

Art & Theory of Art

FALL 2018, HONORS 380, TTh 1:25-2:40 p.m., Honors Hall 142
Prof. Andersen, Honors Hall 130D, 335-7694
kimander@wsu.edu, <http://public.wsu.edu/~kimander/>

Course description

For a good 30,000 years humans have produced images, tales, spectacles, and much more which we now call art. Cave paintings, graffiti, murals, fetishes, drama, sitcoms, literature, performance, pottery, painting, architecture, jewelry, carvings, music, country, western, medieval cathedrals, tattoos, rap, twist, hip, funk, bop, American Idol, and The Blue Heart—we call it all art, we call them all artists! Does it make sense?

In this course we will seek enlightenment on the nature of art. We will investigate theories of art (a selection, from Plato onwards) to try to determine what it is we appreciate about art. We will discuss art theories that offer particular discriminating viewpoints on the nature of art as we assess the possibilities for obtaining an all-encompassing perspective on art. Simultaneously, we will actively experience, review, evaluate, discuss, and present artworks, in particular painting, literature, and film. We will make use of videos and excursions to local museums and exhibits.

As we develop our contextual understanding of art – as art is created in the flux of individual human creativity and social norms – we will also develop an appreciation for the function, methods, and value of research and scholarship in the Humanities.

Final grade to be determined by active participation, written assignments, and an in-class presentation.

Required text:

But Is It Art? by Cynthia Freeland, Oxford University Press, ISBN:10-0192853678
Other texts handled in class, available on Blackboard.

Syllabus

AUGUST

Week 1:

21: Introductions. What is art? Critical thinking about art.

23: Arts-critical-thinking exercises.

Week 2:

28: Randall White: “Prehistoric Art” (Chapters. 1-2, pgs. 1-38)

Art & Theory of Art

FALL 2018, HONORS 380, TTh 1:25-2:40 p.m., Honors Hall 142
Prof. Andersen, Honors Hall 130D, 335-7694
kimander@wsu.edu, <http://public.wsu.edu/~kimander/>

30: Cynthia Freeland: But is it art? (Introduction p. xvii-xxi, Chapter 1: Blood and Beauty, p.1-29)

SEPTEMBER

Week 3:

4: Cynthia Freeland: But is it art? (Chapter 2: Paradigms and Purposes, p.30-59)

6: Art theory I: Plato [Presentation #1: [Mckenna, Michael](#)]

Reading response 1 due Tue 9/4:
What stands out to you the most in
Randall's description of pre-historic art?

Week 4:

11: Art theory II: Aristotle [Presentation #2: [Sarah, Martin](#)]

13: *Excursion: WSU Museum of Art: "Fine Arts Faculty Exhibition Self-ish"*

#1: Essay due Thursday, Sep 13: 'A philosophical cartoon on art'

Week 5:

18: Art theory III: Hume [Presentation #3: [Elyse, Emma](#)]

20: Cynthia Freeland: But is it art? (Chapter 3: Cultural crossings, p. 60-89)

Week 6:

25: Artist: Andy Warhol [Presentation #4: [Seiji, Jack](#)]

27: Art theory IV: Danto [Presentation #6: [Kelcey, Emma](#)]

R-r 2 due Tue 9/25:
Which of Freeland's points on 'cultural
crossings' impressed you the most - why?

OCTOBER

Week 7:

2: Artist: Roy Lichtenstein [Presentation #7: [Lindsey, Catherine](#)]

4: Art theory V: Dickie [Presentation #8: [Anne, Amanda](#)]

Week 8:

9: Artist: Paul O'Hare in "Faking It!" (video)

#2: Review due Thursday, Oct. 9: "Fine Arts Faculty Exhibition Self-ish"

Art & Theory of Art

FALL 2018, HONORS 380, TTh 1:25-2:40 p.m., Honors Hall 142
Prof. Andersen, Honors Hall 130D, 335-7694
kimander@wsu.edu, <http://public.wsu.edu/~kimander/>

11: Discussion of “Faking It?” – philosophical reflections?

