

PHIL 3050 DE: Philosophy and the Arts

Instructor: Nahum Brown

Course Description:

Truth and Art: The Sublime, the Beautiful and the Mimetic

This course offers a particular line of inquiry into the history of aesthetic theory. Our primary focus will be on the problem of truth in art, of whether art obscures or clarifies the essence of what things really *are*. We will begin with Plato's famous statement in *The Republic* that art is an imitation of an imitation of the truth. We will then spend the majority of the course discussing two of the greatest pieces ever written on the nature of aesthetics, Kant's *Critique of the Power of Judgment* and Schopenhauer's *World as Will and Representation*. We will look at Kant's conception of the beautiful and the sublime in a lot of detail, paying attention to the role that purpose, fear, subjectivity, and universality play in the text. When we turn to Schopenhauer, we will look at the beautiful and the sublime again, but in terms of his critique of Plato and his argument that music is the highest representation of the will. In the last segment of the course, we will discuss Martin Heidegger's groundbreaking essay *The Origin of the Work of Art*, focusing on his claim that art is truth.

Required Texts:

The Republic of Plato. Translated by Allan Bloom. Published by Basic Books, 1968.

Immanuel Kant. *Critique of the Power of Judgment*. Translated by Paul Guyer and Eric Matthews. Published by Cambridge University Press, 2000.

Arthur Schopenhauer. *The World as Will and Representation*. Volume 1. Translated by E. F. J. Payne. Published by Dover Publications, 1969.

Martin Heidegger. *Poetry, Language, Thought*. Translated by Hofstadter. Published by Harper Perennial Modern Classics, 2001.

Unit # and Topic	Readings
Unit 1: Plato (A)	The Republic of Plato, Book VI, pages 193- 198 (514a- 520a)
Unit 2: Plato (B)	The Republic of Plato, Book X, pages 277- 285 (595a- 602d)
Unit 3: Kant (A)	Critique of the Power of Judgment: Analytic of the Beautiful, selections from 89- 127.
Unit 4: Kant (B)	Critique of the Power of Judgment: Analytic of the Beautiful, selections from 89- 127.
Unit 5: Kant (C)	Critique of the Power of Judgment: Analytic of the Sublime, selections from 128- 159.
Unit 6: Midterm Paper	No Reading
Unit 7: Schopenhauer (A)	The World as Will and Representation, Book 3, 169- 267
Unit 8: Schopenhauer (B)	The World as Will and Representation, Book 3, 169- 267
Unit 9: Schopenhauer (C)	The World as Will and Representation, Book 3, 169- 267
Unit 10: Heidegger (A)	"The Origin of the Work of Art" in Poetry, Language, Thought, 17- 87
Unit 11: Heidegger (B)	"The Origin of the Work of Art" in Poetry, Language, Thought, 17- 87
Unit 12: Final Paper	No Reading

Assignments:**10 GROUP DISCUSSIONS**

Students will participate in discussion groups each week of the term *except when papers 1 and 2 are due*. I will post a question, problem, or debate for each discussion. Each discussion is worth 2.5%, for a total of 25% of the grade.

2 PAPERS

Students will write one midterm paper and one slightly longer final paper. The midterm paper, worth 25% of the total grade, will be between 800- 1200 words long, and the final, worth 30%, will be between 1500- 2000 words long. Papers will be due on the 6th and 12th week of the term.

FINAL EXAM

This will be a written exam, worth 20% of the grade. You will choose between 2 or 3 questions.