

Spring 2014 Graduate Course Descriptions – Art History

ARTH 602 Research Methods: The Modern “Masterpiece” in Latin America

Lynda Klich

Wednesdays 4:00 – 6:40 pm

Students will learn to research an art object in depth and compose a comprehensive catalogue entry in two parts. The first is full factual documentation (provenance, exhibition history, and bibliography); the second is a detailed interpretative essay (15-18 pages) on all aspects of the work, written in a publishable, expository style. The course provides fundamental training for academic and curatorial work by emphasizing foundational tools and means of research in the field. It also offers pragmatic instruction in determining appropriate theoretical frameworks and viable methods of critical interpretation. Strategies for writing—the organization of information, the clear articulation of ideas, logical structure of argument, and developing an authoritative voice—will be stressed.

The course will focus on the role of the so-called masterpiece in the development of modernism in Latin America. Students will be assigned individual works of art from New York collections and will have the opportunity to contribute new research and analysis. There will be instructional sessions in museums and libraries, working with professional staff in order to master searches in both print and electronic media. Students will also learn by doing through a series of technical tasks involving information retrieval and analysis pertinent to their objects. The seminar covers a variety of issues and methodologies, with an emphasis on recent approaches to Latin American art history. In addition to the final catalogue entry and weekly tasks, students will give a class presentation on the progress and problems in their research.

ARTH 620

Roman Art

Hendrik Dey

Tuesdays 7:00 – 9:40 pm

In this course we will explore the material culture of Roman civilization, from the beginnings of Rome in the eighth century BC through the reign of Constantine (306-337 AD). Material remains provide a crucial and often highly evocative window onto the spectacular rise and subsequent evolution of the Roman Empire and its constituent cultures. We will consider the evolution of Roman art and architecture (chiefly sculpture, mosaics, and painting, as well as ‘minor arts’ such as jewelry, household items and coins/medallions) not only in stylistic and iconographical terms, but also as an index of broader and more systemic changes in Roman society over the long term. The issues which our study of Roman art and architecture will allow us to confront include: state-formation and

empire building; ‘Romanization’; ethnicity and identity in a multicultural empire; and the role of religion (including the rise of Christianity) in Roman society.

ARTH 626

Modern Art III

Max Weintraub

Tuesdays 7:00 – 9:40 pm

This course focuses on European and American art since 1945, tracing the complex legacy of high modernist art and theory and the divergent paths taken in art up to the contemporary moment. Examining select but exemplary artists, critics and theorists, this class will situate the important themes of art and art criticism since 1945 within contemporaneous cultural, philosophical and theoretical developments. Each week will be structured thematically while adhering to a loosely chronological progression. Some of the key topics that will be covered include Greenbergian formalism, Appropriation art, Performance and Video art, Postmodern strategies of remembrance and memorialization, Identity Politics, Institutional Critique and Globalization.

ARTH 635

Venetian Painting of the Golden Age

Elinor Richter

Thursdays 4:00-6:40

This lecture course will focus on the great age of Venetian painting from the late fifteenth- through the sixteenth-centuries. Venice at this time remained the sole independent city-state in central and northern Italy governed by a *doge* from the patrician class and an elected senate. Venetian *colorito* also represented the first direct challenge to the primacy of Florentine drawing, or *disegno*. Genres examined will include portraiture, landscape, and the altarpiece with the emphasis placed on the great horizontal, narrative tableaux that decorated the churches, private palaces and scuole (charitable lay confraternities) of the city. These impressive narrative cycles, devoted to Sts. Ursula, George, Mark, Roch, and even San Giobbe (Job), offer up splendid panoramic urban vistas filled with the pageantry, diplomacy, and ceremony that are unique to La Serenissima. Utilizing a contextual approach, these cycles will be examined within the artistic, social and historical conventions of Renaissance Venice. We will also concentrate on the ornamentation of the great Palladian-like villas scattered throughout the *terra firma*. An examination of the techniques of Venetian painting, including the study of new glazes, will help to demonstrate why many scholars consider Titian to be the greatest oil painter of the Renaissance. Artists featured include Carpaccio, the Bellini (Jacopo, Gentile, and Giovanni), Giorgione, Titian, Tintoretto and Veronese

Requirements include class participation, a final exam, and a research paper.

ARTH 734 Theory and Criticism: Aesthetics, Theory, Curating and Criticism

A Combined Art History and Studio Seminar

Professors: Valerie Jaudon and Joachim Pissarro

(Both professors will lead each seminar.)

Room 203, MFA Building, 205 Hudson, Tuesday 4:00-6:40

This class will be limited to 12 Art History MA and 12 Studio MFA students. Each art historian will be paired with an artist as a “dialectical duo.” A goal of this course is to encourage structured dialogue between both disciplines.

The First Half

The first six weeks of the semester will focus on principle moments in the history of aesthetics (and various anti-aesthetics) from the 18th century until today. This portion of the course will consist of a concentrated program of readings and presentations in a seminar format. Texts will be by Kant, Hegel, Nietzsche, Heidegger, Adorno, Foucault, Derrida, Deleuze, Mattick, Rancière, Bourriaud and Groys, among others. A seven-page paper will be due at the end of the semester.

The Second Half

In the second half of the semester each artist should be prepared with enough artwork for a small, curated solo exhibition. The exhibitions, organized by the MA and MFA teams, will be installed in the small Gallery (room 203) in the MFA Building. Each exhibition will be accompanied by a panel presentation, and will include a statement by the artist, an essay by the art historian, a review by a critic, and critique from the class. The MA and MFA teams will, in turn, assume different roles in the preparation of each exhibition. Everyone therefore will be involved as a curator, a writer and a critic. The exhibitions and presentations, two each class, should attempt to incorporate material covered during the first half of the semester.

