AESTHETICS, VALUES, AND AUTHORITY: ART AS SOCIAL LANGUAGE

The Honors College at FIU
Course Number: IDH 3005, 3006\Section U 02
Fall 2005 & Spring 2006
Tuesday: 12:30 – 15:15
Instructor: John Bailly
Email: baillyj@fiu.edu
Office: GL 422
Office Hours: MW 12:30 – 15:00 and by appointment

“What do you think an artist is? An imbecile who has only eyes if he is a painter, or ears if he is a musician, or a lyre in every chamber of his heart if he is a poet, or even, if he is a boxer, just his muscles? Far, far from it: at the same time, he is also a political being, constantly aware of the heartbreaking, passionate, or delightful things that happen in the world, shaping himself completely in their image. How could it be possible to feel no interest in other people, and with a cool indifference to detach yourself from the very life which they bring to you so abundantly? No, painting is not done to decorate apartments. It is an instrument of war” Pablo Picasso

Course Description
This course will investigate the manifestations of social and cultural issues in the arts. Specifically, how have artists challenged, or enforced, authority by creating new aesthetics? How is art used to initiate, accelerate, or prevent social change? Further, how does art document these transformations, and by documenting them, do the arts, in turn, contribute to the definition of social issues?

The course is designed to encourage students to think critically about art. It is divided into essentially three sections.

The first part of the course will explore the core concepts of formal art appreciation: What is beauty? What are the formal elements of art (color, line, composition…)? What is the relationship between content and form? How do we look at and then formulate opinions about art?

Following this introduction to the methods of seeing art, we will then examine selected art as it is related to specific issues (ex: religion in Caravaggio, politics in Hans Haake, gender identity in Dyke Action Machine, consumerism in Jeff Koons…). Repeatedly, in the history of art, new art has led to a confrontation of avant-garde values with some form of authority. How have artists revolutionized established aesthetics in order to present new values? Is visual art a tool for social change? If so, how effective is it?

The last part of the course will involve research projects as part of a group exhibition. We will each select local artists and analyze their work from a sociological perspective. You will visit the artists in their studios, interview them, and write about how their work relates to a broader social issue. We will then organize a group exhibition of these local artists, in which we will present their work and your research about them.

Required Readings

Fall 2005
1. Joseph Heller, *Picture This*
2. Herschel B. Chipp, *Theories of Modern Art: A Source Book by Artists and Critics*

Spring 2006
1. Bret Easton Ellis, *American Psycho*
2. Harry G. Frankfurt, *On Bullshit*
Course Requirements

1. Class Participation – Please be prepared for each class section with having completed assigned readings. Also, you will be welcome and expected to participate in class discussions.

2. Attendance – Class Attendance is mandatory.
   - Two unexcused absences are forgiven. Thereafter, each unexcused absences lowers one’s final grade by one half grade (3 absences makes an A- would become a B+, 4 absences makes an A- a B, and so forth).
   - Students are responsible for everything assigned and for everything discussed in class. If absent, it is your responsibility to get that day’s notes from another student.
   - After any absence, the student must present a written justification (doctor’s note, jury duty) to have the absence excused.
   - Academic integrity is embracive to this policy. That means not being honest in written excuses, or in signing in (others sign you in, you leave before class ends, etc. ad nauseum are considered violations of academic integrity and handled as such.
   - Unexcused absences will consequentially adversely affect your final grade.

3. Attendance/Off-Campus Research – Aside from attending class at FIU, several of our meetings will be off-campus during our class time (no long trips - promise). It is imperative you attend these. We will visit multiple institutions to see the art and to learn about the missions of the organizations. We will certainly visit the Rubell Collection, Miami Art Museum, Frost Museum, and Wolfsonian.

4. Papers - We will write two papers in the first semester and one in the second. All papers will be critical analyses of art supported by research. Certain research methods will be required (such as interviews with experts, multiple references, artists’ comparisons…). Papers must be turned in on their due date; no late work will be accepted. They must be typed, double-spaced, and stapled.