Week 9:

16: Cynthia Freeland: But is it art? (Chapter 4: Money, Markets, Museums, p. 90-121)

18: “Thomas Kinkade” (video)

R-r 3 due Thu 10/18:
Do you see any concerns with the commercial dimensions described by Freeland in chapter 4?

Week 10:

23: Art theory VII: Tolstoy [Presentation #9: [Kim, Amelia](#)]

25: Artist: Jackson Pollock [Presentation #10: [Alison, Courtney](#)]

Week 11:

30: MOVIE: *WHO THE #\$% IS Jackson Pollock?*

NOVEMBER

1: MOVIE: *WHO THE #\$% IS Jackson Pollock?*

R-r 4 due Thu 11/1:
What’s your view of Jackson Pollock – and the Terri Horton debacle?

Week 12:

6: Cynthia Freeland: But is it art? (Chapter 5: Gender, genius, Guerilla Girls, p. 122-147.

[Presentation #5: [Logan, Rachel](#)]

8: Documentary: *WHO DOES SHE THINK SHE IS?*

Week 13:

13: Cynthia Freeland: But is it art? (Chapter 6: Cognition, Creation, Comprehension, p. 148-176)

15: *Excursion: WSU Museum of Art: “Crow’s Shadow: Institute of the Arts at 25”*

THANKSGIVING, NOVEMBER 19-23

Week 14:

27: Art theory X: “Rage Against the Art Gene” + “The Natural History of Art”

Art & Theory of Art

FALL 2018, HONORS 380, TTh 1:25-2:40 p.m., Honors Hall 142
 Prof. Andersen, Honors Hall 130D, 335-7694
 kimander@wsu.edu, <http://public.wsu.edu/~kimander/>

[Presentation #11: [Talia, Olivia](#)]

29: Cynthia Freeland: But is it art? (Chapter 7: Digitizing and disseminating, Conclusion, p. 177-209)

[Presentation #12: [Peter, Zach](#)]

R-r 5 due Thu 11/29:
 Review of Crow's Shadow-exhibit. Min. 2 pages.

DECEMBER

Week 15:

4: Art theory IX: P. Fingesten: "The Theory of Evolution in the History of Art"

[Presentation #13: [Devin, Garrett](#)]

6: Conclusive discussion

#3: Final paper due Thursday, December 13, 5 p.m. in the Honors Office.

Course objectives

In this course we examine 'art' as it has been perceived as a theoretical concept in the West since Plato. We discuss a selection of theoretical perspectives on art in order to place the experience of actual artworks (through excursions and in classroom interpretations and discussions) in theoretical contexts.

	At the end of this course students will	This objective will be evaluated primarily by	Examples of course topics that advance these learning goals
LG1 Critical and Creative Thinking	be critically familiar with a variety of theoretical perspectives on art	written assignments, class discussions	3 essays (see dates and topics in syllabus), 5 reading responses
LG2 Communication	develop formal communication skills through PowerPoint presentations of course materials as well as in daily discussion of material	class room presentations	group presentations of course material throughout syllabus
LG3 Information Literacy	engage cultural and historical information from library and internet research	written assignments and PowerPoint presentation requirements	3 essays (see dates and topics in syllabus), 5 reading responses. See 'first come, first served,' numbered presentation topics
LG4 Scientific Literacy	develop an appreciation for the academic study of art	textbook, scholarly articles on topics	E.g., Roy Lichtenstein and the Comic Strip, Albert Boime Art Journal, Vol. 28, No. 2 (Winter, 1968-1969), pp. 155-159
LG5 Quantitative and Symbolic Reasoning	be able to critically and creatively analyze, interpret, and synthesize specific symbolic representations of art	written assignments, class discussions	3 essays (see dates and topics in syllabus), 5 reading responses. See numbered presentation topics
LG6 Cultural Competency	understand how to relate theoretical, historical, and cultural contexts of art to our own historical and cultural situation	class discussions, reading responses, written assignments	E.g., Textbook: <i>But Is It Art?</i> by Cynthia Freeland, Oxford University Press
LG7 Integration of Knowledge	have gained an understanding of works of art and their historical contexts	class discussions, reading responses, written assignments	E.g., Textbook: <i>But Is It Art?</i> by Cynthia Freeland, Oxford University Press

