



Modern art ca. 1889-1945

Course description

This course will examine the major artistic developments in Europe and North America from the late nineteenth century to the middle of the twentieth century. This course will not only cover art, sculpture, and architecture, but will explore other arts from fashion to photography to film, murals to metro stations. Along with Art History, we will also approach the modern period from other vantage points including poetry, music, and literature. Students will also learn about the technological, cultural, political, and social histories of this era.

Course Goals and Objectives

The two foundational aims of this course are to acquaint students with Modern art of the and help them develop the technical skills specific to practicing art history.

To achieve these goals, the lectures and assignments have been designed to help students:

- gain a familiarity of the major artistic movements and historical developments throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries
- gain insight to the major works of the period, as well as important scholarly interpretations
- become familiar with foundational literature, including primary source documents and contemporary scholarship
- develop critical tools for practicing art history—increased reading comprehension, acuity in visual analysis, and clear, concise writing

Assignments

Readings

For each class period there will be an associated textbook reading, a required reading, and a recommended reading. Textbook readings are meant to allow students to review and append the content covered in class. Required readings must be completed before students come to class, whereas recommended readings are offered as a supplement should students wish to learn more about a specific topic.

Required texts:

H.H. Arnason and Elizabeth C. Mansfield, *History of Modern Art*, (latest edition)

Charles Harrison and Paul Wood, *Art in Theory, 1900-2000: An Anthology of Changing Ideas*, Oxford: Blackwell, 2003.

*All other required readings will be available in PDF format in our course dropbox

Reading responses

Students will be required to submit 8 short reading responses throughout the course of the semester (about 1-2 paragraphs each). Responses must be submitted to our digital dropbox by noon before class.

While specific prompts will guide student discussion in completing each response, generally students should demonstrate their engagement with the text by summarizing its main ideas and responding in a meaningful manner, either to critique strengths and weaknesses, discuss insights gained to a specific work thanks to the reading, or placing ideas posited by the author into dialogue with other scholarly discourse.

Exams

There will be a mid-term and a final exam. Exams are designed to engage students through a variety of assessment tools. Students will be required to identify and discuss the significance of works of art covered in class, ascribe unknown images to a specific artist or movement, link passages from primary readings to their authors, and write essays that engage with overriding themes treated throughout the course.

Research paper

Throughout the semester, each student will be engaged in producing a 10-12 page research paper focused on one work of European art created within the time constraints of this course. This paper is designed to allow you to attain an in-depth knowledge of your chosen work. To complete this assignment, you will summarize the basic historical overview of its production, provide in depth visual analysis of your object, and then analyze and critique the most important art historical scholarship written about your work. Your assessment of scholarship must include at least ten sources, of which two must be books and five must be articles published in scholarly journals. In your analysis of this scholarship, you should bring the various authors' arguments into conversation with one another, as well as determine which interpretations you find the most compelling.

OR

Creative work project

For students majoring or minoring in a visual arts field, the production of a creative work may replace the research paper. The creative work project will consist of the production of an artistic work either in imitation or inspired by a work of modern art. The work will also be accompanied by a 6-10-page written summary. To complete this project, students must first select an artist and/or work of art that will become the subject of their project. Prior to producing your work, you must find primary documents written by the artist in which they discuss their artistic theories. You

must also conduct research to understand the historical context and scholarly interpretations of your work. Finally, where possible, you must also research the method of production or instruction in working in the medium of your chosen work/artist. This research should inform your effort as you reproduce the artist's creation, or create a new work based upon the original art object. Your research, your creative process, and what you gained artistically from this project must be outlined in your paper and presented together with your work by the end of the semester.

Schedule

Week 1

1.1 What does it mean to be Modern?

Review

Arnason, Ch 1

Required Reading

AIT: Georg Simmel 'The Metropolis and Mental Life'
Excerpts from Guy Debord *The Society of the Spectacle* (pdf)

Recommended Reading

TJ Clark, *The Painting of Modern Life: Paris in the Art of Manet and his Followers* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984)

1.2 Modern Paris

Review

Arnason, Ch 2

Required Reading

Clark, "A bar at the Folies-Bergère" in *The Painting of Modern Life: Paris in the Art of Manet and his Followers* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984) (pdf)

Recommended Reading

Robert L. Herbert, *Impressionism: Art, Leisure, and Parisian Society*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988

Week 2

2.1 Post-Impressionism- Cezanne

Review

Arnason, Ch 3

Required Reading

AIT: Cezanne: Letters to Emile Bernard

Clark, "Freud's Cezanne" in *Farewell to an Idea: Episodes from a History of Modernism*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999 (pdf)

Recommended Reading

André Dombrowski, *Cézanne, Murder, and Modern Life*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013

2.2 Post-Impressionism- Van Gogh

Review

Arnason, Ch 3

Required Reading

AIT: Maurice Denis 'From Gauguin and van Gogh to Neo-Classicism'

Recommended Reading

Deborah Silverman, *Van Gogh and Gauguin: The Search for Sacred Art*, (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2000)

