LANGUAGE OF COLOR – BEAUTY, POWER & MEANING

Department of Art and Art History
ART 3010 (3 credit hours)

Elizabeth Dewitte MFA
Spring Semester 2016
Lecture days / time: Tuesday & Thursday 12:25 – 1:45
Location: CRCC 115
Phone: 581-8677
E-mail: elizabeth.dewitte@xmission.com
Appointments are best made by email

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Language of Color, Art 3010 is for non-majors, there is no prerequisite.

This course examines global and regional use of color as a visual language and as a means of transcultural/ transnational communication. Visual vocabulary is introduced at the start of the course through a global study of philosophies of color organization and meaning. Color is explored as a cultural indicator of beauty, status, and group identity. Each topical investigation begins with a comparative study among a group of related cultures and broadens to a relative study between nations from markedly different geographic regions and socio-economic/political environments. Course material takes a discipline-correlated approach where twentieth and twenty-first century visual artworks are used to present examples of color in a cultural context and to begin a dialog of contemporary issues and philosophies to include aesthetics, life style, religion, race, gender, global economics and politics. Collapse of cultural identity is addressed through a review of color as a function of global marketing strategies and Internet communications.

Books we will refer to:

Chromophobia by David Batchelor
Color in Art by John Gage
Colour – Documents of Contemporary Art Edited by David Batchelor
Interaction of Colour by Josef Albers
Colour Codes by Charles Riley
Colour, Environment, & Human Response by Frank H. Mahnke
Colour and Meaning by John Cage
Colour and Culture by John Cage
The Elements of Colour by Johannes Itten

Colour in Art, Design & Nature edited by C.A. Brebbia, C. Greated, & M.W. Collins

Contemporary Colour - Theory and Use by Steven Bleicher

Color: Essence and Logic by Rolf G. Kuehni

Kandinsky's Teaching at the Bauhaus - Colour Theory and Analytical Drawing by Clark V. Poling

Colour and Communication by Jean-Paul Favre & Andre November


Colours of the World by Jean-Philippe Lenclos and Dominique Lenclos

The Secret Language of Color by Joann Eckstut and Arielle Eckstut

Glittering Images by Camille Paglia

ROY G. BIV by Jude Stewart

Additional readings will be placed on the Class Canvas site.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to identify the formal visual elements of an artwork and explain the basic principles of design employed in the organization of its composition.

Students will be able to identify situations in which color is used as a cultural indicator of beauty, status, and group identity and be able to discuss similarities and differences among a set of geographically and culturally related countries and as compared to nations from markedly different geographic regions and socio-economic/political environments.

Students will be able to identify issues rooted in cultural identity and group affiliation and be able to discuss how color and visual language function as a vehicle through which attitudes on aesthetics, lifestyle, religion, race, gender, global economics and politics are communicated.

Looking at a broad range of communities and nations throughout the world, students will be able to identify and discuss cultural and nation-based profiles that are promoted largely through visual modes of communication and contemporary artworks.

Students will be able to identify aspects of American use of visual propaganda, visual stereotypes and visual representation of cultural myth building and be able to explain the effects of this on other communities of the world.

Students will be able to identify the contemporary visual imagery of a range of diverse cultures, regions, and nations and to discuss the influence of this imagery on US society. While discussion of
American perspective is addressed to some degree in each topic, examples of concentrated comparison might include color as a vehicle for concepts of religion as seen between the United States and countries of the Middle East: Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates; also a concentrated comparison of visual language as a tool for international corporations and marketing strategies might be viewed between the United States and countries of East Asia: China, Japan and Korea; and a concentrated comparison of color as an indicator of gender and ethnicity as seen possibly between the United States and countries of Latin American: Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, and Venezuela.

Students will be able to identify visual representations originating from the United States and be able to discuss how this has influenced the conception that the people of United States have of other nations and cultures.

Students will be able to identify the collapse of some aspects of regional and national cultural identity and be able to discuss this framed as a response to the rise of global corporations and marketing strategies, and Internet-based communities.

Students will gain a more informed understanding of world communities by studying the art produced by these communities. Through this, students will achieve a broader understanding of the human experience and an expanded awareness of the importance of considering information and issues from multiple viewpoints.

Students will be able to examine and explain the social and formal distinctions of artworks from a range of different nations and cultures. Broadly grouped according to world map regional locations, select countries from multiple regions might include:

- Central/Western Europe: France, Germany
- East Asia: China, Japan, North Korea, South Korea
- Europe and Northern Asia: Poland, Russia, Ukraine
- Latin America: Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, Venezuela
- Middle East: Iran, Iraq, Israel, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates
- North America: United States
- Northern/Western Europe: Denmark, Sweden, the Netherlands
- South Asia: India, Nepal, Pakistan
- Southeast Asia: Cambodia, Indonesia, Thailand, Viet Nam
- Southern Africa: Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland
- Southern Europe: Greece, Italy
- Western Europe: United Kingdom

CONTENT OVERVIEW

To begin, this visual art course presents a discipline-based foundation as students learn how artists and designers orchestrate visual elements, design strategies and aesthetic concepts in the creation of artworks. The visual element of color is used as a vehicle to explore the interrelated structure of art and design, visual language and cultural symbols, and socio-political forces. Students will gain an understanding of art and design as a powerful means of communicating to members of a group and across borders: geographical, cultural, political, economical, and societal.

Through comparative study of design and art from a broad spectrum of nations and geographical
regions, students will identify and compare unique qualities that distinguish the art and design of one culture from another, as well as local and more global cross-cultural influences. Compositional strategies, selection of visual elements such as color and form, choice of subject matter and modes of representation, and the affect of societal forces on the development of aesthetic direction are aspects that will be covered. Students will employ critical thinking skills through participation in discussions where diverse perspectives are considered. Artworks will be experienced as digital representations, photographic documentations, objects and in the context of a specific environment through virtual on-site activities.

