

PHIL 2807-A/ARTH 2807-A: Philosophy of Art
September 6th, 2017 – December 8th, 2017
Professor: Devin Zane Shaw, Ph.D.
Contact: Devin.Shaw@carleton.ca

Class

Mackenzie Building 3275
Tuesday/Thursday, 2:35pm–3:55pm

Office Hours

3A56 Paterson Hall
Thursday, 1:30pm–2:30pm

Course Objectives

The objective of this course is to introduce students to an interdisciplinary approach to the philosophy of art. By the end of the semester, you should be able to identify both key philosophical positions on the meaning of art (drawn from, for example, Plato, Aristotle, Kant, Merleau-Ponty, and Sartre) and the significance of 20th and 21st century critical perspectives on the history and philosophy of art (including Marxism, feminism, and post-colonial theory).

Course Description

In Book X of the *Republic*, Plato famously banishes poets from the ideal city. Poets, on his account, speak of the most important facets of life, such as living and governing well, but do so without true knowledge of such things. Given that the *Republic* is taken to be one of *the* foundational texts in the history of Western philosophy, we can tentatively say that, since the beginnings of philosophy, philosophers have often valued art according to how it functions in society. While, of course, we will talk about key concepts in art—such as beauty, ugliness, representation, abstraction, and modernity—we will do so to understand how the ways we *value* art are related to how we *live*: our ideals, our politics, and how we work.

Evaluation

All papers must be submitted through CULearn. Instructions for formatting of assignments are available on CULearn.

Class Participation (10%). Participation is evaluated according to whether the student actively contributes to class discussions, discusses material with either the professor or the teaching assistant during office hours, and is present during days in which class attendance is taken. Class attendance will be taken on randomly chosen days; if the student is absent on each day that attendance is taken they will receive a zero for class participation.

Reader Report (500–600 words each)

You will submit three reader reports. At the end of some lectures, I will propose a question relevant to the readings or the lecture. The purpose of the reader reports is to respond to these questions.

- **September 28th: First Reader Report due (15%)**
- **November 2nd: Second Reader Report due (15%)**
- **November 23rd: Third Reader Report due (20%)**

Final Essay (1500 words), due December 22nd at 4:15pm.

The final essay is worth 40% of the final mark. This assignment requires that the student propose a thesis regarding the debates discussed in class and defend it. I expect that Final Essay to be an expanded version of one of your Reader Reports. The topic must focus on one or more required readings. A successful paper (receiving a mark of 75% or higher) will be able to incorporate material from *at least one relevant* peer-reviewed secondary source about material read in class or about a work of art that you are discussing.

Peer-review means: published in an academic journal in philosophy or art history, or as part of a book that is published by a scholarly press, or published in an art journal (such as *Artforum*) or museum or gallery catalogue. In a relevant peer-reviewed paper, the author(s) aim to defend a thesis that responds to previous work on a given subject. Please consult with the professor or teaching assistant(s) if you have a question about what it means for a secondary source to be *relevant* to your paper. You will find that many websites are useful but don't typically count as peer-reviewed research; these include blogs and encyclopedic-type sites. *Wikipedia* is helpful, so is the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*; but they are not what I have in mind.

Policies and Procedures:

1. Professionalism: I require that students adopt a professional attitude towards class conduct. Please be on time and wait to leave until class is over. Please do not engage in discussions that are unrelated to class material. Cell phones should be turned off and calls should be taken after class is over excepting cases of extreme emergency: imminent mortality (birth or death) or imprisonment. Most importantly, I also expect class discussions to be conducted at a respectful and professional level.
2. Email to the professor should indicate the name, student number, and course. The subject line should read PHIL 2807A. Please note that I reserve the right to not answer an email if it requests information that is provided on the syllabus or other distributed documents.
3. Graded assignments will be returned two weeks after they are submitted. The grades will be posted on CULearn.
4. Late assignments, not excused by doctor's note or other documentation, are penalized 5% per day for the first 4 days, and 10% per day thereafter.

Required Readings

All readings are available through the ARES Library Reserve system, with the exception of Jean-Paul Sartre, *What is Literature? and Other Essays* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1988), which is available at All Books, 327 Rideau Street.

