AH312 Art and National Socialism

Seminar Leaders: Prof. Dr. Aya Soika, Bard College Berlin, and Dr. Andrea Meyer, TU Berlin
Course Times: 14:00 – 18:00, Tuesday (starting 13th October)
Seminar sessions are held together with TU-Students in TU-Seminar Room and elsewhere. Individual tutorials are to be arranged separately via email
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The agenda of the Nazi regime of 1933-1945 impinged on every realm of activity in Germany, including the art world and artistic production. This is evident not only in the importance of propaganda and a general “aestheticization of politics” to the imposition of the aims of the regime. Nor is the imprint of Nazi ideology solely apparent in the works of those who enjoyed direct political patronage, for example the painter Adolf Ziegler, the sculptor Arno Breker, the architect Albert Speer, or the filmmaker Leni Riefenstahl. Yet other artists—for example the Expressionist Emil Nolde—avidly sought but signally failed to obtain such patronage, with complex consequences for their careers. Central to the course will be the study of the evolution of a Nazi aesthetic, especially a Nazi idea of what should constitute the “new” in German art—a viewpoint that both competed with and adapted aspects of existing Modernist techniques. We will look at the institutions that upheld and enforced this viewpoint, such as the Reich Chamber of the Fine Arts and Goebbels’ Ministry of Popular Enlightenment and Propaganda, as well as the pillorying of modern art branded “degenerate” in the infamous exhibition under that heading in 1937. The course examines the role of theft and destruction in the propagation of Nazi aesthetics, looking at case studies of the fate of art collections owned by Jewish proprietors. We address the ongoing legacy of violence and misappropriation in the legal controversies of ownership and authenticity affecting public and private museum and gallery collections in Germany – and elsewhere – today.

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 eight 4-hour blocks. In addition, individual tutorials in order to discuss presentation and essay are being offered for the Bard College Berlin students. You are expected to participate in our discussions and prepare each seminar session as well as individual tutorials carefully. Weekly readings and writing assignments and an oral presentation are part of the course requirements. The readings and weekly responses are accessible electronically on google drive. Please note that the use of laptop computers, tablets, smartphones or other electronic devices in the classroom is prohibited.

Attendance
Attendance at ALL classes is expected. More than one absence in the seminar will significantly affect the grade for the course. If absent, a short notification via email, if possible sent before the beginning of class, is appreciated.
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, but make sure you are also equipped with a city map.

**Assessment**
The course assessment consists of the overall seminar work (various writing assignments, in addition to class participation and the preparation of tutorials), a long essay and a presentation.

**Writing Assignments**
Your weekly responses are due each Tuesday of our class, no later than 9:30 am, should be of approximately 300-500 words length, and engage with the weekly readings. 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 19th December at 23.59, and should be of ca. 7 000 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. one to 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 (the list of topics will be distributed on 13th October). 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 & weekly responses
- **Seminar Grade**: 30%
- **Presentation** = Relevance to the topic; Awareness of context and scholarly debates, during the presentation and in the Q&A session afterwards; Structure & Timing; Relevance and structure of Presentation Notes
- **Presentation**: 30%
- **Essay** = Line of Argument with regard to essay questions; Awareness of context and existing literature
on the topic; Structure and Formatting (consistent use of annotations, bibliography & list of illustrations)
Essay: 40%

Schedule

Week 1
13th October 2015 (Tuesday), 14:00 – 18:00
I. Introduction
What – if anything – is “Nazi Art”?
Mini presentations of selected works /Survey of the course

Presentation Topics (please note that with the following works the idea is to focus on specific aspects of their reception history rather than the stylistic analysis alone):

Please prepare a mini-presentations of 3-5 minutes on one of the following works/themes. For this, please send us an email with 2 suggestions by 7th October (please have a look at the powerpoint presentation with all images on google drive). We will then get back and confirm which of the works will be designated to you.

