



Philosophy 347

Aesthetics: Kant, Nietzsche, Heidegger

Fall Semester 2009,
Michigan State University

Dr. Christian Lotz

Tentative Schedule (last **UPDATE**: November 14, 2009)

Number	Date	Topic	Reading	Information	Other	General Assignments
1	Sep 2	Introduction				
2	Sep 7	University Holiday	University Holiday	University Holiday		
3	Sep 9	The Nature of Aesthetics	Critique of Judgment, §§1-5			
KANT with Barnett Newman: The Case of Painting						
4	Sep 14	Beauty	Critique of Judgment, §§1-5			
5	Sep 16	Beauty	Critique of Judgment, §§6-9			
6	Sep 21	Beauty	Critique of Judgment, §§6-9			
7	Sep 23	Taste	Critique of Judgment, §§10-17			
8	Sep 28	Taste	Critique of Judgment, §§10-17, §§49+59			
8a	Sep 30	The Sublime	Critique of Judgment, §§23-29			
9	Oct 5	The Sublime	Critique of Judgment, §§23-29			
10	Oct 7	The Sublime in Painting	JMW Turner	Presentation 1: Ania Pathak		Response paper assignment 1 will be passed out in class
11	Oct 12	The Sublime in Painting	Barnett Newman	Presentation 2: Kevin Folk		

HEIDEGGER with Frank Lloyd Wright: The Case of Architecture

12	Oct 14	Ontology	Heidegger, The Origin of the Work of Art, pp.143-165		Oct 16: Detroit Symphony Orchestra plays Mahler's Seventh	Response Paper 1 due in class or in my box
13	Oct 19	World and Earth	Heidegger, The Origin of the Work of Art, pp.165-182		Watch BBC documentary on Heidegger online (YouTube)	
14	Oct 21	Art and Truth	Heidegger, The Origin of the Work of Art, pp.182-212			
15	Oct 26	Art and Truth	Heidegger, The Origin of the Work of Art, pp.143-212			
16	Oct 28	no class	no class	no class		
17	Nov 2	Building	Heidegger, Building, Dwelling, Thinking			
18	Nov 4	Building	Heidegger, Building, Dwelling, Thinking			
19	Nov 9	Building	Heidegger, Building, Dwelling, Thinking			
20	Nov 11	Frank Lloyd Wright, Fallingwater	Hoffmann, Fallingwater	Presentation 3: Sara Molnar	FLW in Grand Rapids FLW in Michigan Palmer House in Ann Arbor (with video)	Response paper assignment 2 will be passed out in class
21	Nov 16	Frank Lloyd Wright, Fallingwater	Levine, The Temporal Dimension of Fallingwater (download here)	Presentation 4: Jacob Idoni		

NIETZSCHE with Gustav Mahler: The Case of Music

22	Nov 18	Music	Nietzsche, The Birth of Tragedy, Preface+§§1-6		Watch BBC documentary on Nietzsche online (YouTube)	Response Paper 2 due in class or in my box
23	Nov 23	Music	Nietzsche, The Birth of Tragedy, §§7-18			
24	Nov 25	Apollonian and Dionysian	Nietzsche, The Birth of Tragedy, §§19-24;		Listen to Gustav Mahler's <i>Third Symphony</i> and to his <i>Das Lied von der Erde</i>	
25	Nov 30	Gustav Mahler, Introduction	Hefling, Mahler: Das Lied von der Erde, chapter 1; Schopenhauer, The World as Will and Representation, Vol 1, section 52 (download here)	Presentation 5: Lafe King		
26	Dec 2	Mahler, Das Lied von der Erde	Hefling, Mahler: Das Lied von der Erde, chapter 3; Nietzsche, Zarathustra, pp.3-15; pp.81-87; pp.258-266	Film, Bernstein conducting and talking about <i>Das Lied von der Erde</i>	Read Henry-Louis de La Grange on Mahler - click here;	Response paper 3 will be passed out in class
27	Dec 7	Mahler, Das Lied von der Erde	Hefling, Mahler: Das Lied von der Erde; chapter 4; Nietzsche, Zarathustra, TBA		Watch Bernstein talking on Mahler	
28	Dec 9	Wrap Up	Wrap Up	Wrap Up		Response Paper 3 due in class or in my box
	Dec 18					Class Essay due in my box (503 South Kedzie Hall)

Class Meetings:

Days: MW

Time: 10:20am-11:40am

Place: C303, Snyder Hall

Office:

Phone: 517.353.9392 (if you are unable to reach me, please leave a message at 517.355.4490 [dept.])