TEACHING AND LEARNING METHODS

The primary teaching approach in this course will occur through collaborative learning.

We will all work together to ensure that our online discussions reflect respect for differences of opinions and sensitivity to the needs, opinions and circumstances of our peers.

LECTURES:
Online lectures will be based on a number of published and Internet sources.

DISCUSSIONS:
This course will make use of class discussions both student lead in our class time and online on the CANVAS site specifically for this class. These discussions are to be used to apply acquired knowledge from the course materials in a comparative dialogue of:

1) the contextual function of visual language and artworks among geographically and culturally diverse locations as related to the concept of color; and

2) related contemporary issues and philosophies to include aesthetics, life style, religion, race, gender, global economics and politics. Roughly each week there will be an assigned discussion topic given on the Canvas site that all students are expected to participate in. Further explanation will be covered in class and on the Discussion Guidelines page on the class website.

EVALUATION METHODS

ONLINE DISCUSSIONS:
Students will be graded on their participation and quality of responses on the online discussions on CANVAS.

CLASS DISCUSSIONS:
Students will also be graded on their participation and quality of leading and presenting in class discussions. Each student will be assigned to a group and date when their group will lead a class discussion based on the assigned question given for that week’s topic. This is required and will be graded according to how much research and information has been collected and presented by each student in the group. Class discussion topics will typically be one week after the online discussion, giving the presenting group ample time to review what the class has posted on the online discussions.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS:
There will be one written assignment. The written assignment can range from five or more pages in length. The assignment will require a comparative analysis of two or more artworks from geographically and culturally diverse locations.

Some examples of comparative topics include:

1) Use of color as visual language and as a component of trans-cultural/ transnational communication.

2) Cross-cultural and cross-national agencies that influence the developmental meaning of visual symbols.

3) Color and visual language as a cultural indicator of beauty, status, and group identity.

4) Strategies of visual propaganda, stereotypes and cultural myth building.

5) An examination of the social and formal distinctions of artworks from different nations and cultures.

ATTENDANCE, DISCUSSION AND PARTICIPATION:
Regular class attendance is required. Missing more than two class meetings will negatively affect your demonstration of active and ongoing involvement with in-class activities and discussions. Simply showing up, however, is not enough. Students are expected to read each assigned reading prior to class and be ready to discuss them. The Discussion/ Participation portion of your grade will closely reflect your attendance and participation in class discussions.

GRADING

| Written Assignment          | 100 points |
| Online discussions         | 325 points |
| Class Discussion            | 50 points  |
| Participation / attendance  | 50 points  |

Total points possible for the semester 425 Points
WEEKLY SCHEDULE OF TOPICS, CLASS DISCUSSIONS AND DUE DATES (TENTATIVE)

All discussions will be built on visual examples and comparative discussion of concepts examined through the contemporary artwork and other visual language formats of select cultures / countries.

This schedule is not set in stone. Be strong enough to bend. Dates and assignments may change due to the progress of the class, alignment of the planets, and the chaos theory. Therefore I will not attach dates on this list of topics, but ample time will be given before any assignment due dates and examinations. These topics overlap and blend into each other, but will always be discussed with the aid of images from contemporary art. Some topics such as colour and its significance in a culture will be focused on and discussed much more than other topics.

Basic Colour Theory
Biology of Seeing / Visual Intelligence
Psychological and Physical Effects of Colour
Colour and Culture
Colour and Identity
Border Art
Color and Environmental Art
Color as a Vehicle for Communication
Visual Language of Globalization
Color and Marketing Strategies

ACCOMMODATION POLICIES:

1) ADA statement
The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in the class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Union Building, 581-5020 (V/TDD). CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations.

All written information in the course can be made available in alternative format with prior notification to the Center for Disability Services.

2) Some of the writings, lectures, films, or presentations in this course may include materials that conflicts with the core beliefs of some students. Please review the syllabus carefully to see if the course is one that you are committed to taking. If you have a concern please discuss it with me at your earliest convenience.

Faculty and Student Responsibilities

All students are expected to maintain professional behavior in the online classroom setting, according to the student code, spelled out in the Student Handbook. Students have specific rights in the classroom as detailed in Article III of the code. The code specifies prescribed conduct (Article XI) that involves cheating, plagiarism, and/or collusion. Students should read the Code carefully and
know they are responsible for the content. According to Faculty Rules and Regulations, it is the faculty responsibility to enforce responsible classroom behaviors, beginning with written warnings and progressing to dismissal from class and a failing grade. Students have the right to appeal such action to the Student Behavior Committee.

Discussion threads, e-mails, and chat rooms are all considered to be equivalent to classrooms, and student behavior within these environments shall conform to the Student Code. Specifically:

- Posting photos or comments that would be off-topic in a classroom are still off-topic in an online posting.
- Off-color language and photos are never appropriate.
- Using angry or abusive language is called “flaming”, is not acceptable and dealt with according to the Student Code.
- Do not use ALL CAPS, except for titles, since it is the equivalent of shouting online, as is overuse of certain punctuation marks such as exclamation points!!!!!! And question marks?????

Course e-mails, e-journals, and other online course communications are part of the classroom and as such, are University property and subject to GRAMA regulations and the Student Code. Privacy regarding these communications between correspondents must not be assumed and should be mutually agreed upon in advance, in writing.

*Note: The syllabus is not a binding legal contract. It may be modified by the instructor when the student is given reasonable notice of the modification.*