Art and the First World War

Seminar Leader: Aya Soika (with TU-Professor Dr. Andrea Meyer)
Course Times: Wednesday, 14:00 – 18:00, from 15th October
(Sessions together with TU-Students in TU-Seminar Room and on site (museums and elsewhere):
to be arranged separately)
Email: a.soika@berlin.bard.edu

Art and the First World War

The inaugural catastrophic event of the twentieth century, causing destruction and loss of life on an
unprecedented scale, the First World War (1914-1918) altered almost every aspect of existence in
Europe. It also had a dramatic impact on the lives, working practices and forms created by visual
artists, who underwent a decisive rupture with their previous experience and commitments. The
works created by artists who went through the disaster of the war also decisively influenced the ways
in which the war was perceived later, and not only in intellectual or artistic circles. In this course,
manifestos and visual and literary works by European artists active during and after the war will be
analyzed and placed in a wider cultural and socio-historical context. This will allow us to ask
questions about the relationship between art and politics, but also about early twentieth-century
society, and the role of nationalism, education, religion and medical science in cultural life and artistic
production. The legacy of the war and its effects on the avant-garde from 1919 onwards will be
studied by looking at movements such as Dada and Surrealism all the way to today's reception
marked by the hundredth anniversary of its outbreak. Thus the course will include visits to exhibitions
organized on the occasion of the centenary.

Modules: Artists, Genres, Movements; Historical Studies

Requirements

Since this is a joint course together with the History of Art Department from the Technische
Universität, the course is taught as a block seminar, consisting of seven 4-hour blocks. In addition,
individual tutorials in order to discuss presentation and essay are being offered for the Bard College
Berlin students. Weekly readings and writing assignments and an oral presentation are part of the
course requirements. You are expected to participate in our discussions and prepare each seminar
session as well as any individual tutorials carefully. The use of laptop computers, tablets,
smartphones or other electronic devices in the classroom is prohibited.
**Attendance**
Attendance at ALL classes is expected. Punctuality is essential. Please make sure you depart early in order to reach the museums and/or seminar room, and please lock in your coats and bags before the beginning of class. The itinerary can be checked on [www.bvg.de](http://www.bvg.de), but make sure you are also equipped with a city map.

**Writing Assignments**
Your weekly responses are due each Wednesday of our class, no later than 9:30 am and should be of approximately 300-500 words length. They should be posted onto the google document on the google drive and will be accessible to all participants of our class in order to encourage and stimulate our communal discussion.

For the Bard College Berlin students the final essay is due on Monday, 14th December 2014, at 23.59, and should be of ca. 10 000 words, including footnotes/references, bibliography and list of illustrations. The essay is conceived as an academic research paper, so it is especially important that you gain a good overview of the existing literature on your chosen topic and familiarize yourself with methods of academic writing (literature-search in libraries and via databases such as jstor.org, use of citations, use of bibliography). A structure or a draft of the long essay may be discussed ca. two weeks in advance to the final submission deadline. Please note that prior consultation with the Bard in Berlin Writing Centre may be recommended in order to reflect upon writing and structure. The TU students follow the requirements outlined in the respective list of modules.

**Presentation**
Each student will deliver a presentation. Presentations should last no longer than fifteen minutes. Please make sure that you rehearse beforehand in order to avoid exceeding this timeframe. A 1-2 page document (ca. 750-1000 words) with structured presentation notes (and, where applicable, a power point presentation) should be submitted via email to both course leaders on the day before class by 3:00 pm. This document can complement or serve as hand-out during the presentation.

**Policy on Late Submission of Papers**
Essays that are up to 24 hours late will be downgraded one full grade (from B+ to C+, for example). Essays that are more than 24 hours late cannot receive a grade of higher than C (see also policy on late submission in the Bard College Berlin Student Handbook).

**Grade Breakdown**
Listed below is the percentage grade allotted to each essay, and to classroom participation and assignments.
Seminar Grade = Attendance/Participation/Preparation of Art Works and Texts & Tasks
Seminar Grade: 30%
Presentation: 30%
Essay: 40%
Schedule

The joint class with the TU –Berlin starts on Wednesday 15 October and runs until Wednesday 10 December, with fall break planned for 20 October – 31 October, 2014. Completion week will take place 15 December – 19 December. Scheduled class times are available online under the relevant course heading: http://www.berlin.bard.edu/academics/courses/fall-2014/

1)  15.10.2014: Seminar Room
Introduction of class participants with mini-presentations.
Themes of the Course / Allocation of Presentations.

