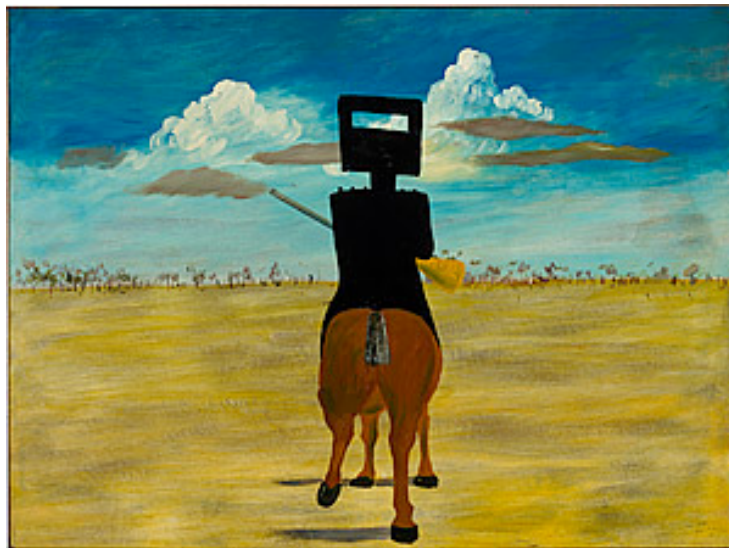


AH374

Australian Art and Architecture

*The search for beauty, meaning and freedom
in a harsh climate*



**Boston University Sydney Centre
Spring Semester 2015**

Course Co-ordinator

Peter Barnes

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Course Description

The course provides an introduction to the history of art and architectural practice in Australia.

Australia is home to the world's oldest continuing art tradition (indigenous Australian art) and one of the youngest national art traditions (encompassing Colonial art, modern art and the art of today). This rich and diverse history is full of fascinating characters and hard won aesthetic achievements. The lecture series is structured to introduce a number of key artists and their work, to place them in a historical context and to consider a range of themes (landscape, urbanism, abstraction, the noble savage, modernism, etc.) and issues (gender, power, freedom, identity, sexuality, autonomy, place etc.) prompted by the work.

Course Format

The course combines in-class lectures employing a variety of media with group discussions and a number of field trips. The aim is to provide students with a general understanding of a series of major achievements in Australian art and its social and geographic context. Students should also gain the skills and confidence to observe, describe and discuss works of art.

Course Outline

Week 1

Session 1

Introduction to Course

Introduction to Topic

- a. **Artists** – The Port Jackson Painter, Joseph Lycett, Tommy McCrae, John Glover, Augustus Earle, Sydney Parkinson, Conrad Martens
- b. **Readings** – both readers are important short texts. It is compulsory to read them. They will be discussed in class and you will need to be prepared to contribute your thoughts and opinions.
 - i) Bernard Smith, 'Introduction' from *European Vision and the South Pacific 1768-1850: A Study in the History of Art and Ideas*, (Oxford University Press, Melbourne), 1960
 - ii) Jeanette Hoorn, 'Joseph Lycett: Exposing the Lie of Terra Nullius', *Art & Australia*, Vol.31, No. 1, 1993

Visit Art Gallery of NSW

Session 2

Descriptive Attributes and Theoretical Concepts

Group Library Session

Aboriginal Art – An Introduction

- a. **Artists** – Unknown rock artists, Najombolmi (Barramundi Charlie), Djawida, Les Mirrikkuriya, Albert Namatjira, Clifford Possum, Tim Leura Tjapaltjarri, Rover Thomas, Robert Campbell junior, Michael Riley, Richard Bell, Danie Mellor, Emily Kame Kngwarreye, Trevor "Turbo" Brown, Dorothy Napangardi, Tracey Moffat, Jonathan Jones
- b. **Themes** – land, community, dispossession, power, dreamtime, landscape, spirituality, humor, sexuality, assimilation, land rights, art market
- c. **Reading**
 - i) Howard Morphy, 'Introduction', *Aboriginal Art*, (London, Phaidon), 1998

