

Art History 2 - Course Schedule

1. Introduction

Aims, objectives and outcomes. We will cover an overview of the classes, and introduce some of the main questions and themes that we will explore over the course. We will also have a quick refresher on visual analysis basics.

2. A Formal Approach

This class explores how some artists (such as Cezanne and Mondrian) approach their art practice as a kind of formal visual problem-solving, methodically investigating different visual possibilities. We will also consider the importance of formal analysis for art historians.

3. An Emotional Approach

As a counter-point to the previous class, this week we will study a range of artists whose work stems primarily from a deeply personal, or emotional place such as Gauguin, Kirchner and Pollock.

4. Dreams and Nightmares

This class explores Surrealism, from the dream-like to the nightmarish. We will also examine the startlingly inventive hellscapes of Hieronymous Bosch, the 16th century Dutch painter.

5. Towards Abstraction

We will consider various paths to abstraction, from the lyrical paintings of Kandinsky to the vast colour fields of Barnett Newman.

6. Modern Women: Sonia Delaunay and Hilma af Klint

This class will focus on the careers of these 2 artists, whose work in the early 20th century explored drastically new ways of painting and the creative process. This class will build on our conversations from the previous class.

7. Art Idea vs. Technique

What do you think is more important in art: the idea or technical skill? How do you judge the quality of art? These questions will frame our discussion of how art is conceived, created and perceived.

8. Art and Authorship

When you look at an artwork, how important is it for you to know about the artist? We will discuss the myriad ways that authorship (or lack thereof) impacts on the value of artwork and how we interpret it.

9. Art and the Original

What value does an original work of art have, as opposed to copies? This class will look at artists who explore copies and simulacra in their work, arguing that copies are originals in and of themselves.