

ART 60205 A
Modern Visual Culture: 1789-1960

T 6:30 – 8:50
Room: MM103
Dr. Maria Elena Versari
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Office: CFA 300
Office hours: T: 5:30-6:30 and by appointment

Description: This course is intended to introduce CMU's students to the different aspects in which visual culture has evolved from the late 18th century to the 1950s. It focuses in particular on the cultural debates surrounding the concepts of "modernity" and "tradition," the impact that science and technology had on artistic practices, and the role that identity and political ideology played in defining new roles for the artists in society.

Course's Online Research Guide: <http://guides.library.cmu.edu/mvc>

Readings: Readings are intended to introduce students with the historical and critical background of the themes discussed in class and familiarize them with the varied methodologies and argumentative styles proper to research and writing in the humanities. They comprise classic texts and more recent critical assessments.

Readings are divided in three groups:

- 1) In-class readings: primary sources such as artists' statements and manifestos, seminal critical texts that will be read and discussed in class. Students should have a copy of these texts available in class.
- 2) Required readings that each student should prepare before coming to class.
- 3) Further readings, a short list of reference texts that provide a starting point for individual research on the theme of each class lecture.

In-class and required readings will be available through the course's Dropbox.
The volumes of the *Art In Theories* series (AIT) are available in the Arts Reference section (4th Floor).

Quizzes, Exams and Assignments:

1. Quizzes: There will be 4 in-class quizzes relating to material from the readings and/or discussed in class. The first of the 4 quizzes will be a mock-quiz (ungraded), conceived to familiarize students with the nature and requirements of the subsequent quizzes. The lowest grade of the three graded quizzes will be dropped.

2. Exam: There will be one exam (on Tuesday, **December 8th**), consisting of three parts: quiz; image recognition; a short in-class essay relating to an unknown image (from a choice of two) that the students will have to identify and briefly discuss. (see attached Guidelines A)

3. In-class discussion of the readings: At the beginning of each class, two/three students will be randomly selected to briefly comment on the readings assigned for that day.

4. Research Project: There will be one brief research project, designed to acquaint students with bibliographic research and scholarly writing. It will consist of one 2000-word essay (excluding footnotes) The essay (in Microsoft Word, sent as an email attachment to mversari@andrew.cmu.edu) is due on **Monday, December 14th**. Students will be able to choose among three different general topics provided by the professor. CMU’s Art and Drama Librarian Maureen Dawley is available to help students draft a bibliography for the essay. The professor will review and give feedback on the abstract and bibliography (by **Friday, November 27th**). See attached Guidelines B for more information.

5. Participation: Class participation in the discussion of the readings is expected and will determine part of your final grade.

Attendance, Plagiarism and Academic Integrity: In accordance with CMU’s School of Art Handbook, regular attendance is expected and required. In no case can a student expect to receive a passing grade without regular attendance and participation in class. After **one unexcused absences**, the class participation grade for the course will be reduced by 10% for each ensuing absence. Similarly, consistent and/or unexcused tardiness will affect class participation. It is imperative that students pay close attention and take detailed notes of the lectures, which will include material not present in the assigned readings. If you are absent from class, **you are responsible** for obtaining notes and copies of the material distributed in class that day from one of your classmates.

Any form of plagiarism will be sanctioned. Please refer to CMU’s policy on plagiarism for further information (<http://www.cmu.edu/policies/documents/Academic%20Integrity.htm>).

Please refer to CMU’s Policy on Academic Integrity and the School of Art’s Classroom Attendance, Conduct & Participation policy in the School of Art Handbook for additional information about policies affecting this course.

Technology: As a form of respect to the professor and your classmates, cell phones, smartphones, ipads, laptop computers and other electronic devices must be switched **off** before coming into the classroom. Video or audio recording is not allowed in the classroom, unless authorized by the instructor.

