

## ART 150-01, Introduction to the Visual Arts. Fall 1998

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ART 150: **Introduction to the Visual Arts**  
Rhodes College, Fall 1998  
417 Clough, MWF 11:30-12:30

Prof. Kimberly Smith  
414 Clough, Ext. 3663  
Office Hours:  
Tu 11:30-1:30; W 4:00-5:30  
and by appointment

## COURSE OBJECTIVES AND DESCRIPTION

The objectives of this course are:

1. to provide students with a comprehensive, theoretical introduction to the visual arts;
2. to enable students to develop skills of visual analysis;
3. to examine the various media used by artists;
4. to introduce students to basic methods of interpretation;
5. to learn the terminology and skills of art criticism and writing.

In the course of pursuing these objectives, we will be looking at a variety of themes and issues pertaining to the visual arts. We will be examining the formal elements of line, shape, mass, light, color, texture, and balance; the principles of composition and design; the distinction between form and content; the meaning of representation; and the process of interpretative criticism. The goal of this class is to develop the fundamental tools necessary for viewing and analyzing the visual arts. To reach this goal, we will be looking at a wide variety of artists and media from different cultures and eras in history.

Art 150 is a foundation course that serves as an introduction for further work in studio art and art history. A three hour course, Art 150 satisfies the fine arts requirement and also may be counted toward the film studies major. Enrollment is limited to first- and second-year students who are not expected to have had any previous experience with either studio art or art history. Art 150 is a lecture course with a considerable amount of classroom discussion.

## TEXTBOOKS

Barnet, Sylvan. *A Short Guide to Writing About Art*, 5th ed. New York: Longman, 1997.

Berger, John. *Ways of Seeing*. New York: Penguin Books, 1972.

Preble, Duane, Sarah Preble and Patrick Frank. *Artforms*, 6th ed. New York: Longman, 1999.

Taylor, Joshua C. *Learning to Look: A Handbook for the Visual Arts*. Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press, 1981.

Coursepacket, available at the Rhodes Bookstore.

\*\* Copies of all textbooks are on reserve in the library.

## REQUIREMENTS

Readings on the day they are assigned.

Seven quizzes.

Two examinations (mid-term and final) involving: definition of terms, applications of terms and ideas taken from readings, lectures, and class discussions. Students are responsible for all material presented in class, even if it is not included in the textbooks.

Makeup examinations will be given only under drastic conditions (such as death of a family member or trip to the hospital).

Five papers of about two pages each on specific images and issues covered in the class. Papers exceeding specified limits will be returned for editing.

All papers must be typed, double-spaced, and numbered.

Late policy: each day a paper is late results in a 1/3 deduction from your grade. For example, if you turn in a paper two days late which warrants a B+, your grade would be a B-. I do not give extensions.

## HONOR CODE

All assignments are to be completed and pledged in accordance with the Rhodes College Honor Code.

“...plagiarism is the act of using another person’s words or ideas without documenting them properly (footnotes, bibliography, etc.). This includes, without limitation: using information from any sources (including class textbook(s), other books, journals, newspapers, magazines, etc.) without proper reference, getting ideas or words from a classmate’s paper, failure to properly punctuate direct quotes, and obtaining a paper from someone else. Ignorance is not an excuse for these violations.”

*Rhodes College Student Handbook, p. 62.*

If you are unclear as to what constitutes plagiarism, please see me before turning in your paper.

## GRADING

Grading evaluates your ability to comprehend and assimilate the material presented in the course. I will take improvement into consideration when determining your final grade.

In evaluating each student’s performance, the following proportions will be used:

Quizzes -- 25%

Papers -- 25%

Mid-Term Examination -- 15%

Final Examination -- 25%

Class Participation -- 10%

## WEEK 1

August 26      Introduction

August 28      Purposes and Functions of Art

Reading: *Artforms*, pp. 1-14.

## WEEK 2

August 31 Looking and Seeing  
Reading: *Artforms*, pp. 15-20.

September 2 Creativity  
Reading: *Artforms*, pp. 20-28.

September 4 Form and Content  
Reading: *Artforms*, pp. 28-35; Taylor, *Learning to Look*, pp. 51-68.  
QUIZ #1

## WEEK 3

Read Barnett, *A Short Guide to Writing About Art*, pp. 1-85 (as needed).

September 7 Labor Day. No class.

