



## LNDN ARTH 3312 Modern Art in London: From the Sublime to the Ridiculous?

### Course Description

This course examines modern works of art from the late nineteenth century through to the present. The course begins by analyzing the ways in which the seeds of Modern Art were sown at the end of the nineteenth century, before moving on to work made during the twentieth century - particularly art produced in response to the First and Second World Wars; and culminates with reference to contemporary practice. Students will experience a diverse range of works on display in London, including painting, printmaking, mixed media, photography, sculpture, installation, film and video.

Core themes to be studied will include attitudes and ideas in Modern Art and the effect of historical events, sociological changes and advances in technology on the art world; materials and techniques – developing an eye and appreciation of similarities and differences; and the global art market: public and private collectors, thefts, the auction house, the value of art and the changing role of the artist. Additional topics will vary with the specific exhibitions showing during each semester but will be drawn as appropriate from the following themes: the impact of photography on art and artists; the influence of Primitive Art and Orientalism on twentieth-century art and the impact of multiculturalism on contemporary artists; visual and conceptual beauty – is beauty an important ingredient in twenty-first century art?; and the influence of the World Wars and continuing global conflicts on art.

### Course Aims and Objectives

This course will prepare students with the experiential, critical and analytical tools to understand the historical events, advances in technology and sociological changes that have shaped the visual arts of the late nineteenth century through to today. The course enables students to develop and improve upon their powers of perception. The course encourages students to develop their abilities to reflect on and analyze their experiences, as well as to improve upon their verbal and written skills.

### Requirements and Prerequisites

The course is suitable for students with some prior knowledge of the visual arts but will also be of interest to historians who will be able to appreciate the impact of historical events on the art world. Business students might be fascinated by the Art Market and the staggering prices that some artworks are achieving in the auction houses and actors might be intrigued to learn that 'Performance Art' is an integral part of Contemporary practice.

## Learning Outcomes

At the end of the course students will have the knowledge and skills to:

- a. Identify and define concepts underpinning modern and contemporary artwork.
- b. Gain a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the host culture where they are studying.
- c. Identify the main movements/periods of modern art and articulate how they are related to one another.
- d. Understand and articulate the significance of the cultural, political, economic and sociological contexts of the production of specific artworks.
- e. Appreciate the global context of the production of modern art and its global significance, for example its contemporary commodification.
- f. Analyze the relationship between modern artworks and the urban environments of the global city, for example in terms of their spaces of display and styles of curation.

## Class Methodology

The course alternates classroom and experiential learning and places an emphasis on actually seeing and analyzing the artworks under discussion wherever possible. Classroom sessions are intended to introduce students to relevant concepts, artists and works in order to contextualize subsequent gallery visits and related field studies, and will include both lecture and seminar material. Lectures will be supplemented by slide presentations and other audio-visual materials as appropriate. Discussion is strongly encouraged and student presentations are also important features during these sessions.

## Field Components

Field classes form an important component of this course; attendance at these classes, which take place during our class time on alternate weeks, is mandatory. During each gallery visit, students will be given an introduction to the gallery and the works on display, and asked to work in small groups and be prepared to feedback to the wider group. During class time we will be visiting some of the following collections and/or exhibitions, including Tate Britain, the National Gallery, Tate Modern, and the Courtauld Gallery.

**Please note:** Students are responsible for ensuring that they arrive at field studies classes on time – please consult the Transport for London website to plan travel arrangements carefully: <http://www.tfl.gov.uk/>

In **some** of the galleries visitors are allowed to take photographs, so be sure to bring some sort of digital camera to collect relevant visual material.

## Assessment/Grading Policy

Descriptor	Alpha	UK	US	GPA
Excellent	A	75+	93+	4.0
	A-	70-74	90-92	3.7
Good	B+	66-69	87-89	3.3
	B	63-65	83-86	3.0
	B-	60-62	80-82	2.7
Average	C+	56-59	77-79	2.3
	C	53-55	73-76	2.0
Below Average / Poor	C-	50-52	70-72	1.7
	D+	46-49	67-69	1.3
	D	40-45	60-66	0.7 1.0
Fail	F	<40	<60	0

## Assessment

There will be two assignments which address topics that we are studying in the class lectures and galleries – one of these will be a presentation in class, and the other will be a research paper. There will also be two exams, one at mid-term and one at the end of the semester, which will relate to works that you have experienced in the galleries and studied in class.

