

Graduate Art History Course Descriptions Fall 2017

ARTH 602 Research Methods of Art History: *Costume Books between Europe and the Islamic World*

Thursday 7:00 – 9:40 pm

1503 HN

7669

Nebahat Avcioglu

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The costume book became a popular genre in the sixteenth century, circulating in manuscript or printed formats in the East and West, that gave perfect expression to a mutual fascination. Costume books meant to provide microcosmic and portable representations of faraway peoples. We will consider cultural and socio-political relationships between the East and West through the medium of this object, paying special attention to issues of travel, collecting, and the relationship between text and image, as well as serial and sequential narrative strategies. We will begin by considering the distinctive characteristics of the costume book and its conceptual implications in offering representations of the Other, examining several formats such as printed costume books, mass-produced bazaar images for foreign consumption, and personal costume books. We will address their compilers and patrons as curators in charge of selecting, classifying and interpreting iconographic diversity. Students will choose specific albums to write about and actively participate in class discussions through weekly summaries of readings and presentations. Visits to the museums and libraries are planned.

ARTH 602 Research Methods of Art History: *Rethinking 20th-Century American Realisms*

Monday 7:00 – 9:40 pm

1502 HN

7668

Michael Lobel

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Realism and figuration are the unlovely stepchildren of twentieth-century art. In the context of modernist criticism's celebration of the ostensibly purified values of abstract art, and postmodernism's similar championing of the stripped-down, anti-aesthetic forms of minimalism and conceptual art, realist modes were often seen as reactionary and outdated. Modernism needed its straw man, and realism too often fit the bill.

With the resurgence of critically engaged figurative painting in contemporary art, in the work of such practitioners as Kerry James Marshall and Nicole Eisenman, this narrative is due for a reconsideration. In this course we will focus on various episodes in American art of the twentieth century, exploring the possibility for rethinking the received understanding of those moments, with emphasis placed on overlooked or undervalued practices. Topics may include, but will not necessarily be limited to: the work of the Ashcan School; Precisionism and industrial culture in the 1920s; Magic Realism; Regionalism and Social Realism in the 1930s; Photorealism (including such practitioners as Audrey Flack); 1960s discussions of the so-called "art of the real"; and figuration and activism in 1960s and 1970s art. In line with the course's focus on research methods, we will also consider useful tools for uncovering historical and archival documentation.

ARTH 619 Greek Art

Wednesday 4:00 – 6:40 pm

1501 HN

40091

Hendrik Dey

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The history of western art begins with the Greeks. The intellectual, creative and artistic flowering that peaked among the Greek city-states of the fifth and fourth centuries BC underpins a cultural legacy that continues, via ancient Rome and the Renaissance, to this day. Greek notions of beauty, proportion, harmony and indeed 'art' in general lie at the root of modern discourse about the same

subjects. We will focus on the art and material culture of the Greek-speaking Mediterranean world from c. 900 BC until the Roman conquest of Greece in the second century BC. Subjects covered include architecture and the development of the classical orders, sculpture, vase and panel-painting, and jewelry and metal-work, alongside broader topics such as urbanism and the evolution of the Greek polis, the development of the naturalistic canon, and the political, intellectual and social milieu in which the objects of our study were produced.

ARTH 622 Modern Art II

Narratives of Twentieth Century Art from 1900 to 1945

Monday 4:00 – 6:40

1501 HN

10651

Romy Golan

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This graduate lecture course will look at the first half of the past century following a certain number of narratives: each time I will privilege one narrative over others that have been given on this particular movement, artist or body of work.

Empathy and the animation of the inorganic in Fauvism and Expressionism (centered on a text by Wilhelm Worringer); The semiotics of Cubism: mass culture (urban context) versus pure semiotics (Ferdinand de Saussure); Abstract painting as a global language: or how could everyone—from Paris to Moscow, to Munich, Prague and New York—be on the same page in the year 1912?; Futurism as the art of acceleration and blast (in part through the lens the media theory of Frederick Kittler); Homo Protheticus: Berlin Dada and Surrealist Automatism as two ways out of the trenches; The Language of Industry: Duchamp’s readymade and Taylorist America; Art as Revolution: from Soviet Constructivism to Productivism or from Tatlin’s Culture of materials to Rodchenko’s object as “active co-worker;” Painting after Collage: Surrealism and Magic Realism as the return to the non-same in France, Italy, and Germany; The outmoded or how can these avant-gardes be seen as not entirely “presentist;” The Bauhaus and the exhibition-as-pedagogical practice in Weimar, in Dessau, and in American exile; The Paris World Fairs as “transmedial” theatres: the phantasmagoria of 1900 to the agitational propaganda of 1937.

