

Academy of Visual Arts
Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Visual Arts Programme

VART2315 Writing in Art and Culture

No. of units: 3

Pre-requisite: VART1006 Introduction to Visual Arts II or any GDCV courses offered by AVA or any Visual Arts courses

Duration: 39 hours

Cluster: Art History and Theory

I.1. Course Description & Rationale:

Writing on and about visual art is an essential element of artistic practice and has a multitude of uses from artist's statements to exhibition, critical analysis and academic discourse. How the artist uses words to analyse and describe works, becomes a necessary component in the dissemination and communication of the creative. The writing of the visual explores the essence of communication and the positions and perspectives of artists and art writers. Art writing further provides primary sources to explore the changing role of the writing about art, from manifesto and critic to intention and reception.

This course will improve students' individual research, critical analysis and written skills, in order to effectively express ideas for their own practice, and in interpreting and understanding writings about art.

The course will examine fundamental skills of research practice, methods and methodology for practicing artists and academic writing on art. Revealing the relationship between art, creativity and language, as a methodology that can enhance communication and critical engagement with art theory and art historical writings. It will also assess writings on modern and contemporary visual arts practices by looking at how key texts from the past have informed present discourses on art.

We will examine a number of artists' writings through selected examples of primary source materials; notes, correspondence, manifestos, and other printed matter, by those who work between art and also writing about art.

I.2. Course Content:

No.		Hours	%
1.	Introduction: Defining terms and meanings	3	7
2.	Art Writing - Functions and Methods: Introducing the range and types of Art writing, including; critique and criticism, exhibition catalogues, manifestos and academic theory.	6	16
3.	History and Interpretation: How art writing and the history and interpretation of art has informed the historiography of art.	9	20
4.	Practice and methodology: - How and why we research and methodologies; - Practical applications of research; - Constructing research projects.	9	20
5.	Bias, Ethics and Objectivity: Case study examination of issues relating to how we interpret research with ethical responsibility and individual objectivity.	9	20
6.	Media and Art Writing: The effects and affects of mass media on the consumption and review of visual arts.	3	7
		39	100

I.3. Intended Course Learning Outcomes (CILOs):

(Please take note of the PILOs for the overall BA programme in the Programme Document.)

Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

No.	Intended Course Learning Outcomes (CILOs)
1.	Identify the processes of research and methodologies for art writing;
2.	Demonstrate critical and analytical skills in selecting appropriate research methods;
3.	Construct research in an assigned area by analysing academic discourse on critical theories and arguments;
4.	Critically evaluate ideas and process in a clear verbal and written format;
5.	Practice critical writing skills to engage, and interpret, student's own art practices as well as those of others within the visual arts field; and

6.	Adhere to standards of professional practice and ethos.

** More may be added.*

I.4. Alignment of CILOs with PILOs:

Learning Outcomes	<i>Please indicate alignment by checking '✓' the appropriate box</i>					
	CILO1	CILO2	CILO3	CILO4	CILO5	CILO6
PILO1.1	✓		✓		✓	
PILO1.2						
PILO2.1	✓		✓			
PILO2.2						
PILO2.3		✓		✓	✓	
PILO3.1						✓
PILO3.2						✓

** There may not be 6 CILOs, in which case, just leave columns empty.*

I.5. Alignment of Teaching and Learning Activities with CILOs:

No.	Teaching and Learning Activities	CILO	Hours
1.	Field trips to museums, art galleries and cultural centres will be arranged to cultivate their appreciation and understanding of the lecture based theories and processes. Student will submit regular case study reports and exercises that apply formal analysis to a diverse range cultural production and consumption.	1–6	6
2.	Case studies will be used in order for the students to express their opinions, discuss, identify and define various artworks and to develop application of the theories and definitions.	1–6	12
3.	Group presentations require students to research into specific art works or themes and to analyse in terms of the themes and topics of the course and consequently encourage them to evaluate with appropriate means and confidence.	1, 2, 6	17
4.	Formal lectures will introduce students to the processes and theories of art writing. Individual summative assessment will provide the student the opportunity to synthesise and transfer learning and further prepare the students for further study.	1–6	4

**More may be added.*

I.6. Assessment:

No.	Assessment Methods/Activities	Weighting	Alignment with CILOs
1.	Research Project: Students are required to identify, interpret, analyse and contextualise an artwork through an individual research project presented as a case study report. The written research will provide summative assessment and utilise all learning and skills.	40%	1–5
2.	Case Study Reports and presentations: Reports require students to work collaboratively in groups and individually to examine and write critically about the formal qualities of artworks, using appropriate research.	30%	1–5
3.	Professional Attitude: Professional Attitude does not necessarily define its own learning outcomes, but takes a look at 'how' the other, non-attitudinal outcomes are achieved. Assessment will always be based on direct personal contact with the student. Assessment methods include personal conversations – formal and informal –, class observation, individual and group-tutorials, and such like. Assessment evidence is continuously produced through attendance and participation class-records, public presentations, peer-reviews, evaluation of sketchbooks or visual diaries, personal notes of students and teachers, etc. For more information, please refer to the BA (Hons) in Visual Arts' Programme Document.	30%	6

**More may be added.*

I.7. References (up to 10 books):

Adams, Laurie S. *The Methodologies of Art: An Introduction*. New York: Icon Editions. 1996.

Barnet, Sylvan. *A Short Guide to Writing About Art*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2007.

Chipp, Herschel B. *Theories of Modern Art: A Source Book by Artists and Critics*. With contributions by Peter Selz and Joshua C. Taylor. Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1996.

Collier, John, and Malcolm Collier. *Visual Anthropology: Photography as a Research Method*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico, 1986.

Dicks, Bella. *Culture on Display*. London: Open University Press, 2003.

Harrison, Charles, and Paul Wood. *Art in Theory, 1900-2000: An Anthology of Changing Ideas*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2003.

Johnson, McAllister W. *Art History: its use and abuse*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998.

Kemal, Salim, and Ivan Gaskell. *The Language of Art History*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991.

Leavy, Patricia. *Method Meets Art: Arts-based Research Practice*. London: Guilford Press, 2008.

Minor, Vernon Hyde. *Art History's History*. Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall, 2001.

Murray, Chris. *Key Writers on Art*. London: Routledge. 2003.

Nelson, Robert, and Richard Shiff. *Critical Terms for Art History*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996.

I.8. Academic Integrity:

Students will endeavour to only claim work that they have actually produced themselves. Claiming the work of others is considered plagiarism, and will be dealt with under the academic policies of the university.

I.9. Health and Safety:

Every effort will be made to comply with the intent of Hong Kong's law or acts and the University's policies to maintain a safe and healthy working environment.

I.10. Final Note:

The instructor reserves the right to modify the class and the syllabus or the schedule to adjust to the dynamics of the particular group or to take advantage of opportunities that may arise.