

History of Modern Art (WLAC Art 115) Section 3305  
Fall 2013  
M/W 3:35 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.  
Room FA 208  
8/26/2013 - 12/15/2013  
No class Sept 2 or Nov 11

Doug Harvey  
dghrvy@gmail.com

## Syllabus

### Overview

This course will explore the history of modern art in Europe and America, beginning with the 18<sup>th</sup>-century art movements of Romanticism and Neo-Classicism and the 19<sup>th</sup> century painting traditions of Impressionism and Post-Impressionism.

We'll look at the question of what characteristics define "Modernism," examine the social, political, and philosophical contexts in which it emerged, and touch on a diverse range of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century art movements including Cubism, Dada, Surrealism, Mexican Muralism, Abstract Expressionism, Pop, Feminist Art, Land Art, Installation Art, Performance, Video Art, and more!

We will use in-depth examination of individual works and artists to explore entire historical periods and art movements. For example, how is it that Marcel Duchamp's *Fountain* – an upside-down urinal – was voted the most influential artwork of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Are Jackson Pollock's drip paintings a confrontational put-on or a sincere attempt to accelerate the evolution of our culture's visual language? Or both?

### Grading

Grading is based on attendance, class participation, completion of reading and homework, one 1200-word essay comparing two artists (your choice) discussed during the course (due on the last day of class), two slide identification quizzes and a final exam. The first quiz will be on Monday, September 23. Final will be Monday, December 9.

Credit will also be given for interesting comments, links, and other forms of participation in the class blog at <http://profdoughshistoryofmodernart.blogspot.com/>.

Extra credit may also be awarded for attending and writing a short review of a gallery or museum art exhibit relating to the material covered in this course, and for short personal responses to the materials presented in class.

### Text and Readings

We will be roughly following Arnason (& Mansfield's) *History of Modern Art*, which should be available in the bookstore. There is also a copy on hold in the library. If you are short on cash, the 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> editions are acceptable substitutes. Most of the quiz and test questions will be based on the identification of images included in this text. These images will also be readily available online. We'll be skipping some parts, supplementing others with online readings, and, time permitting, covering a few topics – comics, film, LA

art, graffiti and lowbrow art – which aren't addressed in depth in the text. For these topics there may be separate readings.

Also highly recommended, though not required, is *Theories of Modern Art: A Source Book by Artists and Critics* by Herschel B. Chipp

In the first 2 weeks, we'll be looking at and discussing the general historical context and meaning of Modernism. Begin by reading Arnason Chapter 1: *The Sources of Modern Painting* and Chapter 2: *Realism, Impressionism and Early Photography*, and reading the wikipedia entry on modern art at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Modern\\_art](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Modern_art) .

*Institutional Student Learning Outcomes or SLOs:*

*A. Critical Thinking: Analyze problems by differentiating fact from opinions, using evidence, and using sound reasoning to specify multiple solutions and their consequences.*

*B. Communication: Effectively communicate thought in a clear, well-organized manner to persuade, inform, and convey ideas in academic, work, family and community settings.*

*Program SLOs:*

- 1. Secure Technique*
- 2. Cultivate relationship to other disciplines*