Place: 501/503 S. Kedzie Hall

Hours: MW (1:00-2:00pm), by appointment and by phone

Exceptions:**Other Contact:**

E-mail: lotz@msu.edu

Home Phone: 734.975.0803

Webpage

URL: <http://www.msu.edu/~lotz/classes>

(Please check the webpage *regularly* for the current schedule)

Box

You will find my box in the front office of the philosophy department (503 South Kedzie); you can also slip your assignments under my door if I am not in my office (507 South Kedzie)

Course Description:

Rather than focusing on contemporary questions in aesthetics we will intensively deal and discuss major positions within the history of aesthetics, namely, Kant's *Critique of Judgment*, Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy*, and Heidegger's *The Origin of the Work of Art*, all of which still determine major ways of thinking about aesthetics and art. As such, this class does *not* focus on meta-questions in aesthetics, such as "what is art?," "what is representation," or "what is expression?," though all of the aforementioned questions will come up during our discussion of Nietzsche, Heidegger and Kant. In addition to reading these major philosophers, we will also connect their ways of thinking to selected examples in art: Barnett Newman (painting), Gustav Mahler (music), and Frank Lloyd Wright (architecture).

Course Goals:

This class should introduce students to selected aspects of aesthetics and philosophy of art through the study of three major texts of the philosophical tradition. As such, it is hoped that students learn how to *read* these texts, as most students grow up in illiteracy. At the end of this class students should be able to differentiate between two major ways of understanding aesthetics and art, and the historical concepts connected to these positions, such as the beautiful, taste, subjectivism, the sublime, ontology, and tragedy.

Note:

Students who did not take philosophy classes before (but signed up for this class) should be aware of the fact that this course is based on extremely difficult texts. Kant's and Heidegger's style of philosophy and reflection differs significantly from contemporary styles of philosophy and philosophical writing. Accordingly, this class requires self-responsible learners and an *intense* confrontation with the primary text. My task in this class is solely based on making these texts transparent to you and to prepare your further studying of the material. In addition, the study of aesthetics presupposes that you are interested in art and that you are not ignorant of the historical dimension of art. Accordingly, if you are not excited about the prospect of a daily confrontation with primary authors, then you should not take this class.

Reading assignments and preparation

The reading assignment per session is limited; however, this means that I expect you to come to class having prepared the texts carefully and thoroughly and that you are able to talk meaningfully about the text, raise questions of your own and provide answers when called upon. I will take the liberty to call on students randomly. An approximate preparation time for each class is a *minimum* of three hours. The reading for the next session, if not clear from the course schedule (below), will be announced at

the end of the previous class. "Preparing for class" implies underlining and making excerpts from the text assigned; looking up unfamiliar vocabulary and writing them into a note book (I encourage you to keep a vocabulary booklet for all of your classes). Just reading the text won't be sufficient. You have to *study* the material. Some vocabulary might not be sufficiently explained in a regular dictionary (this goes especially for philosophical terms), so it is necessary to consult additional sources (e.g., the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* — online (see remark below) — is an excellent source of information, and the MSU Library Website is a great resource for nearly all questions in this context).