The Great War. Current Scholarship and Debates.

Readings:
Belinda Davis, “Experience, Identity and Memory: The Legacy of World War I” (review article), in: The Journal of Modern History 75, March 2003, 111-131

2)  5.11.2014: Museum, Unter den Linden
German Historical Museum. Exhibition: Der Erste Weltkrieg. 1914–1918.

Reading:

Short Presentations on:
Propaganda (e. g. Posters; War Bonds); Patriotism (e. g. Hindenburg Myth); Warfare; The Western Front (e. g. Ypers); The Eastern Front (e. g. Galicia)

3) 12.11.2014: Museum, Bussardsteig, Dahlem

Readings:
Sherwin Simmons, „Split-Identity in Ernst Ludwig Kirchner’s Woodcut Cycle „Peter Schlemihls wundersame Geschichte““, in: Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte, 70, 3, 2007, 409-432
Additional:
German book *Weltenbruch*, Introduction

Short Presentations on:
Various members of the former artists’ group *Brücke* (Erich Heckel, Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Karl Schmidt-Rottluff); German Expressionism and WWI

4)
19.11.2014: Seminar Room
The International Avantgarde during the First World War
First Round of Presentations on different themes / artists and different texts

Reading:

Short Presentations:
Futurism and WW I; Surrealism and WW1; Cubism/Léger and WW1; Franz Marc; Ernst Barlach; Max Beckmann; Madness

5)
26.11.2014: Seminar Room
Anti-War Imagery.
Second Round of Presentations

Readings:

Short Presentations:
Otto Dix; Käthe Kollwitz; Dada and WW1; George Grosz; Willy Jaeckel, Memento

6)
3.12.2014: Seminar Room and Museum, Jebenstrasse
Part 1: War and Photography
Part 2. Exhibition Visit: Fotografie im Ersten Weltkrieg, Museum für Fotografie

Readings:

Short Presentations:
Photography and Censorship; personal war photography; illustrated press

7)
10.12.2014: Seminar Room
Memory and the War’s Legacy

Reading:
Stefan Goebel, “Re-Membered and Re-Mobilized: The ‘Sleeping Dead’ in Interwar Germany and Britain”, in: Journal of Contemporary History, 39, 4, Special Issue: Collective Memory, 487-501

Short Presentations:
Mourning; memory; public commemoration; Tannenberg monument; Neue Wache by Heinrich Tessenow and its reinterpretation, Kollwitz’ Grieving Parents

Essay Deadlines

Monday, 15th December, midnight. The network administrator will create a file for course essay submissions ahead of each deadline, and all essays are submitted electronically.

Readings:
Readings are available to registered students as PDFs from the google drive.

Bibliography


Deshmukh, Marion F., “ German Impressionist Painters and World War I”, in: Art History, 4, 1981, 66-79


*German Expressionism. Documents from the End of the Wilhelmine Empire to the Rise of National Socialism*, edited by Rose-Carol Washton Long, New York 1993


Kahn, Elizabeth Louise, “Art from the front, death imagined and the neglected majority”, in: *Art History*, 8, 1985, No. 2, 192-208


Paret, Peter, “Field Marshal and Beggar – Ernst Barlach in the First World War”, in: id., *German Encounters with Modernism*, 1840-1945, Cambridge 2001, 144-184


Sherwin Simmons, „Split-Identity in Ernst Ludwig Kirchner’s Woodcut Cycle „Peter Schlemihls wundersame Geschichte““, in: *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte*, 70, 3, 2007, 409-432


Winter, Jay, Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History, Cambridge 1995

**Jstor Articles (selection):**


Apel, Dora, “Cultural Battlegrounds: Weimar photographic narratives of war”, in: New German Critique, no. 76, special issue on Weimar visual culture (Winter 1999), pp. 49-84


Crockett, Dennis, “The most famous painting of the “golden Twenties”? Otto Dix and the Trench Affair”, in: Art Journal, 51, 1, 1992, 72-80

Davis, Belinda, “Experience, Identity and Memory: The Legacy of World War I” (review article), in: The Journal of Modern History 75, March 2003, 111-131


