

## **Art History 345: Modern Art**

Fall 2007

Classroom Carnegie 306

MWF 11-11:50; 1-1:50

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Office hours: MWF 10-11am, M 2-4:30pm, and by appointment

### **Course Description:**

What does it mean to be an artist? During the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, Western culture recast the definition of artistic genius. As the role of the artist was redefined in this period, so was the concept of art. Naturally, the two ideas evolved more or less in tandem. Art history, as a discipline devoted to the study of visual culture, tends to view the work of art as the most eloquent and accurate witness to a culture's history and values. This semester, I want to shift our focus slightly. By focusing on the West's changing definition of the artist, I am testing the possibility of seeing modern art as a consequence of personal as well as social or institutional forces. Our pursuit of the modern artist will lead us to a variety of sources. Visual arts will remain at the center of our inquiry. But we will also consult novels, philosophical and political texts, films, newspapers, and music for traces of the modern artist.

This course satisfies the college's general education requirement in Fine Arts by teaching students how to analyze works of visual art. Students taking this course to satisfy their breadth requirement will complete at least one assignment to gauge competency in this area.

### **Course Requirements:**

Attendance at lectures is required. Students with documented learning differences or disabilities should inform the professor of any necessary accommodations during the first week of class.

First Exam =15% (28 September)

Second Exam=20% (2 November)

Final Exam=25% (see schedule at end of syllabus; final make be taken at either time)

Paper=35% (due 12 December *or earlier if you wish*; abstract due in class on 16 November)

Participation=5%

Late work policy: Late work will not be accepted until required community service is completed under the supervision of the Outreach Office. The amount of community service required is identical to the extra time taken to complete the assignment. In other words, if your paper is 4 hours late, you must complete 4 hours of service; if your paper is 48 hours late, you must complete 48 hours of service, etc. Missing an exam due to illness or emergency will result in the points for that exam being shifted to your final exam. In other words, makeup exams are not given in this class.

Pass/Fail Option: Students with an overall college GPA of 3.3 or higher may take this course pass/fail. Art history majors and students taking this course to fulfill the college breadth requirement in Fine Arts cannot use pass/fail option.

**Required Texts:**

Harrison, et al. *Primitivism, Cubism, Abstraction: The Early Twentieth Century (PCA)*

Harrison, et al. *Realism, Rationalism, Surrealism: Art between the Wars (RRS)*

Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*, (1818; 1831)

Emile Zola, *L'Assommoir* (1877) or *Nana* (1880)

J.-K. Huysmans, *À Rebours* a.k.a. "Against Nature" (1884)

Virginia Woolf, *To the Lighthouse* (1927)

Ayn Rand, *The Fountainhead* (1943)

**Optional Texts:**

H.H. Arnason, Marla Prather, & Daniel Wheeler, *History of Modern Art (HMA)*

Théophile Gautier, *Mademoiselle de Maupin* (1835)

All textbooks are on reserve at duPont Library and are available for purchase at the bookstore. Novels are available at the bookstore. I recommend that you purchase all books, if possible. Additional readings will be distributed in class. Handouts are marked with an asterisk in the syllabus.

**SCHEDULE OF CLASSES:****WEEK 1—INTRODUCTION**

Recommended reading: *HMA* chaps. 1 & 2

Friday, 31 August—The End of the Academy

**WEEK 2— THE BIRTH OF THE MODERN ARTIST**

Reading: Emile Zola, *L'Assommoir*, *HMA* ch.3

Monday, 3 September—Tracing the Origins of Modernism

Wednesday, 5 September— 'race, moment, milieu': Naturalism and the Modern Artist

Friday, 7 September—Zola's *L'Assommoir*: Modern Art and Everyday Life

Come to class prepared to discuss *L'Assommoir*

### **WEEK 3—ART FOR ART’S SAKE**

Reading: Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*; Théophile Gautier, “Preface” to *Mlle de Maupin* (on reserve); \*Charles Baudelaire, “The Painter of Modern Life”; \*Charles Baudelaire, “Salon of 1859”

