

Department of Sociology & Anthropology, BGU

Course: The social and the cultural aspects of studying art

Level and status: 4 credit points B.A. seminar.

Lecturer: Dr. Esmail Nashif

Taught: 2008/09, 2009/10, 2010/11

Course description:

The study of the material expressive culture in general and the arts in particular is one of the fascinating juncture of the sociological and the anthropological research traditions. Each work of art entails simultaneously a particular formation and general socio cultural contours. While these two aspects make the work of art present historically, they constitute the major challenge for the researchers concerned with studying the social history of the arts. The aim of this seminar is to introduce and to examine the socio cultural conditions that make the production of art possible. Moreover, it seeks to do so via the different theoretical traditions that bind the historical and the socio cultural dimensions of the works of art. In order to enrich the processes of the studying of art, and to acquaint the students with firsthand experience of art work, the seminar includes several field trips to museums and art exhibition venues.

Seminar requirements: students are required to be present in class meetings, read, prepare the material and participate actively in the discussions (10% of grade), offer class presentations of an artist and her works (30%), present research paper proposal (10%) and submit on the final written seminar paper on time.

Grade: final written seminar paper (50% of grade)

Course schedule and reading list (items with [*] are elective):

The source book for paintings that we will use in the seminar is:

Gombrich, E. H., 2006 [1950]. *The Story of Art*. London: Phaidon (pocket edition).

1- Introduction:

2- What is art?

Hanfling, O., 1999. What is Art? In O. Hanfling (ed.) *Philosophical Aesthetics: an introduction*. Tel-Aviv: Open University Press, pp. 3-42

*Gombrich, E. H., 2006 [1950]. *The Story of Art*. London: Phaidon (pocket edition), pp. 21-32.

3- The two ancient models.

Janaway, C., 2001. Plato. In B. Gaut & D. M. Lopes (eds) *The Routledge Companion to Aesthetics*. London: Routledge, pp.3-13

Papas, N., 2001. Aristotle. In B. Gaut & D. M. Lopes (eds) *The Routledge Companion to Aesthetics*. London: Routledge, pp. 15-26.

*Aristotle, 2003. *Poetics*. Jerusalem: Magnes, pp. 15-54.

4- Studying the art: The historical versus the contemporary.

Tanner, J., 2003. *The Sociology of Art: A reader*. London: Routledge, pp. 1-26.

*Preziosi, D., 1998. Art History: Making the visible legible. In D. Preziosi (ed) *The Art of Art History: A critical anthology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 13-30.

5- The status of art in the classical theories.

Tanner, J., 2003. *The Sociology of Art: A reader*. London: Routledge, pp.39-68.

*Baudelaire, S., 2003. *The Painter of Modern Life: A selection of aesthetics writings*. Tel-Aviv: Poalim, pp. 7-61.

*Kandinsky, V., 1999. *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*. Jerusalem: Bialiq Institute, pp. 21-45.

6- Example 1: Beginnings.

Hauser, A., 1979. *The Social History of Art and Literature: vol I*. Tel-Aviv: Hakibbutz Hamiohad, pp. 11-41.

*Brash, M., 1992. Winckelmann as a Theoretician of Art. In Y. Winckelmann *Contemplations on the Mimesis of Greek artworks in Painting and Sculpture*. Jerusalem: Bialiq Institute, pp. 41-69.

7- Field trip to Tel-Aviv Museum.

www.tamuseum.com/hebrew/

8- Example 2: The social production of art.

Wolf, J., 1981. *The Social Production of Art*. London: Macmillan, pp. 1-48.

*Smith, T., 2003. Production. In R. S. Nelson, & R. Shiff (eds) *Critical Terms for Art History*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, pp. 361-381.

9- The evaluation of art.

Lyas, C., 1999. The Evaluation of Art. In O. Hanfling (ed.) *Philosophical Aesthetics: an introduction*. Tel-Aviv: Open University Press, pp.329-357.

* Baudelaire, S., 2003. *The Painter of Modern Life: A selection of aesthetic writings*. Tel-Aviv: Poalim, pp. 108-130.

10- Critique: The concept and the practice.

Azolay, A., 1999. *Exercising for Art: The Critique of the Economy of Museumization*. Tel-Aviv: Hakibbutz Hamiohad, pp. 19-70.

*Horkheimer, M., 1993. Traditional Theory and Critical Theory. In T. W. Adorno and M. Horkheimer *The Frankfurt School: A selection*: Tel-Aviv: Poalim Publishers.

11- Field trip to Abu Shaqrah Art Gallery.

www.umelfahemgallery.org/galleryheb.html

12- Summary: The original versus the reproduced.

Benjamin, W., 1987. *The Work of Art in the Age of its Technological Reproducibility*. Tel-Aviv: Poalim, pp. 7-70.

Buck-Morss, S., 1992. Aesthetics and Anesthetics. *Studio*, 39, pp. 6-13.

Second semester:

1- Methodological principles in building a socio cultural research on art.

Bourdieu, P., 1993. *The Field of Cultural Production: Essays on art and literature*. N. Y.: Columbia University Press, pp. 215-266.

*Nashif, E., 2008. Images of the Fragmented. In N. Gray & M. Abu Hashhash (eds) *Transitions: The young artist of the year 2006*. Ramallah: A. M. Qattan Foundation, pp. 24-31.

2- The Class of taste, the taste of class:

Bourdieu, P., 1984. *Distinction: A social critique of the judgment of taste*. Cambridge M. A.: Harvard University Press, pp. 1-96.

*Agasi, M., 2008. The vase from Tennessee and Other Essays, 1983-1997. Tel-Aviv: Am Ovid, pp. 149-174.

3- Postmodernism.

Jameson, F., 2002. *Postmodernism or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*. Tel-Aviv: Resling, pp. 5-74.

*Bhabha, H., 2003. Postmodernism/Postcolonialism. In R. S. Nelson, & R. Shiff (eds) *Critical Terms for Art History*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, pp. 435-451.

4- The Israeli art field I.

Trachtenburg, G., 2005. *Between Nationality and Art: The Constitution of the Art Field during the Yishuv and the Early Years of the State*. Jerusalem: Magnes, pp. 1-70.

*Omer, M., 2006. *Contemporary Israeli Art: Origins and Influences*. Tel-Aviv: Am Ovid, pp. 15-35.

5- The Israeli art field II.

Azolay, A., 1999. *Exercising for Art: The Critique of the Economy of Museumization*. Tel-Aviv: Hakibbutz Hamiohad, pp.144-180.

6- Field trip to the Museum of Israel, Jerusalem.

www.imjnet.org.il/HTMLs/Home.aspx

7- Presentation of students' research projects.

8- Presentation of students' research projects.

9- Presentation of students' research projects.

10- Presentation of students' research projects.

11- The Visual as a Social Intervention.

Herbert, J., 2003. Visual Culture/Visual Studies. In R. S. Nelson, & R. Shiff (eds) *Critical Terms for Art History*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, pp. 452-464.

*Jameson, F., 2004. *The Political Unconsciousness*. Tel-Aviv: Resling, pp 7-102.

12- Conclusions.