

**SCHOOL OF FINE ART AND MUSIC**  
**Winter Semester 2017**  
**ARTH\*3320-01**  
**Lives: Aspects of Western Art**



**INSTRUCTOR:** Martina Meyer, PhD  
**TIME:** Tuesday and Thursday, 2:30-3:50pm  
**LOCATION:** MacKinnon room 114  
**OFFICE HOURS:** Tuesday and Thursday, 4-5pm  
**OFFICE:** Johnston Hall room 113A

**CALENDAR DESCRIPTION:**

This course examines how the theory and practice of art history has often been informed by biography and other constructions of stereotypes and social practices concerning the 'Artist', the artist' audiences and the various contexts that inform artists' lives, real and imagined.

***Prerequisite(s):*** 7.50 credits or 1.5 credits in Art History

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

Roland Barthes declared that the 'author' is dead. Recently, art historians rejected the individualism of the art-historical monograph and post-structuralism emphasized cultural *intertextuality*, instead of author-based notions of intentionality. When discussing an artist's life, several obvious questions emerge. How is artistic inspiration explained? How do we account for the origins of creativity? Why do the narratives of artist's lives frequently fall into familiar patterns, despite so many cultural and contextual differences among them? Is psychology and psychoanalysis still fundamental to understanding an artist's work? Can anyone other than the artist truly understand and explain the artist's life? This course will investigate the mythic and legendary status of the artist in modern history and some of the now-classic theoretical writings that critiqued biographical approaches. The core of the class

will focus on recent examples of biographical writing. We will also look at popular imagery of modernist myths, specifically how film biography attempts to describe the artistic process.

### **Student Learning Objectives**

You will have developed the ability to engage with complex ideas, and the confidence to transfer or transform those ideas into your own arguments.

You will have a better sense of how knowledge is generated, organized, and propagated, and will have improved capacities in visual analysis.

You will develop critical skills in reading and evaluating primary-source texts.

Lastly, you will develop new communication skills, and will have enhanced understanding of working in, and responding to, a group of colleagues.

### **Required books:**

Salas, Charles G. (ed.) *The Life and the Work: Art and Biography*. Getty Publications. 2007. ISBN 978-0-89236-823-5

(UoG Library: Online e-Resource)

Louden, Sharon (ed.) *Living and Sustaining a Creative Life*.

University of Chicago Press. 2013. ISBN: 9781783200122

(UoG Library: Online e-Resource)

Georgio Vasari, *Lives of the Most Excellent Painters, Sculptors and Architects*. Online

source. <http://members.efn.org/~acd/vite/VasariLives.html>

### **Recommended**

Ernst Kris and Otto Kurz, *Legend, Myth, and Magic in the Image of the Artist* (Yale University Press, 1979)

- Additional readings will be available on the class Courselink.

**Images** Every lecture will be illustrated with images (PowerPoint).

**Course requirements:** All students are expected to attend class regularly and complete all the readings and assignments by the dates outlined in the syllabus.

**Evaluation:**

Midterm: Feb. 14<sup>th</sup> 30%

Reading Responses: 2 @ 5 points each 10%

Due: Jan. 31<sup>st</sup>, Mar. 2<sup>nd</sup>

Group (2-3 students) Presentation & Summary\* (5-6 pages): 30%

Scheduled for the last two weeks of class.

\* (On an artist of your choice (historical or contemporary, provided it is not someone we discuss in class). In addition you will submit an annotated\* summary of your bibliography)

- <http://guides.library.cornell.edu/annotatedbibliography>

Take Home Final Essay: 30%

**\*Please note:** This is a preliminary web course description only. The department reserves the right to change without notice any information in this description. The final, binding course outline will be distributed in the first class of the semester.

**Late papers and make-up tests:** As the dates of exams and due dates of assignments will be included in the Course Outline, all students are expected to know about them and to be prepared accordingly. For those who miss a mid-term test for documented medical or compassionate reasons, the grade will be redistributed to the other exams. There will be NO make-up tests.