Monday, 10 September—Frankenstein as the Romantic Genius

Be prepared to discuss *Frankenstein* and Gautier’s “Preface” to *Mlle de Maupin*

Wednesday, 12 September—The Painter of Modern Life

Be prepared to discuss Baudelaire’s “The Painter of Modern Life”

Friday, 14 September—Photography and the Invention of Modern Art

Be prepared to discuss Baudelaire’s “Salon of 1859”

**QUESTIONS FOR FIRST EXAM DISTRIBUTED TODAY**

### **WEEK 4—AESTHETICISM AND SYMBOLISM**

Reading: \*Walter Pater, “Conclusion” to *Renaissance*; \*James Abbot McNeill Whistler, “Ten O'clock Lecture,” J-K Huysmans, *À Rebours*; \*Sigmund Freud, “On Dreams”

Monday, 17 September— Whistler v. Ruskin

Be prepared to discuss Pater and Whistler

Wednesday, 19 September—Symbolism

Be prepared to discuss *À Rebours*

Friday, 21 September— Secessionism

### **WEEK 5—DREAMING A NEW REALITY: ARTS & CRAFTS AND ART NOUVEAU**

Recommended reading: *HMA* chaps. 4, 5 & 6

Monday, 24 September— Modern Architecture

Wednesday, 26 September—Arts & Crafts and Art Nouveau

Friday, 28 September—**FIRST EXAM: BRING BLUEBOOKS**

## **WEEK 6— THE UN-CIVILIZED ARTIST**

Reading: Gill Perry, "Primitivism and the 'Modern'" (*PCA*); \*Paul Gauguin, *Noa Noa*

Monday, 1 October— Primitivism and the Artist's Quest for Authenticity

Wednesday, 3 October—The Colonizer's Gaze

Be prepared to discuss Perry essay and Gauguin's *Noa Noa*

Thursday Evening Session: Screening of *Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* at 6:30pm Gailor 11

Friday, 5 October—Fauvism

## **WEEK 7— MODERNISM IN BRITAIN**

Required Reading: \*Roger Fry, selections from *Vision and Design*; and \*Clive Bell, from "The Aesthetic Hypothesis" Virginia Woolf, *To the Lighthouse*; & \*E.L. Kirchner, "Program of Die Brücke"

Recommended: *HMA* chaps. 7 & 8

Monday, 8 October— Roger Fry: Modernism and Formalism

Be prepared to discuss Fry and Bell essays

Wednesday, 10 October— *To the Lighthouse*

Be prepared to discuss *To the Lighthouse*

Friday, 12 October—Expressionism: Die Brücke

## **WEEK 8—MIDTERM**

Required Reading: \*Wassily Kandinsky, from *The Spiritual in Art*

Monday, 15 October—Expressionism: Der Blaue Reiter

Wednesday, 17 October— Austrian Expressionism [**MID-SEMESTER**]

Friday, 19 October— Introduction to Picasso

**QUESTIONS FOR SECOND EXAM DISTRIBUTED TODAY**

**\*\*\*\*\*FALL BREAK\*\*\*\*\***

## **WEEK 9—ART AS LANGUAGE**

Reading: Francis Francina, “Realism and Ideology: An Introduction to Semiotics and Cubism”(PCA); Charles Harrison, “Abstraction,” (PCA).

