



CAT1

Culture, Art and Technology 1
Sixth College
University of California, San Diego

*Visual Experience: a user's guide to the history of painting
(from Lascaux to Jackson Pollock)*

Fall 2017
Tuesday and Thursday, 12:30-1:50
Center Hall 113

Prof. William Tronzo
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Sections and Sections Leaders:

LE	1E	TTH	12:30-1:50	CENTR	113	WILLIAM TRONZO
E1	909373	T	4-4:50	CENTR	201	COREY DUNLAP
E2	909374	T	5-5:50	CENTR	201	COREY DUNLAP
E3	909375	T	6-6:50	CENTR	201	SAMUEL CHAN
E4	909376	T	7-7:50	CENTR	201	SAMUEL CHAN
E5	909377	TTH	4-4:50	CENTR	201	SURYA TAMRAPARNI
E6	909378	TTH	5-5:50	CENTR	201	SURYA TAMRAPARNI
E7	909379	TTH	6-6:50	CENTR	201	KATIE HALE
E8	909380	TTH	7-7:50	CENTR	201	KATIE HALE

“It is seeing which establishes our place in the surrounding world; we explain that world with words, but word can never undo the fact that we are surrounded by it. The relation between what we see and what we know is never settled”

John Berger, *Ways of Seeing*

Images are inescapable; some say that they are fundamental to the way in which our world is formed. We easily absorb images, but unlike words, we have not been schooled in a methodology that would allow us to approach them critically. This is what the present course sets out to do. Its subject in a chronological sense is the western tradition in painting from antiquity to the present, which will introduce the student to the main periods and styles in the History of Western Art – Ancient, Medieval, Renaissance, Baroque and Modern. In a conceptual sense, however, it will be to provide a critical vocabulary for the analysis of visual experience and to familiarize the student with major categories and forms of artistic achievement across the board.

The focus of this course is one particular medium, perhaps the image-creating medium par excellence: painting. Painting is generally defined as a 2-D art form based on line (*disegno*) and color (*colore*). But in order to understand the historical development of painting we will need to make reference to and to discuss other media, such as sculpture and architecture. Ultimately our aim is to understand how painting creates images and how images are empowered by us to shape reality.

We will be looking at works of art from across a broad chronological spectrum. Here is a great resource for understanding how it all fits together chronologically and geographically:

The Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History (<http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/>). This resource is open to all online. It was developed by the Metropolitan Museum in New York and includes not only lists of works and dates but also descriptive and explanatory essays on periods, styles and other themes. It has a bibliography of additional readings, should you feel so inspired by a work to want to know more about it and its context.

Weekly themes and topics in sequence:

0. ***Introduction: cutting and washing*** (Sept 28)
1. ***Chronology and geography*** (Oct 3 and 5)
2. ***Classical or a shadow outline*** (Oct 10 and 12)
3. ***The overwhelming importance of the face*** (Oct 17 and 19)
4. ***Spatial revolution in painting: the medieval tradition*** (Oct 24 and 26)
5. ***Painting sees/seizes the world*** (Oct 31 and Nov 2)
6. ***Caravaggio’s gobbo and painting about art*** (Nov 7 and 9)
7. ***Painting between percept and symbol*** (Nov 14 and 16)
8. ***Six works from the Stuart Collection*** (Nov 21)
9. ***Abstraction and the threshold of photography and film*** (Nov 28 and 30)
10. ***Conclusion: image, body, medium*** (Dec 5 and 7)

Course Requirements:

Class attendance and participation (20%)

On-time attendance in lecture and section is required. Please notify your TA if you must be absent for illness, a family emergency or for any other reason. Excessive tardiness or absences from lecture or section may be grounds for failing the course. Active participation in discussion in section is encouraged. See CAT policies on attendance and participation for additional clarification.

Weekly readings are listed below in the class schedule and should be read (and thought about) before the week in which they are assigned. All required readings are available online on the course website on TritonEd (TED). There will be occasional exercises or presentations in section to make sure that everyone keeps up with the readings.

An analysis of two images (40%)

A comparison between two things is one of the most effective ways of making a point in an argument and it is a technique employed across the board by lawyers arguing a case in court, for example, op-ed writers putting forth an opinion in a newspaper, or researchers offering an interpretation in a scholarly journal. Great orators like Cicero have spoken of the art of comparing.

What I would like you to do in this paper is to select one image from the course material thus far and one image of your choosing and compare them. Write about them in relationship to one another: what are their most important similarities?; what are their most important differences? You will practice thinking about this type of comparison because we will present and discuss comparisons just about every day. As the course progresses you will become very familiar with what comparisons can and cannot do. The final paper will be 750-1000 words and make an argument about the relationship between the two images.

Process: this paper will be written in five stages:

First, you will select the two images that you want to write about and you can do so in consultation with the professor and/or the T.A.'s, who can guide you. This should be done by October 19.

Second, you will outline or list in the form of bullet points important differences and/or similarities in relationship to their form and content between the works and what you think they might mean. This should be done by October 31 and submitted to the T.A. for a grade. You will receive comments to help push your ideas forward. Peer review or work in small groups in Section for feedback (TA's: see Resources folder for examples)

Third, you will organize your observations in the form of an outline that makes sense as a logical sequence. You will spend time in week 6 discussion section working on this outline.

Fourth, you will write a draft of 750-1000 words of your paper based upon the outline and this will be submitted to Turnitin. The due date for the draft is November 21 and this should be submitted to the T.A. for a grade. You will do a peer review in Section.

