

9-2013

## ARTH 250L.01: Introduction to Art Criticism

Valerie L. Hedquist

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**School of Art**  
**ARTH 250L, Introduction to Art Criticism, 3 credits**  
**Literary and Artistic Studies and Writing course**  
**TTH 11:10-12:30, Fall Semester 2013, Fine Arts Building 302**

Associate Professor Valerie Hedquist, 305A Fine Arts Building

E-mail: [valerie.hedquist@umontana.edu](mailto:valerie.hedquist@umontana.edu);

Office hours: Tuesday 3:30-4:30 p.m. and Wednesday 9:00-10:00 a.m.

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 and use 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
- Improve communication skills through writing brief responses to weekly questions and three 3-5 page papers

Required text: Terry Barrett, *Criticizing Art, Understanding the Contemporary*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, McGraw-Hill, 2012.

Requirements for Course: You are expected to attend lectures. Students will complete all assignments in order to earn credit for the class. Students are expected to keep copies of all assigned work. Students will utilize Moodle at <http://umonline.umt.edu> for course syllabus, lectures, assignments, other course materials, announcements, and grades.

Assignments and Points Distribution:

Library assignment: 100 points total

Three papers; visual analysis, interpretation, and judgment: 100 points each; (300 points total)

Peer-review reports: 10 points each, (30 points total)

Weekly Writing: 10 points weekly, (140 points total)

Grades are calculated as follows, based on all work completed:

570-526, A; 525-513, A-  
512-502, B+; 501-468, B; 467-456, B-  
455-445, C+; 444-411, C; 410-399, C-  
398-388, D+; 387-354, D; 353-342, D-  
341 and lower F

Students with disabilities or special needs should contact 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 [http://life.umt.edu/vpsa/student\\_conduct.php](http://life.umt.edu/vpsa/student_conduct.php).

Events in the School of Art are listed at the electronic bulletin board: <http://umartdepartment.wordpress.com/>  
Check it out!

## Local Art Scene. A Short List:

UC Art Gallery: [http://life.umt.edu/uc/ucsi/uc\\_gallery/](http://life.umt.edu/uc/ucsi/uc_gallery/)

Montana Museum of Art & Culture, MMAC, <http://www.umt.edu/montanamuseum/default.aspx>

School of Art Gallery of Art, GVA, <http://www.umt.edu/art/galleries/gva>

Missoula Art Museum, MAM, <http://www.missoulaartmuseum.org/>

## Lecture and Discussion Topics and Assignments

### Week One, 27 and 29 August

#### **Lecture: Introduction and What is Art?**

Moodle Introduction

Definitions and changing ideas of art

Receive and begin discussion of cases from *Puzzles about Art, An Aesthetics Casebook*

Introduction to Art Resource Center (Hours: To be determined) and on-campus art venues, including Main Hall, University Center Art Gallery (M-F 10-4:00), MMAC, Paxson/Meloy (TWSat 12:00-3:00; THF 12-6:00), GVA, Gallery of Visual Art (TWF 11-5:00; TH 11-6:00), MAM, (Tuesday - Saturday 10-5, Sunday noon-5)

See, too, [http://www.umt.edu/montanamuseum/documents/CampusArtWalk\\_001.pdf](http://www.umt.edu/montanamuseum/documents/CampusArtWalk_001.pdf)

UC Art Gallery, *Macrocosm*, by Jessica Mongeon, Aug 26 - Sept 27, Reception: Aug 29 4PM-6PM

MMAC, *Henry Freedman: Imagining New Worlds*, August 8 - September 21, 2013, Paxson Gallery

MMAC, *Four Collections*, August 8 - September 21, 2013, Meloy Gallery

GVA, September 3-25, *Accumulation/Transformation: School of Art Faculty Exhibition*

### Week Two, 3 and 5 September

#### **What is Art?**

**Visit the School of Art Faculty Exhibition in Gallery of Visual Arts**

*Puzzles about Art, An Aesthetics Casebook* discussion ongoing

Receive art criticism selections regarding Christian Marclay and discuss

September 5 Faculty lecture by Associate Professor Valerie Hedquist, "Miss Linwood's Picture Gallery in Leicester Square", 5:10-6 pm, Social Science Building, Room 356, followed by opening reception for *Accumulation/Transformation: School of Art Faculty Exhibition*, 6-7 pm, Gallery of Visual Arts

MAM, Sara Siestrem: *BALLAST*, Artist Reception: September 6, 5-9 PM, Gallery Talk: September 6, 7 PM, Artist Tour, September 7, 12 PM

### Week Three, 10 and 12 September

#### **What is Art Criticism?**

Past and Present Critics, Writing about Art

Read: Barrett, Preface, Chapter 1

MMAC, Tuesday, September 10, 7pm, Masquer Theater, Artist's talk with Henry Freedman

MMAC, Saturday, September 14, 12pm, Paxson Gallery, Gallery tour with artist Henry Freedman limited to 28 people, RSVP at 243-2019

### Week Four, 17 and 19 September

Visit from Writing Center Director, Kelly Webster, 17 September

Information about writing and reading for college success

Information about the UDWPA (Upper Division Writing Proficiency Assessment)

#### **The Task of the Critic: Description, Interpretation, and Evaluation**

What do critics do?

