Modern and Contemporary British Art and Design
CAS AH 320 (Core course)

Instructor Information
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F. Office hours By appointment

Course Description
This course provides an overview of Modern and Contemporary British Art and Design. The course begins by looking at late nineteenth-century art works and explores the changes that have been made in art practice and its reception up to the present day. Themes and topics may include ‘The London Art Market’ and ‘Role of the Artist as Practitioner and Dealer.’ It addresses the historical changes that have impacted on the aesthetics of museum culture, commercial galleries, patrons, curators and the artists. It provides evaluative tools for the critical, historical and aesthetic evaluation of art works and the institutions that house them through the permanent collections and temporary exhibitions in London. The course is designed to engage students with the major developments in Modern and Contemporary British Art and Design that relate to the historical changes in culture. The aim is to increase critical understanding of Modern and Contemporary British Art and Design by providing insight into how it is organised and why it has developed in its present form. The course draws on London’s rich permanent collections and temporary exhibitions that contribute to the city’s vibrant and constantly changing art scene. Each of the four-hour teaching sessions is divided into a two-hour session in the seminar room followed by a site visit to a relevant museum, gallery or temporary exhibition space for the remainder of the time.

Hub Learning Outcome-Aligned Course Objectives
Students will demonstrate their knowledge and appreciation of art works from the turn of the twentieth-century in Modern and Contemporary British Art and Design to include the cultural contexts in which the works were produced, and to be able to identify their ongoing significance and relevance to current art practice. (Aesthetic Exploration Learning Outcome 1)

Students will demonstrate the reasoning skills and vocabulary necessary to interpret Modern and Contemporary British Art and Design, an understanding of its various genres and of the skills needed for a successful exhibition. (Aesthetic Exploration Learning Outcome 2)
Through seminar room discussions students will provide a formative analysis of their understanding of the aesthetic characteristics and cultural implications of Modern and Contemporary British Art and Design. (Aesthetic Exploration Learning Outcome 3)

Students will create historical narratives, evaluate interpretations based on historical evidence and construct art historical arguments about Modern and Contemporary British Art and Design, and will assess why these have changed over time. (Historical Consciousness Learning Outcome 1)

Students will demonstrate an ability to interpret primary source material (works, sketches, artist's and curator's notes, artist's video recordings etc.), to draw on a range of interpretative skills including visual and textural analysis by situating the material in their historical and cultural contexts. (Historical Consciousness Learning Outcome 2)

Students will demonstrate knowledge of historical periods, and movements in relation to historical social change, in explaining how these factors affected the kind of art that was being produced, and the impact this had on the development of art institutions. (Historical Consciousness Learning Outcome 3)

Additional Course Objectives
On completion of this course, students will be able to:
• Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of Modern and Contemporary British Art and Design;
• Engage critically with the major historical developments related to Modern and Contemporary British Art and Design;
• Identify the changing landscape of art to the broader changes in British culture;
• Demonstrate critical analysis of individual art works, changing methods and materials and how they relate to broader trends;
• Assess the aesthetic strengths and weaknesses of British art institutions;
• Write effective, robust articles that are historically accurate and aesthetically aware;
• Become open-minded in entertaining new ways of thinking about studying;
• Understand the benefits that are gained in working through research to gain new insights in art that can only benefit wider learning.

Other Outcomes
This course aims to enhance life skills, such as independent working, self-motivated study, personal self-confidence and good time keeping.

Approach to Learning
Active learning and experiential learning are the drivers of this course, which takes place in the seminar room and out on field trips. Students are required to give a 10-minute presentation on an agreed and relevant topic, as part of their formative assessment. In each session students are required to consolidate what they have learnt in the previous class, and are requested to review what they have learnt and to demonstrate how their understanding might have changed. Each new session is structured around a presentation and PowerPoint by the instructor that may also use video materials. The structured teaching session involves questions and answers, and is followed by a field trip relating to the area of discussion. Students are required to undertake a minimum of two relevant readings with additional reading where possible. The purpose of the reading in conjunction with the field trips is to broaden their historical and aesthetic understanding of Modern and Contemporary British Art and Design. It is also designed to equip the students with the necessary skills for their coursework paper and written examination. The aim is that students can demonstrate a robust aesthetic and historical understanding
of Modern British Art and Design that can be replicated outside of the classroom and in other areas of ongoing and later study.

Assessment
The coursework essay assignment represents 50% of the overall assessment mark. Students are tasked with writing an eight-page, (2,000-word) double-spaced academic paper. Students are required to demonstrate their historical awareness and aesthetic understanding to the topic question that will relate to an aspect of Modern and Contemporary British Art and Design. The essay must demonstrate thorough research and critical use of bibliographic sources to include books and journals. The Internet is acceptable for online published sources through for example, JSTOR. Generic sourcing from websites is not acceptable. Lecture Eight: Course Work Assignment Due.

