

Graduate Art History Course Descriptions Spring 2016

ARTH 602 Research Methods of Art History: Considering the Object of Art History

Harper Montgomery

Th 4:00 pm – 6:40 pm 1502 HN

In this course we will study methods of art historical inquiry and develop the skills necessary for writing a research paper focused on close analysis of a single work of art. For this purpose, each student will choose a work from either the Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros, the Museum of Modern Art, or the Whitney Museum of American Art. Our objective will be to obtain a critical grasp of the historiography of our discipline and to consider how methods of Art History such as iconology, formalism, structural linguistics, post-colonialism, and gender theory can help us interpret and describe artworks. Weighing the assessment of objects and their historical conditions with the use of analytical frameworks will be our central concern. Readings will include classic texts of Art History (i.e. Winckelmann, Panofsky, Gombrich, and Schapiro) as well as revisionist interventions and cultural studies (i.e. Roland Barthes, Griselda Pollock, and Edward Said). Requirements for the course will be regular research and writing assignments, an in-class oral presentation, and a research paper. Readings and class discussions will introduce you to methods for interpreting works of art and assignments will focus on strategies for clear and compelling writing. Four classes will be held outside the classroom, including a visit to the Watson Library of the Metropolitan Museum of Art where the reference librarian will conduct a workshop on researching printed and electronic media.

ARTH 619 Hellenistic Art

Beryl Barr-Sharrar

Wed 4:00 pm – 6:40 pm 1527 HN

This is an introduction to the sculpture, painting, architecture and urbanism in the expanded regions of the Greek-speaking world from the death of Alexander the Great in Babylon in 323 BC to the Roman victory over the last Macedonian kingdom, Ptolemaic Egypt, in 31 BC. The germs of some important phenomena of Hellenistic art begin to appear before Alexander, so we will spend some time not only with Alexander, but also his father Philip II. Philip's vast expansion of the kingdom of Macedon allowed the accumulation of enormous wealth and the development of new artistic ideas. This has been revealed to us by excavations over the past 40 years that have uncovered a huge palatial structure as well as the greatest number of surviving gold, silver and bronze objects from the late Classical period ever known.

The material cultures of the following periods: the successors of Alexander (323-275 BC), the age of the Hellenistic Kingdoms (275-150 BC) and the Greco-Roman phase (150-31 BC), will be critically examined with the recognition that styles in all media during this complex period are cumulative, not successive, and are conditioned by purpose, setting and patron. We want to find out how Hellenistic artists and architects functioned, what they produced, and why. Pertinent themes will be Hellenistic "realism," artistic state propaganda, the domestic realm, commemoration in death, the private and public votive, and others. In mid-April a major exhibition of Hellenistic art will open at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, *Pergamon and the Other Hellenistic Kingdoms*. We will visit it together.

ARTH 621 Modern Art I

Susanna Cole

M 4:00 pm – 6:40 pm 1502 HN

This lecture course examines the development of art in Europe and England from the 1780's to 1900. It will explore topics including, but not limited to, revolutionary practices, the avant-garde, modernity, primitivism, mass-culture, industrialization, and urbanism through the works of major figures of the Nineteenth-Century. The course will cover artistic movements including the neo-classical, romanticism,

realism, landscape, impressionism, post-impressionism and symbolism.

Requirements:

Class Participation, weekly readings, short paper and presentations.

ARTH 624 High Renaissance

Patricia Rocco

Th 7:00 pm – 9:40 pm 1502 HN

This course looks at cultural production in the 16th century during the High Renaissance and its aftermath, the Mannerist period. Mannerism, or the stylish style as it was also known, is a period that has been treated by art historians as a monolithic block, while in reality there were many competing styles and influences during this time. The origin of the label is from Vasari's 16th-century description of "maniera," or style; therefore we will look at key artists of the period in tandem with his work, the Lives of the Artists, as primary source and period commentary. The course analyzes secondary sources describing the shift from the classical revival of the High Renaissance to the complex visual culture of Mannerism. We will also look at topics such as women artists who flourished in the 16th century. In addition, we will discuss hybrid art from a global perspective, since the period was one of great discoveries which fueled Mannerist forms. Requirements include weekly readings and class discussion, a final paper and presentation, 2 exams, and a trip to the Metropolitan Museum.

ARTH 629 Modern Art IV

Maxim Weintraub

Mon 4:00 pm – 6:40 pm 1527 HN

This course considers art from the 1960s to the contemporary moment, focusing on select but exemplary artists, critics and theorists in order to isolate significant and recurring themes within the art and art theory and situate them within contemporaneous philosophical and historical developments. In so doing we will consider the influences, directions and legacies of art of the past fifty years.

