

IDSVA SYLLABUS
Seminar III
The Subject and Object of Art

Part 1: New York Intensive

Course Number: 703.1
Course Name: Seminar III, Part 1: New York Intensive
Dates: January 2 – 9, 2011
Format: Residency: New York City
Credits: 1

Part 2: The Subject and Object of Art

Course Number: 703.2
Course Name: Seminar III, Part 2: The Subject and Object of Art
Dates: Jan 17 – April 30, 2011 (Spring Break: March 7 – 11)
Format: Online/Teleconference
Instructor: Professor Denise Carvalho
Credits: 4

Course Description:

Seminar III begins with a seven-day January intensive residency in New York City. Visiting lecturers will deliver presentations concerning ethics within the context of a symposium on “Art, Ethnicity, and Globalization.” Speakers include Simon Critchley, James Elkins, Avital Ronnel, and Julie Mehretu (studio visit).

Museums to be visited include The Harlem Studio Museum, The Metropolitan Museum, MoMA, The Guggenheim Museum, The Whitney Museum, The New Museum of Contemporary Art, as well as numerous Chelsea galleries. Students will give seminar presentations on fall Independent Studies, with a view toward linking those studies to questions raised in the Symposium Lectures.

In the online section of the course, The Subject and Object of Art will loop back to *Art in Theory* Revisited. In tracing the relation between the subject and the object as it develops over the course of the last two centuries, we start with Karl Jasper’s reading of Kant and then move to Alexandre Kojève’s introduction to Hegel. (This seminar, which Kojève gave at the École Pratique des Hautes Études from 1933 to 1939, tremendously affected French intellectual thought. Participants included Bataille, Merleau-Ponty, Breton, Lacan, and Sartre; and Foucault and Derrida figure prominently among others who acknowledge a sizable debt to Kojève.) We then venture into subject formation as a question of language and ethics, with Bakhtin’s theory of dialogical consciousness. While here in particular Dostoevsky’s *The Brother’s Karamazov* provides a point of focus, the intent is to think through theories of language toward a philosophy of visual art. To that end Henri Bergson’s *Creative Evolution* will question the Darwinian mechanism of evolution with

an evolution motivated by an *élan vital*, a naturally creative impetus that shapes human experience. In addition, Bergson's notion of subjective time, influential in the work of modern writers and thinkers, can illuminate other developments in the field of human subjectivity, such as Lacan's theory of the gaze, which will introduce problems more specifically ocular vis-à-vis the object/other. This in turn will raise gaze/body/gender/subjectivity questions, especially as per Jacqueline Rose's & Juliet Mitchell's feminist readings of Lacan. Virginia Woolf's *The Moment and Other Essays* will also address feminist issues, although here through its literary, aesthetic, and critical language, informed also by the author's involvement with Bloomsbury Group. Thereafter we consider Deleuze & Guattari's anti-psychoanalytic philosophy as well as Žižek's *The Sublime Object of Ideology*, in which the author explains Hegelian dialectics through his own way of mixing philosophy, politics, and psychoanalysis. We conclude with a discussion of the relation of feminism and postmodernism as it pertains to our reading toward a philosophy of art.

Learning Objectives:

Students will learn to examine and discern distinct concepts in French thought, from poststructuralist theory and psychoanalysis to feminist theory, focusing on the problematics of subject/object relations, and always referencing back to Kant, Hegel, Marx, and Freud through the readings of Jaspers, Kojève, Lacan, Mitchell and Rose, Deleuze, and Žižek. By reading, discussing, and writing short responses to these texts, students will be able to articulate concepts and ideas that inform important debates between philosophy, aesthetic theory, and contemporary art.

Course Requirements:

At the end of each reading section I will pose a question. You will be given a day or two to consult with your peers, then submit a three to five page (12 pt, double spaced) response to my question. I will follow up with a telephone discussion of your response.

I will schedule one-on-one phone calls every other week, and class teleconferences on the weeks you won't have your individual phone calls (also every other week). So, whether as a group or individually, we will be talking every week.

Each assignment should include the names of at least two people with whom you have worked on the question. Late submissions will not be graded unless prior arrangements have been made.

All materials should be delivered to Professor Carvalho via First Class and to IDSVA Submission Storage. Submitted documents must be titled with both the document name and email subject line according to the following format:

familyname, givenname_703_assignmentname_yymmdd
(e.g., "Jones, Sally_703_Jaspers_100223").

Assessment:

The course grade will be based on the average grade of your papers (80%), the grade for your collaboration work (10%) and a grade for your discussions with me (10%).

Suggestions:

1) You will notice that the reading schedule is very tight. You should scan the texts to note the number of pages you will need to read per day in a given week to stay on schedule. If you find yourself running into trouble, give me a heads up right away, so we can strategize the problem before it gets out of hand.

2) Some of the texts you will be reading are famously difficult. Do not skip! Even if you are reading long passages that seemingly make no sense, read the words, and we will make sense of them later.

Recommended Texts:

The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy, Second Edition. Ed. Robert Audi. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

A Dictionary of Cultural and Critical Theory. Ed., Michael Payne. Oxford, Blackwell Publishers, 1997.

Required Texts:

Bakhtin, Mikhail. *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*. Ed., Trans. Caryl Emerson. Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1984.

Bergson, Henri, Edman, Irwin, and Mitchell, Arthur. *Creative Evolution*. London: MacMillan and Co, Limited. Paperback, 2010.

Deleuze, Gilles and Felix Guattari. *A Thousand Plateaus*. Trans. Brian Massumi. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987.

Dostoevsky, Fyodor. *The Brothers Karamazov*. Trans. Richard Pevear. New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 2002.

Jaspers, Karl. *Kant* [from *The Great Philosophers*, Vol 1]. Ed., Hannah Arendt, Trans., Ralph Manheim. New York: Harvest, 1962.

Jones, Amelia (editor). *The Feminism and Visual Culture Reader*. London and New York: Routledge, 2003.

Kojève, Alexandre. *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*. Ed., Alan Bloom. Trans. James H. Nichols, Jr. Ithica: Cornell UP, 1969.

Lacan, Jacques. *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-Analysis*. Ed., Jacques-Alain Miller. Trans. Alan Sheridan. New York and London: Norton, 1978.

Mitchell, Juliet and Jacqueline Rose. *Feminine Sexuality: Jacques Lacan and the école freudienne*. Trans. Jacqueline Rose. London & New York: Norton, 1985.

Woolf, Virginia. *The Moment and Other Essays*. New York: Harvest Book.

Zizek, Slavoj. *The Sublime Object of Ideology*. New York: Verso, 1989.

Reading and Writing Schedule

Jan 18-24	Jaspers
Jan 26	Ques. due back
Jan 27-Feb 3	Bergson
Feb 5	Ques. due back
Feb 6-14	Kojève
Feb 16	Ques. due back
Feb 17-23	Bakhtin
Feb 25	Ques. due back
Feb 26-Mar 5	Woolf (chapters TBA)
March 7	Ques. due back
March 8-12	Spring Break
March 13-20	Lacan (pp. vii-119)
March 22	Ques due back
March 23-30	Mitchell & Rose
April 2	Ques. due back
April 3-11	Deleuze & Guattari (Chapters 1, 2, 3, 14, 15)
April 13	Ques. due back
April 14-20	Zizek
April 22	Ques. due back
April 23-28	The Feminism and Visual Culture Reader (chapters TBA)
April 30	Ques. due back

Conference Call Schedule: TBA