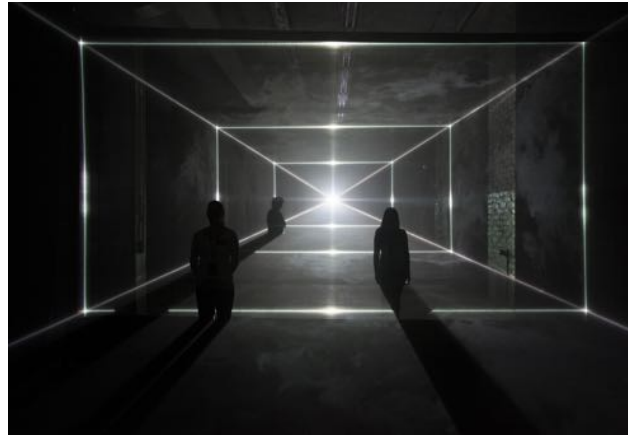


## Survey of Western Art: Renaissance to Contemporary

Jacob Henry Leveton



Raphael, *School of Athens*, 1509-11. Fresco, Apostolic Palace, Vatican City, Italy



United Visual Artists, *Vanishing Point*, 2013-14. Laser light installation

In this survey, limited primarily to western art produced between the sixteenth century in Italy and the twentieth century in the United States, we will collaboratively engage in a selective overview of art created in a range of media. The relation between art and politics will constitute our principal concern. Together we will ask how art has acted as either an object of cultural capital investment, asserting the social power of the patron, who pays for it, or asserting the authority of the artist, who might offer critiques of society through their work. We'll be especially interested when we find evidence of both.

Ultimately, careful looking and conscientious thinking represents the basis of beginning to think across art and politics. I intend this course to offer students the opportunity to catalyze this work.

Prof. Leveton's Office Hours

[Time/Location]

Teaching Assistant Office Hours

[Names/Times/Locations]

### Course Requirements:

- Attend all lectures (a sign-in sheet will be circulated)
- Attend and participate in weekly discussion sections
- Complete all reading/viewing assignments
- Maintain Visual Analysis Journal
- Write 5 One-Page Short Essays
- Final Examination, Take Home

### Grading:

- 15% Lecture Attendance
- 15% Active Participation in Discussion
- 20% Critical Art Journal
- 20% Short Essays
- 20% Final Examination

Assignments explained:

**1. Attendance and participation:** the shared success of this course depends on all of our engagement with materials as well as our physical and mental presence in the classroom. As a result, I require attendance *and* participation in both lecture and discussion sections. While I will lead the primary lectures, and your teaching assistants will lead discussion sections, we expect you to offer comments and ask questions at both. Last, and less traditionally, art often offers ways of envisioning how we might pursue more equitable, committed, and deeper forms of being in the world. An aspect of participating in this course includes that you take up one new way of bettering the collegiate and city environment where you study based on a theme for the class. This can be formal, through some kind of volunteerism, or informal, e.g., my commitment as an ecological art historian to cleaning trash from the Lakeside Trail while jogging.

**2. Visual Analysis Journal:** Art frequently perplexes. Engaging it in a way that reveals insights about relations in the world demands that we develop an active and critical imagination. I have designed this sustained assignment to benefit you in these regards. Each week, you will annotate and explicate three artworks we will discuss in lecture and discussion. While explication is more frequently mobilized as an analytic tool in English courses, we will deploy, develop, and refine it too for the pursuit of the interpretation of visual art. Either in digitally, or by paper printout and with a pen, you will diagram the key components of select works and write a one-sentence summary of what you find the artwork to be about or express.

**3. Short Essays:** Because the objects of study in Art History are visual, and the way we study them is by writing, Art History courses offer extraordinary opportunities to expand your intellectual capacities and horizons by working both visually *and* verbally. In these essays, you will choose one artwork to which you've devoted additional time in the Critical Art Journal. In an essay that can be no longer than 1 page, develop a thesis about what the artwork expresses. Then, support your argument utilizing your visual analysis of the artwork with your annotations as the concrete evidence that will validate your thesis. *The first essay, which I will consider "diagnostic," and utilize to identify areas for improvement throughout the semester, will be due at the conclusion of Week Two.* The remaining four can be submitted to your teaching assistant any week of the semester. You may submit a maximum of two short essays in a single week.

**4. Final Examination:** The course will culminate in a final examination taking the form of an in-class essay, for which you may prepare a 1-page outline. The prompts will be arrived at collaboratively following the conclusion of the Final Review. Together, we will decide what constituted the primary driving questions that linked our study of the history of western art. With the in-class final, you will have the opportunity to answer one.

