

HUM 201: EXPLORING THE ARTS IN NYC

Spring Semester 2023

Tuesdays: 11:30 a.m. – 2:20 p.m.

Classroom: Thomas Hunter 414

Prof. Stephen Foglia

Instructor Office: Baker Theater Building, 1st Floor

Office hours by appointment

fs1035@hunter.cuny.edu

TA: Ian Robles

ianroblesyo@hotmail.com

SYLLABUS

Course description:

This course introduces students to the arts of New York City. As a group and individually we visit museums and galleries and attend theatre, dance, and music performances. Class sessions explore and develop ways of describing, engaging, evaluating, and questioning these varied cultural experiences.

Course methodology:

Readings and discussions will emphasize the social context of art in order to bring to the fore the ways in which the art and performances we experience together reflect issues pertinent to questions of identity and concern for today's artists and audience members. Our aim is to extend and deepen the insights, pleasures, and understandings the arts may have to offer.

Expected Learning Outcomes:

Students will:

- **Gather, interpret, and assess information from a variety of sources and points of view.** Students are required to attend various performances and art exhibitions. After reading primary source texts and critical essays relevant to a particular work, students write reflections in which they demonstrate their understanding of what they have seen/experienced on several analytic levels.
- **Evaluate evidence and arguments analytically.** Students are asked in their writing assignments and oral presentations to critically engage with the assigned readings and works of art. Throughout the semester, students must demonstrate their ability to analyze different kinds of artistic production not only in individual written assignments but also in creative assignments and class discussions.
- **Articulate how meaning is created in the arts or communications and how experience is interpreted and conveyed.** Students are required to identify the key characteristics of particular forms that constitute the varied artistic forms that are examined by the class throughout the semester. Throughout the course, students are asked to analyze the creative process on several different levels, as it is

experienced subjectively and also — with the help of reading assignments, lectures and class discussions — on aesthetic, historical, social, and political levels.

Course Objectives and Requirements

As you will see from the syllabus and accompanying course schedule, some of class time and some evenings will be spent out of the classroom experiencing artworks in and around the city— both as a class and individually. This course requires students' continuous engagement in diverse activities including creative expression, critical thinking and analytical writing. Students need to be prepared to share their views and ideas in both oral and written form about assigned readings, discussions of issues raised by performances, art exhibitions or public spaces visited.

Attendance

Since this course combines experiential learning, research and discussion, attendance is a critical factor. Attendance is expected **at every** class session and at all events scheduled outside the classroom. **Absence directly affects students' grades.** If a student must miss a class, he or she will notify the Professor in advance. If a class outing is missed, the student will make up attendance on their own time.

No cell phone use during class. Use of laptops and/or tablets is restricted to students who require them.

Attendance, Tardiness

- If you are 10 minutes late to class; you are marked LATE. Two tardies equal one absence.
- Three (3) absences and students fail the course.
- No late papers or assignments will be accepted.

Grading - ALL GRADES WILL BE POSTED ON COURSE BLACKBOARD SITE

- All Assignments 80%
- Participation 20%

Assignments Overview

All assignments are due in hard copy *at the beginning of class* on dates listed in Course Schedule.

Written Reflections:

You will write short essays reflecting on some of the works you experience throughout the semester. You must do the initial Writing About Art assignment. After that, you are required to do three more of your choice, each worth 15% of your final grade.

- Writing About Art (5%)

- Theatre (15%)
- Dance (15%)
- Film (15%)
- Music (15%)
- Other (15%)

Presentations:

- Janet Cardiff (15%)
- Final Presentation (20%)

Extra Credit Assignments:

Students may attend additional outside art exhibitions or performances with Instructor approval. These programs must be documented with a report emailed to the professor before the last class.

READINGS

Although there are many wonderful books on the topics we will be discussing, in the interest of flexibility (and mindful of textbook prices), all of our readings will be available electronically. Most will be available via Blackboard. Some may be emailed directly. Others you will be responsible for finding on your own.