Assessment Task	Grade %	Learning Outcomes	Due Date
Participation	10%	a, b, d, e, f	weekly
Oral Presentation 1 X 15min. class presentation	20%	a, d	weekly
Mid-term exam 5 slide identifications (20%); 3 slide comparisons (60%); 1 essay (20%)	20%	a, b, c, d, e, f	week 7
Research Paper (2,500 words)	20%	a, b, d	week 12
Final Exam 5 slide identifications (20%); 3 slide comparisons (60%); 1 essay (20%)	30%	a, b, c, d, e, f	week 14

**Students must complete all required components for each course by the established deadlines. Failure to do so will result in a reduction of the course grade and may result in a grade of F for the course in question.**

It is expected that everyone will contribute fully to class discussions and to respond thoughtfully to the field trips. Silent attendance of class is not enough for a good participation grade.

## Assignments

### Paper

This assignment will combine ideas from the core themes that we will have 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.

Your research paper should be informed by visits to museums and galleries, as well as wider reading. The National Art Library at the Victoria And Albert Museum might be helpful for this. Your 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.

### Presentations

Presentations should be 15 minutes duration, and students are encouraged to be creative in their presentation technique through the use of audio/visual display etc. In each seminar, a selected number of students will research topics that relate to the time period/art movement/theme that is the focus of study that week, and introduce them to the rest of the class. Students will be expected to generate discussion with the class through the use of questions and discussion points.

### Midterm and Final Exams

Exams 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).

**It is recommended that students visit at least ONE of the many contemporary art galleries in London outside of class time** (see gallery websites for opening times and exhibition details).

Barbican Art Gallery, Barbican Centre, EC2Y; Camden Arts Centre, Arkwright Rd, NW3; ICA, The Mall, SW1Y; Serpentine Galleries, Kensington Gdns, W2; David Zwirner, 24 Grafton St, W1; Hauser & Wirth, 23 Saville Row, W1; Pace Gallery, 6 Burlington Gdns, W1; White Cube, 144 – 152 Bermondsey St, SE1 and 25 – 26 Mason's Yrd, W1.

## Dress Code

Please wear comfortable shoes when visiting the galleries as you will find that you are on your feet for long periods of time. If you have a large bag/rucksack you may be asked to leave it in the cloakroom.

## Text Book(s) and Recommended Readings

Students must purchase the following text:

- Nikos Stangos, ed., *Concepts of Modern Art: From Fauvism to Postmodernism* (Thames & Hudson, London, 2003)

The most recent edition of this book is available to buy from the Thames & Hudson website, but you might prefer to pick up a copy second hand. If so, ensure that you buy the more recent edition as the information has changed since this book was first published over 40 years ago.

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

John Berger, *Ways of Seeing*. Penguin 2008

Leah Dickerman, *Inventing Abstraction*. Thames & Hudson 2012

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Course Materials

A small amount of money is needed to buy visual references such as postcards or colour copies of any photographs you have taken. THERE IS NO COLOUR PRINTER AT CAPA.

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## CLASS SCHEDULE

**Please note:** the schedule will vary every semester and will be designed to relate to the exhibitions on show at the time.

### **Week 1: Introduction to the course: Manet, Modernism, and Modernity**

The course begins with an overview of its key artists, movements, and themes, and you'll be introduced to the key skills required for art history. We will focus on the work of the French artist Edouard Manet as an introduction and examine how his work represents an embrace of the modern in late nineteenth century France.

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### **Week 2: Impressionism and Post-Impressionism at the National Gallery and the Courtauld Gallery**

After a short class at CAPA discussing the early reception of the Impressionists and their artistic ideologies we will visit the National Gallery and the Courtauld Gallery to look at works by both the Impressionists and Post-Impressionists.