There will be two exams: a mid-term and a final, both in the classroom.

ARTH 734 Theory and Criticism: *Mapping Discourses*

Thursday 1:10 – 3:50 pm

205 Hudson Room 300

7670

Valerie Jaudon

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This seminar concentrates on the historical development of theoretical issues concerning current art and theory. Weekly reading assignments, group discussions and presentations focus on key texts relating to modernism/postmodernism, structuralism/post-structuralism, aesthetics, philosophy, phenomenology, feminism, psychoanalysis, semiotics, post-colonial theory, cultural studies, and a variety of critical methodologies. The goal of the class is to provide students with an introduction to primary theoretical texts and critical approaches to art from multiple disciplines that have played a significant role in forming the art and criticism of today. Students will choose topics and readings on which they will present brief papers and lead seminar discussions. A final paper (min.10 pages) allows for detailed examinations of current critical concerns. All readings will be available on E-Reserve from the Hunter Library.

ARTH 734 Theory and Criticism: *Becomings of the Image*

Tuesday 7:00 – 9:40 pm

1502 HN

40159

Jérôme Game

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Since the mid-20th century, Critical Theory has developed a rich and multidisciplinary approach to the notion of meaning – its production, its locations, its authority. In that, it has marked a shift from a thinking informed by absolute norms (such as the ‘subject’, the ‘true’ or the ‘beautiful’) to one that is concerned with interrelations between theory and practice, knowledge and action, the individual and the collective. The implications of this shift on the understanding of aesthetics, as well as on the making of art, have been extensive. In the light of these changes, this course focuses on the notions of experience, representation and value in relation to art from a plurality of disciplinary standpoints (Gender Studies, Deconstruction, Psychoanalytical Criticism, Postcolonial Studies, etc.). If far from being ‘natural’ or ‘essential’, aesthetic meaning is in fact constructed and shifting, how are we then to account for its contextual and relative nature? To answer this question, the course examines a set of theoretical paradigms engaging critically with the image, photographic or painted, fixed or moving, digital or analogic, as an utmost site on which to trace how theoretical productivity has always been going hand in hand with artistic creativity.

The course is structured around lectures and seminars (collective readings, written exercises and discussions, presentations and debates).

Course aims:

1. To equip students with an historical sense of critical theory as a rigorous intellectual discipline.
2. To introduce students to a variety of conceptual tools (deconstructionist, psychoanalytical, feminist, post-colonialist, queer, etc.) with which to address and make sense of texts and artefacts encountered during their time at Hunter and beyond.
3. To train students in writing and research skills in Theory and Criticism.

Course Learning objectives:

Students completing this course should:

1. have a solid understanding and knowledge of the main critical theories of the second-half of the 20th and the 21st centuries;
2. be able to demonstrate this understanding in written and in oral through a critical engagement with artworks and the literature on them;
3. be able to problematize, compare and evaluate different critical arguments;
4. be able to develop their own critical engagements with artistic artefacts and cultural discourses of their time

ARTH 734 Theory and Criticism: *Three German Concepts: Tracing the Birth and Development of Aesthetics, Art History, and Romanticism*

Thursday 4:00 – 6:40 205 Hudson

10130/7674/7677

Joachim Pissarro

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Within a span of fifty years in Germany, and to a degree in Western Europe, we see the emergence of three essential concepts that will structure--up to the present day--the way we refer to art. The first is in 1750: Alexander Baumgarten writes the first treaty on aesthetics, *Aesthetica*, in Latin. The second is in 1764: Johann Joachim Winckelmann basically invents art history with *Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums*. And the third is in the late 18th century with the birth of the Romantics.

We will trace these three different directions over two centuries: the Kantian direction, the Hegelian direction, and the Romantic direction. (Chronologically, their inceptions all overlap: Hegel is a bit younger than Kant but they never met). The Kantian direction will look at aesthetic judgment as something that cannot be regulated, directed, or programmed. Hegel, on the other hand, brings in history with a big H: a pictorial force that progresses from the first stumbling steps of humanity to the realization of the absolute--a very progressive, positivistic, and historicist way of thinking about aesthetics. The Romantics reject both of these previous directions, and instead introduce the individual as the driving force behind a work of art, so that the individual artist supersedes the rest of the world. The 19th and the 20th century will bring developments and amplifications of these three foundational concepts.