The written examination represents 50% of the overall assessment mark. The format is a seen paper that is handed out in the revision session a week before the exam. The aim of the exam response is to demonstrate aesthetic exploration, historical consciousness about Modern and Contemporary British Art and Design. Critical research of bibliographic sources needs to be demonstrated within the response, as the questions will be sent out one week prior in order to prepare for the exam date. Exam: tbc (usually takes place the week following Lecture 10)

Active learning is the core educational strategy that is implemented on the course to ensure students actively participate in knowledge construction to demonstrate their aesthetic and historical consciousness. Students who do not demonstrate this by participating in discussions will lose 10% of their final grade.

Grading
The following Boston University table explains the grading system that is used by most faculty members on Boston University’s Study Abroad London Programmes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Honour Points</th>
<th>Usual %</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>93-100</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>89-92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>85-88</td>
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<td>Unmarked</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grading Criteria
‘Incomplete’ or I grades are not permitted because of the obvious difficulty in making up missed work once the student has left the country. All work must be completed on time. We also do not allow ‘Audits’ (AU), ‘Withdrawals’ (W), or ‘Pass/Fail’ (P) grades.

The grades reflect the quality of the work. Lecturers and students should use the following criteria for an understanding of what each grade means.

A This exceptional grade is assigned only to work that has persistently outstanding quality in both substance and presentation. The student must demonstrate a sustained
capacity for independent thought and extensive study, producing rigorous and convincing analyses in well-ordered prose.

A- Awarded to work that is clearly focused and analytical, and based on wide reading. The student must cover all the principal points of a question and systematically develop a persuasive overall thesis, allowing for one or two venial omissions or inapt expressions.

B+, B, B- This range of grades indicates that the student has shown some evidence of original thought and intellectual initiative. The student has cited sources beyond the class materials, and shown a degree of originality in perception and/or approach to the subject. The work will show thoughtful management of material, and a good grasp of the issues. The differences between a B+, a straight B and a B- may reflect poor presentation of the material, or mistakes in punctuation, spelling and grammar.

C+, C, C- Work in this grade range is satisfactory, but uninspiring. If the work is simply a recitation of the class materials or discussions, and shows no sign of genuine intellectual engagement with the issues, it cannot deserve a higher grade. Should an essay fail to provide a clear answer to the question as set, or argue a position coherently, the grade will fall within this range.

Quality of presentation can lift such work into the upper levels of this grade range. Work of this quality which is poorly presented, and riddled with errors in grammar, spelling and punctuation, will fall into the lower end of the range. To earn a C grade, the work must demonstrate that the student is familiar with the primary course material, be written well enough to be readily understood, be relevant to the assignment, and, of course, be the student’s own work except where properly cited.

D A marginal pass can be given where some but not all the elements of the course have been completed satisfactorily.

F The failing grade indicates the work is seriously flawed in one or more ways:
  - Obvious lack of familiarity with the material
  - So poorly written as to defy understanding
  - So brief and insubstantial that it fails to properly address the subject
  - Material presented is not relevant to the assignment
  - Demonstrates evidence of plagiarism (see following section in Academic Conduct Code)

Please refer to the Academic Handbook for detailed grading criteria, attendance requirements and policies on plagiarism: [http://www.bu.edu/london/current-semester](http://www.bu.edu/london/current-semester)

*Final Grades are subject to deductions by the Academic Affairs Office due to unauthorised absences.*

### Attendance

**Classes**

All Boston University London Programme students are expected to attend each and every class session, seminar, and field trip in order to fulfil the required course contact hours and receive course credit. Any student that has been absent from two class sessions (whether authorised or unauthorised) will need to meet with the Directors to discuss their continued participation on the programme.
**Authorised Absence**

Students who expect to be absent from any class should notify a member of Academic Affairs and complete an Authorised Absence Approval Form 10 working days in advance of the class date (except in the case of absence due to illness for more than one day. In this situation students should submit the Authorised Absence Approval Form with the required doctor’s note as soon as possible). The Authorised Absence Approval Request Form is available from: [http://www.bu.edu/london/current-semester/](http://www.bu.edu/london/current-semester/)

**Please note: Submitting an Authorised Absence Approval Form does not guarantee an authorised absence**

Students may apply for an authorised absence only under the following circumstances:

- **Illness (first day of sickness):** If a student is too ill to attend class, the student must phone the BU London Student Affairs Office (who will in turn contact the student’s lecturer).

- **Illness (multiple days):** If a student is missing more than one class day due to illness, the student must call into the BU London Student Affairs Office each day the student is ill. Students must also provide the Student Affairs office with a completed Authorised Absence Approval Form and a sick note from a local doctor excusing their absence from class.