## Week 1: Introduction/Classicism and Italian Renaissance Art

Lecture: "Introduction: Social-Critical Art History, The Means of Art History, and How to Explicate an Artwork"

Readings:

- Aristotle, selection from *The Nicomachean Ethics* on the well-lived life
- John Berger, "Seeing comes before words" in *Ways of Seeing* (1972)

Lecture: "The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Early-Modern Italian Art"

Readings:

- Fred Kleiner, "Renaissance and Mannerism in Cinquecento Italy" in *Gardner's Art through the Ages* [PDF]
- A.A. Donahue, "History and the Historian of Classical Art" (2013)

**\*\*Download Course PowerPoint from Blackboard featuring all images to be discussed in lectures over the semester.**

## Week 2: Perspective and Politics in Italian Renaissance Art

Lecture: "Constructing Space and the Visual Technologies of Exclusion"

Readings:

- Niall Atkinson, "Getting Lost in the Italian Renaissance," *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance* (2016)
- Erwin Panofsky, "Introduction" in *Perspective as Symbolic Form*

Lecture: "Renaissance Rome and Florence in a Globalizing World"

Readings:

- Walter Benjamin, "Theses on the Philosophy of History" (1942)
- Alessandra Russo, "At the Frontiers of Art History" in *The Untranslatable Image: Mestizo History of the Arts in New Spain, 1500-1600* (2014)

**\*\*Note: First Short Essay Due by E-Mail to Teaching Assistant, Friday, 5PM**

## Week 3: Ecstasy, Atrocity, and Challenging Power in Early-Modern Baroque Italian Art

Lecture: "Ecstasy and Atrocity in Mannerist Art and Sculpture"

Readings:

- Michelangelo's poetry [selections]
- Peter Burke, Luke Clossey, and Felipe Fernández-Armesto, "The Global Renaissance," *Journal of World History* (2017)

Lecture: "New Radicals: Caravaggio and Artemisia Gentileschi"

Viewing: *Caravaggio*, dir. Derek Jarman. 1986. 93 minutes.

Reading:

- Mary D. Garrard, "Artemisia Gentileschi's Self-Portrait as the Allegory of Painting," *The Art Bulletin* (1980)

## Week 4: Commerce and Science in Early-Modern Baroque Northern European Art

Lecture: “Economics of Mercantilism in Dutch and Flemish Art”

Readings:

- Fred Kleiner, Ch. 23 of *Gardner’s Art through the Ages*
- Svetlana Alpers, “The Mapping Impulse in Dutch Art” in *The Art of Describing Dutch Art in the Seventeenth Century* (1983)

Lecture: “Art and Science in Seventeenth-Century Northern European Art”

Readings:

- Lucretius, Book I from poem “On Nature”
- Charles Scribner, “Ways of Seeing in the Age of Dürer”

## Week 5: Art, Theory, and Responsibilities of the Citizen in Eighteenth-Century British Art

Lecture: “The Politics of Fine Art and the Republic”

Readings:

- Sir Philip Sydney, “Defense of Poetry”
- John Rees, “The Maddest Christmas I Ever Saw” in *The Leveller Revolution* (2016)
- John Barrell, “A Republic of Taste” in *The Political Theory of Painting* (1986)

Lecture: “Image and Text in William Hogarth and the Poetry of a Life Well-Lived”

Readings:

- John Milton, Book 12 from *Paradise Lost*;
- Ronald Paulson, “Industry and Idleness, 1747” in *Hogarth: High Art and Low, 1732-1750* (1992)

## Week 6: Neoclassicism in Revolutionary and Counter-Revolutionary France

Lecture: “Jacques-Louis David’s *Oath of the Horatii* and the Vices and Virtues of the French Revolution”

Readings:

- Robert Rosenblum, “The *Exemplum Virtutis*” in *Transformations in Late Eighteenth Century Art* (1967)
- Stephen F. Eisenman, “Patriotism and Virtue” in *Nineteenth Century Art: A Critical History* (1994)

Lecture: “Militarism, Nationalism, and Imperialism: Napoleonic Art as Ideological State Apparatus”

Readings:

- Louis Althusser, “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses” (1970)
- Todd Porterfield, “The Obelisk and the Place de la Concorde” in *The Allure of Empire* (1998)

\*\*Please note: the second lecture will conclude 20mins early for students to complete a brief evaluation of the course trajectory to date and to allow for suggestions what remains of the semester.

## Week 7: Art and Politics in Romantic-Period England and Spain

Lecture: “The Ecology of the British Industrial Revolution and the Sister Arts Radicalized”

Readings:

- William Blake, *Songs of Innocence* (1789)
- Thora Brylowe, “William Blake, Art History, and the Status of the Copy” in *The Sister Arts as Cultural Practice, 1760-1820* (2017)

Lecture: “Goya and the Arts of Enlightenment and Resistance in Spain”

Readings:

- Janis A. Thomlinson, “Godoy, Goya, and the Imagery of Enlightenment” in *Goya in the Twilight of Enlightenment* (1992)
- Andrew P. Schulz, “Modes of Spectatorship” in *Goya’s Caprichos* (2005)

## Week 8: Romanticism and Realism in France

Lecture: “Delacroix and Géricault: Critics of Society”

Readings:

- Elisabeth A. Fraser, “Delacroix’s *Sardanapalus*: The Life and Death of the Royal Body,” *French Historical Studies* (2003)
- Darcy Grimaldo Grigsby, “Cannibalism-Senegal: Gericault’s *Raft of the Medusa*” in *Extremities: Painting Empire in Post-Revolutionary France*

