

Course Last Updated 4/2/2024



## Modern Art in London: From Sublime to Ridiculous

### Section I: Course Overview

**Course Code:** ARH312

**Subject Area(s):** Art History

**Prerequisites:** None

**Language of Instruction:** English

**Total Contact Hours:** 45

**Credits:** 3

**Course Fees:** N/A

### Course Description

This course examines canonical works of art from the late nineteenth century through to the present. The class analyses the ways in which the seeds of art as we know it today were sown at the end of the nineteenth century including emphasis on art produced in response to the First and Second World Wars. A diverse range of works on display in London such as painting, printmaking, mixed media, photography, sculpture, installation, film and video form part of the immersive experience in class and through field studies.

Core themes explored in the course investigate attitudes and ideas in Modern Art and the effect of historical events and sociological changes. Class discussions and activities evaluate the advances in technology on the art world; materials, styles and techniques, the value of art and the changing role of the artist to develop an eye and appreciation for similarities and differences.

### Learning Objectives

- Identify concepts underpinning modern and contemporary artwork and its sustainability within a rapidly evolving world.
- Recognize the main movements/periods of modern art and articulate how they are related to one another.
- Analyze the wider context of the production of modern art and its global significance, for example its contemporary commodification.
- Analyse the relationship between modern artworks and the migration trends in the local context, for example in terms of their spaces of display and styles of curation.

## Section II: Instructor & Course Details

### Instructor Details

**Name:** TBC

**Contact Information:** TBC

**Term:** TBC

**Course Day and Time:** TBC

**Office Hours:** By appointment

### Grading & Assessment

The instructor assesses students' mastery of course learning objectives by using the forms of assessment below. Each of these assessments is weighted toward the final grade. The Assessment Overview section provides further details for each.

**Engagement - 20%**

**Mid-term exam - 20%**

**Group Curatorial Project - 20%**

**Research Paper - 40%**

### Assessment Overview

This section provides a brief description of each form of assessment listed above. Forms of assessment may be slightly modified in the term syllabus.

**Engagement (20%):** Students are expected to be engaged in class, to have read the [CEA CAPA Engagement Policy](#), and to understand the [Class Engagement Rubric](#) that outlines how engagement is graded.

This course is designed to engage students' critical mind. Class participation and engagement is evaluated via class discussion, presentations, preparatory readings and field studies as well as other class activities in a critical and evaluative manner; to interact with the faculty and fellow students with respect and tolerance; and to actively engage in discussion.

**Mid-term exam (20%):** Exam will contain three parts. First, students will be asked to identify works of art from slides. Second, students will be asked to write essays which compare two works of art, highlighting the key thematic issues relevant to both objects. And third, a full essay response to a broader (and more theoretical) question posed by the instructor.

**Group Curatorial Project (20%):** Students are the curators of a major museum, working on a new display launching this Fall 2024. Using the artworks that they have seen this semester, plus any additional research into other works in Tate's collection, for example, devise a new exhibition complete with spin-off events/workshops etc. Please give detailed description of the reasons/thinking behind your decisions.

\* Title of exhibition:

\* Exhibition description (press release/premise/ themes etc):

\* Location (Where and why?):

\* 6-10 artworks: (please give title of artwork, date, artist name, materials used and include a good quality photograph)

\* Press and marketing activity:

\* Public programme (spin-off events/ panels/ workshops/ community engagement):

N.B Please assign one group member to 2 activities and state who worked on what section. Each section should be minimum 200 words. The project can be delivered as a .PDF file or a PowerPoint presentation.

**Research Paper (2000 words, 40%):** This assignment will combine ideas from the core themes that are studied in class with experiential reflection and analysis of the works in the galleries. Some suggested essay topics will be provided, but you will also be encouraged to draw up your own topics and questions should you wish.

The research paper should be informed by visits to museums and galleries, as well as wider reading. The paper should demonstrate a firm understanding of the concepts and ideas being discussed. Papers should be analytical rather than descriptive and based on a clearly stated thesis and supported by specific details from the field classes, class handouts and readings. Whilst the primary source will be students' own observations at the sites themselves, written analysis must be supported by a minimum of five secondary sources, which should be cited in the text and in a final bibliography.

## Active Learning

Experiential learning is an essential component of education abroad, and participation in field studies is a required part of coursework. In this course, students explore the city in which they are studying using a variety of methods. This provides the opportunity to gain nuance and perspective on the host context and course content, as well as to collect information and resources for assigned papers, projects, and presentations.

- Tate Modern
- Tate Britain
- Mayfair Galleries

## Readings and Resources

The below readings and resources are representative of what will be assigned as required in this course but may vary slightly in the term syllabus.

All students are given access to the online library of the University of New Haven (UNH), accessible [here](#), and are expected to comply with [UNH Policies](#) regarding library usage.

Wherever possible, required readings are made accessible through the online library or Canvas. Students are responsible for obtaining all required readings.

