London's Art Scene: The Bloomsbury Group

Session: Winter 2018
Days: Mondays, January 8th – February 12th
Time: 1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
Location: Room 124, Leeds House Building
Title: London's Art Scene: The Bloomsbury Group

Course Description:
At the beginning of the twentieth century, a group of intellectuals started to gather in the London neighborhood Bloomsbury. The core members included fiction writers Virginia Woolf and E.M. Forster, post-impressionist painters Vanessa Bell and Duncan Grant, art critics Clive Bell and Roger Fry, and biographer Lytton Strachey. Liberal and progressive, they encouraged the creation of art, were generally opposed to militarism, and formed intimate friendships.

This course examines not only the art and writings of Bloomsbury’s core members but also analyzes the works of artists associated with Bloomsbury, such as Katherine Mansfield’s short stories and T.S. Eliot’s poetry. Of special interest in the course is the connection between various modernist art forms: post-impressionist styles in both fiction and painting, for instance. Possible topics of discussion include the suffragette movement, the influence of psychoanalysis, the aesthetic principles of modernism, and the love affair between Virginia Woolf and Vita Sackville-West.

Recommended Readings:
Virginia Woolf, “The Mark on the Wall” and “Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown”
Virginia Woolf, A Room of One’s Own (not in course reading package. For the online version, go to http://gutenberg.net.au/ebooks02/0200791.txt)
Katherine Mansfield, “The Garden Party” and “The Daughters of the Late Colonel”
T.S. Eliot, “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock” (in-class reading)
E.M. Forster, Maurice (not in course reading package)

Please remember that the readings are not required but recommended. Read what you can and enjoy! If you are experiencing any problems accessing the readings, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Schedule of Readings
Week 1: Introduction: Meeting the Bloomsberries
Topics: The Dreadnought Hoax and The Post-Impressionist Exhibitions (1910 and 1912)

Week 2: The Aesthetic Principles of Bloomsbury: Roger Fry, Duncan Grant, Vanessa Bell, and Virginia Woolf
Recommended readings: Virginia Woolf, “The Mark on the Wall” and “Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown”

Week 3: Virginia Woolf and Modernism
Recommended readings: Virginia Woolf, A Room of One’s Own
Topics: Feminism, women’s writing, the love affair between Virginia Woolf and Vita Sackville-West
Week 4: Outside Bloomsbury: James Strachey, T.S. Eliot, Katherine Mansfield
Topics: The influence of psychoanalysis, literary modernisms, stream-of-consciousness

Week 5: Back to Old Bloomsbury: Forster
Recommended readings: E.M. Forster, Maurice

Week 6: Forster Continued and Criticisms of Bloomsbury: Wyndham Lewis and Angelica Garnett