Reading Schedule (Subject to Change)

Week 1: September 7th, Introduction

Week 2: September 12th, 14th

- Plato, *The Republic*. Trans. C.D.C. Reeve (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 2004), 297–313 (594–608b).
- Aristotle, *Poetics*, in *The Basic Works of Aristotle*. Ed. Richard McKeon (New York: The Modern Library, 2001), 1455–1470 (1447a–1454b20).

Week 3: September 19th, 21st

- Bertolt Brecht, “A Short Organum for the Theatre” in *Brecht on Theatre: The Development of an Aesthetic*. Ed. John Willett (New York: Hill and Wang, 1992), 179–205.
- Walter Benjamin, “The Author as Producer,” in *Selected Writings: Volume 2, 1927–1934*. Ed. Michael W. Jennings, Howard Eiland, and Gary Smith (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 1999), 768–782.

Week 4: September 26th, 28th

- W.E.B. Du Bois, “Criteria of Negro Art,” in *Selections from The Crisis*. Vol. 2, 1926–1934. Ed. Herbert Aptheker (Kraus-Thomson Organization Ltd., 1983), 444–450.
- Alain Locke, “The Legacy of the Ancestral Arts,” in *The New Negro: Voice of the Harlem Renaissance*. Ed. Alain Locke (New York: Atheneum, 1992), 254–267.
- Martha Gruening, “The Negro Renaissance,” in *The New Negro: Readings on Race, Representation, and African American Culture, 1892–1938*. Ed. Henry Louis Gates, Jr. and Gene Andrew Jarrett (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 240–246.

September 28th: First Reader Report Due

Week 5: October 3rd, 5th

- Sartre, “What is Literature?” In *What is Literature? and Other Essays* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1988), 25–69.

Week 6: October 10th, 12th

- Sartre, “Black Orpheus,” in *What is Literature? and Other Essays* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1988), 289–330.

Week 7: October 17th, 19th

- Immanuel Kant, *The Critique Judgment*. Trans. Werner S. Pluhar (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1987), §§23–24, 26, 28–29.
- Brad Prager, *Aesthetic Vision and German Romanticism: Writing Images* (Rochester: Camden House, 2007), 93–122.

Week 8: October 24th, 26th: Fall Break

Week 9: October 31st, November 2nd

- Maurice Merleau-Ponty, "Eye and Mind" in *The Merleau-Ponty Aesthetics Reader: Philosophy and Painting*. Ed. Galen A. Johnson (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1993), 121–149.

November 2nd: Second Reader Report Due

Week 10: November 7th, 9th

- Griselda Pollock, "Modernity and the Spaces of Femininity," in *The Expanding Discourse: Feminism and Art History*. Ed. Norma Broude and Mary D. Garrard (New York: Harper Collins, 1992), 245–268.
- Linda Nochlin, "Les Cribleuses de blé: Courbet, Millet, Breton, Kollwitz, and the Image of the Working Woman," in *Courbet* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 2007), 95–108.

Week 11: November 14th, 16th

- Linda Nochlin, "Seurat's *La grande jatte*: An Anti-utopian Allegory," in *The Politics of Vision: Essays on Nineteenth-Century Art and Society* (New York: Harper and Row, 1989), 170–193.
- Kristin Ross, *The Emergence of Social Space: Rimbaud and the Paris Commune* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988), 46–74.

Week 12: November 21st, 23rd

- Joan Borsa, "Frida Kahlo: Marginalization and the Critical Female Subject," in *Feminism-Art-Theory*. Ed. Hilary Robinson (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001), 257–273.
- Clement Greenberg, "Avant-garde and Kitsch," in *Art and Culture: Critical Essays* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1989), 3–21.

November 23rd: Third Reader Report Due

Week 13: November 28th, 30th

- Meyer Schapiro, "Abstract Art" in *Modern Art: 19th and 20th Centuries* (New York: George Braziller, 2011), 185–232.

Week 14: December 5th, 7th

- Jacques Rancière, *Aisthesis: Scenes from the Aesthetic Regime of Art*. Trans. Zakir Paul (London: Verso, 2013), 245–262.