Grades:

Breakdown for the course:

Class Participation and Attendance		10%
Exams and Assignments:		90%
Quizzes	25%	
Exam	30%	
Research project	30%	
In-class discussion	5 %	

CMU’s School of Art Grading Scale:

<u>Grades</u>	<u>Quality Point Value</u>
A- Excellent	4
B- Good	3
C- Satisfactory	2

Factorable Units for this course: 9

D- Passing	1
R- Failure	0
X- Conditional Failure	0

Schedule: The professor maintains the right to change the present syllabus at any point during the semester.

Class Schedule:

Week 1: Tuesday, September 1st

What Is Modernity? What Is Antiquity? An Introduction

This session is devoted to the way in which, in the late 18th-century, the concept of modernity developed not only in opposition to the idea of antiquity, but in symbiosis with it. We will analyze how the discoveries of Pompeii and Herculaneum gave way to a veritable “craze” for everything Greek and Roman and how, underneath the fondness for antiquity, artists and intellectuals were expressing new artistic and political values.

In class:

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, from “Discourse on the Arts and Sciences” (*Art in Theory, 1648-1815*, pp. 432-437)

Johann Joachim Winckelmann, from “Reflections on the Imitation of Greek Works in Painting and Sculpture” (*AIT, 1648-1815*, pp. 450-456)

Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, from “Laocoön: An Essay on the Limits of Painting and Poetry” (*AIT, 1648-1815*, pp. 477-481)

Anatole Quatremère de Quincy, “On the System of Teaching” (*AIT, 1648-1815*, pp. 710-717)

Further Readings:

Hugh Honour, *Neo-Classicism, Style and Civilization*, 1968.

Robert Rosenblum, *Transformations in Late Eighteenth Century Art*, 1969.

Francis Haskell and Nicholas Penny, *Taste and the Antique. The Lure of Classical Sculpture 1500-1900*, 1981.

Martin Myrone and Lucy Peltz, *Producing the Past: aspects of antiquarian culture and practice, 1700-1850*, 1999.

Nina Dubin, *Futures & Ruins: Eighteenth-century Paris and the Art of Hubert Robert*, 2012.

Week 2: Tuesday, September 8th

Art for the People, Art for the Revolution (part 1)

This session is devoted to the visual culture of the French Revolution. It analyzes the way in which art contributed to the process of the renewal of political and civic identity in France and clarifies how a new symbolism emerged, which was appropriate to the ideology of the time. It also introduces students to the concepts of iconoclasm and artistic preservation, as they developed in response to the political turmoil in France.

In class:

Jacques-Louis David, on his picture of Le Peletier (*AIT, 1648-1815*, pp. 718-720)

Jacques-Louis David, “Proposal for a monument to the French people” (*AIT, 1648-1815*, pp. 724-727)

Excerpts from Antoine-Chrysostome Quatremère de Quincy, *Letters to Miranda and Canova on the abduction of antiquities from Rome and Athens*, 2012

Readings:

T. J. Clark, "Painting in the Year Two," in *Representations*, No. 47, Special Issue: National Cultures before Nationalism (Summer, 1994), pp. 13-63 Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2928785>
Dominique Poulot, "The Cosmopolitanism of Masterpieces," in Antoine-Chrysostome Quatremère de Quincy, *Letters to Miranda and Canova on the abduction of antiquities from Rome and Athens*, 2012

Further Readings:

Richard Clay, *Iconoclasm in Revolutionary Paris: The Transformation of Signs*, 2012
Rolf Reichardt and Hubertus Kohle (eds), *Visualizing the Revolution: Politics and the pictorial arts in late eighteenth-century France*, 2008
Joan B. Landes, *Visualizing the Nation: Gender, Representation and Revolution in eighteenth-century France*, 2001.
Thomas Crow, *Emulation. Making Artists for Revolutionary France* (New Haven, CT: Yale UP, 1995).

Week 3: Tuesday, September 15th

class canceled: Rania Matar's conference at 6pm

Week 4: Tuesday, September 22nd

Art for the People, Art for the Revolution (part 2)

→ In class: Quiz 1 (ungraded)

Week 5: Tuesday, September 29th

Romanticism. Heroes, Society and Nature

Is nature stronger than civilization? What are the limits of the human experience? This session will introduce students to the principal features of Romantic aesthetics, seen through the production of artists, poets and philosophers.

