

UNDERSTANDING ART

Course Information

AHST 2331.002

Fall, 2015

Tues. & Thurs., 11:30am-12:45pm, ATC 1.102

Professor Contact Information

Dr. Richard Brettell

Email: brettell@utdallas.edu

Office: ATC 2.842

James Rodriguez (Ph.D. candidate, Yale U.)

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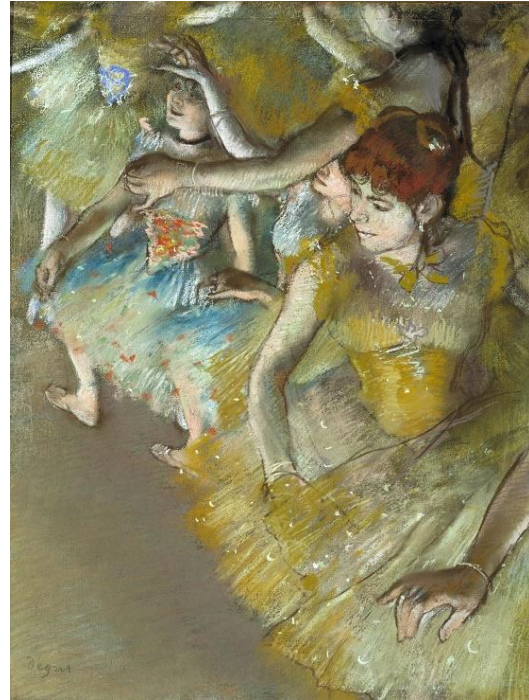
Office: ATC 2.830

Office Hours: Tues., 1:00-2:00pm, or by appointment

(JAMES IS YOUR PRIMARY CONTACT FOR THIS COURSE. PLEASE DIRECT YOUR QUESTIONS TO HIM VIA E-MAIL.)

Teaching Assistants

Tyler Cochran, Virginia Curry, Fatima Tashakori



THIS SYLLABUS IS YOUR CONTRACT WITH THE PROFESSORS. IT CAN ANSWER MANY QUESTIONS YOU HAVE ABOUT OUR COURSE. PLEASE READ IT CAREFULLY.

WITH THE EXCEPTION OF BOTTLED WATER, NO FOOD OR DRINK IS ALLOWED IN THE LECTURE HALL, ATC 1.102—NO EXCEPTIONS!

Course Description

The course will look at and discuss in detail art objects (including paintings, sculpture, works of furniture and additional examples) from history, beginning with antiquity and extending to the age of digital art. Each lecture, we will focus on art objects from locally accessible collections, including the Dallas Museum of Art, the Kimbell Art Museum, the Crow Collection of Asian Art, and others. In addition to familiarizing students with objects housed at these collections, we will investigate the nature of the visual arts over a wide period of history. We will emphasize the issues and ideas that artists explore through their work and how these ideas translate into artworks. We will give attention to the interpretation of artworks and how they relate both to their respective original contexts and to their context today.

Course Pre-requisites: None

Student Learning Objectives

- Students will demonstrate a familiarity with both majors artistic trends from antiquity and up to today, as well as monuments associated with these trends.
- Through faithful attendance at lecture and regular recording of one's impressions of art works in a journal, students will demonstrate an ability to analyze and discuss cogently works of art using art-historical methods, including stylistic analysis and relation to wider social patterns.

- Students will demonstrate an ability to express in written and spoken language their impressions and ideas of art works, which they can extend to analyses in related Humanities courses, including History, Literature, Philosophy, etc.
- Students will gauge for themselves to what extent art can pave a dependable path into historical inquiry.

Required Textbooks & Materials

- *Dallas Museum of Art: A Guide to the Collection*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012.
- D. DeWitte, R. Larmann and M. Shields. *Gateways to Art: Understanding the Visual Arts*. New York: Thames & Hudson, 2012.
- George Kubler. *The Shape of Time: Remarks on the History of Things*. Revised edition. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008.

The texts *Gateways to Art* and *Shape of Time* include the reading assignments. The guidebook to the Dallas Museum of Art has many of the artworks we will look at in lecture, and it will prove useful when studying for quizzes and the final exam. All three texts are on reserve at the circulation desk in the University's Eugene McDermott Library; they are available to check out for a two-hour period. Please purchase also a notebook with the pages firmly bound (a lab book will work best). This notebook will serve as your "art journal" and that you will submit to your Teaching Assistant throughout the semester (for more on this "art journal," see the section below entitled "Grading Policies").

