CIEE Barcelona, Spain

Course title: Masterworks in Catalan Art
Course code: AHIS 3002 BASP
Programs offering course: Advanced Liberal Arts
Language of instruction: Spanish
U.S. semester credits: 3.00
Contact hours: 45.00
Term: Spring 2021

Course Description

This course presents students with some of the most decisive episodes of Catalan art, ranging from the Romanesque period, that is, the first European international style, to some of the most current artistic manifestations. We will especially focus on international artists, such as Gaudí, Picasso, Dalí, Miró and Tàpies, although we will also focus on other key players, without whom the progress of the arts in Catalonia would not be understood. The sessions are complemented by classes outside the classroom that combine field trips to discover in situ some of the most interesting elements of Barcelona’s heritage. Visits to museums and artistic and cultural institutions of the city, such as the National Museum of Catalan Art (MNAC) or the Picasso Museum, among others, will help us better understand the particularities, evolution and other issues related to Catalan art.

Learning Objectives

By completing this course, students will:

- Identify and analyze masterpieces from the most important periods and styles of Catalan art.
- Relate the works studied to their historical, economic and cultural context.
- Assess the works studied not only at a local level but also in the context of world art history.
- Argue with confidence about topics related to avant-garde art and postmodernity.
- Produce a scholarly paper on a specific art topic based on an in-depth research project.

Course Prerequisites

6 semesters of college-level Spanish (or equivalent).

Methods of Instruction

The course is structured in lectures, learning activities and fieldtrips. Lecture classes will be conducted by the professor, but students are expected to participate (class debates & learning activities). During the fieldtrips, students will visit places relevant to the course content (monuments, art expositions, museums, etc.)

Assessment and Final Grade

1. Written Exams 50%
2. Essay 25%
3. Debate 15%
4. Participation in Class 10%
   TOTAL 100%

Course Requirements

Written Exams

Midterm exam: 25%; Final exam: 25%

Students enrolled in this course must take two exams. Both will consist of the written development of a topic proposed by the professor. Among the options proposed, the student must choose only one and prepare a critical text of an approximate length of one page and a half or two pages.
Essay

At the end of the course, there will be a research paper due of between 10-12 pages that will correspond to 25% of the final grade. The theme of the essay will be chosen by the students, approved in advance by the professor, and will have to deal with a work of art, a monument, an artist or artistic manifestation of Catalan art that may have been discussed in class or, on the contrary, be of special interest to the student. It is important to emphasize that the essay should address formal and technical aspects of the work, and also its social and cultural context, its impact on society, its role as a testimony of its time, among other issues.

Debate

Essay 10% & Discussion 5%

The program includes a debate for the last phase of the course surrounding the turn of modern art, based on the topics related to avant-garde art and also those of postmodernity. A specific issue will be raised from a particular case and two possibilities of argumentation (for A and against B, for example). Students must prepare, individually and prior to the debate, a text with a minimum of five arguments for each of the possibilities. The day of the debate, by choice or by drawing lots according to the number of students, they will be assigned an option (A or B) and must defend it as a group. Before the debate, students will have a few minutes to develop their joint general argument and after the presentation of the main arguments, the discussion will open. Students are expected to actively participate with their arguments and questions during the activity. This session will be graded both by the prior write-up of the arguments and by student participation in the classroom during the debate.

Participation in Class

Class Participation

Students are expected to participate in class by asking questions that show their active engagement in class and by being able to comment on the readings due for each session. The level of engagement with the class materials, as evidenced in written work and class participation, will be one of the factors of the final grade.

Students are responsible for the material covered in regular classes, on-site classes, discussions, peer presentations and readings.

Attendance

Students are expected to attend all scheduled class sessions on time and prepared for the day’s class activities. CIEE Barcelona does not distinguish between justified or unjustified absences, whether due to sickness, personal emergency, inevitable transport delay and/or other impediments. You are considered responsible of managing your own absences. Please keep in mind that exams, paper submission dates, presentations and any other course work deadlines cannot be changed.

No academic penalty will be applied if students miss up to 3 class sessions. If students miss up to 5 class sessions, students’ final course grade will drop 5 points out of 100 on the CIEE grade scale for each additional absence beyond 3 (for example a 95 will become a 90 if they reach the 4th absence, and an 85 if they reach the 5th absence). Students will automatically fail the course if they miss more than 20% of total class hours (i.e. if they exceed 5 absences).

For students who miss up to 20% of the total course hours due to extenuating circumstances, the Academic Director may allow for exceptions to the local attendance policy based on documentation such as proof of bereavement, religious observances, hospitalization etc.

Students arriving more than 10 minutes late to the class will be considered absent for a day.

