

## *Course Syllabus*

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### **Course Information**

PHIL 4325 PHILOSOPHICAL AESTHETICS

Charles Bambach

FALL 2019 TUES-THURS. 11:30 AM -12:45 PM. JO 3.536

### **Professor Contact Information**

My office hours, in JO 5.416, are from 3:00 PM- 4:00 PM on Tuesday and by appointment; the phone number is 972-883-2006. My e-mail address is: [cbambach@utdallas.edu](mailto:cbambach@utdallas.edu)

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### **Course Description**

Within the history of philosophy, traditional metaphysics has defined the work of art as a beautiful “object;” as a re-presentation of the ideal (mimesis); as an instantiation of the “good”, the “true” or the eternally valid; as the culmination of the ideal forms of perception that involve both the senses and the the mind in a unity that affords us a pathway into an eternal order of harmony, grace, and the sublime. For the Greeks, *aisthesis* simply means “perception”—a way that the senses organize and interpret the forces of the natural world. “Art,” then, emerges out of this manner of thinking as the most graceful manner of perceiving an order of nature---but ever tethered to a metaphysical understanding of all that is in terms of “subject” and “object” analysis. Modern German philosophy has, however, offered its own transformative critique of this metaphysical tradition and has understood the work of art less in terms of “perception,” “mind,” or “representation” than as “performance”---one that involves us in a hermeneutic relation to the world. And it is in terms of art as an engaged, performative enactment of our interpretation of the world that this course is organized. Art happens, Heidegger tells us, not as a form of “re”-presentation, but as a founding leap that opens up a world, one where being emerges out its concealment into the openness of originary truth. Our focus this semester will be on how this metaphysical tradition breaks down under the assault of the Nietzschean-Heideggerian critique of metaphysics. Yet one of the essential questions I which to raise in this seminar is the ethical significance of the work of art. In what sense can we speak of art as an ethical act?

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### **Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes**

Students will learn interpretive skills in reading texts with care, improve their writing ability, and gain a rudimentary knowledge of philosophical approaches to tragedy, poetry, and justice.

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### **Required Textbooks and Materials**

The following editions are REQUIRED. You may find them at Off Campus Books, and commercially. It is imperative that you purchase the EXACT editions of these texts and NOT just any translation of these works.

- Immanuel Kant, **The Critique of Judgment** (Oxford World Classics) ISBN-10: 0199552460 ISBN-13: 978-0199552467
- G.W.F. Hegel, **Introductory Lectures on Aesthetics** (Penguin Classics) ISBN-10: 014043335X ISBN-13: 978-0140433357
- Friedrich Nietzsche, **The Birth of Tragedy** (Cambridge University Press) ISBN-10: 0521639875 ISBN-13: 978-0521639873
- Martin Heidegger, **Basic Writings** (Harper Perennial) ISBN-10: 0061627011 ISBN-13: 978-0061627019
- Walter Benjamin, **The Work of Art in the Age of its Technical Reproducibility and Other Writings on Media** (Harvard University Press) ISBN 9780674024458

### **Suggested Course Materials**

Robert Wicks, *European Aesthetics*

Andrew Bowie, *Introduction to German Philosophy: Kant to Habermas*

Kai Hammermeister, *The German Aesthetic Tradition*

Eva Geulen, *The End of Art*

Dennis Schmidt, *Of Germans and Other Greeks*

Harald Seubert, *Ästhetik-Die Frage nach dem Schönen*

Walter Schulz, *Metaphysik des Schwebens: Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der Ästhetik*

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## **Assignments & Academic Calendar**

20 August: Course introduction

22-27-29 August + 3 September: Kant, **The Critique of Judgment** , pp. **35-54; 62-66; 71-108; 115-125**

5-10-12-17 September: Hegel, **Introductory Lectures on Aesthetics**, pp. **3-61** (+ Commentary)

19-24-26 September + 1 October: Nietzsche, **The Birth of Tragedy**

### **1 OCTOBER TAKE HOME ESSAY DUE**

3-8-10-15-17-22-24-29 October: Heidegger, “Origin of the Work of Art” in: **Basic Writings**, pp. **139-212**

31 October + 5-7-12-14-19-21 November + 3 December: Walter Benjamin, **The Work of Art in the Age of its Technical Reproducibility**, pp. **19-55 + pp. (TBA)**

**5 DECEMBER: FINAL ESSAYS DUE in my office by 2PM.**

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### **Grading Policy**

Course requirements include **TWO ESSAYS** –the first 4-5pp. essay (30%); the second 6-8 pp. essay (50%); **ONE IN-CLASS PROTOKOLL** (10%) & Class Participation (10%). Classroom participation based on quality of insight and **ATTENDANCE**. **ATTENDANCE WILL BE NOTED AND STUDENTS WHO MISS 6 OR MORE CLASSES WILL BE DROPPED AT LEAST A FULL GRADE.** Students will be expected to read the texts for each class and be prepared to discuss them. Since we will be discussing the language and form of each text we read, **STUDENTS WILL BE EXPECTED TO BRING THEIR TEXTS TO CLASS FOR EACH SESSION.**

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### **Course & Instructor Policies**

You cannot hope to pass this class if you do not attend it and complete all of the required work. **I DO NOT ACCEPT LATE PAPERS.** This course will be conducted according to strict codes of academic honesty. All cases of plagiarism will be fully investigated and the deliberate instances reported to the Dean of Students. Penalties for deliberate cheating may include failing the assignment in question, failing the course, or suspension and expulsion from the University. Students are expected to know the University's policies and procedures on such matters, as well as those governing student services, conduct, and obligations.

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### **Academic Integrity**

The faculty expects from its students a high level of responsibility and academic honesty. Because the value of an academic degree depends upon the absolute integrity of the work done by the student for that degree, it is imperative that a student demonstrate a high standard of individual honor in his or her scholastic work. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, statements, acts or omissions related to applications for enrollment or the award of a degree, and/or the submission as one's own work or material that is not one's own. As a general rule, scholastic dishonesty involves one of the following acts: cheating, plagiarism, collusion and/or falsifying academic records. Students suspected of academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary proceedings.

Plagiarism, especially from the web, from portions of papers for other classes, and from any other source is unacceptable and will be dealt with under the university's policy on plagiarism (see general catalog for details). This course will use the resources of turnitin.com, which searches the web for possible plagiarism and is over 90% effective.

***These descriptions and timelines are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.***