Fifth, your Section Leader will read and comment on your draft and with these comments in mind you will prepare a final version of the paper and submit it as well to Turnitin. The due date for the final version is December 7 and it will be graded.

Please feel free to consult the professor and the T.A.'s at any stage of this process.

A journal: connecting the class to the outside world (40%)

Part 1: Over the course of the quarter you will keep a journal. I would like you to write about a paragraph each week, utilizing one of the terms or concepts noted on the syllabus (three a week), which I will try and elucidate in lecture. What I would like you to do is to connect these terms or concepts to something that you see or experience in the world outside of the classroom. This “something” could be a work of art (on campus, for example), or an advertisement, a billboard, a photograph, a picture online or in a newspaper or magazine, and so on. The possibilities are just about infinite. I would like you to think about how the ideas we discuss in class can be meaningful outside of the classroom. In other words, how these ideas might help you understand your own experience in the world. Think of these entries as episodes in your coming to terms with the meanings that are possible in the visual culture as a whole.

You will upload your journal entry weekly to TED (if you have any questions about this, your T.A. will explain to you how to do it). These ten entries will be worth 15% of your grade. Your journal can be submitted hand written (as a pdf) or typed up.

Part 2: At the end of the quarter you will be asked to summarize your entries and discuss them in a more continuous narrative. This will give you the opportunity to reflect upon possible patterns of thought in the issues and ideas you have been grappling with. Make this summary, analysis and reflection upon your experience a couple of paragraphs, about 350 words or about one page and a half in length. This submission will be worth 25% of your grade.

This part will be due on Friday December 15 by 2:30 pm.

Student Code of Conduct

A good classroom environment should stimulate you to think for yourself, challenge paradigms, and raise critical questions. Please keep in mind, however, that we must engage each other in a respectful and considerate manner. These ground rules are reflected in the UCSD Principles of Community to which we are all expected to adhere (<http://www-vcba.ucsd.edu/principles.htm>).

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities should talk with professor and teaching assistant by the end of week 1 to make accommodations for the quarter. Please see the Office for Students with Disabilities website (<http://disabilities.ucsd.edu>) for more information on registering for accommodations. P.S. Extra Credit

You are encouraged to attend up to 3 events during CAT 1 or CAT 125 for extra credit points. Submit your Extra Credit to the extra credit section of your course TED within one week after attending the event.

Answer the following *prompt* in less than 250 words:

In what ways did you experience or think about Culture, Art, and Technology intersecting in the event that you attended?

In your writing use concrete details from what you saw or heard. You are also encouraged to participate with your friends from other CAT courses or go alone and make new friends! Please be respectful and mindful of the events that you attend.

September 28

Introduction: cutting and washing

No reading this week but sit, listen and ask questions.

October 3 and 5

Chronology and geography

Reading:

Heinrich Wofflin, *Principles of Art History*, 1-17

Erwin Panofsky, *Studies in Iconology*, 3-16

Three terms and concepts: western tradition/globalism, form and content, iconography/iconology

October 10 and 12

Classical or a shadow outline

Reading:

Ernst Gombrich, "The Stylistic Categories of Art History and their Origins in Renaissance Ideals," in *Norm and Form*, 81-98

Three terms and concepts: the orders, Antiquity, the Ideal

October 17 and 19

The overwhelming importance of the face

Reading:

David Freedberg, *Power of Images*, 1-40

Three terms and concepts: likeness, presence, icon

What you need to have done: have your selection of two images for your Analysis paper made by Oct. 19

October 24 and 26

Spatial revolution in painting: the medieval tradition

Reading:

Otto Demus, *Byzantine Mosaic Decoration*, 3-39

Three terms and concepts: liturgy, devotion, monasticism

October 31 and November 2

Painting sees/seizes the world

Reading:

Oliver Sacks, *The man who mistook his wife for a hat*, 1-21

Three terms and concepts: Renaissance, one-point perspective, memory

What you need to have done: outline or list in the form of bullet points important differences and similarities between the two images you have selected for your Analysis paper

November 7 and 9

Caravaggio's *gobbo* and painting about art

Reading:

Rudolph Preimesberger, "Pittura Gobba: Conjectures on Caravaggio's Entombment," in *Paragons and Paragone*, 83-107

Three terms and concepts: Baroque, metapainting, chiaroscuro

November 14 and 16

Painting between percept and symbol

Reading:

John Berger, *Ways of seeing*, 83-112

Three terms and concepts: Modern, the gaze, avant-garde

November 21

Six works from the Stuart Collection: John Baldessari, Robert Irwin, Barbara Kruger, Bruce Nauman, Alexis Smith, William Wegman

This week will be devoted to site visits to objects from the Stuart Collection on campus, with discussion led by the T.A.'s. The six works are selected from the larger number of pieces in the Stuart Collection because of the greater degree to which they relate to themes and issues discussed and developed in this course. For a general introduction to the Stuart Collection, see their website: <http://stuartcollection.ucsd.edu/>. This is definitely a collection you should familiarize yourself with, since we all live with it here everyday. The main office of the Collection is in Sixth College.

What you need to have done: turn in a draft of your Analysis paper on November 21

November 28 and 30

Abstraction and the threshold of photography and film

Reading:

Clement Greenberg, "Avant-Garde and Kitsch," in *Art and Culture*, 3-21

Three terms and concepts: medium-specificity, indexical, popular culture

December 5 and 7

Conclusion: image, body, medium

What you need to have done: Turn in a final version of your Analysis paper on December 7

December 15 by 2:30 pm

What you need to have done: Turn in the final (reflective) essay on your Journal entries