Lecture: “The Reproducible Image, Photography, and Resistance to Everyday Authority in 1830s Paris”

Readings:

- Walter Benjamin, “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction”
- Judith Wechsler, “Caricature: Newspapers and Politics” in *A Human Comedy* (1982)
- Mary Warner, “Photography and the Modern in Nineteenth-Century Thought” in *Photography and its Critics: A Cultural History, 1839-1900* (1997)

## Week 9: The Built Environment and Politics in Paris and London

Lecture: “Building New Paris from the Center to the Periphery: Architecture and Control”

Readings:

- David Van Zanten, “Paris Space: What Might Have Constituted Haussmanization in *Manifestos and Transformations in the Early Modernist City* (2010)
- Seth Graebner, “The Bird’s Eye View: Looking at the City in Paris and Algiers,” *Nineteenth-Century French Studies* (2008)

Lecture: “London’s Urbanization and the Chartist Social Movement”

- John Keats, “Robin Hood” poem
- Elizabeth Prettejohn, “Contexts for Pre-Raphaelitism” in *The Art of the Pre-Raphaelites* (2000)
- Mike Sanders, “The Chartist Imaginary: ‘Talking by Turns of Politics and Poetry’ in *The Poetry of Chartism: Aesthetics, Politics, History* (2009)

## Week 10: The French Salon System and the Insurgence of Realism

Lecture: “Artistic Production under the Académie des Beaux-Arts”

Reading:

- Stephen F. Eisenman, “The Generation of 1830 and the Crisis in the Public Sphere” in *Nineteenth-Century Art: A Critical History* (1994)

Lecture: “Courbet’s Radical Art of the Country and its Challenge to the City”

- Linda Nochlin, “Innovation and Tradition in Courbet’s *A Burial at Ornans*” in *Courbet* (2006)
- T.J. Clark, “On the Social History of Art” in *Image of the People: Gustave Courbet and the 1848 Revolution* (1971)

## Week 11: Manet's break and the Emergence of Painting "in Plain Air" in France

Lecture: "Édouard Manet: French Modern Art and the Global Thought"

Readings:

- T.J. Clark, "Olympia's Choice" in *The Painting of Modern Life* (1984)
- Kristine Ibsen, "The View from Paris: Spectacle and Spectator in Édouard Manet's Execution of Maximilian" in *Maximilian, Mexico, and the Invention of Empire* (2010)

Lecture: "Impressionism's Ecology"

Readings:

- André Dombrowski, "Instants, Moments, Minutes: Impressionism and the Industrialisation of Time" in *Monet and the Birth of Impressionism* (2015)
- Stephen F. Eisenman, "Impressionism and the Climate Change: Environmentalism's Beginnings during the Impressionist Era" in *Impressionism: The Art of Landscape* (2017)

## Week 12: "Fin-de-Siècle" Malaise and the Rupture of the New

Lecture: "Re-Visioning Artistic Experimentation in French Symbolism"

Readings:

- Stéphane Mallarmé, poem "Azur" (1864)
- Jean Moréas, *Symbolist Manifesto* (1886)
- Rubén Darío, poems "Sea Shell," "To Goya," "The Poet and the King"
- Robert Goldwater, "Introduction" in *Symbolism* (1979)

Lecture: "The Futurist Image and the Destructive Tendencies of Modernity"

Readings:

- Filippo Marinetti, "The Founding Manifesto of Surrealism" (1909)
- Selena Daly, "Introduction" in *Italian Futurism and the First World War* (2016)

## Week 13: The Cubist Experiment

Lecture: "Picasso and Abstraction"

Readings:

- John Berger, "The Moment of Cubism" (1967)
- Rosalind Krauss, "In the Name of Picasso" (1981)

Lecture: "Cubism and Modern/Industrial Excess"

Reading:

- John Scanlan, "Preface" and "Garbage Aesthetics" in *On Garbage* (2005)

## Week 14: World War One and The Emergence of the Russian Avant-Garde

Lecture: "Sculpting Constructivism and Painting Suprematism in Moscow"

Readings:

- Kazimir Malevich, "From Cubism and Futurism to Suprematism" (1915-1916)
- China Miéville, "Introduction" in *October: The Story of the Russian Revolution* (2017)
- McKenzie Wark, "Alexander Bogdanov: Workings of the World" in *Molecular Red* (2015)

Lecture: "Art During and in the Wake of War"

Readings:

- T.S. Eliot, "The Wasteland" (1922)

**\*\*Last week to begin turning in two essays per week to meet course requirement**

## **Week 15: Abstract Expressionism**

Lecture: “When New York Stole the Art World: Pollock, Abstract Expressionism, and the Global Implications of the New Art”

Readings:

- Clement Greenberg, “Modernist Painting” (1960)
- T.J. Clark, “In Defense of Abstract Expressionism” in *Farewell to an Idea: Episodes in the History of Modernism* (1999)

Lecture: Final Examination Review

**\*\*Remaining “short essay” assignments due to your teaching assistant by Friday, [date] at 5pm.**

## **Week 16:**

[Final Examination]