ARTH 632 Neoclassicism and Romanticism

Tara Zanardi

Th 4:00 pm – 6:40 pm 1503 HN

This lecture course will cover the two major movements of the second half of the eighteenth and the first half of the nineteenth centuries. These two movements occurred simultaneously and are often difficult to separate, since many artists utilized aspects from both styles. While the debate between "Classicism" and "Romanticism" was heightened in the 1824 Paris Salon and associated with two distinct artistic practices and theories, *disegno* and *colore*, the two movements share many similarities and were practiced by artists who received traditional academic training. By closely examining these movements in their cultural, historical, and political contexts, we will cover a broad range of objects and subjects from Europe and the United States.

ARTH 638 Late Medieval

Cynthia Hahn

Tues 4:00 pm – 6:40 pm 1502 HN

This course will introduce the student to problems and topics in later medieval art with a focus on France. In particular, the student will learn the importance of medieval art to its audience and study the

ability of art to communicate ideas through meaning and material. Topics will include the origins and generation of Gothic architecture, sculpture, manuscript painting, stained glass, and what is called in other eras “decorative arts” but which for the middle ages were objects of great value and importance—such as tapestries and reliquaries. The class will be a cross between lecture and seminar with close readings of art historical writing with many different perspectives and on a wide range of topics. We will make numerous trips to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, including at least one visit with a curator.

ARTH 734 Theory & Criticism: Broodthaers’ Lesson

Thierry De Duve

Th 4:00 pm – 6:40 pm 1501 HN

This coming February, the Belgian artist Marcel Broodthaers (1924-1976) will have a major retrospective at MoMA. The seminar is prompted by the extraordinary opportunity to study the work of this major artist of the conceptual generation firsthand.

We will visit the exhibition together at least twice, and seek the enlightenment of its curator and possibly other Broodthaers scholars who might be in town on this occasion. The first classes (before the exhibition opens) will be devoted to the art context in which Broodthaers was working, with a focus on René Magritte, conceptual art, and Joseph Beuys. We will also prepare ourselves theoretically by reading some of Stéphane Mallarmé’s poetry and a few important texts on rhetorics and related matters.

After an in-depth survey of the artist’s career and oeuvre, the seminar will concentrate on the lesson we can gather from a particular body of work Broodthaers created between 1968 and 1972. In the wake of the occupation of the Palais des Beaux-Arts, a major repercussion of the May ’68 students’ uprising on the Brussels art scene, Broodthaers conceived the fiction of a *Museum of Modern Art, Department of Eagles*, of which he proclaimed himself the director. Four years and several avatars of the Museum later, he staged its *Section of Figures* at the Düsseldorf Kunsthalle, in which some 300 objects or images featuring an eagle were systematically denied art status. The second part of the seminar will consist in a close reading and contextualisation of the two-volume catalogue of this exhibition.

There is no prerequisite, but students will be asked to actively participate in the seminar with presentations on assigned topics pertaining to the intellectual tools needed to make the most of Broodthaers’s extraordinary achievement with this seminal work.

ARTH 734 Theory & Criticism: Rauschenberg and his Circle

Michael Lobel

M 7:00 pm – 9:40 pm 1503 HN

This course will consider the continuing legacy of Robert Rauschenberg and his immediate circle, including Jasper Johns and John Cage. It coincides with (or serves as a preliminary examination of) the content of several important museum exhibitions, including a survey of the activities at Black Mountain College and a Rauschenberg retrospective organized by the Tate and MoMA for 2016/17. The class will study the work of this group and its relevance for ongoing critical discussions, including those around the concept of the neo-avant-garde and the category of postmodernism. Attention will also be paid to less widely considered works, such as the blueprints produced collaboratively by Rauschenberg and Susan Weil in the early 1950s.

ARTH 780.08 The Artist’s Institute

Jenny Jaskey and Gabriel Packard

T 7:00 pm – 9:40 pm The Artist’s Institute at 132 E. 65th Street

The inaugural season of The Artist's Institute at 132 E. 65th Street is dedicated to Hilton Als (b. 1960, Brooklyn, NY) and his connections and contributions to the visual and performing arts. Students enrolled in the seminar will engage with Als' practice through three modalities: (1) close readings of Als' texts with seminar discussions about the artists and cultural histories his work addresses (2) a series of creative nonfiction writing workshops with Gabriel Packard, associate director of the Hunter MFA Creative Writing Program (3) an end-of-semester curatorial project for Als' season at The Artist's Institute.