Week 3

3.1 Post-Impressionism- Gauguin

Review

Arnason, Ch 3

Required Reading

AIT: Paul Gauguin Letter to Fontainas

Recommended Reading

Deborah Silverman, *Van Gogh and Gauguin: The Search for Sacred Art*, (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2000)

3.2 Post-Impressionism- Seurat and Toulouse-Lautrec

Review

Arnason, Ch 3

Required Reading

John Gage, "The Technique of Seurat: A Reappraisal." *Art Bulletin* Vol. 69 issue 3, (Sept. 1987) (pdf)

Recommended Reading

Norma Broude, *Georges Seurat*, New York: Rizzoli, 1992

Week 4

4.1 Primitivism and Colonialism

Required Reading

Excerpts from Edward Said, *Orientalism*, New York: Pantheon Books, 1978

Linda Nochlin, "The Imaginary Orient," *Art in America* 71:5 (1983)

Abigail Solomon-Godeau, "Going Native: Paul Gauguin and the Invention of Primitivist Modernism," in *The Expanding Discourse: Feminism and Art History*, New York: Harper Collins, 1992

Recommended Reading

Colin Rhodes, *Primitivism and Modern Art*, New York: Thames and Hudson, 1994

4.2 Primitivism and Colonialism ctd.

Required Reading

Excerpts from Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness* (pdf)

Excerpts from Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart* (pdf)

Patricia Leighton, "The White Peril and *L'art nègre*: Picasso, Primitivism and Anticolonialism," *Art Bulletin* 72.4 (1990) (pdf)

Recommended Reading

C. Harrison et al, *Primitivism, Cubism, Abstraction*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993

Week 5

5.1 Symbolism, Art Nouveau, and *Fin de Siècle* Europe

Review

Arnason, Ch 5

Required Reading

AIT: August Endell 'The Beauty of Form and Decorative Art'; Otto Weininger from *Sex and Character*

Recommended Reading

Michelle Facos, *Symbolist Art in Context*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009

5.2 Symbolism, Art Nouveau, and *Fin de Siècle* Europe ctd.

Review

Arnason, Ch 5

Required Reading

Sections from Rodolphe Rapetti and Deke Dusinberre, *Symbolism*, Parris: Flammarion, 2005

Recommended Reading

Shearer West, *Fin de Siècle*, Woodstock, N.Y.: Overlook Press, 1994

Alastair Duncan, *Art Nouveau*, New York: Thames and Hudson, 1994

Week 6

6.1 Expressionism in France

Review

Arnason, Ch 6

Required Reading

AIT: Henri Matisse 'Notes of a Painter'; André Derain Letters to Vlaminck

Recommended Reading

Sarah Whitfield, *Fauvism*, London: Thames and Hudson, 1991

6.2 Expressionism in Germany

Review

Arnason, Ch 7

Required Reading

AIT: Ernst Ludwig Kirchner Programme of the Brücke; Wassily Kandinsky The Cologne Lecture; Franz Marc 'The "Savages" of Germany' and 'Two Pictures'
Excerpts from Nietzsche "Thus Spoke Zarathustra" (pdf)

Recommended Reading

Norbert Wolf and Uta Gosenick, *Expressionism*, Köln and Los Angeles: Taschen, 2004

Week 7

7.1 Cubism

Review

Arnason, Ch 8

Required Reading

Leo Steinberg, "The Philosophical Brothel," *October* v44 (1988) (pdf)

Anna C. Chave, "New Encounters with Les Demoiselles d'Avignon: Gender, Race, and the Origins of Cubism," *The Art Bulletin*, Vol. 76, No. 4 (Dec., 1944) (pdf)

Recommended Reading

Elizabeth Cowling, *Picasso: Style and Meaning* London and New York: Phaidon Press, 2002

7.2 Cubism ctd.

Review

Arnason, Ch 8

Required Reading

AIT: Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler from the *Rise of Cubism*; Georges Braque 'Thoughts on Painting'; Pablo Picasso 'Picasso Speaks'

Recommended Reading

Christine Poggi, *In Defiance of Painting: Cubism, Futurism, and the Invention of Collage*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992

William Rubin, Kirk Varnedoe, and Lynn Zelevansky, *Picasso and Braque, a symposium*, New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1992

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Week 8

8.1 The Great War

Review

Arnason, Ch 11

Required Reading

Selections from *Poetry of the First World War: An Anthology*, Tim Kendall, ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013

William Butler Yeats "The Second Coming"

Recommended Reading

Samuel Lynn Hynes *A War Imagined: The First World War and English Culture*, New York: Atheneum, 1991

E.J. Jobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes: A History of the World, 1914-1991*, New York: Vintage Books, 1996

8.1 Futurism

Review

Arnason, Ch 10

AIT: Filippo Tommaso Marinetti 'The Foundation and Manifesto of Futurism'; Umberto Boccioni et al. 'Futurist Painting: Technical Manifesto'

Recommended Reading

Richard Humphreys, *Futurism*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999

Week 9

9.1 The Advent of Film

Review

Arnason, Ch 5

Required Reading

Dan North, "Magic and Illusion in Early Cinema," *Studies in French Cinema*, 1. No. 2 (2001) (pdf)

