AH3902

Country, City and Society in Nineteenth-Century French Art

Semester 1

Coordinator/Tutor:  Dr William Rough (e-mail wwr)
AH3902: Country, City and Society in Nineteenth-Century French Art

Course Description:

This module will examine French Art, Society and Culture as demonstrated through a study of Realist, Impressionist, Post-Impressionist and Avant-Garde paintings c.1840 - c.1900.

In particular it will explore the various social and class themes affecting the notions of City vs. Country. It will also explore the variety of contemporary artistic and literary texts paying particular attention to the broad range of critical and theoretical texts, written by key figures, during this period. It will also explore modern critical theories and readings of the works and the period in general.

Assessment = 100% Continuous Assessment as follows:

- Research Essay, c. 3000 words. (50%)
- Visual Analysis Test (1,000 words) (25%)
- Visual Analysis Paper on a work of art in the Edinburgh collections, c.2000 words (25%)
AH3902 Lecture and Seminar Programme

Lectures are at 6.30 pm on Monday. These are followed by a coffee/tea break and seminar.

The structure of this Combined Studies MA module is such that a seminar immediately follows a lecture. As a result, each tutorial will discuss issues concerning the previous week’s lecture.

All seminar texts can be found in *Art in Theory 1815-1900* (Harrison, Wood & Gaiger). Please Note: earlier editions of the revised edition may have slightly different page numbers.

**Week 1**  
**Introduction and Overview.** Introduction to key texts.

**Week 2**  
**LECTURE - Courbet & Ornans**  
**SEMINAR- Millet and the Barbizon School**  
**TEXTS:**  

**Week 3**  
**LECTURE - Manet & Paris**  
**SEMINAR - Courbet & Ornans: Ornans vs. Paris**  
**TEXTS:**  

**Week 4**  
**LECTURE - The Impressionists & Paris Part I**  
**SEMINAR - Manet & Paris: Baudelaire and the City**  
**TEXTS:**  

**Week 5**  
**LECTURE - The Impressionists & Paris Part II**  
**SEMINAR - The Impressionists & Paris Part I: Monet**  
**TEXTS:**


**Week 6**

ILW (no classes)

**Week 7**

**LECTURE - Paris & London**

SEMINAR - The Impressionists & Paris Part II: Degas

**TEXTS:**


**Week 8**

**LECTURE - Monet & Argenteuil**

SEMINAR - Paris & London: The Thames & the Seine

**TEXTS:**

i) Oscar Wilde: on Art for Art’s Sake 1889/1891, *Art in Theory 1815-1900*, pp. 859-862


**Week 9**

**LECTURE - Gauguin & Pont-Aven**

SEMINAR - Monet & Argenteuil: Work & Leisure in Argenteuil


**Week 10**

**VISUAL ANALYSIS TEST**

**Week 11**

**LECTURE - Van Gogh & Arles**

SEMINAR - Gauguin & Pont-Aven: Primitivism, Symbolism & the Avant-Garde

**TEXTS:**


Please note that this handbook is for illustrative purposes only and may not reflect the course content in 2020 or future years

Week 12
LECTURE - Seurat & Asnières
SEMINAR - Van Gogh & Arles: Van Gogh in Saint-Remy & Auvers

TEXTS:
i) Van Gogh: Letters to his brother Theo c.1885, Art in Theory 1815-1900, pp. 896-902
ii) Van Gogh: Letters to his brother Theo and his sister Wilhelmina c.1882-1890, Art in Theory 1815-1900, pp. 942-948
iii) G. -Abert Aurier: “The Isolated Vincent Van Gogh” 1890, Art in Theory 1815-1900, pp. 948-952

Week 13
LECTURE - Gauguin & Tahiti
SEMINAR - Seurat & Asnières: Anarchism on the Seine

TEXTS:
i) Charles Henry: Introduction to a Scientific Aesthetic” 1885, Art in Theory 1815-1900, pp. 953-958
ii) Félix Fénéon: “Neo-Impressionism” 1887, Art in Theory 1815-1900, pp. 966-969
iii) Seurat: Letter to Maurice Beaubourg 1890, Art in Theory 1815-1900, pp. 969-970

Week 14
SEMINAR & REVIEW SESSION: Gauguin & Tahiti
i) Gauguin: Notes on Colour 1896-1898, Art in Theory 1815-1900, pp. 992-998

Please note that this handbook is for illustrative purposes only and may not reflect the course content in 2020 or future years.
SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

Useful reading for all History of Art students
- A. D’Alleva, *Methods and Theories of Art History*
- A. D’Alleva, *How to Write Art History*
- S. Barnet, *A Short Guide to Writing About Art*

Set Books
- C. Harrison, P. Wood, J. Gaiger, eds., *Art in Theory 1815-1900: An Anthology of Changing Ideas*
- S. Eisenman (ed.). *Nineteenth Century Art: A Critical History*

Below is a selection of useful texts for each corresponding Research Essay.

**Courbet and Ornans**
- T.J. Clark, *The Absolute Bourgeois: Artists and Politics in France 1845*
- T.J. Clark, *Images of the People: Gustave Courbet and the 1848 Revolution*
- R.L. Herbert, *From Millet to Léger: essays in social history*

**Manet & Paris**
- T.J. Clark, *The Painting of Modern Life: Paris in the Art of Manet and His Followers*
- B. Collins (ed), *12 Views of Manet’s ‘Bar’*

**The Impressionists & Paris Part I & Part II**
- R.L. Herbert, *Impressionism: art, leisure and Parisian Society*
- J. House, *Impressionism, Paint and Politics*

**Paris & London**
- Arts Council of Great Britain, *The Impressionists in London*, (exh. cat.)

**Monet & Argenteuil**
- R.L. Herbert, *Monet on the Normandy Coast: Tourism and Painting, 1867-1886*
- R. Thomson (ed.), *Framing France: The representation of landscape in France 1870-1914*
- P.H. Tucker, *Monet at Argenteuil*
**Gauguin & Pont-Aven**
- B. Boyle-Turner, *Gauguin and the School of Pont-Aven* (exh. cat.)
- B. Thomson (ed), *Gauguin: Maker of Myth*
- B. Thomson, *Gauguin’s Vision*

**Van Gogh & Arles**

**Seurat & Asnières**
- R. Brettell, J. Pissarro, *The Impressionist and the City: Pissarro’s Series Paintings*
- R.L. Herbert, *Seurat and the making of La Grande*
- J. House, ‘Meaning in Seurat’s Figure Paintings’, *Art History*, vol.3, Sept. 1980, pp.314-44