Various electronic readings posted on Blackboard and/or handed out in class include:

- Aristotle. *The Poetics*. Translated by S.H. Butcher. 3 November 2008.
- Barnett, Sybil. *A Short Guide To Writing About Art*. Pearson, 2005.
- Benjamin, Walter. "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction." Translated by Harry Zohn. Schocken / Random House, 1936.
<https://www.marxists.org/reference/subject/philosophy/works/ge/benjamin.htm>
- Berger, Jon. "Uses of Photography." *About Looking*. NY: Pantheon Books, 1980.
- Bonanos, Christopher. "Documented: Absence of History." *Intelligencer*. 2018.
- Bradford, Mark. "The Detail." *Art in America*. Sept. 2014.
- Brewton, Vince. "Literary Theory." *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.
<https://www.iep.utm.edu/literary/>
- Culler, Jonathan. *Literary Theory: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford University Press, 1997.
- Czikszenmihalyi, Mihaly. *The Art of Seeing: An Interpretation of the Aesthetic Encounter*. CA: J. Paul Getty Museum, 1990. (excerpt)
- Fuchs, Elinor. "Visit to a Small Planet: Some Questions to Ask a Play." *Theater*. Vol 34, No 2. Summer 2004. Duke University Press.
- Jones, Will. *How To Read New York: A crash course in Big Apple architecture*. Ivy Press, 2012.
- Kimmelman, Michael, "The Art of the Pilgrimage" in *The Accidental Masterpiece: On the Art of Life and Vice Versa*. New York: Penguin Books, 2005.
- Klages, Mary. *Literary Theory: A Guide for the Perplexed*. Continuum, 2006.
- Pullman, Philip. "A Bar at the Folies-Bergère: Modernism and Storytelling." *Daemon Voices*. Penguin Random House, 2019.
- Reiss, Julie. "Introduction." In *From Margin to Center: The Spaces of Installation Art*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2001.

- Richter, David. *Falling Into Theory*. Bedford/St. Martin's, 2000.
- Scherstuhl, Alan. "Review Advice." PDF.
- Smith, Zadie. *Feel Free*. Penguin Books, 2018.

TRIGGER WARNING

As part of this course, we will be experiencing works of art representing viewpoints and situations that may be uncomfortable. In some cases, we will be seeing new work for which I cannot offer a thorough warning regarding all possible triggers. Feeling secure in your ultimate safety as you explore challenging subjects is important, and I encourage you, in cases where you are concerned, to reach out to the art institution in advance and to prepare yourself however necessary.

Relatedly, we will have to *talk* about the works of art that challenge and discomfort us, at times engaging with new topics as thorny as those represented in the art itself. Participation in these discussions is part of the class. We will conduct these conversations with sensitivity and care for ourselves and others.

ADA Statement:

In compliance with the ADA and with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Hunter College is committed to ensuring educational access and accommodations for all its registered students. Hunter College's students with disabilities and medical conditions are encouraged to register with the Office of AccessABILITY for assistance and accommodation. For information and appointment contact the Office of AccessABILITY located in Room E1214 or call (212) 772-4857 /or VRS (646) 755-3129.

Hunter College Policy on Academic Integrity:

Hunter College regards acts of academic dishonesty (e.g., plagiarism, cheating on examinations, obtaining unfair advantage, and falsification of records and official documents) as serious offenses against the values of intellectual honesty. Hunter College is committed to enforcing the CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity and will pursue cases of academic dishonesty according to the Hunter College Academic Integrity Procedures.

Hunter College Policy on Sexual Misconduct:

In compliance with the CUNY Policy on Sexual Misconduct, Hunter College reaffirms the prohibition of any sexual misconduct, which includes sexual violence, sexual harassment, and gender-based harassment retaliation against students, employees, or visitors, as well as certain intimate relationships. Students who have experienced any form of sexual violence on or off campus (including CUNY-sponsored trips and events) are entitled to the rights outlined in the Bill of Rights for Hunter College.

a. Sexual Violence: Students are strongly encouraged to immediately report the incident by calling 911, contacting NYPD Special Victims Division Hotline (646-610-7272) or their local police precinct, or contacting the College's Public Safety Office (212-772-4444).

b. All Other Forms of Sexual Misconduct: Students are also encouraged to contact the College's Title IX Campus Coordinator, Dean John Rose (jtrose@hunter.cuny.edu or 212-650-3262) or Colleen Barry (colleen.barry@hunter.cuny.edu or 212-772-4534) and seek complimentary services through the Counseling and Wellness Services Office, Hunter East 1123.