Recommended Reading

Joshua Yumibe, *Moving Color: Early Film, Mass Culture, Modernism*, New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2012

9.2 École de Paris

Review

Arnason, Ch 12

Required Reading

Paula J. Birnbaum, "Chana Orloff: A modern Jewish Woman Sculptor of the School of Paris," *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies*, v15, n1 (2016 01 02) (pdf)

Recommended Reading

Christopher Green, *Art in France: 1900-1940*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000

Week 10

10.1 Suprematism to Revolution

Review

Arnason, Ch 10

Required Reading

AIT: Kasimir Malevich 'Non-Objective Art and Suprematism'

Éva Forgács, "Definitive Space: The Many Utopias of El Lissitzky's *Proun Room*,"
in *Situating El Lissitzky: Vitebsk, Berlin, Moscow*

Branislav Jakovljevic, "Unframe Malevich!: Ineffability and Sublimity in Suprematism," *Art Journal*,
Vol. 63, No. 3 (Autumn, 2004)

Recommended Reading

Matthew S. Witkovsky and Devin Fore, eds. *Revolutsiia! Demonstratsiia! Soviet Art Put to the Test*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017

10.2. Experiments in abstraction-Mondrian and De Stijl

Review

Arnason, Ch 13

Required Reading

AIT: Piet Mondrian 'Dialogue on the New Plastic'; *Neo-Plasticism: The General Principle of Plastic Equivalence*

Recommended Reading

Yve-Alain Bois, *Piet Mondrian, 1872-1944*, Boston: Bulfinch Press, 1995

Week 11

11.1 DADA

Review

Arnason, Ch 11

Required Reading

AIT: Hugo Ball 'Dada fragments; Tristan Tzara 'Dada Manifesto'; Richard Huelsenbeck 'First German Dada Manifesto'

Recommended Reading

Leah Dickerman and Brigid Doherty, *Dada: Zurich, Berlin, Hannover, Cologne, New York, Paris*, Washington D.C.: National Gallery of Art in association with D.A.P/ New York, 2005

11.2 DADA ctd.- Duchamp

Review

Arnason, Ch 11

Required Reading

AIT: Marcel Duchamp 'The Richard Mutt Case'

Recommended Reading

Dalia Judovitz, *Unpacking Duchamp: Art in Transit*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998

Week 12

12.1 Surrealism

Review

Arnason, Ch 15

Required Reading

AIT: André Breton from the First Manifesto of Surrealism; Louis Aragon et al. 'Declaration of the Bureau de Recherches Surréalistes'

Recommended Reading

Briony Fer, David Batchelor, and Paul Wood eds., *Realism, Rationalism, Surrealism: Art Between the Wars*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993

12.2 Surrealism ctd.

Review

Arnason, Ch 15

Required Reading

AIT: André Breton *Surrealism and Painting*; André Breton from the Second Manifesto of Surrealism

Recommended Reading

Briony Fer, David Batchelor, and Paul Wood eds., *Realism, Rationalism, Surrealism: Art Between the Wars*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993

Week 13

13.1 Early Twentieth-Century Mexico

Review

Arnason, Ch 16

Required Reading

AIT: Diego Rivera 'The Revolutionary Spirit in Modern Art'; André Breton, Diego Rivera, and Leon Trotsky 'Towards a Free Revolutionary Art'; David A. Siqueiros et al. 'A Declaration of Social, Political and Aesthetic Principles'

Recommended Reading

Leonard Folgarait, "Revolution as Ritual: Diego Rivera's National Palace Mural," *Oxford Art Journal* 14(1) (1991)

James Oles, "At the Café de los Cachuchas: Frida Kahlo in the 1920s," *Hispanic Research Journal* 8 (5) (1993)

David Lomas, "Body Languages: Kahlo and Medical Imagery," in *The Body Imagined: The Human Form and Visual Culture Since the Renaissance*, Kathleen Adler and Marcia R. Pointon, eds., Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993

13.2 Interwar America

Review

Arnason, Ch 16

Required Reading

Excerpts from Jacob A. Riis *How the Other Half Lives: Studies Among the Tenements of New York*, Boston: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 1996 (pdf)

Robert Haywood, "George Bellow's "Stag at Sharkey's": Boxing, Violence, and Male Identity," *Smithsonian Studies in American Art*, Vol. 2, No. 2 (Spring 1988) (pdf)

Recommended Reading

Barbara Haskell and Sasha Nocholas, *Georgia O'Keeffe: Abstraction*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009

Robert A. Slayton, *Beauty in the City: The Ashcan School*, Albany: Excelsior Editions, State University of New York Press, 2017

Week 14

14.1 Modern Architecture

Review

Arnason 14 and 21

Required Reading

AIT: Walter Gropius 'The Theory and Organization of the Bauhaus'; Charles Edouard Jeanneret (Le Corbusier) and Amédée Ozenfant 'Purism'

Recommended Reading

William J.R. Curtis, *Modern Architecture since 1900*, London: Phaidon, 1996