test Questions for ART428 (do not use any books, notes, slides, or other resources. Limit yourself to 5 minutes apiece for each of the last two questions. Bring your answers to class on Monday.)

1. Which of the following techniques was NOT developed by the surrealists?
A. Frottage B. Grattage C. Automatism D. Collage
2. Which of the following abstract expressionist painters was NOT an action painter?
A. Lee Krasner B. Jackson Pollock C. Willem de Kooning D. Mark Rothko
3. Which of the same abstract expressionist painters continued to paint the human figure?
A. Lee Krasner B. Jackson Pollock C. Willem de Kooning D. Mark Rothko
4. The two artists associated with the development of cubism in its “analytic” phase were Picasso and:
A. Matisse B. Derain C. Léger D. Braque
5. Which movement emerged as a response to the insanity of World War I?
A. Abstract Expressionism B. Surrealism C. Dada D. Cubism
6. Of the following artists, whose contribution to abstraction is responsible for the complete elimination of the spatial illusion of depth in painting?
A. Picasso B. Kandinsky C. Malevich D. Mondrian E. Pollock
7. This artist is associated with the invention of the “combine” painting (the combination of painting, sculpture, real and/or nontraditional objects in a single work):
A. Robert Morris B. Helen Frankenthaler C. Robert Rauschenberg D. Jasper Johns
8. “Happenings” are instantaneous occurrences in the natural world, such as falling stars, earthquakes, and volcanic eruptions.
A. True B. False C. I don’t know.
9. Contemporary art deals with social issues such as homelessness and AIDS. Which of the following artists made a work about homelessness?
A. Norman Foster B. Krystof Wodiczko C. Rachel Whiteread D. Andy Warhol
10. Bruce Nauman’s *Self-Portrait as a Fountain* makes a reference to the well-known work by:
A. Jasper Johns B. Jackson Pollock C. Marcel Duchamp D. Vermeer

Free-response questions, 5 minutes each:

11. Define appropriation as it is used in an art historical context. What artists can you identify who are associated with appropriations? What mediums do they generally use?
12. What is propaganda art? Is this term meaningful? Why or why not?