

Art and Society

Prof. Greg M. Thomas

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The University of Hong Kong
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Tue. & Thur. 12:30-1:20
Knowles Building 223

Course Description:

This course introduces basic elements of the world's major artistic traditions and helps students develop visual and critical skills needed to understand the visual culture of modern society. Grouped into two modules, each lecture will focus on one theme, using examples of art from both Western and non-Western cultures, both older and more recent. Students also meet in tutorials for small-group discussion and first-hand examination of works of art on campus. No previous knowledge of art or art history is expected for this course.

Lectures:

Lecture classes are held every Tuesday and Thursday (12:30-1:20). Four tutorial meetings are also planned, for which attendance and participation are required. Extra copies of handouts are available in Run Run Shaw 1033 (Dept. of Fine Arts).

Tests (50% of final grade):

There are two in-class tests. Each test has two parts: (1) several questions requiring short answers about specific works of art and specific readings; and (2) a short essay. A study sheet with a list of possible works and possible essay questions will be handed out two weeks before the test.

Project (30% of final grade):

There is one project assignment requiring you to write about a work of art, art event, or art exhibition based on your own first-hand experience of art during the semester. The length will be 1000 words (about 4 double-spaced pages). A detailed assignment sheet will be distributed before Reading Week.

Tutorials (20% of final grade):

Attendance and participation in tutorial discussions are required and will form part of your final grade. Our head tutor is Ms. Nicole Fung (fungnkn@hku.hk); our other tutors are Ms. Elaine Kwok (elaineyn@graduate.hku.hk), Ms. Alice Wong (alicewon@hku.hk), and Mr. Yang Qingkang (yqk11@hku.hk).

Readings:

Readings include excerpts from books, articles, and online news stories; all of them except online readings are in a course packet on sale (\$110) at the Audio-Visual desk in the Main Library, 1/F. A sheet of "topic notes" will also be handed out for each lecture topic. A few books are on reserve in the Main Library and the Dept. of Fine Arts Resource Centre (Run Run Shaw 1029) for extra reference.

Image database:

FAIVA is a database displaying all the images discussed in class. Access is restricted to the HKU intranet. At <http://finearts.hku.hk/faiva.html>, choose "FAIVA database", then "course = Art & Society." Images are listed lecture by lecture. These digital files are to be used only for personal study.

PART 1: FUNCTIONS OF ART

<u>Week 1:</u>	Sept. 18 Sept. 20	1. The things we call "Art" I 2. The things we call "Art" II
<u>Week 2:</u>	Sept. 25 Sept. 27	3. Art and power I [<i>begin TUTORIAL #1: Pillar of Shame</i>] 4. Art and power II
<u>Week 3:</u>	Oct. 2 Oct. 4	<i>-- holiday: no class</i> 5. Art and religion I
<u>Week 4:</u>	Oct. 9 Oct. 11	6. Art and religion II <i>-- no class</i>
<u>Week 5:</u>	Oct. 16 Oct. 18	7. Art and identity I [<i>begin TUTORIAL #2: classroom</i>] 8. Art and identity II
<u>Week 6:</u>	Oct. 23 Oct. 25	<i>-- holiday: no class</i> 9. TEST #1
<u>Week 7:</u>	Oct. 29 Nov. 1	<i>READING WEEK: no class</i> <i>READING WEEK: no class</i>

PART 2: LANGUAGES OF ART

<u>Week 8:</u>	Nov. 6 Nov. 8	10. Techniques of realism I [<i>begin TUT. #3: HKU Museum</i>] 11. Techniques of realism II
<u>Week 9:</u>	Nov. 13 Nov. 15	12. The body across cultures I 13. The body across cultures II
<u>Week 10:</u>	Nov. 20 Nov. 22	14. "Beauty" across cultures I 15. "Beauty" across cultures II
<u>Week 11:</u>	Nov. 27 Nov. 29	16. What is "creativity"? I [<i>begin TUT. #4: classroom</i>] 17. What is "creativity"? II
<u>Week 12:</u>	Dec. 4 Dec. 6	18. Museum culture 19. TEST #2

Dec. 17: **PROJECT DUE**