5. Research Project Exhibition – We will curate an exhibition of local artists for the Spring semester. We will select local artists and work with them in exhibiting their works in a formal exhibition (likely in the Gallery at Green Library). We will do all research and coordination that is required for an exhibition, including supporting text. Not to worry. This will be fun.

6. Journals – You will keep a running learning journal reflecting on your readings, class discussions, and personal impressions. You are strongly encouraged to learn to explore ideas in a visual manner. I will give an extended handout on this. No artistic experience is expected, nor will such experience play any factor in grading.

7. Class Schedule and Email – The class schedule is subject to change at the instructor’s discretion. All changes will either be announced in class or posted on the course website. It is the student’s responsibility to check (and refresh your browser) the course website on a weekly basis and to actively monitor their FIU email account.

Grading Legend
20% - 5 Quizzes
20% - Class Participation
20% - Journals/Sketchbooks
20% - Exhibition Project
20% - Paper on Local Artist
**Academic Integrity**

Please read all information on the following link. Registration in this course requires an acceptance of The Honors College Academic Integrity policy.

http://honors.fiu.edu/plagiarism.htm

**Course Calendar**

Again, please note that the course calendar is subject to change. All such changes, general or travel dictated will be announced in class, through FIU email, or posted here. 3 or 4 dates of each semester are left free so as to accommodate our visits to arts organizations.

**FALL 2005**

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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>WEEK OF</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>READINGS/ASSIGNMENTS</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>30 August</td>
<td>Introduction Discussion of Content and Method: How do artists manipulate medium in order transmit concepts to viewers?</td>
<td>Read Syllabus and Links &lt;READ CLASS, THC, &amp; FIU POLICIES&gt; Ref Artists: Poussin, Rembrandt, Basquiat, Lyn Reading: Chipp, p Intro - 86</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>06 September</td>
<td>Discussion of Content and Method continued</td>
<td>Ref Artists: Michelangelo, Raphael, Caravaggio, Ingres, Delacroix, Bourgereau, Picasso, Hans Haake, Richard Serra Reading: Chipp, 193 - 280</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>13 September</td>
<td>Exploration of Visual Thinking: How do artists generate work?</td>
<td>Ref Artists: Henri Matisse, Max Ernst, Joseph Cornell, Dan Eldon Reading: Chipp, 501 - 623 Note: Bring any traditional and non-traditional tools used to make art in class.</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>20 September</td>
<td>Artist As Historian: How can art serve as a method of documenting history? What are the inherent problems of art as history?</td>
<td>Ref Artists: Bayeux Tapestry, French History Painting, David, Gericault, Gros, Goya, Courbet, Daumier, Sander, Lewis Hine, Picasso’s Guernica, Manet, Kentridge, Golub, Kiefer Reading: Picture This</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>27 September</td>
<td>Artist As Historian Continued</td>
<td>Reading: Finish Picture This</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>04 October</td>
<td>Art and Reality: Is art reality, a spiritual reality, a subjective reality, or simply a lie?</td>
<td>Review of Picture This &amp; Rembrandt. Ref Artists: Magritte, Linear Perspective, Portraits of Royalty, Rubens, Goya, Freud, Monet’s Cathedrals, Malevich, Mantegna, Bailey, Ryan, Albers, Caneletto Reading: Chipp p. 309 – 365 &amp; 397 - 455</td>
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### Week 8

**19 October**  
**Topic:** Artist as Expressionist: Is subjectivity and personal expression the nature of art? What is the difference, if any, between expression and illustration?  
**Ref Artists:** Grunewald, Die Brucke, Van Gogh, Pollock, Picasso, Giacometti, Ryder, Darger, Ensor, Bosch, De Kooning  
**Reading:** Chipp, 87 – 192

### Week 9

**26 October**  
**Topic:** Art as a Tool of the State: Is art an effective method of legitimizing authority?  
**Ref Artists:** David, Rivera, 20\textsuperscript{th} cent Soviet & Chinese art, Rubens, Futurists, Velasquez, Gainsborough, Ingres  
**Reading:** Chipp, 456 - 500