Colonial Art and Architecture

- a. **Artists** - Joseph Lycett, John Glover, Augustus Earle, Sydney Parkinson, Conrad Martens, W.S. Blake, John Eyre, William Westall, George Stubbs.
- b. **Themes** – vision and representation, science, idealism, realism, romanticism, imperialism, landscape, noble savage
- c. **Reading**
 - i) Andrew Sayers, The Shaping of Australian Landscape Painting, in *New Worlds from Old: 19th Century Australian and American Landscapes*, (National Gallery of Australia, Canberra), 1998
 - ii) Paul McGillick, 'Sydney Architecture' and 'An Adaptable Architecture' in *Sydney Architecture*, (Pesaro Press, Sydney), 2005

Week 2

Urbanism in Sydney / Canberra / Melbourne

- a. **Planners** – Arthur Phillip, Lachlan Macquarie, John Bradfield, Walter Burley Griffin, James Hoddle, Craig Alchin,
- b. **Themes** – the planned city, the grid, fine grain, topography, pragmatism.
- c. **Reading**
 - i) Peter John Cantrill, 'Forming Sydney', in *Public Sydney* (Historic Houses Trust of NSW, Sydney) 2013
 - ii) Robert Freestone, 'The Americanization of Australian Planning', *Journal of Planning History*, August 2004 vol. 3 no. 3: pp. 187-214
 - iii) 'How Melbourne Found its Laneways: An interview with Craig Allchin' *Broadsheet*, 2014, accessed url 15 January 2015
<http://www.broadsheet.com.au/melbourne/art-and-design/article/melbourne-laneways-bars-cafes-restaurants-six-degrees#gallery-11>
 - iv) Craig Allchin, *Fine Grain Review – Recommendations For A Lively And Engaging City Centre*, (City of Sydney, Sydney) 2012

Heidelberg School and Early Modernism

- a. **Artists** – Tom Roberts, Arthur Streeton, Fredrick McCubbin, Charles Condor
- b. **Themes** – nationalism – naturalism, realism, impressionism, influence, imperialism
- c. **Reading**
 - i) Ian Burn, 'Beating Around the Bush: The landscapes of the Heidelberg School' in *Dialogue*, (Allen and Unwin, Sydney), 1991

Essay Question – Discussion of options, approaches, expectations.

War and Art

- a. **Artists** – George Lambert, Sidney Nolan, George Gittoes, Wendy Sharpe, Ben Quilty
- b. **Themes** – objectivity, subjectivity, truth, globalism
- c. **Reading**
 - i) Betty Churcher, 'The Birth of a Legend', *The Art of War* (The Miegunyah Press, Melbourne), 2005

Week 3

Canberra Field Trip – Departs 7:30am

Session 2

Recap on Field Trip to Canberra

In class test exam/essay

Modernism

a. Artists - Sidney Nolan, Arthur Boyd, Margaret Preston, Clarice Cliff, Albert Tucker, William Dobell, Russell Drysdall, John Brack, Charles Blackman, Roy de Maistre, Thea Proctor, Grace Cossington-Smith, Ralph Balson, Grace Crowley

b. Themes – abstraction, modernity, realism, truth, humanism, romanticism, sexuality, spirituality, freedom, autonomy, commitment

c. Reading

i) Terry Smith, 'What was Australian Modernism?' in *Transformations in Australian Art: The Twentieth Century – Modernism and Aboriginality*(Craftsman House, Sydney), 2002

Late Modernism

a. Artists - Michael Johnson, Richard Dunn, Sydney Ball, John Peart, Robert Jacks, Robert Hunter, Burt Flugleman

b. Themes – purity, abstraction, hard-edge, autonomy, internationalism, centre, periphery, hegemony, freedom, style,

c. Reading

i) Ian Burn, 'Purity, style, amnesia', in *Dialogue*, (Allen and Unwin, Sydney), 1991

