

COURSE SYLLABUS

Criticism & Theory in the Visual Arts 478W

Prerequisite: ART 260 & ART 370 Credit Hours: 3

Fall 2007

Instructor: Sharon King

Tuesday 6:00pm – 8:50 PM

Class Location: Art Bldg. E, Rm. 108

Office Location: Art Bldg., E, Room 116

**Office Hours & Phone: 30 minutes prior/after class or by appointment
(936)294-4572**

Email Address: art_sak@shsu.edu

Course Goals: This course will explore methodological problems in art history. Its aim is to help students think critically about their own ways of understanding art. The course is organized thematically, but students will also become acquainted with the historiography of the discipline – how the study of art as a historical phenomenon originated, and how its theoretical moorings have shifted over time.

Class will be conducted as an informal discussion group. One or two topics will be covered each week depending on the material. Students are required to give group presentations weekly over the material/questions discussed in class. Each week I will introduce the readings and hand out a list of study questions. Students should be prepared to discuss the questions in class the following week.

Text: Students are responsible for obtaining the reading materials listed for the course outline via electronic reserve from our library. Additionally, several of the reading assignments are found in books in our library.

Attendance: Attendance is mandatory. We will be covering a large amount of work in a short period of time and your participation for each class is essential. I reserve the right to drop your final grade by one letter grade for over **two (2) unexcused absences**. If you anticipate an absence or circumstances cause you to be absent or tardy to class, communicating with your instructor is greatly encouraged to avoid misunderstandings. Attendance is taken at the beginning of class: if you should be tardy, it is your responsibility to speak with me after class to

let me know you are there.

Tardiness and leaving early: If you are late to class more than twice, this could affect your attendance. If arriving late, please do not allow the door to slam shut as this produces a disruption for the entire class. **Please turn off all pagers and cell phones.** Participation and attendance includes actively engaging in class discussions and asking questions.

Grading is based on:

Exam 1	25%
Research paper	50%
Final Exam	<u>25%</u>
	100%

Grading Scale:

A = 90 – 100
B = 80 – 89
C = 70 – 79
D = 60 – 69
F = 59 – 0

Exams: Exam 1 and the Final will be an in-class written essay. The essay questions will be derived from the material covered in class. One week prior to the examination date, four essay questions will be presented in class. On the examination day, two essay questions will be chosen and students will write their responses (in full) in bluebooks.

Research paper: The research paper will be presented in class. Students may select their own topic; however, you will need to submit an abstract for my approval.

Academic Dishonesty: *All students are expected to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. The University and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty including, but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion and the abuse of resource materials.*

Student Absences on Religious Holy Days Policy: *Section 51.911 (b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, included travel for that purpose. A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence.*

University policy 861001 provides the procedures to be followed by the student and instructor. A student desiring to absent himself/herself from a scheduled class in order to observe (a) religious holy day (s) shall present to each instructor involved a written statement concerning the religious holy day (s). This request must be made in the first fifteen days of the semester or the first seven days of a summer session in which the absence (s) will occur. The instructor will complete a form notifying the student of a reasonable timeframe in which the missed assignments and/or examinations are to be completed.

Classroom Rules of Conduct: *Students will refrain from behavior in the classroom that intentionally or unintentionally disrupts the learning process and, thus, impedes the mission of the university. Inappropriate behavior in the classroom shall result in a directive to leave class.*

Visitors in the Classroom: *Unannounced visitors to class must present a current, official SHSU identification card to be permitted in the classroom. If the visitor is not a registered student, it is at the instructor's discretion whether or not the visitor will be allowed to remain in the classroom.*

Americans with Disabilities Act: *SHSU adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines. If you have a disability that may adversely affect your work in this class, then I encourage you to register with the SHSU Counseling Center and talk to me about how I can best help you. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. NOTE: no accommodation can be made until you register with the Counseling Center.*

General Information: I will be available after class if you need to speak with me, or you may make an appointment. My office number is (936)294-4572 and is located in Art Bldg. E, room 116. My email address is art_sak@shsu.edu . I will be happy to help you in any way that I can; however, you must let me know in a timely manner so I can actually offer assistance.

Sincerest wishes for a great semester!!!

Tentative Course Time Outline

- 8/21 Reading List/library assignment
- 9/3 **Labor Holiday for M – W classes**
- 10/9 **Hand out questions for Exam 1**
- 10/10 **Last Day to drop w/o a grade of “F” or to resign w/o receiving W/P or W/F**

Note: I will be in NYC during the week of October 15th-October 19th.