Recommended reading: *HMA*, chaps. 9, 10 & 11

Wednesday, 24 October— *Les Demoiselles d’Avignon*  
Be prepared to discuss Francina essay

Friday, 26 October— Analytic and Synthetic Cubism

## **WEEK 10—ARTIST AS ACTIVIST**

Reading: \*Wyndham Lewis, “Our Vortex”; \*Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, “The Foundation and Manifesto of Futurism”; \*Umberto Boccioni, “Futurist Painting: Technical Manifesto”; \*Tristan Tzara, “Dada Manifesto 1918”

Monday, 29 October— Futurism

Wednesday, 31 October— Dada

Friday, 2 November—**SECOND EXAM**

## **WEEK 11—CHASING HYTHLODAY: DESIGNING UTOPIA**

Reading: Briony Fer, “The Language of Construction,” (*RRS*); De Stijl, “Manifesto I”; \*Theo van Doesburg, from *Principles of Neo-Plastic Art*; \*Piet Mondrian, “Dialogue on the New Plastic” and *Neo-Plasticism: The General Principle of Plastic Equivalence*; \*Walter Gropius, “The Theory and Organization of the Bauhaus”.

Recommended Reading: *HMA*, ch. 12, 13 & 16;

Monday, 5 November— De Stijl [LAST DAY TO DROP WITHOUT A W/F, i.e., “F”]

Wednesday, 7 November— Constructivism  
Be prepared to discuss Fer’s essay

Thursday Evening Session: Screening of *Battleship Potemkin* at 6:30 Gailor 11

Friday, 9 November— Bauhaus

## **WEEK 12—PAINTING AND PATRIOTISM BETWEEN THE WARS**

Reading: David Batchelor, “‘This Liberty and This Order’: Art in France after the First World War” (*RRS*)

Recommended Reading: *HMA*, chaps. 14, 15 & 17

Monday, 12 November— *Battleship Potemkin* and the Art of Revolution

Wednesday, 14 November— School of Paris and “The Call to Order”  
Be prepared to discuss Batchelor

Thursday Evening Session: Screening of Duchamp and Buñuel at 6:30pm Gailor 11

Friday, 16 November— *Die Neue Sachlichkeit* (The New Objectivity)

**PAPER ABSTRACT DUE TODAY IN CLASS**

## **WEEK 13—COWBOYS & INDIANS, OR HOW AMERICA STOLE MODERNISM**

Reading: Briony Fer, “Surrealism, Myth and Psychoanalysis,” (*RRS*); \*André Breton, from the *First Manifesto of Surrealism*

Recommended: *HMA*, ch. 18

Monday, 19 November— Surrealism

Be prepared to discuss Fer’s “Surrealism, Myth, and Psychoanalysis”

**\*\*\*\*\*THANKSGIVING BREAK\*\*\*\*\***

## **WEEK 14—MODERN ART IN THE UNITED STATES**

Reading: \*Serge Guilbaut from *How New York Stole the Idea of Modern Art* \*Clement Greenberg, “Avant-Garde & Kitsch” & “Modernist Painting”; \*Harold Rosenberg, “The Fall of Paris” and an excerpt from “The American Action Painters”

Monday, 26 November— The Armory Show & Stieglitz’s Gallery 291

Wednesday, 28 November— Bauhaus, USA

Friday, 30 November— Greenbergian Modernism

Be prepared to discuss Greenberg and Rosenberg texts

**WEEK 15—MARCHING TO A NEW BEAT: ARTIST AS HERO AND ANTI-HERO**

Reading: Ayn Rand, *The Fountainhead* (either read novel or view film version)

Monday, 3 December— Abstract Expressionism

Wednesday, 5 December— Abstract Expressionism

Thursday Evening Session: Screening of *The Fountainhead* at 6:30pm, Gailor 11

Friday, 7 December— Artist as Hero: At the Barricades  
Be prepared to discuss *The Fountainhead*

**WEEK 16—ART AFTER MODERNISM?**

Monday, 10 December—The Modern Artist as Hero or Superstar?

Wednesday, 12 December—Who paints after Pollock?

**FINAL PAPER DUE TODAY IN CLASS**

**Final Exam for Section A (11am): Friday, 18 December at 2pm**

**Final Exam for Section B (1pm): Friday, 14 December at 7pm**