Each course utilizes Canvas as its LMS. Students are expected to check Canvas regularly for updates and deadlines. Canvas is also the primary platform for contacting your instructor in case of questions or concerns about the course.

### Required Readings

Charles Harrison and Paul Wood, *Art in Theory 1900-2000*. Blackwell 2003

Charles Harrison, Paul Wood and Jason Gaiger, *Art in Theory 1815-1900*. Blackwell 1998

Dan Hicks. The Brutish Museums: The Benin Bronzes, Colonial Violence and Cultural Restitution. Pluto Press 2021

Edward Lucie-Smith, Movements in Art since 1945. World of Art Thames & Hudson 1984

Frances Spalding, British Art since 1900. World of Art Thames & Hudson 1996

Gareth Harris, Censored Art Today (Hot Topics in the Art World). Lund Humphries Publishers, 2022

Hal Foster, Rosalind Krauss, Art Since 1900: Modernism · Antimodernism · Postmodernism. Thames and Hudson, 2016

Hugh Honour and John Fleming, A World History of Art. Laurence King 1999

John Berger, Ways of Seeing. Penguin 2008

John Golding, Paths to the Absolute. Princeton University Press, 2000

Leah Dickerman, Inventing Abstraction. Thames & Hudson 2012

Mary Acton, Learning to Look at Modern Art. Routledge 2004

Nikos Stangos, Concepts of Modern Art – From Fauvism to Postmodernism. Penguin Books Ltd, 2009

Paul Wood, Varieties of Modernism. Yale University Press 2004.

Robert Hughes, the Shock of the New, Thames & Hudson 1996

Sarah Thornton, Seven Days in the Art World. Granta 2008

Steve Edwards and Paul Wood, Art of the Avant-Gardes. Yale University Press 2004

The Politics of Black Figurative Art Today - John Baptiste Odour, Frieze 2024:  
<https://www.frieze.com/article/john-baptiste-oduor-black-figuration-240>

### Recommended Reading(s)

T. J. Clark – The Sight of Death

Ben Street – How to Enjoy Art

Brian Dillon – Affinities.

## Course Calendar

<b>Session 1</b>	
Topics	<b>INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE – THE CULTURAL ECOLOGY OF THE UK ART SCENE</b>
Activity	An overview of the course, the key themes, concepts and practices of modern and contemporary art, and a task to provoke class discussion on Modernism and Post-Modernism. We will also take a look at the cultural eco-system of the UK art scene in order for the students to think about different mechanisms of value and validation.
Readings and Assignments	<b>Readings:</b>

	Grayson Perry – “Who decides what makes art good?” – Financial Times, 2013 <a href="https://www.ft.com/content/c37b1b6a-3017-11e3-9eec-00144feab7de">https://www.ft.com/content/c37b1b6a-3017-11e3-9eec-00144feab7de</a>
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<b>Session 2</b>	
Topics	<b>REALISM – IMPRESSIONISM - POST IMPRESSIONISM - FAUVISM</b>
Activity	We will look at the genesis of Modern art and follow its developments through the mid to late 19th century. In particular we will focus on how various factors, such as the birth of the city and the invention of photography, changed the nature of painting. We will then explore the lives and works of artists such as Vincent Van Gogh, Paul Gauguin, and Paul Cezanne and examine their influence on the next generation of artists such as Henri Matisse. The class will touch on themes such as art’s relation to power, colonialism, and mental health.
Readings and Assignments	<b>Readings:</b> Maurice Denis, ‘From Gauguin and van Gogh to Neo-Classicism’, in Art in Theory 1900-2000, pp.46-51

<b>Session 3</b>	
Topics	<b>“PRIMITIVISM” – TATE MODERN VISIT – CUBISM – FUTURISM – ABSTRACTION</b>
Activity	This session will begin in the classroom where we will discuss the influence of non-European cultures on the early Modern artists in Paris, Berlin and London. We will then travel to Tate Modern to consider the avant-garde in Europe leading up to WW1.
Readings and Assignments	<b>Readings:</b> Susan Hiller – Introduction to The Myth of Primitivism, 1991. P.3-5; John Golding ‘Cubism’ and Norbert Lyton ‘Futurism’ both from Concepts of Modern Art.

<b>Session 4</b>	
Topics	<b>DADA AND SURREALISM</b>
Activity	This session will focus on the effect WW1 has on art practice in Europe. We will look at how artists responded to the conditions of the era and the socio-political power of art in the maelstrom of war. We will pay particular attention to the radical shift in art with Marcel Duchamp’s Readymades, and also explore Sigmund Freud’s influence on the Surrealists.
Readings and Assignments	<b>Readings:</b> Marcel Duchamp – ‘The Richard Mutt Case’, in Art in Theory 1900-2000, p.252; Sigmund Freud – ‘On Dreams’, in Art in Theory 1900-2000, pp.21-28

