

Visual Arts History 1044B: Art, Media and Popular Culture

(2016-17: Winter Term)

Lecture: Thursdays, 14:30-16:20, MC-110

Tutorials: Thursdays, 16:30-17:30

Professor John Hatch

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Hours: Thursdays, 13:00-14:00, or by appointment

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Description:

This course is an introduction to art history with a specific focus on the relationship between art, media and popular culture from the Early Renaissance to the present day. In large part our attention is paid to how art has been influenced by popular culture and vice-versa. As simple as this objective may appear, art has been largely an elitist affair, while what one means by "popular culture" has changed markedly over time, let alone that each time art and popular culture have crossed, the definition of the former has always been questioned as a result. These will be on-going issues throughout the course, which will start with the defining modern moment of the contact between art and popular culture, namely Pop Art of the 1950s and 60s, and then trace historically interactions beginning with Giotto's Scrovegni Chapel frescoes. The course will then proceed by-and-large in a chronological manner, looking at themes such as the artist as entrepreneur in a growing middle-class art market, the rise of print media and its influence on art and social change, photography's role in radically changing the face of art in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the integration of popular entertainment into artistic production, and art's increasing role as a tool of social criticism.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end the semester, students who have successfully completed the course will have met the following learning outcomes: a) an introductory understanding of the role of art and media in popular culture from the fourteenth century to twenty-first century; b) understand the significant role art has played in attempting to communicate to wide audiences; c) identify different strategies that were used by artists in order to connect with the masses; d) make connections to and from different art historical time periods in terms of identifying significant parallels and differences; e) exposure to a variety of media including, but not limited to painting, theatre, sculpture, print, photography, collage, commercials, television, and learned how the media themselves intersect and influence each other; f) developed critical thinking skills in applying critical theories to our world today; g) acquire reading comprehension skills including the ability to assimilate information, while identifying the key points and arguments in a text; h) developed writing skills via short written assignments; i) improved oral communication skills via tutorial discussions and a short presentation; j) learned how to cite various sources using the Chicago Manual of Style; k) gained research experience and learned how to produce an annotated bibliography.

Texts:

There is only one required textbook for this course, Grant Pooke and Diana Newall's, *Art History: The Basics* (Routledge, 2008), which is available digitally through Western Libraries. All the other readings are available for download through the Weldon Library website or on the course website <https://owl.uwo.ca/portal> (reproduced in accordance with Canadian Copyright legislation). As a useful background text, Marilyn

Stokstad and Michael Cothren, *Art: A Brief History* (5th edition), is suggested but not required for the course and is on 2-hour reserve at the D.B. Weldon Library.

Assignments:

- 1) 5% - tutorial attendance: attendance will be taken in the tutorials, but not in the lecture for obvious practical reasons. Please be advised though that attending the lectures is crucial.
- 2) 10% - research methods quiz held on January 19, 2017: this quiz will cover content discussed in the week 2 tutorials. If for whatever reason you are unable to write the quiz, then the mark for this assignment will be transferred to the final exam.
- 3) 15% - first course exam, February 2, 2017
- 4) 15% - tutorial writing assignment; a 500-word analysis of a single art work relevant to the theme of the course for which at least three sources must be referenced due February 16, 2017
- 5) 20% - second course exam, March 16, 2017
- 6) 35% - final exam (scheduled during the April exam period)

Penalties:

Any assignment submitted late will be penalized 10% per day and will not be accepted 5 days past its due date.