Modern Art: from Post-Impressionism through Abstract Expressionism

Professor: Dr. David A. Lewis
dlewis@sfasu.edu (use this instead of D@L), tel. 936-468-4328
Office AR 102 (turn right after the Art Office entrance, first door on the facing wall).
Office Hours: M/W 3:30-4:45pm, T/R 3:30-5:45pm, F 9:30-12:30am, and by appointment
Class meets T/R 11:00 – 12:15 in AR 106

Highly Recommended: Herschel B. Chipp, Theories of Modern Art: a Source Book by Artists & Critics

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
Art 480/580 provides an intensive examination of the major themes and ideas of modernism as well as a survey of its principal stylistic schools, individual artists, and key events that mark the historical development of Modern art from its origins in Impressionism through the heyday of Abstract Expressionism. Working within the framework of an “Art in Context” approach, lectures will examine representative works not only in terms of formal conventions and innovations, but also will seek to place them within the broader historical milieu. The instructor encourages lively discussion among the students, who may wish to explore more fully certain issues raised in either the class lectures or assigned readings.

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES:
Students who successfully complete ART 480 will demonstrate competency in understanding the core principles, events, theory and practice of modern art from the Postimpressionist through Pop art. They will demonstrate: 1) ability to identify and know the significance of major European Artists, 2) be able to identify representative works of painting, sculpture and some architecture of the major styles, 3) mastery of the core principles of modern art as a broad historical phenomena and 4) within the context of specific movements, including, Expressionism, Cubism and related Cubo-futurist styles, abstract painting and sculpture, Bauhaus and International Style Architecture, Russian Suprematism and Constructivism, De Stijl, Dada, Surrealism, Abstract Expressionism, and Mid-century European Expressionism.

STUDENT EVALUATION:
Students will be assigned according to their performance on three examinations (consisting of essay and objective questions) and a term project (to be determined in consultation with the supervising instructor). Students are also expected to become actively engaged in class discussions and attend three guest speaker events.

Exam #1: 100 points; # 2: 100 pts.; Final #100 pts.; class participation, 50 pts.
Cumulative Grades:

STUDENT EVALUATION:
Undergraduate Students will be assessed according to their performance on three exams (consisting of objective and essay questions), class participation, and a term project (details will be announced later).

Graduate Students will be expected to complete a more rigorous program of study, which will include, in addition to the above, more intensive examinations and more involved research projects.

COURSE SCHEDULE: (Subject to modification at the instructor’s discretion.)
Week#   Topics and Reading assignments:

**Part I. IMPRESSIONISM AND POSTIMPRESSIONISM**

1. Jan. 22, 24
   **Introduction: the origins of Modern art – Impressionism and Modern Life**
   Readings: Arnason and Mansfield (hereafter: “A/M”), pp. 1-24 (background); 24-36.

2. Jan. 29, 31
   **Post-Impressionism:**
   Classicizing Post-Impressionism: Cezanne, Seurat and the Primacy of Form
   Readings: A/M, pp. 42-50; Chipp, pp. 1-23, 29-42, 61-64.

3. Feb. 5, 7
   **Romanticizing Post-Impressionism: Van Gogh, Gauguin, and the Primacy of Expression**
   Readings: A/M, pp. 59-64; Chipp, pp. 67-72, 83 (bottom)-86.

4. Feb. 12, 14
   The Symbolist Movement in Europe: Moreau, Redon, the Nabis, Toulouse-Lautrec and Art Nouveau, Munch, Klinger, Klimt and the Vienna Secession
   Readings: A/M, pp. 50-52, 64-69, 70-84, 84-85, 87-89.
   **Rodin, Brancusi & Early Modernist Sculpture**
   Readings: A/M, pp. 53-58, 106-110.

5. Feb. 19, 21
   **Early Modernist Sculpture, continued, Review**

6. Feb. 26, 28

**Part II. EXPRESSIONISM AND ITS ORIGINS, 1890s – 1939.**

7. March 5, 7
   **Expressionism in France, 1905-39**
   Matisse and the Fauves; Later Works of Matisse
   Readings: A/M, pp. 90-103, 246-250
   The School of Paris between the Wars,
   Readings: A/M, pp. 242-246 (top), 250-250.

8. March 12, 14
   **Expressionism In Germany, 1900-39**
   Die Brücke, Readings: A/M, pp. 114-121; Chipp, 146-151.
   Der Blaue Reiter, Readings: A/M, pp. 121-128; Chipp, 152-155, 182-186.
   The Case Against Expressionism: Die Neue Sachlichkeit

SPRING BREAK March 16 – 24

**Part III. THE CUBO-FUTURIST REVOLUTION**

9. March 26, 28
   Cubism from Analysis to Synthesis
Picasso, Braque, and the Development of Analytic and Synthetic Cubism
Readings: A/M, pp. 136-163; Chipp, 193-216.

10. April 2, 4  Futurism and Vorticism; Later Picasso

11. April 9, 11  Review, 2nd EXAM

12. April 16  The Triumph of Geometric Abstraction
De Stijl, Neo-Plasticism & the Non-Objective Alternative
Readings: A/M, pp. 362-274; Chipp, 349-362.

EASTER BREAK No class on Thursday, April 18.

13. April 23, 25  The Russian Avant-garde
Suprematism and Russian Constructivism
Readings: A/M, pp. 198-210; Chipp, 337-346.

Part IV The Art of the Irrational and the Subconscious: Dada through Surrealism

International Constructivism, The Bauhaus & International Style Architecture,
Readings: A/M, pp. 211-212, 169-185, 275-296, 527-541; Chipp, 593-598.
Anti-Art: the Dada Revolution
Readings: A/M, pp. 213-233 (top); Chipp, 376-396.

15. May 7, 9  Dreaming Before the Chaos: Fantasy Art, Scuola Metifisica, Dada & Surrealism
Art and the Subconscious—from Dada to Surrealism
Readings: A/M, pp. 297-322; Chipp, 427-435, 446-455.
Sculpture in the Wake of Surrealism
Readings: A/M, pp. 338-363, 433 (bottom)-434.

16. Finals Week Final Exam (Check exam schedule on-line, or posting on Art Office Door)