In-class readings:

Edmund Burke, from "A Philosophical Inquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful" (*AIT, 1648-1815*, pp. 516-521)
Clemens Brentano, "Various Emotions before a Seascape by Friedrich" (*AIT, 1648-1815*, pp. 1027-1031)

Required Readings:

William Vaughan, "Transcendent landscapes," in *Romanticism and Art*, 1994, pp. 132-174.

Further Readings:

John Barrell, *The Political Theory of Painting from Reynolds to Hazlitt*, 1986.
Morton D. Payley, *The Apocalyptic Sublime*, 1986.
Renzo Dubbini, *Geography of the Gaze, Urban and Rural Vision in Early Modern Europe*, 2002.
Albert Boime, *Art in an Age of Counterrevolution*, 2004.
Leo Costello, *J.M.W. Turner and the Subject of History*, 2012.

Week 6: October 6th

The Historical Imagination, or How to Build a Nation Through Images

→ In class: Quiz 2

This session will address the way in which art, through the spread of historical illustrations and a new sensitivity for the preservation of monuments, contributed to the process of nation-building that characterized Europe and the United States in the 19th century. We will study several examples from Italian, French, British and American art and culture.

In class:

Lord Byron, *The Isles of Greece* (from *Don Juan*, Third Canto, 1821)

Stendhal, On Delacroix's *Massacre of Chios* (*AIT, 1815-1900*, p. 34)

Excerpts from Victor Hugo, *La Bande Noire* (1823) and *Guerre aux Démolisseurs* (1832)

“Va, Pensiero” (Chorus of Hebrew Slaves from Verdi's *Nabucco*)

Required Reading:

Adrian Lyttelton, “Creating a National Past: History, Myth and Image in the Risorgimento,” in Robert Russel Ascoli and Krystyna von Henneberg, eds., *Making and remaking Italy: the cultivation of national identity around the Risorgimento*, (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2001) pp. 27-74

Further Readings:

Peter Fritzsche, *Stranded in the Present: Modern Time and the Melancholy of History*, 2004

Jukka Jokilehto, *A History of Architectural Conservation* (worldheritage-forum.net/en/2005/04/51).

Kurt W. Forster (ed.), *Oppositions* (25) (Fall 1982), monographic issue “Monument/Memory”.

Nina Athanassoglou-Kallmyer, *French Images from the Greek War of Independence, 1821-1830*, 1987.

Todd Porterfield, *The Allure of Empire: Art in the Service of French Imperialism*, 1998.

Albert Boime, *Thomas Couture and the Eclectic Vision*, 1980.

Albert Boime, *The Art of the Macchia and the Risorgimento: Representing Culture and Nationalism in Nineteenth-Century Italy*, 1993.

Thomas W. Gaetgens and Heinz Ickstadt (eds.), *American Icons: Transatlantic Perspectives on Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century American Art*, 1992.

George Martin, “Verdi, Politics and Va Pensiero. The Scholars Squabble” (with extensive bibliography), *The Opera Quarterly* (21:1) (2005) pp. 109-132.

Week 7: Tuesday, October 13th

The Real and the Visual

This session addresses how a new interest in the concepts of “reality” and “truth” led artists to reconsider the way in which they painted and had major consequences also on the way in which they presented their works in society. We will discuss artistic currents such as Realism and Impressionism, outlining how these trends helped define new models of activity for artists, as a response to changes in contemporary politics, in the art market and in the status of art criticism.

In class:

Champfleury, “*The Burial at Ornans*” (*AIT, 1815-1900*, pp. 366-370).

Gustave Courbet, *Letter to Champfleury* and *Statement of Realism* (*AIT, 1815-1900*, pp. 370-372).

Émile Zola, “The Moment in Art” (*AIT, 1815-1900*, pp. 552-554).

Jules Castagnary, “The Exhibition on the Boulevard des Capucines” (*AIT, 1815-1900*, pp. 572-573).

Georges Rivière, “The Exhibition of the Impressionists” (*AIT, 1815-1900*, pp. 593-596).

