Lesson 01: Introduction to Art Appreciation

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“Introduction to Art Appreciation” is part of the

ART APPRECIATION
Open Educational Resource

by Marie Porterfield Barry
East Tennessee State University, 2020

Introduction

This course explores the world’s visual arts, focusing on the development of visual awareness, assessment, and appreciation by examining a variety of styles from various periods and cultures while emphasizing the development of a common visual language. The materials are meant to foster a broader understanding of the role of visual art in human culture and experience from the prehistoric through the contemporary.

This is an Open Educational Resource (OER), an openly licensed educational material designed to replace a traditional textbook.

Course Materials

Presentations
The course materials consist of 24 presentations examining art across the globe from prehistory through the contemporary art world. These introduce key vocabulary, explore the way that culture and art are linked, describe the varying methods and techniques of the featured artists, and encourage classroom discourse.

Reading Lists
Each of the 24 presentations has an accompanying reading list which provides links to articles, videos, and other resources. The reading list is meant to reinforce and clarify information covered in each of the presentations.

Sample Assignments
A list of sample assignments is also included. Ranging from brief essays to simple art projects, these are designed to be completed in a sketchbook to more deeply explore course concepts. Intended to encourage learners to think like artists, art critics, and art historians, assignments emphasize practices of creative thinking and artistic method, while reinforcing concepts addressed in classroom lectures and required readings.
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Some of the images presented in this OER are marked with a Creative Commons license and include a tag for Educational Fair Use, especially works of art that have been photographed while installed in museums. The photographs of these works of art are licensed by the photographer but the two-dimensional works of art are protected under copyright. The images are therefore meant only for the purpose of education and contemplation and are included in a low resolution.

Adopting, Adapting, or Expanding the Resource

The goal for this OER is to build an educational resource that is flexible enough to address concepts relevant to the contemporary discourse and scholarship in the visual arts. For those interested in utilizing these course materials, I am providing below some additional information that may be useful in expanding, adapting, or interpreting the materials. Editable versions are available in Microsoft PowerPoint and Word at https://dc.etsu.edu/art-appreciation-oer/

The font used to create the presentations and written documents for this OER is Calibri.

Finding Additional Readings, Lessons, and Articles

Smarthistory: https://smarthistory.org/
Smarthistory is an extensive open educational resource which publishes outstanding essays and video lectures about art. The Creating + Conserving section of Smarthistory includes wonderful informational articles and videos about materials and processes: https://smarthistory.org/tag/conservation/

MoMA Learning: https://www.moma.org/learn/moma_learning/
MoMA Learning provides a wonderful selection of essays on works of modern art and also has assignment suggestions at the bottom of each section.

KhanAcademy: https://www.khanacademy.org/.
Khan Academy is an outstanding platform of open educational resources covering a variety of academic and scholarly topics.
**Trivium Art History:** https://arthistoryproject.com/
Trivium Art History is a free, online art history book with clean design and approachable descriptions of works of art, periods of art history, and fun artist biographies. The Themes of Art section is a nice tool to helping students explore works that match their interests. The World of Art section is a useful tool for an exploratory World Art sketchbook prompt. The Timeline section is useful, as it separates works of art into galleries based on period.

**Introduction to Art: Design, Context, and Meaning:** https://oer.galileo.usg.edu/arts-textbooks/3/
For a more traditional, textbook approach, there is an Introduction to Art open educational resource textbook available.

**Locating Images**
If you are utilizing the course materials and would like to add new images that are public domain or licensed under Creative Commons, there are several useful tips provided below for finding images.

**The Met Museum:** https://www.metmuseum.org/
The Met has an option to search for Open Access images within the collection here. Make sure that the “Open Access” box is checked. The image license is CC0 1.0, and will be marked OA Public Domain at the lower left of the image.

**Google Images:** https://www.google.com/imghp?hl=en&tab=wi&ogbl
Google Images has an option under “Settings” > “Advanced Search” to search by “Usage Rights”. Choosing “Free to use share or modify” will allow a search for images suitable for expanding our OER.

**Wikimedia Commons:** https://commons.wikimedia.org/
Wikimedia Commons is an outstanding resource for finding open source images, with a strong collection of works of art.

**Flickr:** https://www.flickr.com
Flickr allows users to specify image licenses on uploaded photographs. Click “Some rights reserved” at the lower right of the image to check the licensing. Some images will say “Public Domain” or will be licensed under a Creative Commons (CC) license, allowing for the use in an OER.

**Smarthistory Flickr:** https://www.flickr.com/groups/smarthistory/pool/
The Smarthistory Flickr is expansive with images licensed for educational purposes.

**Acknowledgements**
This Art Appreciation OER was adapted from existing resources by Marie Porterfield Barry as part of East Tennessee State University’s Open Educational Resources (OERs) Initiatives, which are a collaboration of the Charles C. Sherrod Library and the Center for Teaching Excellence. Deepest gratitude for the support from Ashley Sergiadis of Sherrod Library and Phil Smith of the Center for Teaching Excellence during the building of this resource. Thanks as well to my students at East Tennessee State University whose feedback and participation during our Art Appreciation classes was immensely valuable in compiling and evaluating this OER.
Introduction to Art Appreciation

Hilma af Klint, *The Dove, No. 1*, 1915. Author: Rhododendrites, *Cropped from original*, Source: Wikimedia Commons, License: CC BY-SA 4.0
What is art?