ARTH 734 Theory and Criticism

Considine

Thursdays 4:00 – 6:40 pm

This course will cover classic theoretical texts that are important for the methodologies of art history and for art practice.

ARTH 7801Q Institutional Critique

Max Weintraub

Wednesdays 4:00 – 6:40 pm

This course examines the history of artistic practices that reflect critically on their own place within art institutions and those artists and art theorists who interrogate the social spaces and function of art. This class aims to trace the development of institutional critique as an artistic concern from the 1960s to the present, considering both

artistic precedents from the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Topics to be covered include: the museum's or gallery's role in exhibiting and conferring status to artworks, the critique of the artist as the maker of original artworks, the relationship between critical art practices and social movements in Europe, China, America and elsewhere, and the current conditions for politicized critical practice in the twenty-first century.

The class will consider a broad range of theorists and artists who have developed and extended the genre of institutional critique, including artists both familiar and unfamiliar: Andrea Fraser, Fred Wilson, Renée Green, and Christian Phillip Muller, Cildo Meireles, Thomas Struth, Ai WeiWei, Xu Bing, Double Fly Art Center, Marcel Duchamp, Hans Haacke, Banksy, Rikrit Tiravaneja, Guerrilla Girls, Marcel Broodthaers, Daniel Buren, Robert Smithson, Adrian Piper, Gran Fury and Krzysztof Wodiczko.

ARTH 7801R Post-1945 Japanese Art and Architecture: Artists and Architects in Collaboration

Yasufumi Nakamori

Fridays 3:30 – 6:20 pm

This course examines artistic collectivism and collaborations found among artists and architects in post-1945 Japan in the context of the avant-garde and experimentalism. Examining art and architecture, realized or unrealized, the course will cover a range of artistic production that is critically engaged with ideas of Japan-ness, modernity, and the West, and defining what it meant to be both modern and Japanese in the postwar era. The course will explore how these artists, photographers, and architects were both in dialogue, with the practice of collectivism, with intellectuals and mass in Japan and on the world stage. Students will be expected to conduct in-depth research on an artist or architect collective for their research papers.

ARTH 7801S 17th Century French Art & Architecture

DeBeaumont

Mondays 4:00 pm – 6:40 pm

Course description TBA

ARTH 780.08 The Artist's Institute

Alex Kitnick

Thursdays 7:00 – 9:40 pm

Each semester The Artist's Institute dedicates itself to the work of one artist. Programs are put on and a class is taught. The classroom component seeks to extract a handful of themes from the artist's practice that might help us better understand contemporary art and culture at large. Assignments include written work as well the creation of events. More information can be found at <http://theartistsinstitute.org>.

ARTH 780.14 Curatorial Methods

Instructor TBA

Tuesdays 4:00 – 6:40 pm

This seminar proposes an in-depth examination of the curatorial process and introduces contemporary perspectives and approaches to exhibition-making, with a focus on epistemology and the nature of “knowledge” in art. The class is supported by historical references to landmark exhibitions, theoretical readings, visits to museum and gallery exhibitions, and presentations by visiting curators and artists. Students consider to what extent an exhibition---with its themes, politics, juxtapositions, experiments, and pedagogies---can be a site for knowledge production, and the nature of the exhibition experience.

ARTH 780.72 Special Topic: A Lesson in Looking: Developing a Narrative of Art of the 20th Century

William Agee

Thursdays 7:00 – 9:40 pm

In this seminar, we will slow down and hone in: each class will be devoted to a single work of art. We will focus on art of the 20th century, starting with Matisse’s The Red Studio of 1911, and then consider work by artists including but not limited to Stuart Davis, Piet Mondrian, Edward Hopper, Jackson Pollock, Helen Frankenthaler, Jasper Johns, Eva Hesse, Donald Judd, Robert Smithson, and Maya Lin. Weekly discussions will be based on the work of art and selected readings. Over the course of the semester, we will develop one possible narrative (there are many) of how art progressed throughout the early- to late-20th century. In addition to weekly class attendance and participation, students will be responsible for an independent research paper and visits to local art institutions.

ARTH 780.88 Topics in Ancient Egyptian Art and Architecture

Edward Bleiberg

Mondays 7:00 – 9:40 pm

This course explores problems in understanding ancient Egyptian art and architecture from pre-history through the end of Egypt’s New Kingdom about 1075 B.C.E. The course proceeds chronologically beginning approximately 3500 B.C.E. with questions about the origins of Egyptian art. The problems addressed in class concern typical art historical issues such as royal versus middle class patronage, the nature of Egyptian style, and the emergence of Egyptian iconography in various periods. The course concludes with discussions of the antiquities market, Egyptian collections in museums, and issues of cultural patrimony.

OFFERED AT THE GRADUATE CENTER (2 seats available):

ART 83000 Selected Topics in Medieval Art and Architecture: The Reliquary Effect

Cynthia Hahn

Tues., 11:45 a.m.-1:45 p.m.

If the reliquary can be said to be a container, a box, it is akin to the gift box. As it performs its function of presentation, it is erased in the “presence” of the relic. Thus, precisely as the medieval reliquary is materiality glorified, sparkling silver, gold and gems, it simultaneously denies its own existence, standing only as a setting or context for the staging of the relic. Such a theatrical ‘reliquary effect’ makes use of a number of strategies—viewer involvement, the exploration of text-image relationships and visual effects (and opacities), the creation of meaningful spaces and controlled POV, and the exploitation of materials. We will consider reliquaries from the early to late middle ages, as well as touch on those from other periods and cultures. Requirements will include: weekly readings and discussion, museum visits, student presentations and papers.

Suggested Reading: Cynthia Hahn, Strange Beauty, Penn State Press, 2012.