Required Readings:

Patricia Mainardi, "Courbet's Exhibitionism," *La Gazette des Beaux Arts* 118 (December 1991), pp. 253-266.

Meyer Shapiro, "The Seer, the Seeing, and the Seen," and "The Aesthetic and Method of Impressionism," in *Impressionism. Reflections and Perceptions* (New York: Braziller, 1997) pp. 9-20 and 43-78.

Further Readings:

T.J. Clark, *Image of the People: Gustave Courbet and the 1848 Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999).

Norma Broude, *Impressionism: A Feminist Reading. The Gendering of Art, Science, and Nature in the Nineteenth Century* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997).

Belinda Thomson, *Impressionism. Origins, Practice, Reception*, Thames & Hudson, London 2000.

Michael Fried, *Manet's Modernism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996).

Week 8: Tuesday, October 20th

Orientalism, Primitivism, Symbolism and the roots of the artistic impulse

This session charts the definitions of "oriental" and "primitive" in late 19th-century culture, with reference to the rise of ethnology as a science and the repercussions that the taste for foreign and exotic artifacts had on philosophy, the visual arts, music and popular culture.

In class:

G.-Albert Aurier, from *Symbolism in Painting: Paul Gauguin (AIT, 1815-1900)*, pp. 1025-1029).

Wilhelm Worringer, from *Abstraction and Empathy (AIT, 1900-2000)*, pp. 66-69).

Franz Marc, "The Savages of Germany" (*AIT, 1900-2000*, pp. 93-94).

Carl Einstein, "Negro Sculpture" (*AIT, 1900-2000*, pp. 110-116).

* film screening: excerpts from *The Rite of Spring*

Required Readings:

Debora Silverman, "Pleasure and Misery: Catholic Sources of Paul Gauguin's and Pablo Picasso's Abstraction," in Richard Mayer (ed.), *Representing the Passions*, 2003, pp. 217-248.

Anna Chave, "New Encounters with the Desmoiselles d'Avignon: Gender, Race, and the Origins of Cubism," *The Art Bulletin* (76:4) (Dec. 1994), pp. 596-611. [JSTOR]

Further Readings:

Robert Goldwater, *Primitivism in Modern Art*, 1966.

William Rubin (ed.), *Primitivism in 20th-Century Art: Affinity of the Tribal and the Modern*, 1984.

Sally Price, *Primitive art in civilized places*, 1989

Susan Hiller, ed., *The Myth of Primitivism: Perspectives on Art*, 1991.

Elizabeth Barkan and Ronald Bush, eds., *Prehistories of the Future: The Primitivist Project and the Culture of Modernism*, 1995.

H. Glenn Penny, *Objects of Culture: Ethnology and Ethnographic Museums in Imperial Germany*, 2001.

Abigail Solomon-Godeau, "Going Native: Paul Gauguin and the Invention of the Primitivist Modernism," in *Art in America* (July 1989), pp. 119-128 and p. 161.

Judith Zilczer, "The Theory of Direct Carving in Modern Sculpture" *Oxford Art Journal* (November 1981).

Week 9: Tuesday, October 20th

What is the avant-garde?

This session is devoted to the concept of the avant-garde, as it was originally defined by the Italian Futurists and appropriated by other movements such as Russian Futurism, Dada and Surrealism. It addresses the way in which avant-garde artists reconfigured the boundaries between artistic representation and reality and engaged with contemporary ideology and political activity.

In class:

F.T. Marinetti, *The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism* (*Futurism. An Anthology*, 49-53).

F.T. Marinetti, *Let's Murder the Moonlight!* (*Futurism. An Anthology*, 54-61).

U. Boccioni, C. Carrà, L. Russolo, G. Severini, G. Balla, *Manifesto of Futurist Painters* (*Futurism. An Anthology*, 62-64).

Required Readings: (choice of one among the following)

L. Rainey, "Introduction: F.T. Marinetti and the development of Futurism," in *Futurism. An Anthology*, 2009, pp. 2-18.

Christine Poggi, "Futurist collage and Parole in libertà in the service of the war" in Id., *In Defiance of Painting*, 1992.

Further Readings:

Renato Poggioli, *The Theory of the Avant-Garde*, 1968.

