Introduction to Modern Art  
Yale College Summer Session 2020  
Session B: June 29-July 31, 2020

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Course Description

This course offers an introduction to the major artists and movements within modern art from approximately 1880 to 1950. We will engage the concept of modernism and the formation of modern art as an art historical category through a global, cross-cultural perspective. The course proceeds chronologically, aiming to trace conceptual through-lines as well as disjunctures. Students will develop skills in close visual observation and analysis through class discussion and gallery visits. Significant portions of each session will be dedicated to engaging with objects in the collections of the Yale University Art Gallery, the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, and major modern art museums. These explorations will familiarize students with the Yale collections websites and tools for digital research and engagement with art. The course includes time for individual observation, group discussion, and writing exercises designed to encourage close looking. Writing assignments will familiarize students with the process of art historical research, emphasizing object-based inquiry.

Course Requirements and Assignments

There are no prerequisites for taking this class.

Participation (20%): Per Yale Summer Session policy, no unexcused absences are permitted. Students are expected to actively participate in each session. Readings should be completed prior to each class, and students should be prepared to engage in discussion in class and gallery visits. For each meeting, two students will present on one work of art each. These presentations will help outline topics for class discussion, as well as offering the chance to synthesize the readings through concrete examples.

Short papers (30%): Each student will turn in two short response papers (2-3 pages) based on class discussions and gallery visits. For each paper, students will put a single artwork from the Yale University Art Gallery collection into conversation with one of the keywords or concepts we have covered in class. Writing exercises during class and gallery visits will help students generate ideas and drafts. **The first paper will be due in Class 3, and the second will be due in Class 7.**

Midterm examination (20%): The midterm will include a slide ID section and a short answer section. For slide IDs, students are expected to identify the title, date, and artist of the work
shown. Short answer questions will address major concepts covered in the course. **The midterm will be given during the first half of Class 5.**

Final paper (30%): 5-6 page research paper. This paper will expand upon one of the short response papers produced earlier in the course. Rather than selecting a brand new topic, students will use the visual analysis conducted in the earlier paper as a basis for creating a research question. This assignment is designed to help students become more comfortable with the process of art historical writing. It is also meant to emphasize the importance of revision. **Due at the start of Class 10.**

**Major Texts**

Students will read selections from *Art Since 1900*, Volume 1, as well as a number of primary sources. All readings will be provided on Canvas.

**Conduct:**

No phones in the classroom. You may use your laptop to refer to readings.
Be respectful and mindful of others.
Help facilitate a collaborative environment. Notice your own habits in terms of participation.
Be on time. Multiple late arrivals will impact your final grade.

**Plagiarism**

The strength of the university depends on academic and personal integrity. In this course, you must be honest and truthful. Plagiarism is the use of someone else’s work, words, or ideas as if they were your own. Here are three reasons not to do it:

- By far the deepest consequence to plagiarizing is the detriment to your intellectual and moral development: you won’t learn anything, and your ethics will be corrupted.
- Giving credit where it’s due but adding your own reflection will get you higher grades than putting your name on someone else’s work. In an academic context, it counts more to show your ideas in conversation than to try to present them as *sui generis*.
- Finally, Yale punishes academic dishonesty severely. The most common penalty is suspension from the university, but students caught plagiarizing are also subject to lowered or failing grades as well as the possibility of expulsion. Please be sure to review [Yale’s Academic Integrity Policy](#).

You can find a fuller discussion of using sources and avoiding plagiarism on the [Writing Center Website](#).
1. Introduction | Photography and new ways of seeing

*Introduction to Yale University Art Gallery Website and Collections*

2. Realism, Impressionism, Post-Impressionism

Charles Baudelaire, “The Painter of Modern Life”

*Selected works from Yale University Art Gallery*

3. Expressionism in France and Germany

*Art Since 1900*, pp. 52-57; 64-70; 70-78; 85-90

*Selected from Yale University Art Gallery*

4. Cubism | Harlem Renaissance

*Art Since 1900*, pp. 78-85; 106-118


*Selected works from Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library*: Harlem Renaissance materials

5. Midterm Exam | Modernism in Jamaica


6. Mexican Muralism | Latin American Modernism

Manifesto of the Union of Mexican Workers

*Art Since 1900*, pp. 255-260

*Selected works from Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library*: Art of Latin America Since Independence Photograph Collection

7. Futurism, Suprematism, De Stijl

“The Futurist Manifesto”

*Art Since 1900*, pp. 90-100; 130-135; 148-154

*Selected works from Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library*: Katherine S. Dreier Papers

8. Dada, Surrealism

*Art Since 1900*, pp. 135-142; 168-174; 190-196; 212-216; 250-255

*Selected works from Yale University Art Gallery*

9. Modern Architecture


*Art Since 1900*, pp. 196-202
9. Bauhaus, Socialist Realism, Constructivism
Art Since 1900, pp. 174-180; 185-190; 208-212; 260-266

Selected works from Yale University Art Gallery

10. Afrmodernism
Art Since 1900, pp. 302-308

Selected works from Yale University Art Gallery