This seminar will ask: why is the cultivation of these three notions a specifically German phenomenon? What is their effect on contemporary aesthetics and art history? It will essentially be a theory class, as we will look at major texts from two hundred years of aesthetics: from Alexander Baumgarten and Immanuel Kant to Martin Heidegger and Jürgen Habermas, and all the way up to Friedrich Nietzsche and Hannah Arendt.

ARTH 750 Photography in the Twentieth Century (Lecture)

Tuesday 7:00 – 9:40 pm

1501 HN

40160

Antonella Pelizzari

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Photography, as we know it, permeates all aspects of life, blurring geographic boundaries and marking history, from intimate family records to international conflicts, from science to advertising, from love to politics. This global mediation has become even more ubiquitous today, as we negotiate a massive amount of digital information on the screens of our phones and are part of a borderless world on social media. How do we establish a canon and a history for a medium that is so permeable and shifting in meaning and practice, and what contributes to define photography as art?

The course explores these issues through an in-depth study of photography in the twentieth century, tracing key themes that have marked this history and discursive practices. We will retrace the critical debate of art versus document, positioning the aesthetics of the avant-garde against the application of this medium in modern culture industries. The context of publication of photographs will be one of our important concerns, discussing photography in magazines, the mediation of agencies, and the narrative sequences of photo books. We will also look at the “documentary turn” of photography, revisiting conceptual practices that aimed to dismantle the indexical nature of the medium.

The scope of the course is to become literate about the most significant moments and relevant thematics in twentieth-century photography; to develop a knowledge of photographic collections in NYC; and to think critically about the shifting meanings and values of these works throughout this century, as photographs became vehicle of artistic discourse as well as of documentary chronicle, ideology, and, most recently, global communication.

ARTH 7803D Art, Empire and the Global 18th Century

Tuesday 4:00 – 6:40 pm

1502 HN

42610

Tara Zanardi

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As Felicity Nussbaum has argued, the eighteenth century was truly the first “global” century. In order to address the cross-cultural exchange of goods, ideas, and art, we will investigate real and imagined encounters between Europe and other parts of the globe and the impact such encounters

had on the visual arts. As a vital component of the Enlightenment, Europe's motivation for exchange was partially rooted in a systematic aspiration to know, catalogue, and possess the world, and global expeditions provided opportunities for scientists and artists to observe, reproduce, interpret, and collect. Many of the objects, including gems, artefacts, or plant specimens were placed in natural history cabinets, and many of the images, like botanical illustrations or studies of peoples and their dress and customs were published in travel accounts or in costume albums, or served as the basis for larger projects, such as ceiling frescoes. But Europe (and its monarchs) also desired to build networks for imperialistic gain, especially as ongoing competition for resources and markets often generated military conflict.

We will investigate a wide range of topics that artists considered from differing vantage points, including the negotiation of identities across national, global, and imperial spaces, the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade, shifting definitions of race and gender, travel narratives, colonial collecting and display, *chinoiserie*, *turquerie*, the trafficking (legal and illegal) of goods, and scientific expeditions. We shall evaluate these subjects from diverse methodological perspectives, such as material culture and global studies.

Preliminary Reading

Felicity A. Nussbaum, "Introduction," in *The Global Eighteenth Century*, ed. Felicity A. Nussbaum (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003)

ARTH 7803E Duchamp's Telegram

Tuesday 4:00 – 6:40 pm

Thierry De Duve

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58810

This lecture course is a new and profoundly revised version of a course I developed under this or a similar title over a period of fifteen years. Its subject matter is the transition from one art world to another, a transition of which Marcel Duchamp was the messenger. With the photo of a urinal baptized *Fountain*, he put a message in the mail in 1917 announcing that the Western art institution had switched from the *Beaux-Arts* system to the art world as we know it today, which I call the *Art-in-General* system. The fact that Duchamp was merely the messenger and not the author or the agent of this institutional change does not in the least diminish his importance as an artist: four out of fourteen classes will be devoted to a survey or in-depth analysis of his work. Three classes will unpack the historical meaning of his "telegram." Two classes on "the invention of non-art" will seek to understand how and when the switch from one system to the other occurred. Two more classes will explore "missing links" between the two systems, and one class will deal with "acknowledgments of receipt" of Duchamp's "telegram" in the '60s and '70s. Finally, two classes will be devoted to the sentence "This is art," as it applied to *Fountain* and ushered in the Art-in-General system. The last class will be devoted to a recapitulation and a general discussion.

Students are asked to read the required readings in preparation of each seminar, and encouraged as well to make use of the list of advised readings so as to broaden their knowledge. The required readings listed under any given date should be read by that date.