## **Assignments:**

### *Midterm (may include)*

- Short answer
- Image, artist, theorist and terminology identification and its significance

### *Response Papers (Due Jan. 31<sup>st</sup> & Mar. 2<sup>nd</sup>)*

Each student will write TWO response papers (350-400 words). The idea of the response paper is to respond in a thoughtful and analytical way to something that was covered in the lectures or readings during that week. For example, for the first week, which introduced the methods that will be covered in the course, your response paper might focus on one particular lecture or reading you think you will find most useful and why. The response paper should not require any outside research (although please do encourage you to look things up, such as dates and spelling of names). In the response paper, you should demonstrate your critical thinking ability. Although some summary may be necessary, the response paper should not simply a summary. It should be a structured discussion that reaches a conclusion based on evidence and logic.

### *Group Project:*

Each group (2-3 students) will make one 15-minute report to the class on a biography of the group's choice. The reports should focus on methods of historical criticism and the connection between biography and artistic production. You should select an artist not covered in class (not on the syllabus). The artist may be historical or contemporary. You should consult books and articles. Tell us how the 'life' intersects with the work and provide a brief analysis of the author's perspective.

### *Final Exam:*

The exam is a take home essay. The questions (a choice will be provided) will be posted to Courselink at the end of term. You will have

a week to complete the assignment and upload it to Dropbox. The essay will not require outside research. It will require you to demonstrate critical thought with respect to materials discussed in class.

## **Library and Learning Commons Services**

- [Data Resource Centre](#)
- [IT Help](#)
- Writing Services
- [Learning Services](#)
- [Library Accessibility Services](#)
- [Research & Information Literacy](#)
- [Supported Learning Groups Program](#) <http://www.learningcommons.uoguelph.ca>

**E-mail Communication** As per university regulations, all students are required to check their <mail.uoguelph.ca> e-mail account regularly: e-mail is the official route of communication between the University and its students.

**When You Cannot Meet a Course Requirement** When you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement because of illness or compassionate reasons, please advise the course instructor (or designated person, such as a teaching assistant) in writing, with your name, id#, and e-mail contact. See the undergraduate calendar for information on regulations and procedures for Academic Consideration.

**Drop Date** The last date to drop one-semester courses, without academic penalty, is **March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2017** (40<sup>th</sup> day of class). For regulations and procedures for Dropping Courses, see the Undergraduate Calendar.

**Copies of out-of-class assignments** Keep paper and/or other reliable back-up copies of all out-of-class assignments: you may be asked to resubmit work at any time.

**Accessibility** The University of Guelph is committed to creating a barrier-free environment. Providing services for students is a shared responsibility among students, faculty and administrators. This

relationship is based on respect of individual rights, the dignity of the individual and the University community's shared commitment to an open and supportive learning environment. Students requiring service or accommodation, whether due to an identified, ongoing disability or a short-term disability should contact Student Accessibility Services as soon as possible. For more information, contact CSD at 519-824-4120 ext. 56208 or email [sas@uoguelph.ca](mailto:sas@uoguelph.ca) or see their website.

### **Student Rights and Responsibilities**

Each student at the University of Guelph has rights which carry commensurate responsibilities that involve, broadly, being a civil and respectful member of the University community. The Rights and Responsibilities are detailed in the Undergraduate Calendar

**Academic Misconduct** The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and it is the responsibility of all members of the University community – faculty, staff, and students – to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring. University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that discourages misconduct. Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection.

**Please note:** Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor. The Academic Misconduct Policy is detailed in the Undergraduate Calendar .

**Recording of Materials** Presentations which are made in relation to course work—including lectures—cannot be recorded or copied without the permission of the presenter, whether the instructor, a classmate or guest lecturer. Material recorded with permission is restricted to use for that course unless further permission is granted.

**Resources** The Academic Calendars are the source of information about the University of Guelph's procedures, policies and regulations that apply to undergraduate, graduate and diploma programs.

## **COURSE READINGS AND SCHEDULE:**

**Week One (Jan 10/12): Introduction, Course Requirements;** critics Roland Barthes and Roger Fry. Reading: Salas, *The Essential Myth*, 1-20. Barthes, *Death of the Author*, <http://writing.upenn.edu/~taransky/Barthes.pdf>

How to talk about art: the 'model' of antiquity. [http://penelope.uchicago.edu/~grout/encyclopaedia\\_romana/greece/hetairai/apelles.html](http://penelope.uchicago.edu/~grout/encyclopaedia_romana/greece/hetairai/apelles.html)

**Week Two (Jan.17/19): Medieval World View:** Those who fight, those who pray, and those who work

Reading: "Holy Images for the Tsar," in *Portraits of Old Russia: Imagined Lives of Ordinary People, 1300*, ed. Donald Ostrowski and Marshall Poe (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 2011), 129–138. UoG - Online Resource.