- 10/23 **Exam 1**
- 11/17 **Last day to resign**
- 11/21 – 11/25 **Thanksgiving Holiday!!**
- 11/26 **Monday Classes resume 8:00am**
- 12/4 **Hand out questions for the Final**
LAST DAY OF CLASS
- 12/11 **Tuesday Final Exam 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm**

***Note: Artists presentations will be presented in class during the months of October/November.**

Reading Material

Connoisseurship and Its Critics

8/21

Article 1 – Morelli, G. *Italian Painters*, “Principles and Methods,” pp. 1-63.

Article 2 – Wind, E. *Art and Anarchy*, Ch. III “Critique of Connoisseurship,” pp. 32-51.

8/28

The Formalist Tradition: Wolfflin & Riegl

9/4

Article 3 – Wolfflin, H. *Principles of Art History*, “Introduction, Ch. I “Linear and Painterly,” pp.1-62.

Article 4 – Riegl, A. *Das Holländische Gruppenportrat (The Dutch Group Portrait): “Rembrandt’s Staalmeesters,” pp.1-18.*

9/11

Varieties of Cultural History

9/18

Article 5 Panofsky, E. *Iconography and Iconology: An introduction to the Study of Renaissance Art,”* Ch. I of *Meaning in the Visual Arts*, pp. 26-54.

Article 6 – Baxandall, M. *The Limewood Sculptors of Renaissance Germany*, Ch. VI, “The Period Eye,” pp. 143-163.

9/25

Marx and The Social History of Art

10/2

Article 7 – Marx, K and F. Engels. Selections from M Solomon (ed.), *Marxism and Art*, pp. 1-21.

Marx, K. “The Essential Formulaic of Marxism,” pp. 29-30.

Marx, K. “Ideology and Reality,” p.33.

Marx, K. “The Fetishism of Commodities I, II,” pp.38-40.

Marx, K. “Communism: The Negation of Alienation,” pp. 55-60.

Marx, K. “The Formation and Emancipation of the Senses,” pp. 58-60.

Article 8 – Clark, T.J. *The Painting of Modern Life*, Ch. 3 “The Environs of Paris,” pp. 147-204.

Article 9 – Benjamin, W. “The Work of Art in the Age of Its Mechanical Reproduction” in *Illuminations*, pp. 217-242.

10/9

10-23

***Please note: I will be in NYC during the week of October 15th -October 19th.**

The Freudian Model of Interpretation

10/23 – 30

Article 10 – Freud, S. *The Interpretation of Dreams*, selections from Ch. 5 “The Material of Dreams” on the Oedipus complex, pp. 221-225.

Article 11 – Schapiro, M. “Leonardo and Freud: An Art Historical Study, in *Theory and Philosophy of art: Style, Artist and Society*, pp. 147-178.

Article 12 – Schapiro, M. “The Apples of Cezanne: An Essay on the Meaning of Still-Life,” in *Modern Art 19th and 20th Centuries*; selected papers, pp. 1-33.

Gombrich and The Psychology of Perception

10/30

Article 13 – Gombrich, E.H., selections from *Art and Illusion*: Introduction, “Psychology and the Riddle of Style,” pp. 3-30.

Article 14 – Gombrich, E.H., selections

Ch. III, “Pygmalion’s Power,” sections i and ii, pp. 93-101.

Ch. V, “Formula and Experiencing,” section vii, pp. 173-178.

Ch. IX, “The Analysis of Vision in Art,” section ix, pp. 311-314.

The Problem of Narrative

11/6

Article 15 – Alpers, S. “Describe or Narrate? A Problem in Realistic Representation,” pp. 15-38.

Article 16 – Krauss, A. “Narrative Time: The Question of the Gates of Hell,” in *Passages in Modern Sculpture*, pp. 7-37.

11/13

11/20

Thanksgiving Holiday – November 21st - November 25.

Art and Its Audience: Patrons, Collectors, and Museums

11/27

Article 17 – Robinson, W.W. “This Passion for Prints, Collecting and Connoisseurship in Northern Europe During the 17th Century,” in C. Ackley, *Printmaking in the Age of Rembrandt*, pp. xxvii-xlvi.

Article 18 – Haskell, F. “Museums and Their Enemies,” pp. 13-22.

Feminism and Issues of Gender

12/4 – Note: Last day of class

Article 20 – Nochlin, L. “Why Are There No Great Women Artists?” in *Women in Sexist Society*, pp. 480-510.

Article 21 – Barrett, T. “Feminist Aesthetics and Criticism,” in Ch. 5, *Criticizing Art: Understanding the Contemporary*, pp. 131-141.