Art & Theory of Art

FALL 2018, HONORS 380, TTh 1:25-2:40 p.m., Honors Hall 142
Prof. Andersen, Honors Hall 130D, 335-7694
kimander@wsu.edu, <http://public.wsu.edu/~kimander/>

Grading

The class relies on active discussion of works of art and perspectives on art in discussions and in papers. There will be a total of three writing assignments and a formal in-class PowerPoint group-presentation (2 students to a presentation) of a text or an artist (see numbered topics in the syllabus). Participation in discussions and reading responses is concurrently evaluated as part of the final grade.

Final grade will be determined by:

1. Final paper [25%]
2. Two essays/reviews [40%]
3. A presentation of a theoretical text assessing min. 2 works of art [20%]
4. Active participation and 5 reading responses [15%]

I gather impressions of participation in class discussions as the semester progresses. Please read my comments on papers and see me if you have any questions.

My grade calculation: A = 93 points, A- = 90 points, B+ = 87 points, B = 83 points, B- = 80 points, C+ = 77 points, C = 73 points, etc. (Example: A = 93 x 25 (%) = 2325; + 93 x 40 (%) = 3720; + 93 x 20 (%) = 1860; + 93 x 15 (%) = 1395; → 9300 = A). Final grade distribution: A: ≥9100; A-: ≥8900; B+: ≥8600; B: ≥8300; B-: ≥8000; C+: ≥7700; C: ≥7300 etc.

Re. (1) Final research paper: The final research paper must be a critical discussion of its topic incorporating discussion of a minimum of three scholarly opinions. A detailed prompt will be provided. The final research paper-project will provide a comprehensive, scholarly informed discussion of a topic relating to art and art theory including an examination of works of art. Length: min. 6 pages, double spaced.

Student initiative in formulation of topic and contexts is welcome. The final paper may be a cooperative project of two students of a length of approx. 10 pages, double spaced, discussing minimum five scholarly viewpoints. One grade will be assigned for the final project. The group must meet with me by week 12 to discuss the planned, final paper.

The following elements are important for the evaluation:

Analysis. E.g., consult the 'critical thinking guidelines' and 'evaluating papers & essays' on my website (www.wsu.edu/~kimander/) for suggestions to structure and areas of analytical inquiry.

Insightful, creative interpretations. Create connections between art and theory in your interpretations. Reflect on the materials in relation to our contemporary world and your understanding of it.

Art & Theory of Art

FALL 2018, HONORS 380, TTh 1:25-2:40 p.m., Honors Hall 142
Prof. Andersen, Honors Hall 130D, 335-7694
kimander@wsu.edu, <http://public.wsu.edu/~kimander/>

Research. Scholarly and qualified opinions (e.g. journal and newspaper criticism) are necessary to the serious development of discussion, analysis, and interpretation. Researching a historical background also creates great context for interpretation and understanding. Incorporate at least three scholarly viewpoints in your final paper.

Fluent, expressive language in a clear, progressive structure. Attention to the formal dimensions of writing an essay is obviously a necessity and will be rewarded. (E.g., see <http://www.wsu.edu/~kimander/referencing.htm>)

Re. (2) Short essays/reviews: (3-4 pages, double spaced; same general expectations as with the final paper; researched scholarly and/or arts-critical opinion preferred (except essay 1).

Due dates for written assignments:

Essay (#1) due Thursday, Sep 13, prompt to be provided.
Review (#2) due Thursday, Oct 9, prompt to be provided.
Final paper (#5) due Thursday, December 13, in hard copy by 5 p.m. in the Honors Office.
5 reading responses due weeks 3, 6, 9, 11, 14

Re. (3): The Presentation: This is an approx. 30 minute PowerPoint group-presentation (2 presenters) of a theoretical text illustrated by min. 2 works of art that exemplify a perspective within an historical context. Incorporate at least two scholarly viewpoints on your material in your presentation! Sign up for one of the numbered presentation topics. First come, first served! The presentation includes a max. 1-2 page handout to all class participants detailing the presentation. The handout should provide an overview of the presentation, including references, and at least 2-3 questions for further discussion. *Make sure to write your name/s, course prefix and number, and name of instructor, on the hand-out and date it!*

Structure your time well to present the essential perspectives and points. Following your presentation we will discuss questions or problems raised. Defend your perspectives and productively engage other perspectives. You may respond to questions during your presentation in which case the presentation + discussion most likely will stretch beyond the 30 minutes.