Vincent van Gogh, Detail of *The Starry Night*, Oil on canvas, 1889.
Author: Google Art Project, *Cropped from original*, Source: Wikimedia Commons, License: Public Domain
Art can be 2-dimensional, like paintings, drawings, and prints.

Leonardo da Vinci
*Mona Lisa*
Between 1503 and 1516
Oil on poplar wood

Author: Musée du Louvre, Paris
Source: Wikimedia Commons
License: Public Domain
Art can be 3-dimensional, like sculptures and ceramics.

Jeff Koons
High chromium stainless steel with transparent color coating.

Author: Kim, Source: Flickr, License: CC BY-SA 2.0
Art can be 4-dimensional, utilizing time as an intrinsic element, such as in performance art, kinetic art, video art, and sound art.

Nick Cave Soundsuits at YBCA, Author: Geoff Stearns, Source: Flickr, License: CC BY 2.0
Nick Cave’s *Soundsuits* in motion
Author: Acedout
Source: Flickr
License: CC BY-SA 2.0
We find it in museums and galleries.
But we find it, also, in the streets.
And in fields.
And in caves.

*Hall of Bulls* at Lascaux II (replica cave of the original which is closed to the public)
Author: Adibu456, Source: Flickr, License: CC BY-NC 2.0
What images come to mind when you think of an artist?

The solitary genius?

Rembrandt

Self-Portrait

Oil on canvas, 1659

Author: Google Art Project
Source: Wikimedia Commons
License: Public Domain
The painter of dreams?

Frida Kahlo, *The Two Fridas*, 1939. On view at the Museum of Modern Art, Mexico City, Author: The Real Dulouz, *Cropped to remove distortion*, Source: Flickr, License: [CC BY-NC-SA 2.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/2.0/). Educational Fair Use, High quality image [here](https://www.flickr.com/photos/53535992@N04/6849673313).
The starving artist?

Egon Schiele

*Self-Portrait with Splayed Fingers*, 1911

Author: Google Art Project
Source: Wikimedia Commons
License: Public Domain
Many of our ideas about artists come from the modernism of the 20th century, when artists began working more independently, creating works of art that were personal or expressive in nature.
The concept of the avant-garde artist celebrates individuality and originality.

I am the avant-garde artist, Yayoi Kusama.
But at other moments in history, artists have been considered much more as craftsmen, skilled with their hands.
What is the purpose of art?
Art may be a classical masterpiece showing heroic, ideal beauty.

Polykleitos, *Spear Bearer (Doryphoros)*
Roman copy after the original bronze of c. 450-440 BCE.
Tree truck and brace strut are Roman additions.
Author: Marie-Lan Nguyen, Source: Flickr, License: CC BY 2.5
Art may be an object, chosen by an artist, and placed in a new context.

Marcel Duchamp
*Fountain* (reproduction), 1917/1964
Author: Steven Zucker
Source: Flickr
License: CC BY-NC-SA 2.0
Art may be sat upon.

Charles and Ray Eames, *La Chaise*, designed in 1948. Author: Smow Blog, Source: Flickr, License: CC BY 2.0
Art may be gazed upon.
Art may be eaten.
It may be up.
It may be down.

It may be quiet.
Or riotous.
Or holy.

Michelangelo, *The Creation of Adam*, Sistine Chapel Ceiling c. 1511

Source: Wikimedia Commons, License: Public Domain
Art expresses the culture in which it is produced.
It demonstrates the ways that our ideals of beauty change over time.

And art helps define our ideals of beauty within our own time.
Art helps us to see the world around us.

Andy Warhol, *Campbell’s Soup Cans with Viewer*, 1962. Synthetic polymer on thirty-two canvases, Each canvas 20 x 16 inches. Author: Steven Zucker, Source: Flickr, License: CC BY-NC-SA 2.0
And art expresses our deepest beliefs.

The Book of the Dead of Hunefer, ancient Egyptian, ca. 1275 BC, Ink and paint on papyrus
Author: British Museum, Source: Wikimedia Commons, License: Public Domain
Art tells our story.
Art changes over time.

Johannes Vermeer
*Woman Holding A Balance*
Oil on canvas, c. 1664
Author: Google Art Project
Source: Wikimedia Commons
License: Public Domain
The way that we, the viewer, approach art changes over time, too.
And so, now let us begin to look...

Artemisia Gentileschi  
*Self-Portrait as the Allegory of Painting (La Pittura)*  
Oil on canvas, 1638-1639  
Author: Google Art Project  
Source: Wikimedia Commons  
License: Public Domain
Reading List: 01_Introduction to Art Appreciation

The Introduction to Art Appreciation is a preview of the images and artists that will be discussed during the course. The questions included are meant as catalysts for discussion within the class before proceeding to the following slides. The images included here are discussed in more detail throughout the course.
Sketchbook Assignment: 01_Introduction to Art Appreciation

Visit the Trivium Art History: Themes of Art page. Choose a theme, and then a work of art that is interesting to you. Make a note of which theme you found the work of art under. Write two paragraphs describing the work of art and responding to it. How does it make you feel? What is it about? Why does it interest you? Does it remind you of anything, or communicate something specific? Please include the name of the artist, the title of the work of art, and the year it was made.