Department of Philosophy and Carleton University Policies (Fall/Winter 2017-18)

Assignments:

Unless specifically told otherwise by their instructors, students:

- must not use a plastic or cardboard cover or paper clips
- must staple the paper (there is a stapler on the essay box)
- must include the following:
 - student name
 - student number
 - course number and section
 - instructor's name
- No assignments will be accepted after the last day for handing in term work – see dates in next column.
- Assignments handed in through the essay box (just inside the glass doors, Paterson Hall, Floor 3A) must be dropped into the box by **4:15** on a regular business day in order to be date-stamped with that day's date. Assignments handed in after 4:15 or on a non-business day will be stamped as having been handed in on the next business day.
- Students are required to keep copies of their assignments. If your paper is lost at any point, you will be considered not to have submitted it if you cannot produce a copy immediately on request.

Deferrals for Final Exams:

If you miss a final examination (formally scheduled or take-home) because of circumstances beyond your control, you may apply for a deferral. You must apply within 3 working days after the scheduled date of your formally scheduled exam or within 3 working days after the due date of a take-home exam. Visit the Registrar's Office for more information:

<http://calendar.carleton.ca/undergrad/regulations/academicregulationsoftheuniversity/acadregsuniv2/#2.5>

Plagiarism:

It is the responsibility of each student to understand the meaning of 'plagiarism' as defined in the Undergraduate or Graduate Calendars, and to avoid both committing plagiarism and aiding or abetting plagiarism by other students. <https://carleton.ca/registrar/academic-integrity/>

Academic Accommodation:

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

Pregnancy obligation: write to your professor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details visit the Equity Services website: <http://www2.carleton.ca/equity/>

Religious obligation: write to your professor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details visit the Equity Services website: <http://www2.carleton.ca/equity/>

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: The **Paul Menton Centre** for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send your **Letter of Accommodation** at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (*if applicable*). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with your professor to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC

website for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (*if applicable*) at <http://www2.carleton.ca/pmc/new-and-current-students/dates-and-deadlines/>

You can visit the Equity Services website to view the policies and to obtain more detailed information on academic accommodation at <http://www2.carleton.ca/equity/>

Important Dates:

Sept. 6	Classes start.
Sept. 19	Last day for registration and course changes for Fall term and Fall/Winter (two-term) courses.
Sept. 30	Last day for entire fee adjustment when withdrawing from Fall term or two-term courses.
Oct. 9	Statutory holiday. University closed.
Oct. 23-27	Fall Break – no classes.
Nov. 24	Last day for summative or final examinations in Fall term courses before the official examination period.
Dec. 8	Last day of Fall term classes. Classes follow a Monday schedule. Last day for academic withdrawal from Fall term courses. Last day for handing in term work and the last day that can be specified by a course instructor as a due date for term work for a Fall term course.
Dec. 10-22	Final examinations for Fall term courses and mid-term examinations in two-term courses. Examinations are normally held all seven days of the week.
Dec. 22	All take-home examinations are due.
Jan. 8	Classes begin.
Jan. 19	Last day for registration and course changes in the Winter term.
Jan. 31	Last day for a full fee adjustment when withdrawing from Winter term courses or from the Winter portion of two-term courses.
Feb. 19	Statutory holiday. University closed.
Feb. 19-23	Winter Break – no classes.
Mar. 27	Last day for summative or final examinations in Winter term or two-term courses before the official examination period.
Mar. 30	Statutory holiday. University closed.
Apr. 11	Last day of two-term and Winter term classes. Classes follow a Friday schedule. Last day for academic withdrawal from Fall/Winter and Winter courses. Last day for handing in term work and the last day that can be specified by a course instructor as a due date for two-term and for Winter term courses.
Apr. 14-26	Final examinations for Winter term and two-term courses. Examinations are normally held all seven days of the week.
Apr. 26	All take home examinations are due on this day.

Addresses:

Department of Philosophy:	3A35 Paterson Hall www.carleton.ca/philosophy 520-2110
Registrar's Office:	300 Tory www.carleton.ca/registrar 520-3500
Academic Advising Centre:	302 Tory www.carleton.ca/academicadvising 520-7850
Writing Services:	4 th Floor, Library http://www.carleton.ca/csas/writing-services/ 520-3822
MacOdrum Library	http://www.library.carleton.ca/ 520-2735