### Week 10

**02 November**  
**Visit to Wolfsonian**  
**Reading:** Nazi Propaganda Paintings

### Week 11

**08 November**  
**Topic:** Art as Social Dissent: How powerful of a weapon can art be in destabilizing authority?  
**Ref:** Degenerate Art exhibition by Nazis, Beckman, Nolde, Grosz, German woodcuts, Haake, Kruger, Holzer  
**Reading:** Chipp 281 – 308 & handout

### Week 12

**15 November**  
**Topic:** Art and Religion  
**Ref:** Michelangelo, Caravaggio, Mexican ex-votos, Bedia, Rouault, Serrano, Blake  
**Reading:** handout

### Week 13

**22 November**  
**Topic:** Art and Politics  
**Ref:** Jaques-Louis David & Francisco Goya, Gericault, Manet, Lewis Hine, Die Brucke, the Mexican Muralists, Hans Haake, Leon Golub, Jenny Holzer, William Kentridge, Nancy Spiro  
**Reading:** handout

### Week 14

**29 November**  
**Visit to MAM**

### Week 15

**06 December**  
**(Classes End 08 December)**  
**Summary and A Look Ahead**  
**Final Research Papers Due**

### SPRING 2006

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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>10 January</td>
<td>Review of Previous Semester</td>
<td>Read: On Bullshit</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>10 January</td>
<td>Review of Contemporary Miami Artists</td>
<td>Review guidelines and research needed for completion of final research project. Reading:</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>17 January</td>
<td>Multiculturalism in Art</td>
<td>Ref Artists: Michelangelo, El Greco, Picasso, Kahlo, Basquiat, Bedia, Carlos Alfonzo, Hung Liu,</td>
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<td>Date</td>
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<td>3 24 January</td>
<td>Class Warfare in the arts: Does an aristocracy exist in the arts?</td>
<td>Ofili, Ref Artists: Caravaggio, French Academy, The Impressionists, Seurat, Duchamp, Warhol, Lichtenstein, Brueghel</td>
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<td>4 31 January</td>
<td>Sex and Art</td>
<td>Ref Artists: Venus of Wilendorf, murals of Pompey, Titian, Pontormo, Charles Ray, Jeff Koons, Nayland Blake, Schiele, Beardsley, Balthus, Marlene Dumas, Fischl</td>
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<td>5 07 February</td>
<td>Environmentalism</td>
<td>Ref: Robert Smithson, Michael Heizer, Hans Haake, Christo, Richard Long</td>
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<td>6 14 February</td>
<td>Gay Identity</td>
<td>Ref Artists: Caravaggio, Warhol, Mapplethorpe, Haring, Tom of Finland, Dyke Action Machine, Bleckner, Gilbert &amp; George</td>
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<td>7 21 February</td>
<td>Feminism in Art: How have women used art to explore female representation and identity?</td>
<td>Ref Artists: Artemisia Gentileschi, Camille Claudel, Georgia O’Keefe, Judy Chicago, Guerilla Girls, Cindy Sherman, Samantha Salzinger.</td>
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<td>8 28 February</td>
<td>Cultural Identity</td>
<td>Ref Artists: Harlem Renaissance, Kara Walker, Robert Colescott, Rene Stout, Jonathan Greene, Bearden, Lawrence Reading:</td>
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<td>9 07 March</td>
<td>Final selection work &amp; review of all necessary information for Exhibition</td>
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<td>10 14 March</td>
<td>Installation of THC Exhibition</td>
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<td>11 21 March</td>
<td>No Class – Spring Break</td>
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<td>12 28 March</td>
<td>Opening of Exhibition</td>
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<td>13 04 April</td>
<td>Visit to Rubell Collection</td>
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<td>14 11 April</td>
<td>Presentations of the curator(s) of each artists</td>
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<td>15 18 April</td>
<td>Summary – De-Installation</td>
<td>Final Research Papers Due</td>
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