Hilton Als is one of the most distinctive voices in American letters. His career has been closely associated with the *New Yorker* since 1989, where he is chief theater critic. Before coming to *The New Yorker*, Als was a staff writer for the *Village Voice* and an editor-at-large at *Vibe*. Als edited the catalog for *Black Male: Representations of Masculinity in Contemporary American Art* at the Whitney Museum of American Art in 1994. His first book, *The Women*, a meditation on gender, race, and personal identity, was published in 1996. His most recent book, *White Girls*, discusses various narratives around race and gender and was nominated for a 2013 National Book Critics Circle Award in Criticism. In 2009, Als worked with the performer Justin Bond on *Cold Water*, an exhibition of paintings, drawings, and videos by performers, at La MaMa Gallery. In 2010, he co-curated *Self-Consciousness* at the Veneklasen Werner Gallery in Berlin, and published Justin Bond/Jackie Curtis, his second book. He is co-curator of *Christopher Knowles: In a Word*, currently on view at the ICA, Philadelphia. Als has taught at Yale University, Wesleyan, and Smith College. He lives in New York City.

Space is limited and requires approval of the professor. Email a brief statement of interest, including your degree program (MA/MFA) to Professor Jaskey: jenny@theartistsinstitute.org.

ARTH 780.14 **Curatorial Methods**
Objects of Influence: Chinese Art and Global Traditions

Denise Leidy
W 4:00 pm – 6:40 pm 1503 HN

Although often dismissed as decorative, the three-dimensional arts have played a transformative role in the spread of technology, imagery, and ideas. This class will introduce Chinese bronze, clay, cloth, and lacquer from the Neolithic period to the eighteenth century focusing on the continuous and complicated interchanges between these media. The class will also explore the seminal role played by Chinese traditions within East Asia, as well as the impact of longstanding exchanges with West Asia, and, ultimately, with Europe.

Emphasis will be placed on understanding materials and techniques, the evolution of shapes and motifs, and the development of a global design language in the eighteenth century. The class will also discuss the relationship between the critical study of material culture and the presentation of objects in museums, particularly The Metropolitan Museum of Art

ARTH 7802G **Oppositional Biennials**

Daniel Bozhkov (MFA) and Harper Montgomery (MA)
T 1:10 pm – 3:50 pm 205 Hudson

In 1984, the inaugural Havana Biennial declared its oppositional status to global capitalism by self-consciously fashioning itself as a Third World Biennial and exclusively inviting artists from Latin America and the Caribbean to participate. Two years later the Biennial incorporated artists from Africa, Asia, and the Middle East into this mission, carving out a global position for alternative--or "oppositional"--biennials that has since become widespread practice. From Tirana Biennial in Albania, Biennale do Mercosul in Porto Alegre, Brazil, to the critically acclaimed 2014-2015 Kochi-Muziris Biennale in India, the "oppositional" biennials proposed alternative models for what artworks can do in the world, and imagined differently the role artists play in the main social body. They fostered direct relationships among the

“peripheries” that bypass the global art capitals of New York, London and Berlin, and opened discourses not governed by the center. Focusing on Havana as a particularly significant point of interest, this course will examine the artists and critics who have shaped this phenomenon in Latin America, Eastern Europe and India. Taking advantage of the considerable body of criticism and art historical literature on biennials that has been produced over the last decade, the course will examine art production and display within the dynamic socio-political contexts that have shaped biennials. We will explore how this alternative circuit of biennials became spaces for experimenting with social practice and for resisting absorption into global contemporary art. We will study and discuss the effect on the Havana Biennial of the recent normalization of relations between the United States’ and Cuban governments, examining Tania Bruguera’s conflict with the Cuban state, and the debates about censorship and protest that has been generated in the international community in response to it.

Course Includes Required Travel Component - April 23-30, 2016: One-week intensive course to Havana, Cuba during Hunter’s spring break with a group of 12 Hunter College MA and MFA students to study the vision and the institutional structure of the Havana Biennial on site, and participate in seminars at the Fundación Ludwig. The time in Havana will allow students and professors to further develop the individual research projects begun in the seminar at Hunter.

