

IDSVA SYLLABUS
Directed Reading I, Part 1
Word & Image Readings

Course Number: 901.1
Course Name: Directed Reading I, Part 1: Word & Image Readings
Dates: Reading Period June 7 – 26, 2010;
Course June 28 – July 16, 2010
Format: Online/teleconference
Instructor: Professor Denise Carvalho
Credits: 1

Course Description:

This directed reading will examine major statements about the relation between verbal and visual representation from Lessing’s classic study *Laocoön* to contemporary theories of the semiotic and social construction of images. Special attention will be paid to important recent moments in this history (especially Joseph Frank’s influential theory of “spatial form” and Murray Krieger’s seminal argument about the aesthetic implications of “ekphrasis,” the depiction of painting in poetry) not only because of their significance in the “word-image” debate but also because of the light they shed on the aesthetic issues under dispute.

Learning Objectives:

In preparation for these discussions, to be conducted by Professor Armstrong at Brown, we will read the texts listed below and consider their independent arguments and intertextual relations.

Course Requirements:

Reading and online discussion of assigned texts

Assessment:

Grades will be assessed entirely on the basis of course participation. Online/teleconference discussion schedule and individual call schedule TBA.

Readings:

Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, *Laocoön: An Essay on the Limits of Painting and Poetry* (1766), trans. Edward Allen McCormick (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1984)

Clement Greenberg, “Towards a Newer Laocoön” (1940) in *Art in Theory 1900-2000*, ed. Charles Harrison and Paul Wood (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003), pp. 562-68

Joseph Frank, “Spatial Form in Modern Literature” (1945), in The Idea of Spatial Form (New Brunswick: Rutgers UP, 1991), pp. 5-66

Murray Krieger, “Ekphrasis and the Still Movement of Poetry; or Laokoon Revisited” (1967) in Krieger, Ekphrasis: The Illusion of the Natural Sign (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1992), 263-88

Frank Kermode, “A Reply to Joseph Frank,” Critical Inquiry, Vol. 4, No. 3 (Spring, 1978), pp. 579-588

W. J. T. Mitchell, “Spatial Form in Literature: Toward a General Theory,” Critical Inquiry, Vol. 6, No. 3 (Spring, 1980), pp. 539-567

Joseph Frank, “An Answer to Critics” (1977) and “Some Further Reflections (1978), in The Idea of Spatial Form, pp. 69-132

Wendy Steiner, The Colors of Rhetoric: Problems in the Relation between Modern Literature and Painting (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1982), pp. 1-69

Jacques Derrida, “Passe-Partout” in The Truth in Painting, trans. Geoff Bennington and Ian McLeod (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1987), pp. 1-13

Jacques Derrida, “Before the Law” in Acts of Literature, ed. Derek Attridge (New York: Routledge, 1992), pp. 181-220

W. J. T. Mitchell, “What is an Image?” in Iconology: Image, Text, Ideology (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1986), pp. 7-46

W. J. T. Mitchell, “The Pictorial Turn” and “Metapictures” in Picture Theory: Essays on Verbal and Visual Representation (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1994), pp. 11-82

W. J. T. Mitchell, “What Do Pictures Want?” and “Drawing Desire” in What Do Pictures Want? The Lives and Loves of Images (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2005), pp. 28-75

John Bender and Michael Marrinan, “Scenario” and “Diagram” in The Culture of Diagram (Stanford: Stanford UP, 2010), pp. 1-52

Charles Altieri, “Reading Feelings in Literature and Painting” in The Particulars of Rapture: An Aesthetics of Affect (Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 2003), pp. 231-54

Nicholas Mirzoeff, “Prologue: Babylonian Modernity” and “Section 1: Babylon, Long Island” Watching Babylon: The War in Iraq and Global Visual Culture (New York: Routledge, 2005), pp. 1-65