Your assignment for the term consists of one mid-term paper and one final paper, each around ten pages long. For your mid-term assignment, present a thorough summary of one of the required readings (as per list). For your end-of-term assignment, write an essay in connection with a number of topics which will have arisen in class.

ARTH 7803G Art and Politics under Authoritarian Regimes (Lecture)

Tuesday 7:00 – 9:40 pm

Emily Braun

1527 HN

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58863

The rise of mass societies in the late 19th century led to a reaction against liberal democracies and subsequent political revolutions of the extreme left and right. The totalitarian states of interwar

Europe instituted unprecedented controls over artists and art production and their example was followed by other regimes around the globe after 1945. Visual culture became a key instrument of political indoctrination, cultural diplomacy, leader worship, and the social engineering of everyday life. This course looks at art under regimes through three intertwined approaches: state policy in the arts (unions, patronage, exhibitions, censorship); the agency of individual artists and critics (coercion, collaboration, resistance, internal exile); and the hierarchies of styles and media in the dissemination of multi-targeted propaganda. What have been the roles of the avant-garde and formalist modernism in support of political revolutions and regime building? What do we mean by “good” versus “bad” propaganda: are we speaking of efficacy or the values being represented, or both? Why has Socialist Realism been considered effective for mass indoctrination and what are the differences between it and realist styles under democracies? How do we judge the work (and the person) of canonical artists who collaborated? At least one lecture will also be devoted to “aftermaths,” such as the political trials of artist collaborators, historical “amnesia” in artistic representation, and the legal and moral dimensions of postwar restitutions. The course covers the arts under authoritarian regimes in interwar Europe (Italy, the Soviet Union, Germany, Vichy France, Spain), the German Democratic Republic, the People’s Republic of China, and the Brazilian military dictatorship. The fine arts, graphic arts, photography, architecture and performance will all be the subject of inquiry to different extents. Substantial weekly readings will augment the material covered in the lectures and provide issues for class discussions. The course grade is based on two short papers (addressing the readings and/or related artworks) and a final exam (a series of short essay responses based on image prompts).

ARTH 7803H Another Gothic: Avignon and the Mediterranean, c. 1200-c. 1400

Thursday 7:00 – 9:40 pm 1502 HN 58859

Elizabeth Monti *eamonti@yahoo.com*

ARTH 7803I Art & Humor

Thursday 12:20 pm – 3:00 pm 205 Hudson 60439

Lisa Corinne Davis and Ken Johnson *lisa.davis@hunter.cuny.edu*

Visual humor in art may be personal, psychological, philosophical, social and political. It can be about art itself – its forms and techniques -- and about art in general as a human institution. It can be about the real world and about imaginary worlds. It may hinge on style, as in cartoon-based images; it may depend on concepts – paradoxes, contradictions, irony, wordplay and so forth; it can arise from visual storytelling. By trying and examining various ways and means of making humorous artworks, students will gain a deeper understanding of the relationship between humor and art and about the nature of humor itself as an essential element of human consciousness.

Western art of the past century has abounded in comedic expressions. It might be that visual humor, once considered minor compared to, say, history painting, has never before enjoyed such prestige in the world of high art as it does today. Why this should be the case and what makes art humorous are questions studio students will explore in their own work. Art History students will be asked to research specific artists or trends of humor in contemporary art and present their findings to the class.

ARTH 780.08 Artist's Institute Seminar: *Artists' Institutes*
Tuesday 4:00 – 6:40 pm **The Artist's Institute** **7681**
Jenny Jaskey *jennyjaskey@gmail.com*

This course will unfold as a series of case studies of artist-run institutions from the late 19th century to the present, considering the evolving stakes of community engagement, self-presentation, context creation, and funding for platforms initiated by artists. Drawing on the resources of New York City, including guest lectures by artists and field trips, there will be a special focus on New York's downtown spaces from the 1980s-2000s, including ABC No Rio, Group Material, American Fine Arts, CAGE, Orchard, e-flux, and DIS. Final projects for the course will apply our research to the present, with student propositions for forms of public engagement that respond to the city's current economic and political climate as they directly affect artists' abilities to self-organize and to make and show their work.