<b>Session 5</b>	
Topics	<b>FIELD STUDY TO TATE BRITAIN</b>
Activity	Visit to Tate Britain to focus on British art through the early modern period up until WW2. Beginning with JMW Turner and ending with Francis Bacon, we will explore the key themes and developments in Britain in the 19th and 20th century.
Readings and Assignments	<b>Readings:</b> Francis Bacon interview with David Sylvester, 1963-1979, Available here:

	<a href="https://www.theguardian.com/theguardian/2007/sep/13/greatinterviews">https://www.theguardian.com/theguardian/2007/sep/13/greatinterviews</a>
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<b>Session 6</b>	
Topics	<b>MID-TERM EXAM</b>
Activity	This exam will cover all the movements and themes discussed so far in class.
Readings and Assignments	

<b>Session 7</b>	
Topics	<b>Midterm Break</b>

<b>Session 8</b>	
Topics	<b>TATE MODERN VISIT - ABSTRACT EXPRESSIONISM – POP ART – MINIMALISM</b>
Activity	We begin the second half of the semester by following the centre of the art world as it shifts from Europe to USA after WW2. We will discuss the height of Modernism (and death of painting) with Abstract Expressionism, and then enter the Postmodernist era with Pop and Minimalism.
Readings and Assignments	<b>Readings:</b> Harrison 'Abstract Expressionism' and Lucie-Smith 'Pop Art' in Concepts of Modern Art ; Andy Warhol 'Interview with Gene Swanson in Art in Theory 1900-2000, pp.747-749

<b>Session 9</b>	
Topics	<b>PERFORMANCE ART</b>
Activity	This session will survey the history of Performance Art. Tracing the evolution of the practice from the Cabaret Voltaire in 1910's Zurich through to Annie Imhof's Faust, which won the Golden Lion Award at Venice Biennale 2017.
Readings and Assignments	<b>Readings:</b> C. Carr – 'Roped' in On Edge: Performance at the End of the Twentieth Century', pp.3-9 Valie Export – 'Woman's Art', in Art in Theory 1900-2000, pp.927-929

<b>Session 10</b>	
Topics	<b>TATE MODERN VISIT – INSTALLATION ART – VIDEO ART – ACTIVIST ART – CURATING TASK</b>
Activity	In this session we will look at developments in art practice since 1970's in the context of new media technologies and globalisation. Later, in groups of curatorial committees, we will curate fictional exhibitions in order to discuss how art is mediated and experienced.
Readings and Assignments	<b>Readings:</b> Diedrich Diederichsen – 'Which Side are You on, Cultural Worker?', in Art in Theory 1900-2000, pp.1162-1163

<b>Session 11</b>	
Topics	<b>CLASSROOM PRESENTATIONS</b>

Activity	
Readings and Assignments	<b>Assignments:</b> Please see assignments section more information closer to time.

<b>Session 12</b>	
Topics	<b>YBA'S AND RECENT DEVELOPMENTS</b>
Activity	This session will focus on art since 1990 to present day. It will look at the social, political and cultural conditions of the era and explore how artists operate today in this highly networked, post-internet world.
Readings and Assignments	<b>Readings:</b> Jessica Backus "Why you don't get Contemporary Art" – Ted Talk x Cornell <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-07e6L93pF4">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-07e6L93pF4</a>

<b>Session 13</b>	
Topics	<b>MAYFAIR GALLERIES, SOUTH EAST GALLERIES</b>
Activity	This visit will include some of the big money commercial galleries in central London contrasted with DIY project spaces in the South East of the city. The session will offer students the opportunity to see the inner workings of the London art scene.
Readings and Assignments	<b>Readings:</b> Caroline Alabor – 'The Key Players Shaking up London's Alternative Art Scene', 2016, available at <a href="https://news.artnet.com/art-world/london-alternative-art-scene-735602">https://news.artnet.com/art-world/london-alternative-art-scene-735602</a>

<b>Session 14</b>	
Topics	<b>Research Paper Review</b>
Activity	Bring research paper to have peer's review
Readings and Assignments	<b>Assignments:</b> Research paper draft

<b>Session 15</b>	
Topics	<b>COURSE DEBRIEF AND OPTIONAL ONE-TO-ONE TUTORIALS</b>
Activity	
Readings and Assignments	<b>Assignments:</b> Research paper due

## Section III: Academic Policies and Standards

### Academic Policies

Students are expected to review and understand all CEA CAPA student policies, including our [Academic Policies](#) and [Engagement Policy](#). CEA CAPA reserves the right to change, update, revise, or amend existing policies and/or procedures at any time. Additional requirements that may be associated with a specific course or program are addressed in the term syllabus.

### Student Learning & Development Objectives

CEA CAPA has identified [Student Learning and Development Objectives \(SLDOs\)](#) for all programs in all locations: content in context, navigating differences, power and equity, critical thinking and intellectual curiosity, career and professional development, and sustainability and migration.

These are meta-level learning objectives that transcend coursework and are infused across all elements of program delivery, beyond specifics of course offerings, addressing student learning holistically and framing it a larger learning context.