Readings & Academic Calendar

LECTURE 1: August 25

Introduction to the course

LECTURE 2: August 27

Museums in Europe, America and North Texas

LECTURE 3: September 1

Ancient Worlds: China, Korea and Japan. Reading: *Gateways to Art*, pp. 26-43, 336-344

LECTURE 4: September 3

Ancient Worlds: India. Reading: *Gateways to Art*, pp. 46-61, 332-336

LECTURE 5: September 8

Ancient Worlds: Near East and Egypt. Reading: *Gateways to Art*, pp. 62-75, 298-304

LECTURE 6: September 10

Ancient Worlds: Greece. Reading: *Gateways to Art*, pp. 76-91, 304-309

LECTURE 7: September 15

Ancient Worlds: The Roman Empire. Reading: *Gateways to Art*, pp. 106-115, 309-312

LECTURE 8: September 17

Ancient Worlds: South America. Reading: *Gateways to Art*, pp. 116-127, 348-53

LECTURE 9: September 22

Ancient Worlds: Meso-America. Reading: *Gateways to Art*, pp. 128-135, 353-360

September 24

FREE DAY TO VISIT LOCAL COLLECTIONS. Begin *The Shape of Time*, Chapters I and II, pp. 1-61

LECTURE 10: September 29

Medieval & Renaissance Worlds: Western Europe. Reading: *Gateways to Art*, pp. 260-71, 320-328

LECTURE 11: October 1

Medieval Worlds: Asia. Reading: *Gateways to Art*, pp. 142-151, pp. 332-344

SUBMIT YOUR ART JOURNAL TODAY!

LECTURE 12: October 6

Medieval Worlds: Islam. Guest lecture by Dr. Sabiha Al Khemir on Islamic art in the Keir Collection at the Dallas Museum of Art. Reading: *Gateways to Art*, pp. 61, 316, 320, 335-336

LECTURE 13: October 8

Colonial & Early Modern Worlds: The Netherlands. Reading: *Gateways to Art*, 166-79; 393-96

LECTURE 14: October 13

Colonial & Early Modern Worlds: Imperial France. Reading: *Gateways to Art*, pp. 403-405; 520-529

LECTURE 15: October 15

Colonial & Early Modern Worlds: Imperial Spain and Portugal. Reading: *Gateways to Art*, pp. 180-191

LECTURE 16: October 20

Continental Colonialism: The Americas of Spain and Portugal. Reading: *Gateways to Art*, pp. 470-483

October 22

FREE DAY TO VISIT LOCAL COLLECTIONS. Finish reading *The Shape of Time*, Chapters III and IV, pp. 62-122

LECTURE 17: October 27

Continental Colonialism: The Americas of the British and French. NO READING.

LECTURE 18: October 29

The American Democratic Experience: Art from 1800 to 1900. Reading: *Gateways to Art*, pp. 212-221

LECTURE 19: November 3

The European Democratic Experience: Art in France, from Revolution to Revolution, 1789-1848. Reading: *Gateways to Art*, pp. 405-408, 542-553

LECTURE 20: November 5

Tribal Arts in Colonial Times: Africa. Reading: *Gateways to Art*, 364-69, 484-492

SUBMIT YOUR ART JOURNAL TODAY!

LECTURE 21: November 10

Tribal Arts in Colonial Times: New Guinea and Indonesia. Reading: *Gateways to Art*, 370-374

LECTURE 22: November 12

Asian Art in Colonial Times. Reading: *Gateways to Art*, review pp. 332-344

LECTURE 23: November 17

Modern Art: Paris in the Second Empire. Reading: *Gateways to Art*, 408-417

LECTURE 24: November 19

Modern Art: European Artistic Capitals beyond France. Reading: *Gateways to Art*, 417-420

FALL BREAK, NOVEMBER 23-27: NO CLASS!

LECTURE 25: December 1

Modern Art: Paris as Europe, 1900-1930. Reading: *Gateways to Art*, 422-438

LECTURE 26: **December 3—CLASS MEETS TODAY IN SOM 1.118**

Attempts at American Artistic Hegemony: The New York School, 1945-1970. Reading: *Gateways to Art*, pp. 241-247, 438-450

LECTURE 27: **December 8—CLASS MEETS TODAY IN CN 1.112**

All Over the Map: The Contemporary Global/Digital Age. Reading: *Gateways to Art*, pp. 204-211; 578-589
SUBMIT YOUR ART JOURNALS TODAY!

Grading Policies

A student's grade is dependent upon an art journal (worth 75%), the final exam (worth 25%), and several pop-quizzes given throughout the term.