ARTH762001 Curatorial Practicum, Part II: *Contemporary Latin American Art and the Location of Culture*
Mondays 7-9:40pm **1503 HN** **10657**
Harper Montgomery *hmontgom@hunter.cuny.edu*

This course will continue the thread of inquiry begun during its first half: that of exploring the issue of "the location of culture"--the postcolonial discursive field named by Homi Bhabha and others--by considering how it plays out in contemporary practice by artists making art in, about, and around the region that we call Latin America. We will likewise continue to analyze terms used to navigate the complex circumstances of contemporary art's production and display--such as locality, globalization, and difference. While the first part of this two-part practicum focused on the task of devising a curatorial rationale, the second will focus on writing catalog entries on individual works of art, crafting didactic texts and public programming, and designing and implementing the installation for an exhibition that opens January 2018 at the gallery at 205 Hudson Street (which will include working with artists, collections, and dealers in various capacities). Our efforts to subject contemporary art to Art Historical analysis will be supported by reading recent texts on this subject by Terry Smith, Richard Meyer, among others and on the practice of the artist's interview. Our main guides, however, will be the artworks that we will strive to interpret, contextualize, and present in physical space and narrative texts. At least three class meetings will be held in a storage facility discussing artworks and class requirements include readings, oral presentations, and writing two catalog essays for publication.

ARTH 762002 Curatorial Practicum:
Spaces for African-American Art in New York, 1968-1978
Mondays 4:00-6:40 **1502 HN** **10808**
Howard Singerman *howard.singerman@hunter.cuny.edu*

The course, the first half of a two-semester curatorial practicum leading to an exhibition in the Leubsdorf Gallery in fall 2018, will focus on three galleries established in Midtown and Greenwich Village to showcase work by African-American artists: Cinque Gallery, founded in 1969, and initially housed in the Public Theater on Lafayette Street; Acts of Art, founded that same year on Charles Street; and Just Above Midtown, founded in 1974 on 57th Street. Black

owned and run, the spaces were inaugurated as commercial galleries and were located quite consciously within the geographic boundaries of a predominately white art world. As Nigel Jackson, founder of Arts of Art, wrote of his gallery in 1971, they were established “for black artists to have, not just a place to hang their art outside of the ghetto areas, but, as a gallery dealing in fine arts and specializing in the fine art of black artists.”

Using recent books by Bridget Cooks, Susan Cahan, and Darby English on the relationship between New York museums and African-American artists, the course will begin with an examination of the political struggle for artistic representation in the 1960s in its broader context, before turning to focus on the specific histories of these galleries. Drawing on archives in New York and elsewhere, and discussions with artists and other associated with the galleries, we will pull together a history of the spaces, assembling rosters of artists and exhibitions for each, as we begin to imagine how these spaces might be represented in exhibition at Hunter.

CUNY Graduate Center:
Art History and the Subject of Biography
Prof. Michael Lobel
Fall 2017, Wednesdays 9:30-11:30am

Biography is a fraught topic in current art historical practice. It is simultaneously everywhere—in artist monographs, exhibition catalogue essays, and interviews—and nowhere, in that it is routinely dismissed in wide swaths of the discipline. In addition, it has often been deemed crucial to the recuperation of certain categories of artistic practice, including the careers of women artists and those from historically underrepresented or marginalized groups.

In this course we will tackle this problem head-on. We will read major critical texts on the subject—by such figures as Sigmund Freud, Roland Barthes, and Rosalind Krauss—in order to better understand the stakes of the discussion. We will also consider case studies in which biography offers a useful yet conflicted approach, as in feminist and queer interventions in the field, which often posit a stable artistic subject while simultaneously challenging that very notion. We will consider these issues in both methodological and practical terms, as in those cases in which the artist’s stated wishes—often categorized as “intention”—work against the interests of curators and art historians.

Questions to be addressed will include: Why is it that well-respected academic historians regularly write biographies, while the same isn’t true in the field of art history? Is it a coincidence that biography became widely dismissed at roughly the same moment certain groups began to assert their agency in the art world? How do we weigh the narratives that artists create about their lives against the scholarly commitment to provide an accurate account of the historical record? Our discussion of these questions will inform students’ approaches to their own individual research projects.

For more information, contact Prof. Lobel: michael.lobel@hunter.cuny.edu

1. Interested students should apply directly to Professor Michael Lobel (michael.lobel@hunter.cuny.edu) for permission to enroll.
2. Hunter students (or any CUNY students outside the GC) will need to use the ePermit process to register for the class. Details are [here](#). Students need to file the ePermit through their home college (in this case, Hunter); the approved permit will be forwarded to the GC.

Please ask the student to stay in touch with you throughout the process; if there seems to be a problem at any stage, please let me know and I'll see what I can do.

3. Once the ePermit has been approved at Hunter and at the GC, you will be able to log into Banner and grant permission to the student(s) to enroll. To do this Professor Lobel will need to process the accepted students as "overrides".
4. Then, the student should log into Banner to register.