Week 4

Session 1

Art in the 60s, 70s and 80's

- a. Artists** – Brett Whitely, Colin Lanceley, Jeffrey Smart, Martin Sharp, Richard Larter, Immants Tillers, Mike Parr, Stelarc, William Yang, Rosemary Gascoigne
- b. Themes** – fashion, popular culture, sexuality, the body, return of painting, rise of photography and other mediums
- c. Reading**
 - i) Terry Smith, 'A Problematic Practice', Australian Painting 1788-1990 (Oxford University Press, Melbourne), 1991

Field Trip – Pop Art AGNSW

Session 2

Popism

- a. Artists** – Howard Arkley, Maria Kozic, Immants Tillers, Jenny Watson, Juan Davila
- b. Themes** – appropriation, bricolage, centre, periphery, influence, translation, transmission, commercialism, fetish, commodity
- c. Reading** – Anneke Jaspers, 'Art of the Second Degree: post pop and popism' in *Pop to Popism* (Art Gallery of NSW, Sydney), 2014

Contemporary Aboriginal Art

- a. Artists** - Richard Bell, Danie Mellor, Trevor "Turbo" Brown, Tracey Moffat, Jonathan Jones, Fiona Foley, Judy Watson, Julie Dowling,
- b. Themes** - race, racism, tradition, sexuality, death, post-colonialism, power, abstraction, humor
- c. Reading** – Howard Morphy, 'Aboriginal Art and the Avant-Garde', *Aboriginal Art*, (London, Phaidon), 1998

Presentations

Week 5

No Classes – Program Melbourne Field Trip

Week 6

Session 1

Australian Architecture

- a. Architects** – Francis Greenway, John Verge, Edmund Blacket, James Barnet, Glenn Murcutt, Harry Seidler, Robin Boyd, Peter Stutchbury, Ashton Raggatt Mcdougall,
- b. Themes** – identity, context, environment, landscape, place, shock, modernity, tradition, materiality, sustainability.
- c. Reading** - TBC

Session 2

Australian Art and the Asia Pacific Region

- a. Artists** – Ai Weiwei, Michael Stevenson, Colin McCahon, Sangeeta Sandrasegar, Lindy Lee, Qin Ga, John Young, Guan Wei, Shigeyuki Kihara
- b. Themes** – regionalism, globalism, post-colonialism, activism, gender, sexuality, immigration, transnationalism
- c. Reading**
 - i) Ross Gibson, 'Aesthetic Politics', *The 5th Asia-Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art*, (Queensland Art Museum, Brisbane) 2006.

Photography, Video and Performance

- a. Artists** – Max Dupain, Harold Cazneaux, Olive Cotton, David Moore, Tracey Moffat, Michael Riley, Darren Sylvester, Anne Zahalka, Bill Henson, Carol Jerrems
- b. Themes** – Representation, documentary, subjectivity, objectivity, sexuality, otherness,
- c. Reading**
 - i) Bernice Murphy, 'Australian Video Art since the 1980s', *Video Logic* (Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney), 2008

Art Today

- a. Artists** – Brooke Andrew, Patricia Piccinini, Callum Morton, Dale Frank, Daniel Crooks, Shaun Gladwell, Hany Armanious, Jenny Watson, Fiona Hall, Adam Cullen, James Angus

b. Themes – globalism, regionalism, identity, transnationalism, post-medium, tradition, post-art, death

c. Reading

i) Anthony Gardner, 'Post-Provincial, Still Peripheral: Australian Art on the Global Stage 1980-2009' in *The Cambridge Companion to Australian Art*, (Cambridge University Press, Melbourne), 2011

Recap and discussion of essay and exam topics

Field Trips

Art Gallery of NSW Collection

View key works from the permanent collection of the Art Gallery of New South Wales, including the exhibition *Drawing Out* that reveals how the process of drawing allows contemporary artists to engage with the landscape – urban, rural, natural or constructed.

National Gallery of Australia - Canberra

View key works from the permanent collection of the NGA, including inaugural exhibition in the new NGA Contemporary that features a selection of significant works from the National Gallery of Australia's collection of 21st century Australian art.

National Portrait Gallery of Australia – Canberra

View works from the permanent collection and view the exhibition *In the flesh* which is an enthralling and immersive experience of contemporary figurative art that explores the concept of humanness.