Vasari: *Preface to the Lives: Life of Giotto*, Vol. 1, pp.50-77.

**Week Three (Jan. 24/26): Vasari and The Vision of the Renaissance**

Leonardo da Vinci, *The Life and The Work*, pp. 35-44.

Vasari, *Life of Leonardo*, Uof G Online Resource.

*The Life of Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519)* <http://rbscp.lib.rochester.edu/3456>

## **Week Four (Jan. 31, Feb. 2): Renaissance Giants: Michelangelo & Raphael**

Life of

Michelangelo <http://members.efn.org/~acd/vite/VasariMAngelo.html>

The 2014 Josephine Waters Bennett lecture: "Certain of Death": Michelangelo's late life and art.(Michelangelo Buonarroti)(Essay)(Biography)William E. Renaissance Quarterly, 2015, Vol.68(1), pp.1-32. UoG: Online Resource.

Another Michelangelo: the latest biography of Michelangelo adds much to our understanding of the man. *Apollo* [0003-6536] Joannides, Paul, 2014 vol:179, pg:192-93. UoG: Online resource.

Raffaello Sanzio da Urbino, Vasari, UoG: Online Resorce.

## **Week Five (Feb. 7/9): Renaissance Ladies, Painter's Painters and Hellraisers**

Read:

Vasari: <http://members.efn.org/~acd/vite/VasariLombardy4.html>

<http://smarthistory.org/sofonisba-anguissola/>

<http://www.collegeart.org/pdf/artbulletin/Art%20Bulletin%20Vol%2072%20Vol%203%20Pollock.pdf>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HgRWMsYBgbE&index=5&list=%20PLLUaXSRnKa3i3nijItUi0ifqGSS908qzA>

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/art/7840043/New-Caravaggio-biography-casts-light-on-Renaissance-hellraiser.html>

## **Week Six (Feb. 14/16) Midterm & The Madness of Vermeer**

Read: [http://www.essentialvermeer.com/vermeer the man.html#.WGvjprEZM0o](http://www.essentialvermeer.com/vermeer%20the%20man.html#.WGvjprEZM0o)

Brush with Fate: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9tpL1K8ZqrU>

## **READING WEEK (Feb. 21, 23)**

### **Week Seven (Feb. 28/Mar.2) Turner & van Gogh**

View: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9xf3yTAsxCw>

Read: <https://www.theguardian.com/film/2014/oct/31/turner-mike-leigh-film-timothy-spall>

Read: <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/19/movies/mr-turner-about-the-life-of-the-artist-j-m-w-turner.html? r=0>

Read, *The Life and The Work*, pp.76-96.

Read: <http://www.bbc.com/culture/story/20150127-the-decision-that-changed-art>

### **Week Eight (Mar. 7/9) Monet, Renoir & Cassatt**

View: The Impressionists (part

2) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SNcsxUY1TR8>

Read: <http://libmma.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/pageflip/collection/p15324coll10/id/85352/type/compoundobject/filename/print/page/download/start/1/pftype/pdf>

### **Week Nine (Mar. 14/16) O'Keefe & Kahlo & Kollwitz**

Read: <http://mentalfloss.com/article/63175/15-things-you-should-know-about-georgia-okeeffe>

Telling tales: Georgia O'Keeffe on Georgia O'Keeffe.(Biography)

Corn, Wanda M., *American Art*, Summer, 2009, Vol. 23(2), p.55-79. UoG Online Resource.

Watch: Frida Kahlo <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B-t4V5YXk-g>

Watch: Kathe Köllwitz [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-Q4HG8eCY\\_U](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-Q4HG8eCY_U)

### **Week Ten (Mar. 21/23) Pollock and Warhol**

Read: <https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2015/jun/19/why-jackson-pollock-painting>

Read: <http://www.smithsonianmag.com/arts-culture/decoding-jackson-pollock-142492290/>

Read: <http://harvardmagazine.com/2011/06/physics-of-jackson-pollocks-art>

Read: *The Life and The Work*, pp.108-142

**Week Eleven (Mar. 28/30) Presentations**

**Week Twelve (Apr. 4/6) Presentations**