#### **Discussion Readings:**

Louis Leroy, 'The Exhibition of the Impressionists', 1874 in *Art in Theory, 1815-1900*, pp.573-576  
Georges Riviere, 'The Exhibition of the Impressionists', 1877, in *Art in Theory, 1815-1900*, pp.593-98  
Gustave Geffroy, 'Paul Cézanne' in *Art in Theory, 1815-1900*, pp.987-991

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### **Week 3: Modernism in Europe at the Start of the Century**

This seminar will introduce key avant-garde movements in Europe from the early decades of the twentieth century – you'll be introduced to movements such as Fauvism, Cubism, and Futurism. We'll examine the influence of earlier artistic movements on these movements as well as the extent to which they embraced non-Western cultures and modernity, placing the movements in the context of the years either side of the First World War.

#### **Class Reading:**

Sarah Whitfield, 'Fauvism', John Golding 'Cubism' and Norbert Lynton, 'Futurism' all from *Concepts of Modern Art*

#### **Discussion Readings**

Henri Matisse, 'Notes of a Painter' in *Art in Theory, 1900-2000*, pp.69-75  
Guillaume Apollinaire, 'The Cubists' AND 'On the Subject in Modern Painting' in *Art in Theory, 1900-2000*, pp.185-187)  
Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, 'The Foundation and Manifesto of Futurism', pp.146-154

#### **Presentation Topics:**

1. HENRI MATISSE
2. PABLO PICASSO
3. UMBERTO BOCCIONI

#### **Further Reading:**

Mary Acton, *Learning to Look at Modern Art*, pp.8-61  
Jason Gaiger, 'Expressionism and the Crisis of Subjectivity' in *Art of the Avant-Gardes*, pp.39-48  
Jason Gaiger, 'Approaches to Cubism' in *Art of the Avant-Gardes*, pp.135-152

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### **Week 4: TRIP: Collection displays at Tate Modern**

For this class we will meet at Tate Modern to look at the various room displays relating to the course.

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### **Week 5: European Abstraction**

This class will look at the development of abstract art in Holland, Germany in Russia in the years either side of the First World War, looking at the Expressionist, Suprematist and Constructivist Movements and the De Stijl group.

#### **Class Reading:**

Norbert Lynton, 'Expressionism', Aaron Scharf 'Suprematicism' and Kenneth Frampton, 'De Stijl' all in *Concepts of Modern Art*

#### **Discussion Readings:**

Wassily Kandinsky, 'The Cologne Lecture' in *Art in Theory, 1900-2000*, pp.89-93

Piet Mondrian, 'Dialogue on the New Plastic' in *Art in Theory, 1900-2000*, pp.284-289

#### **Presentation Topics:**

1. WASSILY KANDINSKY
2. KASIMIR MALEVICH
3. PIET MONDRAIN

#### **Further Readings:**

Jason Gaiger, 'Expressionism and the Crisis of Subjectivity' in *Art of the Avant-Gardes*, pp.48-56

Paul Wood, 'The Idea of an Abstract Art' in *Art of the Avant-Gardes*, pp.229-265

John Golding, "Malevich and the Ascent into Ether", *Paths to the Absolute*, pp.47-80

Leah Dickerman, *Inventing Abstraction*, pp.34

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### **Week 6: Midterm exam**

The exam will cover all of the movements and themes discussed so far in class, from Impressionism through to the early years following the First World War.

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### **Week 7: Mid-semester break**

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### **Week 8: Dada and Surrealism seminar**

This seminar will give an overview of the emergence of Dada in Zurich and Berlin during the First World War and the impact of its ideas on the subsequent development of surrealism in Paris the 1920s.