ARTH 7802O **Special Topics: *Concepts and Images: Dialogues between Philosophers and Artists --(from 1790 until now)***

Joachim Pissarro
Th 4:00 pm – 6:40 pm TBA

This seminar will engage in a few characteristic features of the dawn of the modern age. We will take a look at what happens in Germany in the mid- to late 18th century: an interesting series of coincidences need to be investigated. Within a few decades, starting in 1750 with Alex Baumgarten's *Aesthetica*, one sees the birth of aesthetics (a brand new discipline that questions the nature of what is beautiful, and, more critically, our capacity to utter a judgment on what is beautiful, or not beautiful).

Shortly thereafter, the premises of art history (and archeology) are set in print by Johann Joachim Winkelman: *Reflections on the Painting and Sculpture of the Greeks*, 1755 (trans. 1765) And in 1795, the palatial abode of the French Kings, the Palace of the Louvre, opens its doors to the public.

These three 'symptoms' (as Nietzsche would call them) -- birth and autonomization of aesthetics, as a separate and new branch of knowledge; birth of art history; the rise of the museum as a new kind of public institutions -- announce the dawn of the modern era.

We will take about a dozen major figures -- principally from German philosophy (from Baumgarten, and Kant, to Hannah Arendt and Jürgen Habermas, via Hegel, Nietzsche, Heidegger, and Adorno) and investigate the points of contacts and dialogues between each of these philosophical giants, and the artists who read them and responded to them -- through their works, or through actual written pamphlets, manifestos, letters.

ARTH 7802P **Special Topics: 19th- Century Theories of Art**

Susanna Cole
T 7:00 pm – 9:40 pm 1503 HN

This seminar is primarily devoted to the analysis of texts. We will read major works of Nineteenth-Century theory and criticism and look at the ways in which these texts have shaped both contemporary and subsequent generations understanding of Art and Art History. We will explore these texts as objects themselves and learn about their history, audience, reception and the debates that arose from the text both at the time and through their influence.

ARTH 7802Q**Special Topics: Documentary Photography: A Practice in Context**

Antonella Pelizzari

T 7:00 pm – 9:40 pm

1502 HN

Today, as we are fully immersed in a world of social media that channels images of environmental disasters and human tragedies, we often come to interrogate the uses and the ethics of documentary. Can documentary practice today continue to be held to the notions of truth, evidence, and witness? What questions do we bring to documentary photography today?

This seminar reviews paradigmatic case studies in the history of 20th century photography and explores what defines documentary through key essays and thinkers. We are not interested in questioning photography as a form of artistic expression vs. documentary evidence, but rather, we want to explore the modalities and reasons why photographs have functioned as documentary media. What was the context in which these images circulated, and to whom did they speak?

We will focus on three particular histories in order to answer these questions: 1) photographers working for the government agency of the FSA in the Thirties [Farm Security Administration]; 2) photographers who became members of Magnum agency [created in 1947 and operating to this day]; 3) contemporary artists and theorists discussing the impact of on-line technologies on the idea of documentary.

This investigation will involve research on the modalities of circulation and reception of documentary images. Each student will be asked to conduct an independent research project and write a final paper that will trace the work of a photographer through publications, photo books, magazine pages, oral histories, and web pages. The scope of this seminar is to define the meaning of documentary through an understanding of the context in which the image was printed and the multiple narratives that were generated.

ARTH 780**Special Topics: *Estridentismo* and the International Vanguard**

Lynda Klich

T 7:00 pm – 6:40 pm

1503 HN

Short-lived and long forgotten, the Mexican cultural movement *estridentismo* (stridentism) has recently been the subject of significant scholarly attention. *Estridentismo* (1921-1927) joined poets, writers, musicians, and artists in the dual tasks of renovating Mexican art forms and challenging the sociopolitical status quo. Now often described as a prototypical Latin American vanguard, *estridentismo* has become a model for scrutinizing issues, questions, and tensions germane to cultural production in 1920s and 30s Latin America, such as the possibilities of collective action, the efficacy of the manifesto as art form, the concept of cosmopolitanism, the definition of the popular, and the meanings and conditions of modernity. *Estridentismo* also provides a case study for evaluating the relevance of theoretical terms employed in relation to European art movements (such as “avant-garde”) for Latin American cultural manifestations. The course focuses on the exploration of these problems in recent scholarship, seeking not only to assess the efficacy of these studies, but also to comprehend the ways in the study of *estridentismo* can inform our understanding of contemporaneous artistic developments in cultural centers throughout Latin America. Discussions and readings, which include theoretical and historical texts (including primary sources), initially begin with Mexico, but expand to include Argentina, Brazil, Cuba, and Peru. Individual student projects may similarly focus on subjects in Mexico and beyond.