

Cultural dimensión of art

Academic Year: (2020 / 2021)

Review date: 02-10-2020

Department assigned to the subject: Department of Humanities: Geography, Contemporary History and Art

Coordinating teacher: VERDU SCHUMANN, DANIEL ANDREAS

Type: Basic Core ECTS Credits : 6.0

Year : 1 Semester : 1

Branch of knowledge: Arts and Humanities

STUDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO HAVE COMPLETED

A basic knowledge of Art History is advisable.

COMPETENCES AND SKILLS THAT WILL BE ACQUIRED AND LEARNING RESULTS.

At the end of the course the student is expected to be able to:

- Reflect on the complex nature of art and its manifestations, both from an abstract and a specific point of view.
- Acknowledge the relationship between art as a cultural product, with its own institutions and practices, and the wider context of the culture in which it is born.
- Recognize and differentiate the main forms that art takes and connect them with the debates that discuss, from different disciplines and points of view, the influence of the context in artistic productions and, in general, the social and cultural importance of art.
- Understand the different theoretical approaches used, both currently and in the past, to analyze art productions.
- Locate the information necessary to correctly fulfill his or her duties, as well as interpret it in order to elaborate contents and well-formed opinions.
- Communicate and argue with academic rigor on the contents of the course, both in oral and written form.
- Work with neatness, efficiency and in depth, both on his or her own and in groups.

DESCRIPTION OF CONTENTS: PROGRAMME

This course tackles art from a cultural point of view. In doing so, it is consistent both with the theoretical approach of the Cultural Studies and with the more practical requirements in the field of Cultural Management.

After a brief theoretical introduction, the syllabus is divided into two major sections.

The first one deals with the arts as a whole, and is therefore interested mainly in what happens 'outside' the art work. It takes a multifaceted approach from different perspectives, offering a kaleidoscopic and necessarily pluralistic view of a complex and often even contradictory reality. Each approach deals with one particular aspect of art as a historical, social and cultural practice, and will be tackled with a diachronic, but by no means exhaustive perspective: only the most relevant episodes will be taken into account. In turn, each of these conceptual threads will intersect the others at some point or another. Some of those points serve as real nodes, transforming our understanding of art as a whole. The most important one will be undoubtedly the period known as modernism. Modernism represents the culmination of the search for autonomy of the artistic institution, with extremely important historical, social, economic and cultural consequences which to a great extent still determine our understanding of the discipline. Obviously enough, we are currently engaged in yet another of those nodes: digitalization and globalization are modifying enormously our comprehension of the artistic sphere.

The second section will address the main types of analysis of art and the work of art. It is concerned mainly with what happens 'inside' the art work. An art work is a complex artifact that serves many purposes and transmits its contents in a variety of ways. This section will study the main theoretical perspectives on art analysis. Especial attention will be paid to those which are still in use in the fields of visual and cultural studies.

0. Art as culture and the concept of art: meanings, origins, uses and limits.

This brief introduction will deal with art as a cultural practice, as well as with its many definitions. The origins, evolution and limitations of the different conceptual approaches will also be studied.

1. Art and the Art World.

1.1. Art as an Institution.

This origins of different artistic institutions, such as the academias, will be addressed here, as well as their relationship with the figure of the artist, particularly from modernism to our days.

1.2. Art and the Audience.

This section will discuss the role of the public from its emergence in the 18th century to our days, as well as other concepts tied to it: taste, popular art, mass culture, etc.

1.3. Art as a Commodity.

The material, economic and practical implications of art will be dealt with, as well as the institutions related to them: the market, galleries, museums, etc.

1.4. Art and Ideology.

The main episodes in the complex relationship between artistic practices and ideology and political praxis will be tackled here, from the more explicit overlap at the beginning of Modernity (19th century, avant-garde & politics, 'entartete Kunst', the cultural Cold War) to the interweaving of art and identity and biopolitics from the End of the 20th century to our days (postmodernism, canon issues, feminism, etc.).

2. The Study of the Work of Art

2.1. Origins and Characteristics of the Main Disciplines.

The basic principles of the various disciplines that analyze art will be addressed: Art History, Aesthetics, Art Criticism and Visual Studies.

