ART 203L.00: Introduction to Art Criticism

Valerie L. Hedquist

University of Montana - Missoula, valerie.hedquist@umontana.edu

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Art 203, Introduction to Art Criticism, 3 credits
Introduction to writing art criticism
Literary and Artistic Studies and Writing course
Spring 2007, Lectures TTH, 11:10-12:00; Journalism 304
Discussion Groups, T or TH, 10:10-11:00 OR 1:10-2:00; Fine Arts Building 302

Valerie Hedquist, Associate Professor, Art Resource Center
Office Phone: 243-4607; valerie.hedquist@umontana.edu
Office Hours: T 1:30-2:30 and W 9:00-10:00
Assistants: Kathryn Rodriguez; kathryn.rodriguez@umontana.edu and Lisa Jarrett; lisa.jarrett@grizmail.umt.edu
Office Hours: Kathryn Rodriguez - M 1-2 p.m., Schreiber Gym, SG 127; Lisa Jarrett -

Course description: An overview of the description, interpretation, and evaluation of visual art as practiced in the discipline of art criticism. Both traditional and postmodern critical approaches to art will be considered with an emphasis on contemporary art criticism. Students will read a range of past and present art critics and write several examples of art criticism based on direct observation of contemporary art works.

Learning Objectives:
- Develop improved observation and analysis of art
- Comprehend various interpretive perspectives
- Develop aesthetic evaluative criteria and apply them to contemporary art
- Become familiar with contemporary artists and art works through first-hand viewing and careful reading of art criticism


Requirements for Course: You are expected to attend class and participate in discussion. All assigned course work must be completed in order to earn credit for the class. Late work will lose 10 points/day. Students are expected to keep copies of all assigned work. Students will utilize Blackboard (http://courseware.umt.edu) for course syllabus, other course materials, announcements, and grades. Grades will be calculated as follows:

Attendance: 10 points/discussion group session (140 points total)
Participation: 10 points/discussion group session (140 points total)
One library assignment: 120 points total
Three papers; visual analysis, interpretation, and judgment: 100 points each; 300 points total
Peer-review reports: 10 points each; (30 points total)
Public presentation; BFA exhibitions: 50 points total
Current Exhibitions Quiz: 20 points

Grades are calculated as follows, based on all work completed:
800-736, A; 735-720, A-
719-704, B+; 703-656, B; 655-640, B-
639-624, C++; 623-576, C; 575-560, C-
559-544, D++; 543-496, D; 495-480, D-
479 and lower F

Students with disabilities or special needs should see the instructor.

Academic Misconduct and the Student Conduct Code: All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The Code is available for review online at www.umt.edu/SA/VPSA/Index.cfm/page/1321.

Lecture Week 1, January 22 and 24: Introduction and What is Art and Art Criticism?
Read: Barrett, Preface and Chapter 1
Past and Present Critics, Writing about Art

Discussion Week 1, January 22 and 24
Puzzles about Art, An Aesthetics Casebook discussion
Art criticism sources (review of materials available in Art Resource Center and Mansfield Library)
Lecture Week 2, January 29 and 31: Writing and Art
Read: Barrett, Chapter 6
Visit from Jake Hansen, Writing Center, January 29
Art Reviews
Discussion Week 2, January 29 and 31
Introduction to Writing Center and On-campus art venues, including Main Hall, UC Art Gallery, Paxson/Meloy, and Gallery of Visual Art

Lecture Weeks 3 and 4, February 5, 7, 12, and 14: Describing art, what do I see?
Read: Barrett, Chapter 3
Make Paper #1 Outline on 8 February; write the paper during Weekend 9-10 February
Discussion Weeks 3 and 4, February 5, 7, 12, and 14
In-discussion group peer reviews

Paper #1, Visual Analysis
In-class peer review: February 12 and 14, 2008
Due date: February 19, 2008
Rewrite due: February 28, 2008

Lecture Weeks 5 and 6, February 19, 21, 26 and 28 Interpreting art, what does it mean?
Read: Barrett, Chapters 2 and 4
Make Paper #2 Outline on 26 or 28 February; write the paper the first week of March
View: IMPACTED NATIONS, Paxson/Meloy Galleries
View: Holly Andres: Short Street Series, MAM
In-class discussion of traditional and postmodern ways of understanding art
Discussion Weeks 5 and 6, February 19, 21, 26 and 28
Contemporary artists and what the art means
View: IMPACTED NATIONS, Paxson/Meloy Galleries
View: Holly Andres: SHORT STREET SERIES, Missoula Art Museum

Additional Activities in Conjunction with IMPACTED NATIONS
Thursday, January 24, 7pm, Meloy Gallery
Gallery talk by Manuela Well-Off-Man, MMAC Curator, Nature in Native American Art from the 19th Century to Present
Monday, February 25, 8pm, Montana Theatre
UM President’s Lecture Series: Winona LaDuke, Creating Just Societies: The Environment, the Economy, and Human Relations in the Next Millennium
Tuesday, February 26, 6-8pm, Meloy Gallery
Closing reception with 7pm film screening of Homeland and gallery talk by Winona LaDuke
Additional Activities in Conjunction with SHORT STREET SERIES
Gallery/Artini artist talk, February 21, 7pm, MAM

Paper #2, Interpretation of art
In-class peer review: March 11 and 13, 2008
Due date: March 18, 2008
Rewrite due: April 3, 2008

Lecture Weeks 7 and 8, March 4, 6, 11, and 13: Evaluating art, what is good art? (Part I)
Read: Barrett, Chapter 5
In-class discussion regarding evaluations and visits to on-campus art venues
Discussion Week 7, March 4 and 6
BFA Senior Thesis Exhibition Gallery of Visual Arts, March 6 through April 2, 2008
Opening reception Thursday 6 March 5-7 PM
Gallery hours Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, 11 AM-5 PM, Thursday, 11 AM-7 PM, Monday by appointment
Gallery will be closed during Spring Break
Discussion Week 8, March 11 and 13
In-discussion group peer reviews
Lecture Week 9, March 18 and 20:
Introduction to Mansfield Library Meet in Mansfield Library Computer Lab

Discussion Week 9: March 18 and 20:
Presentations for BFA Senior Thesis Exhibitions

SPRING BREAK
Library Assignment Due Date: April 10, 2008

Lecture Weeks 10 and 11, April 1, 3, 7 and 10, Evaluating art, what is good art? (Part II)
Discussion Weeks 10 and 11, April 1, 3, 7, and 10
MFA Thesis Exhibitions by Hak Kyun Kim and Kathryn Rodriguez, April 10 through May 9
Opening reception Thursday 10 April 5-7 PM
Gallery hours Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, 11 AM-5 PM, Thursday, 11 AM-7 PM, Monday by appointment

Paper #3, Judgment of art
  In-class peer review: April 15 and 17, 2008
  Due date: April 21, 2008
  Rewrite due: May 1, 2008

Lecture Week 12, April 15 and 17
Current Exhibitions of Contemporary Art
Discussion Week 12, April 15 and 17
Art Criticism of Contemporary Art Exhibitions

Lecture Weeks 13 and 14, April 21, 24, 29 and May 1
Writing and presenting art criticism, communicating your views
Quiz on contemporary art, artists, and exhibitions
Discussion Weeks 13 and 14, April 21, 24, 29, and May 1
Writing and presenting art criticism, communicating your views