

General Information

Course name	Arts and Culture of the USA	ECTS Credits	4
		Semester	winter

Aims

The aim of this course is to develop and improve essential analytical skills in dealing with American culture and art, and to acquire knowledge of historical development of the Fine Arts in USA. The course is designed to provide students with information about the most vital eras important in the overall development of a distinctive American tradition in Arts, and to incite students' very own interpretation of individual works of art and. The course embraces eras and periods starting from Colonial America until late 20th century contemporary USA, focusing on both mainstream and ethnic traditions, and all means of artistic production (visual art as well as audiovisual art of the 20th century). In its essence, the main objective of the course is to present information about the development of art in coherence with wider social, cultural but also political contexts that substantially continue to contribute to the expression of American art.

Contents

Week 1: Introduction

Week 2: The Art and Identity in the British Colonies in America Portraiture – Ch.W.Peale, J.S.Copley, G.Stuart The Grand Tour – Benjamin West Reading – Of Plimoth Plantation Extra – Potraiture

Week 3: Post-Revolutionary America The Hudson River School and Landscape Painting Folk Art American Scenes of Everyday Life Reading – Alexis deTocqueville, The Influences of Democracy upon Science and the Arts, Two Weeks in the Wilderness Extra – American Treasury, Landscape Painting

Week 4: America comes of Age 1876-1900 American Impressionism - Childe Hassam, M.S. Cassatt Gilded Age and Realism The Ashcan School – R.Henri, G.Bellows, G.Sloan Extra – American Ephemera

Week 5: Photography The Daguerreian Era and the Rise of Amateur Photography Pictorialism A.Stieglitz and His Circle Reading – Susan Sontag, America seen through Photographs, darkly Extra – More than Mere Photographs

Week 6: Presentations

Week 7: Tutorials

Week 8: Avant-Garde – M.Duchamp Modernism – Ch.Sheeler, G.O'Keeffe Geometric Abstraction Reading – Walt Whitman, Give Me the Splendid Silent Sun

Week 9: New Deal - Social Realism and Utopia Documentary imagination and Early Documentary Photography – D.Lange Regionalism and Ethnic Pluralism

Week 10: Abstract Expressionism – J.Pollock and the NY School Pop-Art, The post War print Renaissance Conceptual Art and Photography – J.Johns Minimalism Reading – Allen Ginsberg, Howl

Week 11: Feminist Art Black Art 1980s and Contemporary Art

Week 12: Basquiat, The Radiant Child Essay

Week 13: Discussion

Week 14: Tutorials

Evaluation

1. Attendance - students are expected to attend each class according to the schedule. No transfers among the groups are allowed. Should the student miss three or more classes, he/she will not receive credits for the course no matter what his/her overall results are. Student must be on time for class or he/she will be marked as absent.

2. Continuous assessment: Students are expected and required to actively participate in each lesson (active participation = participation in discussions based on having read the required texts and articles), and to present a paper on a chosen topic. Should students fail to provide a presentation, they will not receive credits. Students are required to read all texts given by the lecturer in order to participate in discussions - if they fail to participate in discussions they will be marked absent.

Final assessment: The final grade will be calculated as a sum of grades - active class participation and presentation (30%), essay (30%) and panel discussion (40%).
FINAL EVALUATION : A 93-100% B 86-92% C 78-85% D 72-77% E 65-71% F 64 and less

Bibliography

Recommended literature:

Doss, Erika. Twentieth-Century American Art. 1st edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.

Taylor, Joshua C. The Fine Arts in America. Chicago: The University Press of Chicago, 1979.

Orvell, Miles. American Photography. 1st edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.

Zinn, Howard. A People's History of the United States. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2003.

The American Art Book. Phaidon. 1999.

Sontag, Susan. On Photography. London: Penguin Books, 1978.

Recommended documentary:

Hughes, Robert. American Visions: The Epic History of Art in America. BBC, 1997. Film.

Useful links: http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hi/te_index.asp?i=America