2.2. Conceptual Approaches

The most relevant conceptual approaches to the analysis of an art work will be discussed, both from a theoretical and a practical point of view. Especial attention will be paid to those which are still in use in the fields of visual and cultural studies: art & biography, sociological and marxist approaches, psychoanalysis, iconography and semiotics, Frankfurt School, hermeneutics, post-structuralism, deconstruction.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES AND METHODOLOGY

Given the extraordinary measures adopted by the UC3M regarding the COVID-19 pandemic, the teaching structure of the course is rigidly divided into one online lectures and one seminar per week.

LECTURES: The professor will present the theoretical grounds of the course, with the help of audiovisual material.

SEMINARS: Students will analyse and discuss texts and images proposed by the professor and will present their individual and collective assignments.

- The group assignment will consist on the presentation of a text regarding the analysis of an art work. The text will be provided by the teacher.

- The individual assignment will consist on a written essay on the study of a work of art from the point of view of its cultural context and meaning. The art work will be chosen by the student and approved by the teacher.

COLLECTIVE TUTORSHIP: Before the collective assignment, the group will meet with the teacher in order to discuss the presentation. A second meeting will be arranged if necessary.

INDIVIDUAL TUTORSHIP: All students will meet at least once with the teacher. All aspects concerning the course can be tackled there: contents, assignments, etc.

ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT: 50 %, divided into:

- Individual assignment: 30 %
- Group assignment: 20 %

FINAL EXAM: 50 %

% end-of-term-examination:	50
% of continuous assessment (assignments, laboratory, practicals...):	50

BASIC BIBLIOGRAPHY

- BERGER, John: Ways of seeing., British Broadcasting Corporation and Penguin Books,, 1973
- CROW, Thomas: Painters and Public Life in Eighteenth-Century Paris., Yale University Press, , 1987
- CUSSET, François: French Theory: How Foucault, Derrida, Deleuze, & Co Transformed the Intellectual Life of the United States., University Of Minnesota Press,, 2008
- DANTO, Arthur C.: The Transfiguration of the Commonplace., Harvard University Press,, 1981
- DANTO, Arthur C.: Beyond the Brillo Box: The Visual Arts in Post-Historical Perspective., Farrar Straus & Giroux,, 1992
- DICKIE, George: The Art Circle. A Theory of Art., Haven Publications,, 1984
- FOSTER, Hal [et al.]: Art since 1900. Modernism Antimodernism Postmodernism., Thames and Hudson,, 2005
- FREELAND, Cynthia: But is it Art? An Introduction to Art Theory., Oxford University Press,, 2001
- GOMBRICH, Ernst: The Story of Art., Phaidon,, 1950
- H. W. Janson: History of Art., Pearson,, 1962
- HOWELLS, Richard; NEGREIROS, Joaquim (eds.): Visual Culture., Polity,, 2012
- MIRZOEFF, Nicholas (Ed.): The Visual Culture Reader., Routledge,, 1998
- MIRZOEFF, Nicholas: An Introduction to Visual Culture, Routledge,, 1999
- PREZIOSI, Donald: The Art of Art History., Oxford University Press,, 1998
- SAUNDERS, Frances Stonor: The Cultural Cold War: The CIA and the World of Arts and Letters, New Press,, 2001
- SHINER, Larry The Invention of Art, University of Chicago Press, 2001
- STURKEN, Marita; CARTWRIGHT, Lisa: Practices of Looking: An Introduction to Visual Culture,, Oxford University Press,, 2000

BASIC ELECTRONIC RESOURCES

- BERGER, John . Ways fo Seeing 1: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0pDE4VX_9Kk
- BERGER, John: . Ways of Seeing 2: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m1GI8mNU5Sg>
- BERGER, John: . Ways of Seeing 3: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z7wi8jd7aC4>
- BERGER, John: . Ways of Seeing 4: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5jTUebm73IY>
- Dr. Christopher L.C.E. Witcombe: . Art History Resources,: <http://arthistoryresources.net/ARTHLinks.html>
- Khan Academy: . Art History,: <https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/art-history>
- Smart History: . History of Art,: <https://smarthistory.org/>
- Wikipedia: . Visual Arts Portal: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portal:Visual_arts