Michael Kirby and Victoria Res Kirby, *Futurist Performance*, 1971.

Peter Burger, *The Theory of the Avant-Garde*, 1984.

Matei Calinescu, *Five faces of Modernism*, 1987.

Dietrich Scheunemann (ed.), *European Avant-Garde New Perspectives*, 2000.

Luca Somigli, *Legitimizing the artist. Manifesto Writing and European Modernism, 1885-1915*, 2003.

Adamson, *Embattled Avant-Gardes. Modernism's Resistance to Commodity Culture*, 2007.

Lawrence Rainey, Christine Poggi and Laura Wittman (eds.), *Futurism. An Anthology*, 2009.

Week 10: Tuesday, October 27th.

Dada, Constructivism and Surrealism

This session will introduce students to the different Dada groups and their activities and to the challenges to the definition of avant-garde created by Surrealism in the 1920s and 1930s.

➔ In class: Quiz 3

In class:

T. Tzara, *An Introduction to Dada* (Motherwell, 402-406).

D. Burljuk, V. Mayakovsky, et al., *Slap in the Face of Public Taste*, available at <http://www.unknown.nu/futurism/>.

André Breton, from the first *Manifesto of Surrealism* (*AIT, 1900-2000*, pp. 447-453).

Required Readings:

Martin Puchner, "Dada and the Internationalism of the Avant-Garde" and "Surrealism, Latent and Manifest," in *Poetry of the Revolution*, 2006, pp. 135-165 and 179-195.

Further Readings:

Stephen C. Foster, Rudolf E. Kuenzli (eds.), *Dada Spectrum: The Dialectics of Revolt*, 1979.
Robert Motherwell (ed.), *The Dada Painters and Poets*, 1981.
Hans Richter, *Dada Art and Anti-Art*, 1966.
Dawn Ades (ed.), *The Dada Reader. A Critical Anthology*, 2006.
Dawn Ades (ed.) *Surrealism: Desire Unbound*, 2001.
Conley, Katharine, and Pierre Caminiaux, *Surrealism and its Others*, 2006.

Week 11: Tuesday, November 3rd **Designing and Living in the modern environment**

This session is devoted to the impact that modern design, architecture and modern theories of urbanism had on everyday life, configuring new aesthetic values as well as new modes of social interaction. It analyzes in particular the theories expressed by Le Corbusier, F.L. Wright and the faculty members of The Bauhaus, as well as the way in which artists and the media reacted to transformations in the urban environment.

In class:

Walter Gropius, "The Theory and Organization of the Bauhaus" (*AIT, 1900-2000*, pp. 309-314).
F. L. Wright, "Ethics of Ornament," in Robert Twombly (ed.), *Frank Lloyd Wright: Essential Texts*, 2009, pp. 103-107.

Required Readings:

Le Corbusier, "Argument" and "Automobiles" in *Toward a New Architecture* (Dover 1986), pp. 1-8 and 135-148.
Carter Wiseman, "Modernism and the Abstract Ascendancy," in *Shaping a Nation. Twentieth-Century American Architecture and its Makers* (New York and London: Norton, 1998) pp. 149-218.

Further Reading:

Reyner Banham, *Theory and Design in The First Machine Age*, 1967 (2nd ed.).
Beatriz Colomina *Privacy and Publicity: Modern Architecture as Mass Media*, 1994.
Eva Forgacs, *Bauhaus Idea and Bauhaus Politics*, 1995.
Adolf Loos, *Ornament and Crime*, 1998.
Magdalena Droste, *Bauhaus: 1919-1933*, 2002.
Jean-Louis Cohen et al (eds.), *Scenes of the World to Come: European Architecture and the American Challenge, 1893-1960*, 1995.
George Dodds, *Building Desire: On the Barcelona Pavilion*, 2005.
Barry Bargdoll et al. (eds.), *Bauhaus 1919-1933: Workshops of Modernity*, 2009.

