

Phil 225
Philosophy of the Arts

Fall 1995

Class meeting time: T R 9:55 - 11:10 AM
Office location: Welles 107
E-mail: Liu@geneseo.edu

Instructor: JeeLoo Liu
Office hours: M W 2-4 PM
or by appointment
Telephone: 245-5231 (O)

Texts: *The Philosophy of the Visual Arts*, ed. by Philip Alperson
***Art After Modernism: Rethinking Representation*, ed. by Brian Wallis**

Course description: This course is divided into two parts. Part One serves as a general introduction to some of the philosophical problems associated with the visual arts on the whole. We will first examine how art relates to the world, and to the artist's mental life. Next we will briefly examine women's role in art work and as artists. Finally, in view of today's many new forms of art expression, we will reexamine the issue 'what is art?.' In Part Two our attention is turned to the contemporary development of the visual arts. The purpose is to give a general survey of some ideas that have played a formative role in shaping today's art production and art criticism. Starting with the decline of modernism in art, we will progress to the emergence of postmodernism and introduce some of the issues related to art in a post-modernistic era. Students will be asked to do an oral presentation of the reading material in this part of the course.

Course objectives: Emphasis is placed on cultivating your own intellectual response to different issues and various points of view, not on memorization. You should challenge yourself to be an active and independent thinker in this course, to ask your own questions and find your own answers.

Grading:

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|-----------------------------------|------------------|
| 2 short papers (4-5 pages) | 20 % each |
| Final paper (10-12 pages) | 30 % |
| Presentation | 10 % |
| Homework (1 page) | 10 % |
| General participation | 10 % |

General policies:

- (i) All written assignments must be typed, double-spaced.
- (ii) All papers must be handed in on time. A 1/2 grade deduction will be made for each day delayed. You are free to choose your paper topics as long as they are related to the reading materials. The final paper could be an expansion of either one of your short papers or your presentation. It could also be a new topic you wish to develop.
- (iii) Homework must be handed in on the assigned date and in person. It could be either a summary of the reading material, or, if you are inspired, a discussion of one particular point the author made. You should also include three short questions for class discussion. Homework will not be graded and each accepted homework will receive one point. The final accumulation of homework will be assigned grades as follows:

20 = A+; 17-19 = A; 15-16 = A-; 13-14 = B+; 12 = B; 11 = B-; 10 = C+; 9 = C; 8 = C-; 7 = D
(any number lower than this counts as F).

- (iv) In the last phase of the course, each student is expected to do a short presentation in class (about 15-20 minutes) based on the reading material. One other student will be assigned to be the commentator (about 5-10 minutes). So everyone will serve once as a presenter and once as a commentator.
- (v) To receive a final grade for the course, all assignments must be completed.

Class Schedule

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Content</u> | <u>Assignments</u> |
|----------------------------------|--|--|
| T 8/29 | Introduction | |
| R 8/31 | Jerome Stolnitz: The Aesthetic Attitude | Read <i>The Philosophy of Visual Arts</i> , (PVA) pp. 7-13 |
| Part One | | |
| I. Art and Representation | | |
| T 9/5 | Plato: A Copy Theory of Representation | Read (PVA) pp. 63-67 [Homework #1] |
| R 9/7 | E.H. Gombrich: An Illusion Theory of Representation | Read (PVA) pp. 72-87 [Homework #2] |
| T 9/12 | Nelson Goodman: Reality Remade | Read (PVA) pp. 88-98 [Homework #3] |
| R 9/14 | Susan Sontag: In Plato's Cave | Read (PVA) pp. 281-288 [Homework #4] |
| T 9/19 | Snyder & Allen: Photography, Vision, and Representation | Read (PVA) pp. 289-305 [Homework #5] |
| II. Art and Psychology | | |
| R 9/21 | Doug. Morgan: Psychology and Art Today | Read (PVA) pp. 189-196 |
| T 9/26 | Rudolf Arnheim: Art and Thought | Read (PVA) pp. 157-170 [Homework #6] |
| R 9/28 | Sigmund Freud: Leonardo da Vinci and a Memory of His Childhood | Read (PVA) pp. 171-175 |
| T 10/3 | Herbert Read: The Forms of Things Unknown | Read (PVA) pp. 176-187 [Homework #7] |
| R 10/5 | Special event [Paper #1 due] | None |
| T 10/10 | Fall break | |
| III. Art and Society | | |

- R 10/12** Kenneth Clark: *The Naked and the Nude* Read (PVA) pp. 235-247
[**Homework #8**]
- T 10/17** John Berger: *Ways of Seeing Women* Read (PVA) pp. 248-259
[**Homework #9**]
- R 10/19** Linda Nochlin: *Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?* Read (PVA) pp. 260-270

IV. Art and Its Modern Developments

- T 10/24** Arthur Danto: *The Artworld* Read (PVA) pp. 426- 433
[**Homework #10**]
- R 10/26** George Dickie: *What Is Art? An Institutional Analysis* Read (PVA) pp. 434-443
[**Homework #11**]
- T 10/31** Timothy Binkley: *Piece; Contra Aesthetics* Read (PVA) pp. 450-459
[**Homework #12**]
- R 11/2** **Special event**
[**Paper #2 due**]

Part Two

I. Dismantling Modernism

- T 11/7** Mary Kelly: *Re-Viewing Modernist Criticism* Read *Art After Modernism (AAM)* pp. 87-103 [**Homework #13**]
- R 11/9** Robert Hughes: *The Rise of Andy Warhol* Read (AAM) pp. 45-57
[**Homework #14**]

II. Theorizing Postmodernism

- T 11/14** Douglas Crimp: *Pictures* Read (AAM) pp. 175-187;
Hal Foster: *Re: Post* pp. 189-201
[**Homework #15**]
- R 11/16** Roland Barthes: *From Work to Text* Read (AAM) pp. 169-174;
Craig Owens: *Toward a Theory of Postmodernism* pp. 203-235
[**Homework #16**]

III. Cultural Politics

- T 11/21** Walter Benjamin: *The Author as Producer* Read (AAM) pp. 297-309;
Lucy Lippard: *Activist Art and Power* pp. 341-358 [**Homework #17**]
- R 11/23** **Thanksgiving Break**

IV. Gender/Difference/Power

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|-------------------------|---|---|
| T 11/28 | Laura Mulvey: Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema | Read (AAM) pp. 361-373 [Homework #18] |
| R 11/30 | Constance Penley: A Certain Refusal of Difference: Feminist Film Theory | Read (AAM) pp. 375-389 [Homework #19] |
| T 12/5 | Michel Foucault: The Subject and Power | Read (AAM) pp. 417-432 [Homework #20] |
| R 12/7 | Conclusion | |
| FINAL EXAM DATE: | DEC 14 (R) 12 - 3 PM Final paper due in class | |