

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

## **VART3376 Art, Culture and Criticism**

**No. of units: 3**

**Pre-requisite: VART2305 Art in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century I**

**Duration: 39 hours**

**Clusters: Art History and Theory (2012 & 2013 Intakes) / Graphic Arts and Experience Design (2014 intake and onwards)**

### **I.1. Course Description & Rationale:**

Art criticism 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.

This course will use the practice of viewing exhibitions with a focus on Hong Kong and Chinese artists to provide practical skills of visual analysis to improve students' individual critical analysis and research. In addition this course will visually explore the essence of communication, and the positions and perspectives of artists and art writers. It further provides primary sources to explore the changing role of the writing about art, from manifesto and critic to intention and reception.

Art, Culture and Criticism reveals 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. The course thus examines fundamental skills of research practice, methods and methodology for practicing artists and academics in writing on art.

We will visit a number of exhibitions and critically examine the work in comparison with artists' writings through selected examples of current exhibitions in Hong Kong, utilizing – where possible – primary source materials like notes, correspondence, manifestos, and other printed matter.

## I.2. Course Content:

No.		Hours	%
1.	Introduction: Art writing - Functions and Methods: - Introducing the range and types of art writing; - Critique and criticism; - Exhibition catalogues; - Manifestos and artists statements.	3	8
2.	First Exhibition Visit: Translating what is seen into blogs and informal media	9	23
3.	Second Exhibition Visit: Media and Art Writing: The effects and affects of mass media on the consumption and review of visual arts.	9	23
4.	Third Exhibition Visit: Critique and criticism	9	23
5.	Fourth Exhibition Visit: Bias, Ethics and Objectivity: Ethical responsibility and individual objectivity	9	23
		39	100

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

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.	Critically select appropriate research methods;
3.	Critically evaluate ideas and processes in a clear verbal and written format; and
4.	Practice critical writing skills to engage, and interpret, student's own art practices as well as those of others within the visual arts field;
5.	Adhere to standards of professional practice and ethos.

*\* More may be added.*

## I.4. Alignment of CILOs with PILOs:

Learning Outcomes	Please indicate alignment by checking '✓' the appropriate box					
	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 in order to facilitate practical experience for the class based. Student will submit regular case study reports and exercises that apply formal analysis to a diverse range cultural production and consumption.	1–5	6
2.	Case studies from exhibition visits 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.	1–5	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, 5	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.	1–5	4

\*More may be added.

#### I.6. Assessment:

No.	Assessment Methods/Activities	Weighting	Alignment with CILOs
1.	Exhibition Research Projects: Students are required to identify, interpret, analyse and contextualize current exhibitions through an individual research project presented as a blog post, review or critic. The written research will provide summative assessment and utilise all learning and skills.	50%	1–4

2.	Individual and group 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.	20%	1–4
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%	5

*\*More may be added.*

### **I.7. References:**

- 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: Guildford 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.