

263 PHILOSOPHY AND THE ARTS

Rutgers University—Spring 2015
Scott Hall 116
M-W 1.10-2.30 p.m.

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Office hours: by appointment
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This course analyzes a number of responses, past and contemporary, to one of the most discussed questions in philosophical aesthetics, namely, the question of what counts as work of art. We will consider various interpretations and solutions, but we will also reflect on the validity of the question itself, and on whether the question of the definition of art is truly central to the analysis and appreciation of artworks.

The first part of the semester will be dedicated to some of the most prominent theories and definitions of art: from Plato's attack and Aristotle's defense of the arts to recent "historical" and "institutional" accounts. We will then move to a number of critical issues such as art and perception, the ethical value of art, art and the public and political sphere, art and narrative, art and popular culture, film as the art of moving images, etc.

By the end of the semester you should be able to critically analyze artworks and to highlight their main features and specificities. If all goes well, you might even be able to respond to our initial, and absolutely compelling question.

Textbook: Goldblatt & Brown eds. (2010). *A Reader in the Philosophy of the Arts*, Third Edition. New Jersey: Pearson, Prentice Hall + [Readings and PowerPoint Presentations on Sakai \(*\)](#)

Requirements and Evaluation

Participation and Attendance

Curiosity for the arts is, in philosophy of art, an implicit requirement. Participation in class discussion is crucial, but so is the possibility of raising concerns, and the introduction of works of art that you find particularly meaningful. The "Artworld" moves at an incredibly fast speed: you are encouraged to explore new horizons and to suggest new topics for discussion. Pop up quizzes might be assigned to assess your familiarity with the readings (15%)

Response Papers

There will be 2 short writing assignments (1000 to 1500). Topics will be assigned during the semester. Your essays should be well written and informed by the readings. Grading criteria for essay writing: Clarity (0-15); Organization (0-15); Originality (0-10); Familiarity with the text (0-20); Comprehension (0-20); Analysis (0-20). (10% each)

Exams

There will be a Midterm and a Final exam. Both exams will be preceded by a review session. Please note that the final exam will be cumulative. (20% each)

Research Paper + Presentation

You will be asked to select a topic according to your personal interests and to develop a research paper (at least 2000 words). Your paper should reflect class discussion, but also introduce your own critical standpoint. The paper will be anticipated by an in-class presentation (approximately 20 minutes). (25% - 20% paper 5% presentation)

Grading scale and standards

A	Excellent		A 100-94	A- 93-90
B	Good	B+ 89-87	B 86-84	B- 83-80
C	Acceptable	C+ 79-77	C 76-74	C- 73-70
D	Poor	D+ 69-67	D 66-64	D- 63-60
F	Failure	Below 60		

*The student has to fulfill ALL requirements in order to receive a passing grade.

**The instructor is not responsible for 'lost' material. It is the student's responsibility to keep all returned graded assignments.

***The instructor reserves the right to depart from the mathematical average in determining a final letter grade. I may adjust your grade upwards depending on commitment, interest in the subject, and other similar factors. I may also adjust the grade downwards depending on the lack of such factors.

Policies

1. Participation and Attendance

I will take attendance at the beginning of each class. Attendance and participation are essential and will be considered in your final grade. You can miss up to three classes (unexcused); further absences will result in a grade penalty and might lead to your dismissal from the class.

Note: lateness of more than 10 minutes will be considered as an absence.

2. Electronic Devices

All electronic devices must be turned off and stored out of sight, while class is in session. Anyone caught using any electronic device during an exam session, will receive an F for the exam. Recording devices might be allowed, but you have to ask me for permission.

3. Late Assignments, Make up policies, and Extra credit

- At home assignments: Assignments submitted after the due date **will not** be accepted. If you are unable to attend class you must email me the assignment prior to class.
- Make-up exams are allowed **ONLY IF** I am notified in advance of the student's inability to attend class on the day of the exam and **ONLY IF** the reason for absence is due to medical/family emergency or academic conflict and the student can provide appropriate form of documentation.

SAKAI: It is your responsibility to check Sakai on a regular basis.

ACADEMIC HONESTY: All forms of academic dishonesty, namely, cheating on exams, submitting plagiarized work from another person's book or website, or engaging in any kind of deception will be dealt with in a strict manner (minimally failing the course).

Class Schedule

- *Reading the assigned texts prior to class is not only a requirement; it is essential to your understanding of the class.*
- *This is a tentative schedule: eventual changes to the present schedule, exams, and announcements will be announced in class and posted on Sakai.*

01/21 Introduction to the course

Classical Sources: Ancient, Modern, and Contemporary

01/26 Plato, *Against Imitation*, 4.
Plato, *Ion*, 258.
Aristotle, *On Tragedy*, 265.

01/28 Hume, *Of The Standard of Taste*, 399.
Burke, *The Sublime*, 404.
Kant, *Judgments about the Beautiful*, 406.

02/02 Hegel, *The Philosophy of Fine Art*, 410.
Hegel, *Lectures on Aesthetics* *

02/04 Bell, *Form in Modern Painting*, 17.
Greenberg, *On Modernist Paintings*, 23.

02/09 Danto, *Works of Art and Mere Real Things*, 33.
Danto, *Three Decades After the End of Art* *
Carroll, *The End of Art?* *

02/11 Terry Smith, *Art and Contemporaneity**
*October Anthology, Art Since 1900**

Art as Experience

02/16 Dewey, *Art as Experience*, 414.
Merleau Ponty, *The Eye and the Mind* *

02/18 Dutton, *Aesthetics and Evolutionary Psychology**
Davies, *The Artful Species* *

02/23 Prinz, *Emotions and Aesthetic Value* *

02/25 Review + **FIRST PAPER DUE**

Architecture and Public Art

03/02 Midterm Exam

03/04 Scruton, *The Problem of Architecture*, 115.

Langer, *Virtual Space*, 119.

Venturi, *Architecture as Decorated Shelter*, 130.

03/09 Zuidervaart, *Art in the Public Sphere* *

Neill and Ridley eds, *Arguing About Art* (excerpts from *Public Art*): The Case of Tilted Arc *

Philosophy of Film

03/11 Benjamin, *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, 66.

03/16 - 03/18 Spring Break

03/23 Cavell, *Audience, Actor, and Star*, 379.

Carroll, *The Power of Movies*, 91.

Carroll, *Defining Mass Art**

Goodenough, *A Philosopher Goes to the Cinema* *

03/25 - 03/30 Movie Screening TBA

Music

04/01 Levinson, *On The Concept of Music*, 168.

Davies, *The Expression of Emotions in Music*, 185.

Popular Arts and Everyday Aesthetics

04/06 Nehamas, *Plato and The Mass Media*, 315.

Shusterman, *In Defense of Popular Arts*, 327.

04/08 Tavinor, *Videogames, Interactivity, and Art*, 382.

Patridge, *Is it Only a Game?* 386.

04/13 Kaplan, *The Philosophy of Food* *

Telfer, *Food as Art* *

Korsmeyer, *The Meaning of Taste and the Taste of Meaning* *

04/15 TBA + **II PAPER DUE**

04/20 Review

04/22 Second Exam

04/27 Presentations

04/29 Presentations

05/04 Presentations

05/07-12 Research Paper Due