Adolf Hitler, Watercolour (e.g. Ruins 1919; The Courtyard of the Old Residency in Munich, 1914)
Adolf Hitler Mein Kampf, vol. 1, 1925
Leni Riefenstahl, Der Sieg des Glaubens (The Victory of Faith), 1933, Film Poster
Josef Thorak, Sculpture for the Reich Sport Field, 1937
Josef Thorak, Schreitende Pferde (Horses for the New Reich Chancellory), Bronze, before 1939
Albert Speer, The New Reich Chancellery, 1939
Albert Speer, Große Halle/Ruhmeshalle (Great Hall), Model
Arno Breker, Kameraden (Comrades), Relief, 1940 (vs. Willi Baumeister)
Adolf Ziegler, Die vier Elemente (The four Elements), before 1937
Leopold Schmutzler, Working Maidens, 1940
Wolfgang Willrich, The Aryan Family, undated (print after Willrich’s painting)
Paul Schultz-Naumburg, Kunst und Rasse (Art and Race), 1928 (sample page from book with juxtapositions of works of art and photographs of disabled people)
“Degenerate Art”, Title Page of Exhibition Guide, 1937
“Degenerate Music”, Title Page of Exhibition Guide, 1938
“Great German Art” Exhibition, View of the Galleries, 2nd Exhibition 1938
Jew Süß / Jud Süss, Film Still, 1940

George Grosz, Siegfried Hitler / Hitler der Retter (Hitler the Saviour), Lithograph, 1923, published on the front cover of Die Pleite (Bankruptcy)
George Grosz, Cain or Hitler in Hell, Oil on Canvas, 1944, David Nolan Gallery, New York
John Heartfield, “Hurrah, the butter is gone”, Photomontage, published on December 19th 1935 on the cover of the Workers’ Illustrated Newspaper
John Heartfield, “This is the salvation they are bringing us”, published on June 29th 1938 on the cover of the Workers’ Illustrated Newspaper
Rudolf Schlichter, Blinde Macht (Blind Power), Oil on Canvas, 1932/37, Berlinische Galerie
Max Beckmann, Versuchung (des Heiligen Antonius) (Temptation (of St. Anthony)), Oil on Canvas, 1936/37
Emil Nolde, Das Leben Christi (The Life of Christ), 1912, Oil on canvas polyptich
Franz Marc, Der Turm der Blauen Pferde (The Tower of the Blue Horses), Oil on canvas, 1913 (formerly National Gallery, Berlin, lost)
Wilhelm Lehmbruck, Large Kneeling Woman, 1911
Karl Hofer, Die Schwarzen Zimmer (The Black Rooms), Oil on Canvas, 1943, National Gallery, Berlin
Felix Nussbaum, Selbstbildnis mit Judenpass (Self Portrait with “Jewish Passport”), ca. 1943, Oil on Canvas, Felix Nussbaum Haus Osnabruck
Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Street Scene, Oil on Canvas, 1913 (restituted), formerly Bruecke Museum, Berlin
Max Liebermann, Horse Riders at the Beach, Oil on canvas (restituted in 2015 from Gurlitt collection)

Week 2
3rd November 2015 (Tuesday), 14:00 – 18:00
I. Survey Lecture on Art and Cultural Politics, 1933-1945 (Bernhard Fulda)
II. Aesthetization of Politics. Discussion of Walter Benjamin’s essay
Readings:

Week 3
10th November 2015 (Tuesday), 14:00 – 17:00
I. Visit to Kunsthaus Dahlem, built as Arno Breker’s State Studio (“Staatsatelier”) – Official Art, Case Studies: Arno Breker, Josef Thorak, Adolf Ziegler
II. On the post-war reception of “Nazi Art”
Readings:
Film: Breker Studio Visit – feature in Newsreel of May 1942
Dogramaci, Burcu, Germany, A Foreign Homeland. The Return of Émigré Sculptors after 1945, in: Publication Series of the Kunsthainz Dahlem, Berlin 2015, 43-65

Week 4
17th November 2015 (Tuesday), 14:00 – 18:00
I. “Degenerate Art”: The Campaign (Aims / Confiscations / Storage and Sale)
II. The “Degenerate Art” Exhibitions – Munich 1937 and other “Schandausstellungen”
Readings:

Week 5
24th November 2015 (Tuesday), 14:00 – 18:00
Artistic practice under National Socialism. Exhibition Visit
Visit of the exhibition Die Schwarzen Jahre 1933-45, Hamburger Bahnhof
(Artistic Practice; “Berufsverbot”; Artists' Exile; “Inner Immigration”)

Readings:

Week 6
1st December 2015 (Tuesday), 14:00 – 18:00
I. Visit to German Historical Museum (conversation with Dr. Sabine Beneke, curator, DHM)
II. Albert Speer’s “Germania” / Paul Ludwig Troost’s House of German Art, Munich
( Day of German Art, 14th July 1939) / 1937 Paris Exposition Internationale

Works on display:
Ernst Vollbehr (1876-1960), NSDAP and SA-Assembly of Reich Party Rally in Nuremberg, 1933, Gouache, 39 x 57,7 cm (several other gouaches by Vollbehr on display)
Hein Neuner, Youth serves the Führer, Poster, ca. 1939, 83,2 x 59,4 cm
Franz Würbel, Olympic Games, 1936, Lithograph / Poster, 101,3 x 63,2 cm
Radio “VE 301” Volksempfänger, ca. 1935
Wall Hanging / Tapestry Roma-Berlin, 1936-1939, 128 x 180 cm
Arno Breker, Comrades, 1940, Bronze, 102,5 x 76,5 cm
Albert Speer, Great Hall / Germania, Model / Map

Readings:
**Week 7**
8th December 2015 (Tuesday), 14:00 – 18:00

**Film and National-Socialism. Visit of Topography of Terror**
Riefenstahl – Jew Süß – selected documentary films

Readings:
Siegfried Kracauer, From Caligari to Hitler: A psychological history of the German film, 1947, 3-11
Culbert, David, The Impact of Anti-Semitic Film Propaganda on German Audiences: Jew Süß and the Wandering Jew (1940), in: Art, Culture and Media under the Third Reich, ed. by Richard A. Etlin, Chicago et al. 2002, 139-157

**Week 8 (note: Completion Week)**
15th December 2015 (Tuesday), 14:00 – 18:00

**Nazi Looting / Dealing with Looted Art**
Art Theft, Provenance and Restitution
Case studies private Jewish collections – restitution case studies (Kirchner’s Street; Klimt’s Adele Bloch-Bauer) / Private collection Göring – Linz Museum
The Gurlitt Case

Readings:
Film: The Rape of Europe

Scheduled class times are available online under the relevant course heading: [http://www.berlin.bard.edu/academics/courses-new/fall-2015/](http://www.berlin.bard.edu/academics/courses-new/fall-2015/)
Essay and other Deadlines
Your weekly response is due each Tuesday morning, 9:30. Please read all other responses before the beginning of each class.
Your presentation outline of 1-2 pages is due on the day before your presentation, no later than 15:00.
Your long essay is due on Saturday, 19th December, at 23:59. A draft version should be submitted at least 7 days beforehand, by 12th December, at 23:59.

Library and Book Purchase Policies
All readings and the up to date syllabus (slight changes may be added throughout the semester) are accessible online via a special link.

Bibliography


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James-Chakraborty, Kathleen, The Drama of Illumination: Visions of Community from Wilhelmine to Nazi Germany, in: Art, Culture and Media under the Third Reich, ed. by Richard A. Etlin, Chicago et al. 2002, 158-180
Jungblut, Marie-Paule, Looted! Current Questions Regarding the Cultural Looting by the National Socialists in Europe, Munich: Dt. Kunstverl 2008


Kracauer, Siegfried, From Caligari to Hitler: A psychological history of the German film, Princeton: University Press 1947


Müller, Melissa, Monika Tatzkow, Lost lives, lost art. Jewish collectors, Nazi art theft, and the quest for justice, New York: The Vendome Presse 2010


Petropoulos, Jonathan, From Lucerne to Washington: “Degenerate Art” and the question of restitution, in: Degenerate Art, 282-301


Yeide, Nancy H., Beyond Dreams of Avarice: The Hermann Göring Collection, Laurel Publishing 2009

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http://www.lootedart.com/
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