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Course schedule is subject to change due to study tours, excursions, or local holidays. Final schedules will be included in the final syllabus provided to students on site.

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Weekly Schedule

Week 1
Class: 1.1 Introduction and presentation of the course

Class: 1.2 Urban planning and growth in Barcelona (1)

The old Roman metropolis and the formation of the city; The formation of the medieval city. Reading: Gimeno Pascual (1983).

Week 2
Class: 2.1 Urban planning and growth in Barcelona (2)

Overview of the future urban development of the city.

Class: 2.2 Field Trip

Discover Barcino and its expansion throughout the Middle Ages. City walls and new quartiers. Reading: Barcino 3D (App)

Week 3
Class: 3.1 Romanesque art in Catalonia (1)

Spirituality and aesthetics of Romanesque art. The first European style. Symbology and iconography. Main architects. Architecture and mural painting. Reading: MNAC on-line catalogue (selected entries)

Class: 3.2 Romanesque art in Catalonia (2)

Field Trip: Visit to the Romanesque art collections at the MNAC; iconography. Main architects. Architecture and mural painting.

Week 4
Class: 4.1 Gothic art in Barcelona (1)

The importance of cities. The symbolism of light. The peculiarities of southern Gothic. The great architects. Civil architecture and the transformation of Barcelona. Reading: MNAC on-line catalogue (selected entries)

Class: 4.2 Gothic art in Barcelona (2)

Field Trip: The transformation of the city in the low middle ages through some vestiges such as the Town Hall, the Plaza del Rey, Santa Maria del Mar, the Plaza del Trigo, the Hospital de la Santa Cruz, among others.

Week 5
Class: 5.1 Renaissance and Baroque (1)

The limited impact of the Italian Renaissance in Catalonia. The consolidation of Baroque forms in
Barcelona. The Baroque classicist.

Class:  5.2  Renaissance and Baroque (2)

Field Trip: Walking tour along the Rambla, the Palau de la Generalitat, Sant Felip Neri, the Mercè basilica, the Barceloneta district, the surgery school, the church of Belén, the Palau Moja, the Palau de la Virreina, among others.

Week 6
Class:   6.1  The arrival of Academicism (1)

Field Trip: Visit to the Royal Academy of Fine Arts of Sant Jordi. A new model of artistic education. Reading: History of the Academia (Academia of Fine Arts webpage)

Class:   6.2  The origins of Modernisme (1)


Week 7
Class:   7.1  Midterm Exam

Class:   7.2  The origins of Modernisme (2)


Week 8
Class:   8.1  The origins of Modernisme (3)

Field Trip: Visit to Hospital de Sant Pau. A new model for a health institution.

Class:   8.2  The origins of Modernisme (4)


Week 9
Class:   9.1  Catalan painting around 1900 (1)

Methodology: resources to analyze pictorial works. Class activity: how to analyze a painting? Working on iconography, formal analysis and other artistic aspects.

Class:   9.2  Catalan painting around 1900 (2)


Week 10
Class:  10.1  Session XVII: Catalan painting around 1900 (3)

The first modernist generation: Casas and Rusiñol; Always looking towards Paris; Els Quatre Gats tavern; The second modernist generation.

Class:  10.2  Catalan painting around 1900 (4)

Field Trip: Visit to the modern art collections of the MNAC.

Week 11
Class:  11.1  The great figures of avant-garde art (1)
Week 12
Class: 11.2 The great figures of avant-garde art (2)
Field Trip: Visit to the Picasso Museum.

Week 13
Class: 12.1 The great figures of avant-garde art (3)
Class: 12.2 Visit to the Miró Foundation

Week 14
Class: 13.1 The great figures of avant-garde art (4)
Class: 13.2 The great figures of avant-garde art (5)
Salvador Dalí (II). The Dalinian iconography. The creation of myth, performance and the perfect understanding of the medium.

Week 15
Class: 14.1 The turn of modern art. Modernity and postmodernity (1)
Dau al 7 and Antoni Tàpies. The postwar period, existentialism and spirituality.
Class: 14.2 The turn of modern art. Modernity and postmodernity (2)
The formal renewal: Informalism, Arte Povera and other formal movements.
Essay

Week 15
Class: 15.1 Debate and conclusions
The turn of modern art. Discussion and role play in class about several practical examples from recent art market world.
Class: 15.2 Final Exam

Course Materials
Readings
Fontbona, F; Durà, V.; Historia de la Real Academia de Bellas Artes de Sant Jordi, catálogo on-line,


**Bibliographic Reference**

Armengol, L. R., Dalí, icono y personaje, Madrid, Cátedra, 2003.


Història de l’art català, Barcelona: Edicions 62.


París-Barcelona 1888-1937, Barcelona-París, Museu Picasso-Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 2002