CUNY Policy on Sexual Misconduct Link:

<http://www.cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/la/Policy-on-Sexual-Misconduct-12-1-14-with-links.pdf>

COURSE SCHEDULE

JAN 31 - FIRST CLASS

Introductions, Syllabus Distribution
Group reading activity (Pullman, Smith)

FEB 7 - SECOND CLASS

Close-looking exercise
Discuss reading
Short presentations about works of art you care about
ASSIGNMENT DUE: Writing About Art
READING DUE: Barnett, Bradford, Czikszenmihalyi (skim), Smith
OPTIONAL READING DUE: one of the Literary Theory readings

FEB 14 - THIRD CLASS

DAYTIME CLASS OUTING - Pace Gallery

Meet at 12pm

540 W 25th Street

READING DUE: Szarkowski, Mitter

FEB 21 - NO CLASS (college following Monday schedule)

NO CLASS

FEB 22 - WEDNESDAY CONFIRM ATTENDANCE BY NOON FEBRUARY 11

AFTERNOON/EVENING OUTING: *In the Mood for Love* at Metrograph

Address: 7 Ludlow St, NY, NY 10002

Screening at 4:15pm, please arrive by 4pm

FEB 28 - FOURTH CLASS

Discuss Movie
Film lecture
ASSIGNMENT DUE: Visual Art reflection

MAR 7 - FIFTH CLASS

Film workshop Pt 1 and Pt 2
ASSIGNMENT DUE: Film Reflection

MAR 14 - SIXTH CLASS

DAYTIME CLASS OUTING - Dance Workshop at Thomas Hunter 520

Meet at Thomas Hunter 520 at the beginning of class, dressed in comfortable clothing.

Brief theater lecture

READING DUE: Aristotles Poetics (sections VI-XI, XIII-XVII; about 11 pages in total)

MAR 16 - THURSDAY

THEATER OUTING - Public Obscenities

Meet at 46 Walker Street at 7:00pm

MAR 21 - SEVENTH CLASS

MEET IN BAKER 430

Follow-up theater lecture. Visit from playwright/director Misha Chowdhury

Theater workshop with Ian Robles

MARCH 24 - FRIDAY

EVENING DANCE OUTING - Bereishit Dance at NYU Skirball Center

Meet at 566 LaGuardia Place at 7pm

MAR 28 - EIGHTH CLASS

Discuss Theater and Dance

ASSIGNMENT DUE: Theater Reflection

APRIL 4 - NINTH CLASS - NO CLASS

No class to make-up for the two double-activity weeks in March

ASSIGNMENT DUE: Dance Reflection (please share with me via Google doc or Microsoft 365

NOT a pdf)

APRIL 11 - NO CLASS (Spring Break)

NO CLASS

ASSIGNMENT DUE: Experience *Her Long Black Hair* by Spring Break at latest*

**note that you can experience Her Long Black Hair any time you want, just pick a day with decent weather for your own sake.*

APRIL 18 - TENTH CLASS

Cardiff project showings

ASSIGNMENT DUE: Cardiff project

APRIL 25 - ELEVENTH CLASS

Jazz lecture

READING: Coker, Copland, Richards

MAY 2 - TWELFTH CLASS

Final Presentations
ASSIGNMENT DUE: Final presentation

MAY 3 - WEDNESDAY

EVENING MUSIC OUTING: Noah Garabedian Quarter at Jazz Gallery

Meet at 1158 Broadway at 7pm

MAY 9 - THIRTEENTH CLASS

Final Presentations

MAY 16 - LAST CLASS

Wrap-up discussion, surveys

ASSIGNMENT DUE: Music Reflection