**Philosophy 345: Aesthetics and Philosophy of Art** Carolyn Korsmeyer

Spring 2012 110 Park Hall

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**Texts:** *Aesthetics: The Big Questions,* Carolyn Korsmeyer, ed.

*Arguing about Art*, Third Edition, Alex Neill and Aaron Ridley,eds.

**Office hours:** Tuesdays 1-2 p.m. and by appointment. I am best reached by e-mail.

This course will be an immersion in aesthetics and the philosophy of art. We shall cover such topics as: the nature of art and its role in society; the potential for danger in the arts and entertainment; the nature of artistic creativity and expression; beauty and the sublime; the paradoxical enjoyment of tragedy and horror; the aesthetics of natural environments; the aesthetics of food and drink.  Because the concepts of art and aesthetic value develop historically and vary culturally, we shall consider historical material alongside contemporary theories. Discussion will focus not only on standard artworks but also on popular culture, objects, and events.

Students are expected to demonstrate familiarity with the theories presented and to analyze and critically assess their advantages and disadvantages. Classes will be conducted with a mixture of lecture and discussion and will sometimes be accompanied with visual materials, music clips, and other examples.

**Requirements:**

Students are expected to attend class and to participate in discussion.

* More than four unexcused absences will lower your grade.
* Good participation in discussion will raise your final grade by half a mark.
* Academic integrity is expected. Plagiarism or cheating will result in a failing mark.
* Please turn off cell phones during class and refrain from texting and other distractions.
* If you bring a computer to class (not recommended), use it only to take notes.

Written requirements:

* One quiz, one examination.
* Final paper of about 8 pages on a choice of topics to be distributed.
* The quiz counts for 20% of the final grade; the exam and the paper count for 40% each.

**Note**: Announcements, study guides, etc. will be posted on UBLearns throughout the term. Sometimes I shall send out e-mails to the class. Be sure that you check your UB-issued e-mail account regularly.

**Schedule of readings and assignments**

Week of:

**The Concept of Art**

Jan. 16 Introduction to course.

Plato, from the *Republic*, in *Aesthetics: the Big Questions* (hereafter BQ)

Shiner, “Western and Nonwestern Concepts of Art,” in *Arguing about Art* (AA)

Jan. 23 Anderson, from *Calliope’s Sisters* (BQ)

Dutton, “But They Don’t Have Our Concept of Art,” (AA)

Msosa Mwale, “Against Tradition” (BQ)

Jan. 30 Danto, “The Artworld” (BQ)

Suzuki, “Zen and the Art of Tea” (BQ)

Feb. 6 *Tilted Arc*, transcript of hearing (AA)

Hein, “What is Public art? Time, Place, and Meaning” (AA)

Horowitz, “Public Art/Public Space” (AA)

Kelly, “The Public Art Controversy: the Serra and Lin Cases” (AA)

Danto, “The Vietnam Veteran’s Memorial” (BQ)

**The Concept of the Aesthetic and the nature of “taste”**

Feb. 13 Hume, “Of the Standard of Taste” (BQ)

Dewey, “The Live Creature,” (BQ)

Stolnitz, “The Aesthetic Attitude” (BQ)

Eaton, “Locating the Aesthetic” (BQ)

Feb. 20 Telfer, “Food as Art” ( AA)

Korsmeyer, “The Meaning of Taste and the Taste of Meaning” (AA)

Bourdieu, from *Distinction* (BQ)

Cohen, “High and Low Thinking about High and Low Art” (BQ)

QUIZ THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 23 (short answer)

**Creativity, genius, artistic production, and gender**

Feb. 27 Kant, from the *Critique of Judgment* (BQ)

Battersby, from *Gender and Genius* (BQ)

Parker and Pollock, “Crafty Women and the Hierarchy of the Arts” (BQ)

Mar. 5 Nochlin, “Why Are There No Great Women Artists?” (BQ)

Duncan, “The MOMA’s Hot Mama’s” (BQ)

SPRING BREAK

**Aesthetic value and the appreciation of nature**

Mar. 19 Carlson, “Aesthetic Appreciation and the Natural Environment” (AA)

Carroll, “On Being Moved by Nature” (AA)

Budd, “Models of Nature Appreciation (AA)

**Authenticity and Forgery**

Mar. 26 Lessing, “What is wrong with a Forgery?” (AA)

Dutton, “Artistic Crimes” (AA)

Davies, “Authenticity and Musical Performance” (AA)

Young, “The Concept of Authentic Performance” (AA)

**Art, Emotional Arousal, and Moral Understanding**

Apr. 2 ***Tragedy: Pity and Fear***

Sophocles, *Choral Ode* (BQ)

Aristotle, from the *Poetics* (BQ)

Nietzsche, from *The Birth of Tragedy* (BQ)

Nussbaum, “Form and Content, Philosophy and Literature” (BQ)

THURSDAY, APRIL 5: EXAMINATION (short answers plus essay)

Apr. 9 ***The Sublime: Terror and Awe***

Poe, “A Descent into the Maelstrom” (BQ)

Burke, from *A Philosophical Inquiry into the Sublime and Beautiful* (BQ)

Kant, from *The Critique of Judgment* (BQ)

Apr. 16 ***Horror: Fear and Disgust***

Gaut, “The Paradox of Horror” (AA)

Carroll, from *The Philosophy of Horror* (BQ)

Carroll, “Why Horror?” (AA)

Freeland, “Realist Horror” (BQ)

Apr. 23 Neill, “Fiction and the Emotions” (AA)

Kendall Walton, “Fearing Fictionally” (AA)

Norman, “Carnage and Glory, Legends and Lies” (BQ)

Murdoch, “The Sovereignty of Good over Other Concepts” (BQ)

PAPER DUE THURSDAY, MAY 3 BY 2 PM.