Goebel, Stefan, “Re-Membered and Re-Mobilized: The 'Sleeping Dead' in Interwar Germany and Britain”, in: Journal of Contemporary History, 39, 4, Special Issue: Collective Memory, 487-501


Hüppauf, Bernd, “The Emergence of Modern War Imagery in Early Photography”, in: History and Memory, 5, No 1, 1993, 130-151

Hüppauf, Bernd, “Emptying the Gaze: Framing Violence through the Viewfinder”, in: New German Critique, no. 72, Autumn 1997, pp. 3-44


Simmons, Sherwin, “Men of Nails, Monuments, Expressionism, Fetishes, Dadaism”, in: Anthropology and Aesthetics, 40 (Autumn 2001), 211-238

Simmons, Sherwin, „Split-Identity in Ernst Ludwig Kirchner’s Woodcut Cycle ‘Peter Schlemihls wundersame Geschichte’“, in: Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte, 70, 3, 2007, 409-432


List of Images (Selection, TBC):

- Ernst Barlach, The Avenger, 1914
- Raoul Hausmann, Spirit of Our Time – Mechanical Head, ca. 1921, Assemblage
- Hannah Höch, Cut with the Kitchen Knife, 1919
- Käthe Kollwitz, Selected lithographs such as Never again War, 1924
- Käthe Kollwitz, Memorial Sheet for Karl Liebknecht, woodcut, 1919
- Käthe Kollwitz, The Grieving Parents / Memorial for her son Peter, 1932
- Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Self-Portrait as Soldier, 1914
- Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Artillerymen in the Shower, 1914
- Oskar Kokoschka, Self-Portrait (Knight Errant), 1914-15
- Erich Heckel, Ostend Madonna, 1915
- Erich Heckel, Mad Soldier, 1915
- Frank Hurley, Over the Top, Photograph, 1917 (exhibited in London in 1918, 6,5 x 4,5 m print photography)
- George Grosz, Pillars of Society, 1926, Neue Nationalgalerie, Berlin
- George Grosz, Postwar Idyll, 1919 (Nachkriegsidyll)
- George Grosz, Ecce Homo, 1922 (portfolio of 84 lithographs and 16 watercolours), Malik, Berlin 1923
- George Grosz, Gott mit uns, 1919 (portfolio of 9 Prints, Malik-Verlag, Berlin 1920
- George Grosz, Maul halten und weiter dienen (Shut up and do your duty)
- George Grosz and John Heartfield, The Middle-Class Philistine Heartfield Gone Wild, 1920
- Jacob Epstein, Rock Drill, 1913-15
- Stanley Spencer, Sandham Memorial Chapel, 1923-1932
- Christopher R. W. Nevinson, Paths of Glory, 1917
- John Nash, Fallen Tree, 1915-16
- Ludwig Meidner, Apokalyptische Landschaft, 1912
- Henri Gaudier-Brzeska, Battle of Fish, 1914, Kettle’s Yard Gallery, Cambridge
- Otto Dix, War, Series of Lithographs, 1923
- Otto Dix, War Triptych: Der Krieg, 1929-1932, Tempera on Wood, three panels, Dresden
- Otto Dix, The Matchseller, 1920, Oil and Collage on Canvas, Staatsgalerie Stuttgart
- John Heartfield, Fathers and Sons, 1924, Montage
- Gino Severini, The Hospital Train, 1915, Oil on Canvas
- Umberto Boccioni, Charge of the Lancers, 1915
- Max Beckmann, Christus und die Sünderin, 1917
- Peter Behrens, Dem deutschen Volk, 1915 / Role of Reichstag (Homefront)
- Heinrich Tessenow, Neue Wache, 1931
- Tannenberg Memorial ("Tannenberg-Nationaldenkmal"), 1924-1927, Hohenstein, East-Prussia

**List of Presentations:**

Ernst Barlach
Käthe Kollwitz
Otto Dix
Ernst Ludwig Kirchner
Max Beckmann
Franz Marc
Futurism and WW1
Dada and WW1
Surrealism and WW1
Erich Maria Remarque
Propaganda
Patriotism
Warfare
Madness
Antiwar Images
The Home Front
The Western Front
The Eastern Front
Mourning
Memory
Centenary Exhibitions / Public Commemoration