Australian War Memorial – Canberra

View key works and the exhibition *Ben Quilty: After Afghanistan* based on the artists tour of Afghanistan in 2011 as the Australian War Memorial's official war artist.

Pop to Popism – AGNSW

View the major survey exhibition exploring the origins of pop art and its reception and reworking in the Australian context.

Assessment

Presentation

Students will be allocated to groups of 3 to make a 10-minute presentation on the following topic. Each presentation will be followed by a short class discussion. Please email me a one-page point form summary of your presentation by 5.00pm on the Day prior to your presentation.

Topic

Select and discuss 3 works viewed during your visit to the Art Gallery of New South Wales or the National Gallery of Canberra. Discuss its attributes (scale, colour, shape, texture, focus, orientation, composition, framing, sound) and place it in a historical context. Identify a concept that could be used to speculate on the works possible meaning.

Short Essay – 1000 words

Topic

Select and discuss a work viewed during your visit to the Art Gallery of New South Wales or the National Gallery of Canberra. Discuss its attributes (scale, colour, shape, texture, focus, orientation, composition, framing, sound) and place it in a historical context. Identify a concept that could be used to speculate on the works possible meaning.

Major Essay – 2200 words

You must conduct research beyond the set course reading material, combining academic research with first hand observations of the works being discussed.

Definitions

Colonial Art 1788 to 1880

Modern Art 1880 to 1970

Contemporary Art 1970 to today

Final Examination – 2 hrs (date/time tba)

Grading/Assessment

Successfully completing the course involves the fulfillment of four tasks:

- i. Presentation, 15 minutes — 15%
- ii. Short papers, 900 words — 20%
- iii. Longer Essay, 2200 words — 40%
- iv. Exam (open notes) — 25%

Attendance

Note that attendance without an acceptable excuse (including confirmation, such as a medical certificate) is a basic expectation of the course. Unsatisfactory attendance will be met with a severe penalty.

Punctuality

Punctuality is also an expectation – late students are disruptive, especially when the first five to fifteen minutes consists of a preview of content and expectations for that session. Tardiness of more than twenty minutes will be regarded as an absence and dealt with accordingly.

Participation

The course aims to create an open dialogue on the themes and concerns of the unit. Art is a fascinating human pursuit that opens a world of possibilities. So don't be shy, ask questions, share your experience and perspective, we will all be the richer for it.

There are numerous field trips to this unit, which involve walking as a group. It is essential that you keep up with the group and your instructor. If you lag behind you may miss vital information relevant to the examination and this won't be repeated. It may also mean you have to find your own way back to the building as the group will not wait for late comers. This could mean you will be recorded as missing class and suffer grade penalties.

Plagiarism

All students are responsible for having read the Boston University statement on plagiarism which is available in the Academic Conduct Code. Students are advised that the penalty against students on a Boston University program for cheating on examinations or for plagiarism may be "expulsion from the program or the University or such other penalty as may be recommended by the Committee on Student Academic Conduct, subject to approval by the Dean. The link is:
www.bu.edu/academics/policies/academic-conduct-code/

Late Work

In general no extensions will be granted. The exceptions are where there are clear and acceptable reasons for late submission. In this case a written statement outlining any serious illness or misadventure together with supporting documentation (e.g. medical certificates) must be provided or a strict penalty of five per cent (5%) per day will apply. You must consult the Academic Director, Dr. Sharon Clarke, on such matters.

Research Materials and Resources

- See the AH374 Blackboard page for a full list of recommend texts
- Visit BUSC Library collection of art and architecture titles
- See BUSC Library for access to significant electronic data base collection
- Visit the specialist fine art library at the University of Sydney
http://sydney.edu.au/arts/arts/power/research_library/index.shtml
- Visit Art Gallery of New South Wales and AGNSW Library
- Visit Museum of Contemporary Art
- Visit State Library of NSW (colonial art collection)
- Visit Powerhouse Museum (decorative art, fashion, design collection)
- Visit Museum of Sydney (colonial art and first contact exhibitions)
- Visit Sydney's vibrant contemporary art gallery scene