REPRESENTATION

Art and Aesthetics Concentration Seminar, Fall 2015
Seminar Leader: Geoff Lehman
Course Times: Tuesday, 13:30-15:00 and Thursday, 13:30-15:00
Email: g.lehman@berlin.bard.edu

Course Description
This course will focus on the problem of pictorial representation in painting, drawing, and photography, considering the (material, structural) conditions that make representation possible, the relationship between pictorial representation and its “model” (whether object or experience) in the world and, perhaps most importantly, the range of experiences arising from the encounter between pictures and their viewers. All the principal topics for the course are ones that are important both within art historical discourse and as larger problems of human experience and (self-)knowledge: originality, nature, space and time, mood, materiality. The course will be guided throughout by sustained discussion of a small number of individual artworks. Among the artists whose works we will examine are Van Eyck, Raphael, Titian, Bruegel, Velázquez, Goya, Talbot, Monet, Atget, Picasso, Martin, Serra, and Sherman. Readings will focus on texts in art history and theory (Pater, Wölfflin, Riegl, Barthes, Krauss, Rosand), as well as primary sources (Alberti and Castiglione, early writings on photography and on Impressionism, selected lyric poems). Visits to Berlin museums to experience works of art firsthand are an integral part of the course.

Requirements
For this class attendance is mandatory, and active participation in discussions will be an essential part of the course. More than two absences (that is, absences from two sessions of 90 minutes) in a semester will significantly affect the grade for the course. Absences can only be excused if a medical note is submitted to the registrar’s office. Readings should be done in advance of the class for which they are assigned. There will be two visual analysis assignments: a midterm essay, 6-7 pages (2000-2300 words) in length, for which a choice of topics will be distributed in advance, and a final presentation and essay, on a topic to be chosen in consultation with me. That assignment will require an in-class presentation and an accompanying essay, 9-10 pages (3000-3300 words) in length, due at the end of the term. Please note the policy from the Student Handbook regarding late submission of essays.

Museum Visits
Five of our scheduled classes will be museum or gallery visits. Since it is not possible to go to a museum during our scheduled class time, each museum class will be on a weekend and will replace a regular Tuesday or Thursday class (usually from the preceding or following week). The midterm essay assignment will also require you to visit a museum independently to study a work of art in person.

Grade Breakdown
Class participation: 30%
Midterm essay: 25%
Final presentation and essay: 45% (presentation: 15%, essay: 30%)
Schedule

I. ORIGINALITY

Tuesday, September 1: Reproducibility and Uniqueness of the Work of Art
Alfred Stieglitz, Vermeer

Thursday, September 3: The Hand of the Artist
Raphael
Visual assignment: group presentations
Reading: Alberti, On Painting, Book II, selections
    Castiglione, The Book of the Courtier, Book I, selections

Saturday September 5: Performance / Substitution
Visit to the Gemäldegalerie
Reading: Alexander Nagel and Christopher Wood, Anachronic Renaissance, “Plural Temporality of the Work of Art”

Tuesday, September 8: Painting as Language
Pablo Picasso
Suggested reading: Clement Greenberg, Art and Culture, “Collage” Yve-Alain Bois, Painting as Model, “Kahnweiler’s Lesson”

Thursday, September 10: Representation and its Remainder
Cindy Sherman
Norman Bryson, “House of Wax”

II. NATURE

Tuesday, September 15: Mimesis
Jan Van Eyck, Rembrandt

Thursday, September 17
Rescheduled (museum classes)

Tuesday, September 22: Nature and Human Experience
Pieter Bruegel the Elder
Visual assignment: group presentations
Reading: Hesiod, Works and Days, ll. 383-694 (Nelson trans., pp. 84-94)
Thursday, September 24: Painting and Photography, I: London

**William Henry Fox Talbot, The Pre-Raphaelites**

Reading: Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, Chapters 1-3, 8-10, 18-20, and 35-36

Suggested reading (all in *Classic Essays on Photography*, ed. A. Trachtenberg):
- Louis Daguerre, “Daguerreotype”
- Hubert Damisch, “Five Notes for a Phenomenology of the Photographic Image”