The presentation will be graded according to the following criteria:

1. Engagement in your role as presenter.
2. Understanding the context/s and art.
3. Evidence of research and independent, critical evaluation of the context/s and art including incorporation of minimum two scholarly viewpoints on the material.
4. Willingness to pose and answer questions.

Art & Theory of Art

FALL 2018, HONORS 380, TTh 1:25-2:40 p.m., Honors Hall 142
Prof. Andersen, Honors Hall 130D, 335-7694
kimander@wsu.edu, <http://public.wsu.edu/~kimander/>

5. A well-structured 1-2 page, pedagogically informative hand-out accounting for all facets of the presentation.
6. 2-3 well-formulated questions for further discussion.
7. ***Following the presentation set up a meeting with me for feed-back and grade!***

Re. (4) Participation & reading responses: The course relies on lively discussion of the materials! *There are no 'stupid' questions or observations!* ACTIVE PARTICIPATION in discussions also strengthens the impression of an engaged and well-prepared student. Consider this class an excellent forum for exercising verbal skills. Two well-excused absences (informed of in advance) during the course of the semester will be tolerated without ramifications for final grade. Ramifications may include writing a short make-up paper and/or have a negative impact on the final grade. I collect my impressions during the semester of student participation.

A significant part of the participation-grade is your 5 reading responses (approx. 200-300 words each) on the readings/discussions to be handed in in hard-copy on the due date.

- ***All cell phones must be shut off during class. Any - even discrete and momentary - checking of a vibrating cell phone will result in a mark of absence.***

See 'evaluating papers & essays' on my web site: <http://public.wsu.edu/~kimander/> for definitions of accomplished, promising, and wanting.

WSU Disability Statement

Students with Disabilities: Reasonable accommodations are available for students with documented disabilities or chronic medical conditions. If you have a disability and need accommodations to fully participate in this class, please visit the Access Center website to follow published procedures to request accommodations: <http://www.accesscenter.wsu.edu>. Students may also either call or visit the Access Center in person to schedule an appointment with an Access Advisor. Location: Washington Building 217; Phone: 509-335-3417. All disability related accommodations MUST be approved through the Access Center. Students with approved accommodations are strongly encouraged to visit with instructors early in the semester during office hours to discuss logistics.

A Commitment to Campus Safety

Washington State University is committed to maintaining the safety of the students, faculty, staff, and visitors to the Pullman campus. As part of this commitment, the university has prepared the Campus Safety Plan, containing a comprehensive listing of university policies, procedures, statistics and information relating to campus safety, emergency management and the health and welfare of the campus community. Please see <http://safetyplan.wsu.edu>

Art & Theory of Art

FALL 2018, HONORS 380, TTh 1:25-2:40 p.m., Honors Hall 142
Prof. Andersen, Honors Hall 130D, 335-7694
kimander@wsu.edu, <http://public.wsu.edu/~kimander/>

Academic integrity

All students are of course expected to act in accordance with the WSU policies on Academic Honesty found in the Student Handbook. These policies include falsification of information, fabrication of information, plagiarism, multiple submissions, and various other offenses. If you have doubts about what constitutes academic integrity or what specifically might qualify as 'cheating' consult the WSU Plagiarism Information Site: <http://www.wsulibs.wsu.edu/plagiarism/>, or see me before writing your paper.

- *Craft your own work, reference the ideas of others, and think for yourself.* It feels good, it carves out brain cell territory, it builds character. If you are in a time crunch, and have a reasonable excuse, ask me for an extension.

Do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions!
Have a great semester!



<https://www.ancient.eu/Altamira/>