- Important placement event that clashes with a class (verified by internship supervisor)

- Special circumstances which have been approved by the Directors (see note below).

**The Directors will only in the most extreme cases allow students to leave the programme early or for a significant break.**

**Unauthorised Absence**

Any student to miss a class due to an unauthorised absence will receive a **4% grade penalty** to their final grade for the course whose class was missed.

This grade penalty will be applied by the Academic Affairs office to the final grade at the end of the course. As stated above, any student that has missed two classes will need to meet with the Directors to discuss their participation on the programme as excessive absences may result in a ‘Fail’ in the class and therefore expulsion from the programme.

**Religious Holidays**

Boston University's Office of the University Registrar states:

‘The University, in scheduling classes on religious holidays and observances, intends that students observing those traditions be given ample opportunity to make up work. Faculty members who wish to observe religious holidays will arrange for another faculty member to meet their classes or for cancelled classes to be rescheduled.’

**Special Accommodations**

Each student will need to contact the Office of Disability Services to request accommodations for the semester they are abroad. Students are advised by BU-ODS not to expect the same accommodations as they receive on campus.

BU London can only uphold special accommodations if we have received the appropriate
documentation from the BU-ODS. We cannot accept letters from other universities/centres.

All disabilities need to be known to the ODS in Boston if they are to be used as a reason for requiring a change in conditions, i.e. reduced internship hours or special accommodations for the internship schedule.

Lateness
Students arriving more than 15 minutes after the posted class start time will be marked as late. Any student with irregular class attendance (more than two late arrivals to class) will be required to meet with the Associate Director for Academic Affairs and if the lateness continues, may have his/her final grade penalised.

Course Schedule
(Sessions have previously included the following visits listed below).

Lecture One
Class: Early Modern Art (Impressionism – Neo-Impressionism)
Field Trip: National Gallery
Permanent Exhibition: Room 41: The Academy, Room 42: Painting out of Doors, Room 43: Manet, Monet and the Impressionists, Room 44: Beyond Impressionism Pissarro and Seurat.

Lecture Two
Class: British Collectors – Student Presentations
Field Trip: Courtauld Gallery
Permanent Exhibition: Post-Impressionism, Cubism & Fauvism

Lecture Three
Class: Exhibiting War
Field Trip: Imperial War Museum
Permanent Exhibition: First World War Galleries & The Holocaust Exhibition
Lecture Four
Class: Modern British Design
Field Trip: London Transport Museum
Permanent Exhibition: London Transport Design

Lecture Five
Class: The Role of the Artist: for example ‘Paul Nash’ (but is subject to change)
Field Trip: Tate Britain
Temporary Exhibition: ****

Lecture Six
Class: The topic will develop from the temporary exhibition, the last one was ‘Red Star Over Russia’ hence reading below.
Field Trip: Tate Modern
Temporary Exhibition: ****
Further Reading: Nicholas Serota (2013 [1996]) Experience or Interpretation: The Dilemma of Museums of Modern Art, please read up to and including the paragraph on Matisse’s The Red Studio, pp. 7–20.

Lecture Seven
Class: Charles Saatchi
Field Trip: Saatchi Gallery
Temporary Exhibition: The Topic will develop from the temporary exhibition
Further Reading: Matthew Collins (1999) This is Modern Art, please read Chapter 6. The Shock of the Now.

Lecture Eight
Class: The topic will develop from the temporary exhibition, the last one was ‘Anthony Gormley’, hence the reading below.
Field Trip: White Cube Bermondsey Temporary Exhibition: ****
Further Reading: Matthew Collins (1999) This is Modern Art, Chapter 6. The Shock of the Now.

Lecture Eight: Course Work Assignment Due

Lecture Nine
Class: Damien Hirst: Artist as Collector
Field Trip: Newport Street Gallery
Temporary Exhibition: ****

Lecture Ten
Class: The London Art Market
Field Trip: Art Fair
Julian Stallabrass (1999) High Art Lite; British Art in the 1990s, Chapter 6: The Market and the State

Exam: tbc (usually takes place the week following Lecture 10)

BIBLIOGRAPHY
The following books are intended as a guide for the course work essay and the exam question and are not proposed to be read as an exhaustive list over the duration of the course.

Christopher Frayling (1996) *Design of the Times, One Hundred Years of The Royal College of Art*, Richard Dennis Publishers.
Richard Humphreys (2001) *Tate Britain Companion to British Art*, Tate Publishing.
Marco Livingstone (1985 [1981]) *David Hockney*, Thames & Hudson.

Additional readings may be posted on Blackboard: http://learn.bu.edu