

GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY  
FALL 2017

LSHS 433-01 CRN 2909 **ART AND CULTURE IN THE 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY**  
PROFESSOR PERCY NORTH (northp@georgetown.edu)  
WEDNESDAYS 6:30-9:30pm ICC 210B  
SATURDAY MUSEUM TOUR NOVEMBER 11

This course will address major issues and ideas that characterize the revolutionary nature of twentieth century intellectual life within a diverse group of art forms. Methods will be introduced for approaching the study of visual art as cultural history. Seminal works will be examined in the context of historical events as key texts for the interpretation of cultural values.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:** Each student is required to write a research paper of 20 to 30 pages on a significant 20th century artist other than those discussed in class, chosen by the student from a list selected by the professor. In the paper the student will explore the meaning of the artist's work, the historical moment of her/his career with an emphasis on their works' public reception, and representation of cultural values. Each student will give a 30 minute class presentation about their chosen artist.

**EVALUATION:** Grades will be based on class participation, paper presentation, and final paper. Attendance and participation in all class discussions is essential.

**PAPERS DUE ON THE LAST DAY OF CLASS. NO LATE PAPERS ACCEPTED**

**TEXTS:** Antliff & Leighten. *Cubism and Culture*, 2001 (Thames & Hudson)  
Amy Dempsey. *Styles, Schools, & Movements*, (Thames & Hudson) 2010.  
Bram Dijkstra. *Cubism, Stieglitz, & W.C. Williams*, (Princeton) 1978.  
Jonathan Fineberg. *Art Since 1940*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed.(PrenticeHall/Pearson), 2000.  
Frascina & Harris, eds., *Art in Modern Culture*, (Phaidon) 1992.  
Wassily Kandinsky, *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*, (Dover), 1977.  
Le Corbusier. *Towards a New Architecture*, (Dover-1986), 1922.  
Articles from the web, listed on the syllabus, will also be required.  
The essays in Dempsey are usually a single page.

**HONOR CODE**

MALS and DLS students are responsible for upholding the Georgetown University Honor System and adhering to the academic standards included in the Honor Code Pledge stated below:

*In pursuit of the high ideals and rigorous standards of academic life, I commit myself to respect and uphold the Georgetown University Honor system: To be honest in any academic endeavor; and to conduct myself honorably, as a responsible member of the Georgetown community, as we live and work together.*

## **DISABILITIES STATEMENT:**

If you believe you have a disability, then you should contact the Academic Resource Center ([arc@georgetown.edu](mailto:arc@georgetown.edu)) for further information. The Center is located in the Leavey Center, Suite 335. The Academic Resource Center is the campus office responsible for reviewing documentation provided by students with disabilities and for determining reasonable accommodations in accordance with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and University policies.

## **LECTURE SCHEDULE AND REQUIRED READINGS:**

SEPTEMBER 6

**Henri Matisse (1869-1954) and Pablo Picasso (1881-1973), from Fauvism to Cubism.** *Matisse* freed painting from mere copying to emphasize a magical world of color and in Cubism Picasso opened the door to a new interpretation of pictorial space followed by a plethora of isms culminating in Abstract Expressionism. Picasso's collaboration with Stravinsky and Cocteau on the ballet *Parade* (1916) will also be discussed as will Picasso's approach to opening up the world to a more global perspective.

READING: Antliff & Leighten. *Cubism and Culture*

*Dempsey, 'Cubism'*

*Rosalind Krauss, 'In the Name of Picasso,' in Frascina & Harris*

SEPTEMBER 13

**Alfred Stieglitz (1864-1946) the Photo-Secession and 291.** From Pictorialism to straight photography Stieglitz was a crusader to have photography accepted as one of the fine arts. His campaign to have photography installed in art museums for comparison with other visual arts was eminently successful, but his categorization of photographs as either culture or commerce confused the inherent message in the medium. His gallery at 291 Fifth Avenue helped to introduce modern art to America

FILM: Alfred Stieglitz: The Eloquent Eye

READING: B. Dijkstra. *Cubism, Stieglitz & the Early Poetry of W.C. Williams, 1978.*

W. Benjamin. *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction,*

SEPTEMBER 20

**Wassily Kandinsky (1866-1944) The Blue Rider and German Expressionism,** *Concerning The Spiritual in Art*, 1911. Kandinsky's belief in the power of visual art similar to music to express emotional states of transcendence affected a change to painting without visible identifiable subject matter. Using tone and line for compositional rather than descriptive ends he introduced a completely new way of thinking about the visual landscape incorporating spiritual ideas uniting Eastern and Western concepts.

READING: Kandinsky, *On the Spiritual in Art* and *Dempsey, 'Der Blaue Reiter'*

SEPTEMBER 27

**Marcel Duchamp (1887-1968) from Futurism to DaDa**, and the Impact of the Armory Show. Through his art Duchamp challenged what he considered to be the outmoded social conventions of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In 1913 at the International Exhibition of Modern Art staged in the 69<sup>th</sup> Regiment Armory in New York he introduced his ideas to the United States that would profoundly change international perceptions of art and cultural identity. His introduction of the 'readymade' up ended centuries of belief in the primacy of craft as a basis for fine art.