Saturday, September 26: Painting and Photography, II: Paris

**Visit to the Alte Nationalgalerie (Edouard Manet, Claude Monet, Paul Cézanne)**

Reading: Edmond Duranty, *The New Painting*, selections
- Théodore Duret, *The Impressionist Painters*, selections
- Louis Leroy, “Exhibition of the Impressionists”
- Jules LaForgue, “Impressionism”

Suggested reading:
- Jonathan Crary, “Unbinding Vision”

Tuesday, September 29

Rescheduled (museum classes)

Thursday, October 1: Camera lucida

**Islamic and Christian sacred architecture**

Reading: Hans Belting, “Perspective: Arab Mathematics and Renaissance Western Art”
- Hans Belting, *Florence and Baghdad*, pp. 252-261 (“The Mashrabiyya as a Symbolic Form”)

III. SPACE AND TIME

Tuesday, October 6: The Rationalization of Space

**Cimabue, Giotto, Giovanni Bellini**

Visual assignment: group presentations

Suggested Reading: Erwin Panofsky, *Perspective as Symbolic Form*, sections 3 and 4

Thursday, October 8: Coordination and Subordination

**Rembrandt van Rijn**

Reading: Aloïs Riegl, “The Dutch Group Portrait,” pp. 3-20, 25-31

Saturday, October 10: Windows

**Visit to the Berggruen Museum (Henri Matisse, Pablo Picasso)**


Tuesday, October 13: Las Meninas, I

**Diego Velázquez**

Reading: Leo Steinberg, “Velázquez’ ‘Las Meninas’”

Thursday, October 15: Las Meninas, II

**Diego Velázquez, John Singer Sargent, Pablo Picasso**
Reading: Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things*, Chapter 1: “Las Meninas”

**Midterm essay due: 23:59 on Sunday, October 18**

FALL BREAK (October 19-23)

**IV. MOOD**

**Tuesday, October 27:** “The Condition of Music”
**Giorgione**
Reading: Walter Pater, *The Renaissance*, “The School of Giorgione”

**Thursday, October 29**
Rescheduled (museum classes)

**Sunday, November 1: *Ut pictura poesis***
**Visit to the Scharf-Gerstenberg Collection**
Reading: Selected poems (contributed by the group)

**Tuesday, November 3: Abstraction: An Alternative History**
**Francisco Goya y Lucientes, Kazimir Malevich, Mark Rothko**
Visual assignment: group presentations
Reading: André Malraux, *Saturn: An Essay on Goya*, selections

**Thursday, November 5: Atmosphere**
**Agnes Martin**
Reading: Rosalind Krauss, *Bachelors*, “Agnes Martin: The /Cloud/”

**V. MATERIALITY**

**Tuesday, November 10: Reflections, Traces, Commodities**
**Eugène Atget**
Reading: Walter Benjamin, “A Short History of Photography”
Suggested reading: Molly Nesbit, *Atget’s Seven Albums*, selections

**Thursday, November 12: Artist, Artwork, Viewer**
**Titian, Xia Gui**
Suggested reading: David Rosand, *The Invention of Painting in America*, “Subjects of the Artist”

**Tuesday, November 17: Paint, Picture, Object**
**Jackson Pollock, Jasper Johns**
Reading: Leo Steinberg, *Other Criteria*, “Jasper Johns: The First Seven Years of his Art”

**Thursday, November 19**
Rescheduled (museum classes)
Saturday, November 21: The Post-Medium Condition?
Visit to the Hamburger Bahnhof
Visual assignment: group presentations

Tuesday, November 24: Landscape / Land Art
Richard Serra, Walter De Maria
Reading: Yve-Alain Bois, “A Picturesque Stroll Around Clara-Clara”

Thursday, November 26
Rescheduled (museum classes)

STUDENT PRESENTATIONS
Tuesday, December 1
Thursday, December 3
Tuesday, December 8
Thursday, December 10

Final presentation essay due: 23:59 on Thursday, December 17