Religion and Art
Rel 295

Francis Sanzaro  
fsanzar@syr.edu  
315-415-7861  
501 Hall of Languages  
Religion Department

What does religion have to do with the picture space? What is a painting? What is an artist doing when he creates a space for us to reflect? What happens when the picture space is no longer seen as the most credible form of aesthetics, as is the state of contemporary art? This course will wrestle with the above questions, attempting to find the formality of religion as integral to both the birth and death of the picture space.

Texts

- Camera Lucida, by Roland Barthes.
- Course Reader, available at Quicky Copy in Marshall Square.

Requirements

1) Participation—Participation will be encouraged and required, and I will expect that you come to each seminar having read the required reading. Attendance—I expect you to attend all class meetings. Your final grade will drop one-third of a letter grade (e.g., from a B to a B-) for each unexcused absence after the second. Provide an official note from your dean, health services, coach, etc., to excuse missed classes.
2) Essays—you will be required to write two essays, each 7-8 ds pages in length. Improvement in writing and conceptual organization will be factored into your overall grade. It is expected that your writing get better over the course of the semester. You can choose your topic, or I can provide direction.
3) Tuesday responses—these are due in class on the assigned day. Don’t email them unless you are not going to be in class and have a documented excuse. Select a quote from the assigned reading and analyze it in light of the reading as a whole. Agree or disagree with the quote strongly. Present your case. These will be shared in class. They are to be no longer than 1 ds page. Please do not go over. These will be graded on a check check-minus scale.

Grading

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<td>Monday Responses</td>
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<td>Essay 1</td>
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Academic Integrity

Academic integrity forms the foundation of any academic community. As a member of the Syracuse University community, it is imperative that you value and exhibit honesty and integrity in all academic endeavors. Cheating, in any form and to any degree, is a dishonest act that is an affront to this community, and it will not be tolerated. This includes giving or received aid when prohibited, fraud, plagiarism (the use of another’s language, ideas, information, or other work without proper acknowledgment), forgery or falsification, collusion, or any other deceptive or dishonest act related to academic work. Any student who commits such an act will fail this course and will be reported to the academic integrity officer. (For more information, see Section 1.0 of the University Rules and Regulations as well as the Academic Integrity Policies and Procedures, available at http://academicintegrity.syr.edu.) I also expect that you treat your fellow students with respect.

Disabilities

If you have a documented disability that might affect your performance in this course, please confer with me and with the Office of Disability Services as soon as possible.
**Texts listed under each date will be discussed that day**

**Religion and Art**

**Tues 1/19:** Syllabus/Introduction  
**Th 1/21:** Bell, “Images and Marks,” 9-24.

**Th 1/28:** Elkins, *Strange Place*

**Tues 2/2:** Elkins, *Strange Place*. Response due.

**Origins of Art**

**Th 2/4:** Lowden, “God and Salvation,” (Cr); “Iconoclast Controversy” (Cr)


**Tues 2/16:** Lossky, 37-50. Response due.

**Birth of the Canvas**

**Th 2/18:** Adams, “The Thirteenth Century” (Cr). Vasari, “Giotto” (Cr)


**Th 3/4:** Sturgis, “Gesture” (Cr). Barasch, “Gesture” (Cr). Barasch, Intro to *Giotto and the Language of Gesture* (Cr). **Paper 1 due.**

**Tues 3/9:** Barasch, “Giotto and the Language of Gesture” (Cr). Response due.  
**Th 3/11:** Hall, “Bodies” and “Giants” in Michelangelo (Cr)

**Tues 3/16:** Spring Break  
**Th 3/18:** Spring Break


**Formalizing the Canvas**

**Th 3/25:** “Modernism and its Origins” (Cr). “Seurat, Cezanne and the Language of Structure” (Cr)

**Tues 3/30:** Alfred Barr, “What is Modern Painting” (Cr). Response due.  
**Th 4/1:** Greenburg, “Art and Culture” (Cr). Kandinsky, “Concerning the Spiritual in Art” (Cr)

**Death of the Canvas**

**Tues 4/6:** Taylor, “Currency” (Cr). Response due.  
**Th 4/8:** Heartney, “Andy Warhol: Somebody with a Body” (Cr)

**Tues 4/13:** Taylor “Apprehension” (Cr). Response due.  
**Th 4/15:** Taylor, “Learning Curves” (Cr)

**Tues 4/20:** “Smithson,” (Cr). Response due.

**Arts/Processes**

**Th 4/22:** Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, 1-34.

**Th 4/29:** *Camera Lucida*, 67-119.

**Tues 5/4:** Bell, “The Word Art”

Final Exams 6-12th