READING: Giddens, '*Modernity and Self-Identity*,' in Frascina & Harris  
Dempsey, 'Futurism'

OCTOBER 4

**Le Corbusier (Charles Edouard Jeanneret) (1887-1965), and the International Style.** The mechanistic simplicity of design espoused by LeCorbusier became the preeminent aesthetic of modern architecture by sweeping away decorative flourishes and historicism for a purer healthier environment. This was also fostered by Walter Gropius (1883-1969) at the **Bauhaus** in Weimar and Dessau, a comprehensive art school that influenced architecture as well as industrial design.

READING: *Le Corbusier, Towards a New Architecture*  
Dempsey. '*International Style*'

OCTOBER 11

**Jean Renoir (1894-1979)**, The mass popularity of films from the earliest silent black and white shorts to the widescreen extravaganzas produced today demonstrates the primacy of cinema as the art form that best characterizes the century. Renoir's examination of manners and mores expresses a pessimistic view of life in the technological world, but the beginning of a new world order.

FILM: Jean Renoir. *La Grande Illusion*, 1937

READING: From David A. Cook. *History of Narrative Film*. 1999. 'Jean Renoir'  
E. Panofsky. *Style and Medium in the Motion Pictures*, 1934/47.

OCTOBER 18

**Alexander Calder (1898-1976)**, and the introduction of kinetic art in the mobile. Calder's training in engineering inspired his dissolution of the notion of sculpture as a medium of mass and weight and instead introduced flattened floating forms that activate the space in which they are placed. He initiated kinetic or moving sculptures that he called mobiles that broke with millennia of sculptural tradition.

READING: Dempsey, 'Kinetic Art' and Fineberg, 'Alexander Calder'

OCTOBER 25

**Jackson Pollock (1912-1956) and Robert Rauschenberg (1925-2008)**, Pollock's introduction of drip painting in the late 1940s revolutionized modern art and ushered in a decade focused on **Abstract Expressionism**. In 1964 Rauschenberg was the first American to be awarded the grand prize at the Venice Biennale for *Monogram*, a combine that broke down the barriers between painting and sculpture and signaled a dramatic shift from the art of the past to a rougher, edgier mode of expression that was characteristically American. Rauschenberg combined the rugged qualities of Jackson Pollock's abstract expressionist painting with assemblage and addressed issues of popular culture that explored the ethos of America.

READING: Fineberg, '*The Beat Generation: Robert Rauschenberg*', and

'*New York in the Forties*'

Eva Cockcroft, '*Abstract Expressionism: Weapon of the Cold War*;' Clement Greenberg, '*Modernist Painting*;' Barbara M. Reise, and Serge Guilbaut, '*The New Adventures of the Avant-Garde in America*' in Frascina Dempsey, '*Abstract Expressionism*' and '*Neo-Dada*'

NOVEMBER 1

**Judy Chicago (1939- ) The Dinner Party**, 1974-79 and the rise of a feminist art consciousness. Judy Chicago challenged the male domination of the art world with her Monumentally scaled homage to great women artists of the past. It's large scale demanded its installation in a dedicated space and its complexity required a village of artisans to complete it. The feminist agenda, collaborative effort, and the nature of art as installation all became highlights of art at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

READING: Dempsey, '*Post-Modernism*' and Fineberg, '*Art and Feminism*'

NOVEMBER 8

**Maya Lin (1960- ) the Viet Nam Memorial**, 1982, and **Environmental Art**. The simplicity and elegance of Lin's design for the Viet Nam Memorial reflect the anti-heroic attitude of 20th century intellectuals, but caused a controversy with populists. Her concern for the environment and the grand scale of earth art demonstrate a new awareness of nature with implications for the 21st century.

FILM: *Maya Lin*

READING: Dempsey, '*Earth Art*'

Fineberg, '*In the Nature of Materials: Artists working in the Landscape*'

**NOVEMBER 11 MEET AT 10:00AM AT EAST BUILDING OF NATIONAL GALLERY  
TOUR OF NATIONAL GALLERY OF HIRSHHORN MUSEUM BUILDINGS AND  
SCULPTURE GARDENS**

NOVEMBER 15

**Frank Gehry (1929-), The Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao Spain 1997**. Gehry's deconstructivist style of architecture presented an entirely new way of making and thinking about architecture abandoning modern concern for mathematical purity and post-modern concern for the classical past.

READING: Dempsey, '*Post-Modernism*' and '*High Tech*'

NOVEMBER 22

THANKSGIVING: MUSEUM TOUR TO BE SUBSTITUTED FOR THIS CLASS

NOVEMBER 29

**STUDENT PRESENTATIONS**

DECEMBER 6

**STUDENT PRESENTATIONS**

**\*\*PAPERS DUE**

