PHILOSOPHY AND PAINTING

Instructor: Peter Hajnal  
p.hajnal@bard.berlin.edu  
Office hours: Fridays 15:00-16:30 or by appointment  
Course times: M: 17:00 - 18:30, Th: 15:15 - 16:45  
Location: P98 Seminar Room 3

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Why do philosophers look at paintings, what happens when they do, and what can we learn from these encounters? In this course we will be studying classic examples of such philosophical readings, but we will also be looking at the paintings that these arguments invoke, and thinking about what it means to read them philosophically. Not only will this activity help us to understand better art-historians’ invocation (or rejection, as the case may be) of philosophical arguments, it will also lead us to think in interesting ways about what philosophical problems are in general. In turn, these multiple perspectives will enable us to think about the relationships between the aesthetic, critical, and historical modes of evaluation. But the most important aim of the course is to develop a practical understanding of what it means to look at a painting philosophically, and thereby to enrich our ability to engage with the artworks themselves.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Attendance  
Attendance is required at all classes. Lateness can ruin a class and will therefore not be tolerated.

Assessment and Writing Assignments  
Assessment for this course will be based on in-class presentations, preparation and participation, and writing.

Students will be required to write one mid-term and one final paper. Tutorials will be given both before and after the papers are due. Students will also be required to hold presentations on a regular basis (there will be one presentation per class). The number of presentations therefore depends on the number of participants.

The mid-term paper is due at the end of Week 8.  
The final paper is due at the end of week 14.
Each paper should be 5000 words long.

Policy on Late Submission of Papers
As the Student Handbook states, essays that are up to 24 hours late will be downgraded one full grade (from B+ to C+, for example). Instructors are not obliged to accept essays that are more than 24 hours late. Where an instructor agrees to accept a late essay, it must be submitted within four weeks of the deadline and cannot receive a grade of higher than C. Thereafter, the student will receive a failing grade for the assignment.

Grade Breakdown
The final grade for this course is based on the following breakdown:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presentations</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essays</td>
<td>50%</td>
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</tbody>
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SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND CLASSES

WEEK 1       Aug 31 - Sept 4
INTRODUCTION

M: Introduction
Th: Florence intro lecture
Sept. 5. SATURDAY: Visit to the Gemäldegalerie, I

WEEK 2       Sept 7 – Sept 11
PROBLEMS OF PERSPECTIVE

M:
Panofsky: Introductory to Studies in Iconology
Panofsky: ‘Artist, Scientist, Genius’
Th:
Panofsky: Perspective as Symbolic Form I. (entire text)

WEEK 3       Sept 14 – Sept 18
PROBLEMS OF PERSPECTIVE

M:
Perspective as Symbolic Form II.
Th:
Perspective as Symbolic form III.
Alberti: On Painting Bk. I.
WEEK 4  Sept 21 – Sept 25
PROBLEMS OF PERSPECTIVE

M:
Alberti On Painting Bks. II.&III.

Th:
Martin Jay: Scopic Regimes of Modernity
Bernard Berenson: Italian Painters of the Renaissance

Sept. 27. SUNDAY: Visit to the Gemäldegalerie, II

WEEK 5  Sept 28 – Oct 2
PAINTING AND FILM

M: Stanley Cavell: The World Viewed (selections)
Th: Stanley Cavell (cont.)+ Aldous Huxley: The Best Picture

WEEK 6  Oct 5 – Oct 9
PAINTING AND FILM

Stanley Cavell: Pursuits of Happiness (selections)
Andrei Tarkovsky: Sculpting in Time (selections)

WEEK 7  Oct 12 – Oct 16
DESCARTES AND THE BAROQUE

René Descartes: Discourse on Method; Meditations (selections)
Blaise Pascal: Pensées (selections)
E: Panofsky: Michelangelo and Neo Platonism (selections)

WEEK 8  Oct 19 – Oct 23
FALL BREAK

WEEK 9  Oct 25 – Oct 30
HEGEL AGAINST HERDER: THE CLASSICISM of MODERNISM
G.W.F. Hegel: Aesthetic Lectures (selections)

WEEK 10  Nov 2 – Nov 6
HEGEL AGAINST HERDER (cont.)
G.W.F. Hegel: Aesthetic Lectures (selections)
J.G. Herder: On Sculpture (selections)

WEEK 11  Nov 9 – Nov 13
PAINTING AND THE BOURGEOIS
Denis Diderot: Salons (selections)
J.P. Sartre: The Captive of Venice (selections)

WEEK 12 Nov 16 – Nov 20
PAINTING AND THE BOURGEOIS

Ortega y Gasset: The Dehumanization of Art; Man and Society (selections); The Revolt of the Masses (selections)

Wilhelm Worringer: Abstraction and Empathy

WEEK 13 Nov 23 – Nov 27
EMBODIED VISION

Merleau-Ponty’s Writings on Painting

WEEK 14 Nov 30 – Dec 4
EMBODIED VISION

Merleau-Ponty’s Writings on Painting

TBA: MUSEUM VISIT: Berggruen collection (Sartre on Giacometti)