#### **Class Reading:**

Dawn Ades, 'Dada and Surrealism' in *Concepts of Modern Art*

#### **Discussion Readings:**

Tristan Tzara, 'Dada Manifesto', in *Art in Theory, 1900-2000*, pp.252-7

Andre Breton, from 'the First Manifesto of Surrealism' in *Art in Theory, 1900-2000*, pp.447-453

#### **Presentation Topics:**

1. MARCEL DUCHAMP
2. MAN RAY
3. SALVADOR DALI
4. RENE MAGRITTE

#### **Further Readings:**

Martin Gaughan, 'Narrating the Dada Game Plan' in *Art of the Avant-Gardes*, pp.339-355

Fionna Barber, 'Surrealism 1924-1929' in *Art of the Avant-Gardes*, pp.427-446

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### **Week 9: Britain in the 30s and visit to Tate Britain**

This class will look at the development of modernist artistic styles in England in the '30s and the influence of European artistic movements on artists such as Barbara Hepworth, Ben Nicholson and Henry Moore before visiting Tate Britain to see some of the works discussed.

#### **Class Reading:**

Emma Barker, 'English' Abstraction: Nicholson, Hepworth and Moore in the 1930s' in *Art of the Avant-Gardes*, pp.273-301

#### **Discussion Readings:**

Barbara Hepworth, 'Sculpture' in *Art in Theory, 1900-2000*, pp.393-396

Ben Nicholson, 'Notes on Abstract Art' in *Art in Theory, 1900-2000*, pp.398-401

Henry Moore, 'The Sculptor in Modern Society' in *Art in Theory 1900-2000*, pp.677-680

#### **Presentation Topics:**

1. BARBARA HEPWORTH
2. PAUL NASH
3. BEN NICHOLSON
4. HENRY MOORE

#### **Further Readings:**

Francis Spalding, chapters 2 and 4 from *British Art Since 1900*

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### **Week 10: France in the 30s**

This class will explore the development of modernist art practices in Europe in the 1930s with a particular focus on the impact of nationalist politics on artistic production after Hitler's rise to power in Germany from 1933.

#### **Class Reading:**

Emma Barker, 'Art in Paris in the 1930s' in *Varieties of Modernism*, pp.11-16, 23-24 and 30-46

#### **Discussion Readings:**

Adolf Hitler, 'Speech Inaugurating the 'Great Exhibition of German Art' in *Art in Theory, 1900-2000*, pp.439-441

Fernand Léger, 'The New Realism Goes on' in *Art in Theory, 1900-2000*, pp.502-505

Pablo Picasso, 'Conversation with Picasso' in *Art in Theory, 1900-2000*, pp.507-510

#### **Presentation Topics:**

1. FERNAND LÉGER AND THE NEW REALISM
  2. PABLO PICASSO IN THE 30s
  3. DEGENERATE ART
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### **Week 11: Trips to the Whitechapel Gallery and Tate Modern**

This week we will head to see two important exhibitions of British and American post-war artists both affiliated with the pop art movement; Eduardo Paolozzi and Robert Rauschenberg. We will meet in the foyer of the Whitechapel Gallery, nearest tube is Aldgate East.

#### **Discussion Readings:**

Adrian Searle, 'Robert Rauschenberg review', *The Guardian*, 29 November 2016,

<https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2016/nov/29/robert-rauschenberg-review-tate-modern>

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## **Week 12: Postwar British Art**

After a class at CAPA discussing the evolution of modernist tendencies in Britain during and after the Second World War, particularly in the works of Henry Moore, Francis Bacon and Pop artists such as Richard Hamilton and Peter Blake, we will visit Tate Britain to look closely at the collection displays.

### **Class Reading:**

Frances Spalding, chapters 7 and 9 from *British Art Since 1900*

### **Discussion Readings:**

Lawrence Alloway, 'The Arts and the Mass Media' in *Art in Theory, 1900-2000*, pp.715-717

Richard Hamilton, 'For the Finest Art, Try Pop' in *Art in Theory, 1900-2000*, pp.742-743

### **Presentation Topics:**

1. FRANCIS BACON
2. RICHARD HAMILTON AND THE INDEPENDENT GROUP
3. DAVID HOCKNEY

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## **Week 13: American Modernism: Abstract Expressionism and Pop Art**

This class focuses on the movement of the center of Modernism from Europe to the United States after the Second World War, looking at the work of Mark Rothko, Jackson Pollock, and the Abstract Expressionists before the emergence of Pop Art in the 1950s and 1960s taking in the work of Robert Rauschenberg, Jasper Johns, and Andy Warhol.