September 9 Media and techniques: drawing and painting  
Reading: *Artforms*, pp. 116-140; Taylor, *Learning to Look*, pp. 77-81, 97-102; Berger, *Ways of Seeing*, pp. 83-112.

September 11 Media and techniques: graphic arts  
Reading: *Artforms*, pp. 143-155; Taylor, *Learning to Look*, pp. 81-86; 109-123.  
PAPER #1

## WEEK 4

September 14 Media and techniques: sculpture  
Reading: *Artforms*, pp. 212-228; Taylor, *Learning to Look*, pp. 87-90, 123-129.

September 16 Media and techniques: architecture  
Reading: *Artforms*, pp. 229-254; Taylor, *Learning to Look*, pp. 90-96, 129-138.

September 18 Media and techniques: crafts, photography, film  
Reading: *Artforms*, pp. 157-180; 196-209.  
QUIZ #2

## WEEK 5

September 21 Form: Line  
Reading: *Artforms*, pp. 42-46.

September 23 Form: Shape and Mass  
Reading: *Artforms*, pp. 46-50.

September 25 Film viewing: Robert Weine, *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (1919)  
PAPER #2

## WEEK 6

September 28 Space and Depth  
Reading: *Artforms*, pp. 51-57; Taylor, *Learning to Look*, pp. 73-76.

September 30 Space and Depth

October 2 Light and Tone (Value)  
Reading: *Artforms*, pp. 61-64  
QUIZ #3

## WEEK 7

October 5 Color  
Reading: *Artforms*, pp. 61-70; Taylor, *Learning to Look*, pp. 69-73.

October 7 Color and Texture  
Reading: *Artforms*, pp. 71-72.

October 9 Field Trip  
PAPER #3

## WEEK 8

October 12 Review

October 14 MID-TERM EXAMINATION

October 16 Film viewing: Fritz Lang, *Metropolis* (1927)

## WEEK 9

October 19 Fall Recess. No classes.

October 21 Principles of Design  
Reading: *Artforms*, pp. 74-91.

October 23 Principles of Design  
QUIZ #4

## WEEK 10

October 26 Style  
Reading: *Artforms*, pp. 94-107

October 28 Evaluation and Criticism  
Reading: *Artforms*, pp. 108-112

October 30 Representation  
Reading: Ernst Gombrich, "Meditations on a Hobby Horse or the Roots of Artistic Form." [in coursepacket]

PAPER #4

WEEK 11

- November 2 Representation and Photography  
Reading: Abigail Solomon-Godeau, "Who is Speaking Thus? Some Questions about Documentary Photography." [in coursepacket]
- November 4 Representation and Popular Culture  
Reading: W.J.T. Mitchell, "From CNN to *JFK*." [in coursepacket]
- November 6 Representation and the Body  
Reading: Berger, *Ways of Seeing*, pp. 36-64  
QUIZ #5

WEEK 12

- November 9 Representation and the "Other"  
Reading: Linda Nochlin, "The Imaginary Orient." [in coursepacket]
- November 11 Production and Education  
Reading: Linda Nochlin, "Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?" [in coursepacket]
- November 13 Field Trip

WEEK 13

- November 16 Reception  
Reading: Ernst Gombrich, "The Image in the Clouds." [in coursepacket]
- November 18 Reception: Class  
Reading: Pierre Bourdieu, Introduction to *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*. [in coursepacket]
- November 20 Reception: Gender  
Reading: Mary Ann Doane, "Film and the Masquerade: Theorizing the Female Spectator." [in coursepacket]  
QUIZ #6

WEEK 14

- November 23 Interpretation  
Reading: Jules Prown, "Style as Evidence." [in coursepacket]  
PAPER #5
- November 25 Thanksgiving Recess. No classes.
- November 27 Thanksgiving Recess. No classes.

WEEK 15

November 30 Interpretation: Subject Matter

December 2 Interpretation: Iconography and Iconology  
Reading: *Artforms*, pp. 37-40; Erwin Panofsky, "Iconography and Iconology: An Introduction to the Study of Renaissance Art." [in coursepacket]

December 4 Interpretation: Signs  
Reading: Roland Barthes, "Photography and Electoral Appeal" and "The Face of Garbo." [in coursepacket]  
QUIZ #7

WEEK 16

December 7 Interpretation: Contextual Analysis

December 9 Review

WEEK 17

Tuesday,  
December 15 **FINAL EXAMINATION**  
8:30-11:00 a.m., 417 Clough