Week 12: Tuesday, November 17th **Totalitarian Ideologies: Building The New Man**

This session analyzes the impact that totalitarian ideologies had on the arts in Italy, Germany and the Soviet Union in the 1930s. It highlights the evolution of State patronage and the drive to make the arts a fundamental factor in the creation of an all-encompassing, aesthetic and ideological experience for the masses.

In class:

Mario Sironi, "Manifesto of Mural Painting" (*AIT, 1900-2000*, pp. 424-426).

Andrei Zdanov, "Speech to the Congress of Soviet Writers" (*AIT, 1900-2000*, pp. 426-429).
Adolf Hitler, speech inaugurating the "Great Exhibition of German Art 1937" (*AIT, 1900-2000*, pp. 439-441).

Required Readings:

Walter L. Adamson, "Avant-garde modernism and Italian Fascism: cultural politics in the era of Mussolini" *Journal of Modern Italian Studies* (6:2) (Summer 2001), pp. 230-248.
George L. Mosse "Beauty without Sensuality/The Exhibition Entartete Kunst" in Stephanie Barron (ed.), "*Degenerate art*": *the fate of the avant-garde in Nazi Germany*, 2004, pp. 25-31.

Further Readings:

Henry A. Millon and Linda Nochlin (eds.), *Arts and Architecture in the Service of Politics*, 1978, pp. 183-193.
Matthew Affron and Mark Antliff (eds), *Fascist visions: art and ideology in France and Italy*, 1997.
Marla Stone, "Staging Fascism: The Exhibition of the Fascist Revolution" *Journal of Contemporary History* (28:2) (April 1993), pp. 215-243.
Stephanie Barron, "*Degenerate art*": *the fate of the avant-garde in Nazi Germany*, 1991.
Eric Michaud, *The Cult of Art in Nazi Germany*, 2004.
Art in the U.S.S.R.: architecture, sculpture, painting, graphic arts, theatre, film, crafts, ed. by G.C. Hulme (London: The Studio 1935).
Katerina Clark, *Moscow, the Fourth Rome: Stalinism, Cosmopolitanism, and the Evolution of Soviet Culture*, 1931-1941, 2011.

Week 13: Thanksgiving Week

No class. Finalize your essay's abstract and bibliography and send it by Friday, November 25th. Review the material for Quiz 4 and for the exam.

Week 14th: Tuesday, December 1st
Art in a Post-Atomic Age

→ In class: Quiz 4

This session is devoted to the major art trends in Europe, Japan and the Americas from the end of WWII to the 1950s. It aims to clarify the path that led to the creation of interpretative categories such as Abstract Expressionism, Spazialismo, Informale, Gutai, and Nouveau Réalisme.

In class:

Lucio Fontana, "White Manifesto" (*AIT, 1900-2000*, pp. 652-656).
Jackson Pollock, "Two Statements" (*AIT, 1900-2000*, pp. 570-571).
Yves Klein, "The Evolution of Art Toward the Immaterial" (*AIT, 1900-2000*, pp. 818-820).
Jiro Yoshihara, "Gutai Manifesto" (*AIT, 1900-2000*, pp. 698-701).

Required Readings:

Michael Leja, "Pollock and Metaphor," in *Reframing Abstract Expressionism*, 1993, pp. 275-327.
Anthony White, "Industrial Painting's Utopias: Lucio Fontana's Expectations" *October* (124) (Spring 2008), pp. 98-124. [JSTOR]

Further Readings:

Clament Greenberg, *Collected Essays and Criticism*, 1986.

Yve-Alain Bois et al. (eds.), *Formless*, 1997.

Michael Fried, *Art and Objecthood: Essays and Reviews*, 1998.

Renato Miracco, *Lucio Fontana: at the Roots of Spatialism*, 2006.

Anthony White, *Lucio Fontana: Between Utopia and Kitsch*, 2011.

Tracey Bashkoff and Megan Fontanella (eds.), *Of Another Kind: International Abstraction and the Guggenheim*, 2012.

Alexandra Munroe et al. (eds), *Gutai: Splendid Playgroud*, 2013.

Week 15: Tuesday, December 8th.

➔ **In class: Exam**

➔ **Research Project: Monday, December 14th is the last day to submit your essay**