### **Class Readings:**

Charles Harrison "Abstract Expressionism" and Edward Lucie-Smith, 'Pop Art' in *Concepts of Modern Art*

### **Discussion Readings:**

Clement Greenberg, 'from After Abstract Expressionism' in *Art in Theory 1900-2000*, pp.785-787

Andy Warhol, 'Interview with Gene Swanson' in *Art in Theory, 1900-2000*, pp.747-749

### **Presentation Topics:**

1. MARK ROTHKO
2. JACKSON POLLOCK
3. ANDY WARHOL
4. ROBERT RAUSCHENBERG

### **Further Readings:**

Edward Lucie-Smith, chapters 1 and 4, *Movements in Art Since 1945*.

Paul Wood, 'The 'Neo-Avant-Garde'' in *Varieties of Modernism*, pp.271-283

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## **Week 14: Final exam**



## Attendance, Participation & Student Responsibilities

**Attendance:** CAPA has a mandatory attendance policy. Attendance is taken at the beginning of every class. Unauthorized absence from class will result in a reduction of the final grade and potentially a failure for the course.

**Missing classes for medical reasons:** If you need to miss a class for medical reasons or for a family emergency, **you must send an e-mail** to let the Associate Director of Academic Affairs (ADAA) know at least one hour in advance of your class or meeting at the following e-mail: [excused.absence@capa.org](mailto:excused.absence@capa.org). Note that calling the CAPA Centre (0207 370 7389) is acceptable only if you do not temporarily have access to the internet. An e-mail is still required as quickly as you can get access to the internet again. You will need to provide evidence of the reason for your absence. Unexcused absences will result in a grade reduction. In the event of a missed class or field trip, it is your responsibility to contact your instructor and make up any missed assignments.

**Class Participation:** Students are expected to participate actively and critically in class discussions, and the participation portion of the class will be graded accordingly. Students must read assignments **BEFORE** the class, and come in on time. Participation is a vital part of your grade: students are expected to participate orally in seminars and in online forums and discussions in a critical and evaluative manner; to interact with the faculty and fellow students with respect and tolerance; and to actively engage in discussion. Derogatory or inflammatory comments about the cultures, perspectives or attitudes of others in the class will not be tolerated.

**Academic Integrity:** A high level of responsibility and academic honesty is expected. Because the value of an academic course depends upon the absolute integrity of the work done by the student, it is imperative that a student demonstrates a high standard of individual honor in his or her scholastic work and class behavior. Plagiarism and cheating will result in dismissal from the program. See the Handbook of CAPA Academic Policies for more information and resources on plagiarism.

**Use of electronic equipment in class:** All devices such as laptops, i-pods, i-pads, netbooks, notebooks and tablets, smartphones, cell phones, etc. are **NOT** allowed unless you have express permission from the faculty or you have been instructed to do so. If you require an accommodation to use any type of electronic equipment, inform the Associate Director of Academic Affairs at the beginning of Term.

**Use of Electronic Translators:** In Language courses students are NOT allowed to use electronic translators for writing texts in the target language: those submitting compositions and texts of whatever kind translated in such a fashion will receive a final F grade for the course.

**Late Submission:** Late submission of papers, projects, journal entries, pieces of homework and portfolios is only permitted with prior approval. A request must be made to the relevant Faculty member no later than two days prior to the due date. Late submission without prior approval will result in a full alpha grade penalty. In either case, work cannot be submitted after feedback has been provided to the rest of the class on the relevant assessment or one week after the due date whichever comes first, after which point a grade of F will be given for the assessment.

**Behaviour during Examinations:** During examinations, you must do your own work. Unless specifically instructed by the lecturer or instructor, talking during an exam is not permitted, nor may you compare papers, copy from others, or collaborate in any way. Any failure to abide by examination rules will result in failure of the exam, and may lead to failure of the course and disciplinary action.