Artist: Nathalie Djurberg

GVA, September 19 Visiting Artist Lecture by Del Harrow, 5:10 pm, Social Science Building, Room 356 Sponsored by the Jim and Jane Dew Visiting Artist Lecture Fund.

### Week Five, 24 and 26 September

#### **Finding Art Criticism**

Library Resources and Assignment with Tammy Ravas, Fine Arts Librarian

**24 September, Meet in Student Computer Lab, Floor 2, Mansfield Library during lecture time**

Discuss Venice Biennale 2012

Receive art criticism selections regarding Maurizio Cattelan and Sarah Sze and discuss

GVA, September 25 Faculty lecture by Professor H. Rafael Chacón, "Wanted: Indian Art Majors", 5:10-6 pm, Social Science Building, Room 356

### Library Assignment due date: 3 October

### Week Six, 1 and 3 October

#### **Describing art, what do I see?**

Read: Barrett, Chapters 3 and 6

Formal elements and principles of design

UC Art Gallery MSU Exit Gallery Visiting Exhibit, Sept 30 - Oct 26, Reception: Oct 3 4PM-6PM

MMAC, Figurative Modernists: Picasso, Chagall and other Masterpieces from a Private Collection, October 3, 2013-February 8, 2014, Meloy Gallery

MMAC, Modernist Prints, October 3, 2013-February 8, 2014, Paxson Gallery

GVA, October 3-24 Michael Murphy and Bernadette Sweeney: Without Having Ended, opening reception Thursday 10/3, 5-7 pm

MAM, Folk Art Lecture: Tom Patterson, Curator & Author, October 2, 6:30 PM, Free and Open to the Public, Exhibition Reception: October 4, 5-9 PM, Gallery Talk: Tom Patterson & Willem Volkersz, October 4, 7 PM

### Paper #1, Description Paper - Visual Analysis

Peer review due date: 8 October

First due date: 10 October

Revision due: 17 October

### Weeks Seven and Eight, 8, 10, 15, and 17 October

#### **Interpreting art, what does it mean?**

Changing approaches to meaning, past and present, traditional, modern, and postmodern

Read: Barrett, Chapters 2 and 4

Contemporary artists and what the art means

Interpretation of the works of Ken Price and James Turrell

### Paper #2, Interpretation Paper – What does it Mean?

Peer review due date: 31 October

First due date: 5 November

Revision due: 14 November

### Weeks Nine and Ten, 22, 24, 29, and 31 October

#### **Evaluating art, what is good art?**

Criteria for evaluating art, past and present

Read: Barrett, Chapter 5

Artist: Kehinde Wiley

How is contemporary art any good?  
Evaluation of  
Establishing Criteria

Visiting Lecturers

UC Art Gallery, *Assembly of Likeness*, by Beth Lo, Stephanie Frostad, Lisa Jarrett, and Jennifer Pulchinski, October 28 - November 22, Reception: October 31 | 4PM-6PM  
October 23 Steamroller Prints, 10-4, Fine Arts Building Oval  
October 24 Visiting Artist Lecture by Nico Arze and Katiushka Melo, Location tba. Sponsored by the Jim and Jane Dew Visiting Artist Lecture Fund  
MAM, MATRIX PRESS, Contemporary Collectors Circle: Jim Bailey, October 24, 5:30 PM

### Week Eleven, 5 and 7 November

**Museums/Galleries and Power**  
Who determines what you see?

**Evaluating art, 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Juried Student Art Exhibition**  
Opening Reception, Thursday, November, 5-7:00 p.m., Gallery of Visual Arts

Meet in Gallery of Visual Arts to determine ArH250 awards

GVA, Nov 5 Visiting Artist Lecture by Sean Starwars, Social Science Building 356, 5:10-6 pm, Sponsored by the Jim and Jane Dew Visiting Artist Lecture Fund  
GVA, November 7-December 5, 19th Annual Juried Student Art Exhibition, opening reception 11/7, 5-7 pm, award presentation, 6 pm  
MAM, Kienholz Connection: Lecture Series, Beth Sellars, November 6, 7 PM  
MAM, Christine Joy, Current,s Artist Reception: November 1, 5-9 PM, Gallery Talk: Nov 1, 7 PM,

### Week Twelve, 12 and 14 November

**Controversy in Contemporary Art**  
Reasons and responses

MAM, Kienholz Connection: Ted Hughes, November 20, 7 PM

### Week Thirteen, 19 and 21 November

Art Criticism of Contemporary Art Exhibitions  
Consideration of leading arbiters of contemporary art

### Paper #3, Evaluation Paper – Is it any good?

Peer review due date: 21 November  
First due date: 26 November  
Revision due: 5 December

### Week Fourteen, 26 November

Contemporary Art about Food  
See it and/or eat it?  
Artist: Rirkrit Tiravanija

MAM, Kienholz Connection: Lecture Series, Raphael Chacón, December 4, 7 PM

**Week Fifteen, 3 and 5 December**

Who's hot and who's not?  
Ten contemporary artists to share  
Group Exchange

UC Art Gallery, Annual UCG Juried Exhibition, Dec 2 - Dec 13, Reception: Dec 5 4PM-6PM

MAM, Artists of Opportunity, Artist Reception: December 6, 5-9 PM,  
Gallery Talk: Tom Lind, December 6, 7 PM