For the duration of the semester, each student must keep an "art journal." On Thursday of each week (not including the first week of the term), you will receive an e-mail with a question and/or line of discussion that draws on the reading assignments and material covered in lecture that week. You are expected to write meaningful responses to these questions; they will require you to think and look critically at the art, as well as to address the question itself. You might even visit the actual collection to see "face to face" the objects about which you are asked to write. The Teaching Assistants will grade your art journal based on whether the entries are focused, coherent and speak to the prompt. Although there is no limit to your creativity and analysis, each response must not exceed two pages and should be at least one page in length. You will submit this art journal on three different occasions (October 1, November 5 and December 8), and it will be returned to you the following Thursday. On the submission dates, please bring your art journal to lecture.

If you cannot attend lecture on a day when art journals must be submitted, you have until 2:00pm that day to submit your journal to Mr. Rodriguez in his office, ATC 2.830, which is located in the Edith O'Donnell Institute of Art History, located on the second floor of the Arts & Technology building (ATC 2.800). If your art journal is not submitted by this time, it is late and you will receive a zero for that round of art-journal submissions. **YOU MUST SUBMIT YOUR ART JOURNAL BY 2:00PM ON THE DAY IT IS DUE OR YOU WILL RECEIVE A ZERO—NO EXCEPTIONS!**

THE ART JOURNAL CONSTITUTES 75% OF YOUR GRADE, SO IT IS VITAL TO KEEP UP WITH READINGS AND TO ATTEND LECTURE. DO NOT PUT OFF TO THE LAST MINUTE WRITING RESPONSES.

The final exam constitutes 25% of your grade. **The exam will take place on Saturday, December 12, beginning at 2:00pm and it will run until 4:45pm; it will be held in HH 2.402.**

On three separate and unannounced occasions, there will be a pop-quiz on both a recent lecture and the reading assignment for the day on which the quiz is given. If you complete the readings and attend lecture faithfully, you will do well on these quizzes. Each of the first two quizzes will consist of three questions, whereas the third quiz will have four questions; each question will be worth one point. A student can score a maximum of three points on each of the first two quizzes and a maximum of four points on the third quiz. A student can score a minimum

of zero points for each quiz. At the end of the term, your pop-quiz scores will be added to your final numerical grade, thereby offering the possibility of raising your grade. These pop-quizzes can only help your final grade. **UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES WILL THE PROFESSOR OR TEACHING ASSISTANTS GIVE A MAKE-UP QUIZ.**

Student Services on Campus

If you find you need help getting started with your responses for the art journal, please contact James Rodriguez and schedule an appointment. If you struggle with writing in general and/or you'd like to better your prose, UT Dallas has an excellent writing center with a professional staff trained to help undergraduate students improve their writing skills. **THE WRITING CENTER IS LOCATED IN MCDERMOTT LIBRARY, rm. 1.206.** More information on the Writing Center is available at the following link:
<http://www.utdallas.edu/studentsuccess/writing/>

UT Dallas offers aid and/or services to students with disabilities. The website for UTD Student AccessAbility reads: "In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, the Office of Student AccessAbility (OSA) provides equal access to educational programs and safeguards against discrimination for qualified students with disabilities as defined by the ADA." If you will need assistance in response to a disability, please make an appointment with Mr. Rodriguez (jxr024000@utdallas.edu) and, most importantly, make a separate appointment with the Office of Student Affairs. **Acquiring necessary accommodations for a disability is the responsibility of the student.** Please see the following website for more information: <https://www.utdallas.edu/studentaccess/guidelines/>

Course and Instructor Policies

- Students are NOT expected to have a background or specialized knowledge in the historical periods and/or regions covered, but they are expected to bring their attention and perspectives to bear on the material.
- **Attendance is required.** Only by attending lecture and completing all assigned readings will students be able to complete the course's written component and perform well on the final exam and quizzes.
- Class begins at 11:30am sharp! If you must be late, please enter quietly.
- Please direct questions related to the course primarily to Mr. Rodriguez (jxr024000@utdallas.edu), and he will respond in a timely manner. A student will receive a response to an email within twenty-four hours of its delivery.
- **PLEASE DO NOT TEXT OR USE YOUR PHONE IN LECTURE.** It is disrespectful to everyone around you.

Student Code of Conduct

According to the UTD online Student Code of Conduct (<http://policy.utdallas.edu/utdsp5003>), under Subchapter C, section 49.10, plagiarism is "the adoption or reproduction of ideas, words, statements, images or works of another person as one's own without proper acknowledgment." An act of plagiarism, as well as acts of cheating, collusion and/or fabrication warrant disciplinary action, typically a failing mark for the assignment/course. The act will be reported to the Dean of Arts & Humanities, and it may result in a student's suspension or expulsion from the University. The work you submit for this course must be a product of your own time, thinking, research, creativity, writing and rewriting.

These descriptions, policies and timelines are subject to change at the professor's discretion.