Required Texts

- BASIC WRITINGS Author: HEIDEGGER; Copyright: 08; Edition: 3; ISBN: 0061627011; Publisher: HARP/COLL
- BIRTH OF TRAGEDY & OTHER WRITINGS Author: NIETZSCHE; Copyright: 99; ISBN: 0521639875; Publisher: CAMBRIDGE
- CRITIQUE OF THE POWER OF JUDGEMENT (ED: GUYER) Author: KANT; Copyright: 00; Edition: ; ISBN: 0521348927; Publisher: CAMBRIDGE
- Frank Lloyd Wright's Fallingwater: The House and Its History, Second, Revised Edition Author: Donald Hoffmann ; Edition: 2; ISBN: 0486274306; Publisher: Dover Publications;
- Mahler: Das Lied von der Erde (The Song of the Earth) (Cambridge Music Handbooks Author: Stephen E. Hefling; Edition: ; ISBN: 0521475589; Publisher: Cambridge University Press;
- THUS SPOKE ZARATHUSTRA (ED: DELCARO) Author: NIETZSCHE; Copyright: 06; ISBN: 0521602610; Publisher: CAMBRIDGE
- In addition you are required to purchase the following CD: Mahler, Gustav, Das Lied von der Erde, Simon Rattle (Conductor) City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra (Orchestra) Peter Seiffert (Artist), Thomas Hampson (Artist) Label: EMI Classics ASIN: B000PGVHW4

Course Organization

The course will be organized such that, ideally, each class period will include [i] "interactive" lecture, [ii] oral presentations or [iii] either discussion time (active learning part II) [iv] or *group* assignments (active learning part III). Students will be asked to [a] read a certain text or part of a text for the next class period and [b] give oral presentations (*group* presentations).

Course Requirements

- 5 class response sheets
- 3 take-home exams/papers
- 1 task card
- 1 class essay

Class Attendance

I hope and strongly encourage that students attend all classes. However, I will not require attendance, as I think that college students should manage their own class attendance decisions. Nevertheless, please be aware that you should not make *me* responsible for a failure that results out of *your* decision.

Class Response Sheets

Every student is asked to submit up to 5 class response sheets during the semester.

[Click here to download the class response sheet \(Word document, I will only accept answers that are given on this form\)](#)

The response sheets have to be submitted at the end of a class session. I do not accept late turn ins. Submission is voluntary.

Participation

Students who actively participate in class can receive up to 10 points.

Task Cards

I will from time to time assign so called "task cards." Students who receive task cards, must write a 1-2 page paper (no more than 600 words) about a concept or about background information. Task cards will be assigned without prior notice in class and have to be prepared for the next class section. For example, in one of our discussions it turns out that no one has ever heard about the philosopher Augustine or about the problem of movement in Zeno. I will ask a student to do research and to prepare brief biographical information of Augustine or an overview of the concept of movement in Zeno. Students will read their brief elaborations at the beginning of the next class sections and turn their papers in. This task is challenging because in your writing

you should be as precise as possible. Note: you are *not* allowed to cite common internet resources, such as Wikipedia. Instead, work with the following online resources (or other resources in the library): Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy - Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy - Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy - Encyclopedia of Continental Philosophy (e-book) - The Oxford Companion to Philosophy

Online

The following encyclopedias and dictionaries are online available through MSU's library: Oxford Art Online - Blackwell Companion of Aesthetics - Encyclopedia of Aesthetics (Oxford, edited by Kelly) - The Oxford Dictionary of Art (search MSU libraries)

Class Essay

I expect a brief paper at the end of the class (5 pages, around 1500 words), the topic of which must be chosen from a list that I will pass out during this class.

Class Essay Opt-Out Option

Instead of writing a final essay 5 students can chose to give PowerPoint presentations on selected dates (see schedule). I expect well researched presentations of around 30 minutes each.

- Presentation 1: The Sublime in GWF Turner
- Presentation 2: The Sublime in Barnett Newman
- Presentation 3: Introduction to FLW's Fallingwater
- Presentation 4: Levine on Fallingwater
- Presentation 5: Introduction to Mahler's *Lied von der Erde*

Response Papers

In order to intensify and improve your understanding of the material, you will turn in on selected days (check schedule for due dates) a brief paper, in which you analyze the readings (2-3 pages, double spaced, no more than 900 words). Assignments will be passed out in class.

General Remark on Assignments

The response sheets will in and outside of the classroom force us to have *an ongoing reflection* on our texts that we read in class. In addition, the assignments will help to prepare the exam. Reading and studying the primary texts is the absolute focus of this class. If you carefully read the texts, then you will easily master the assignments.

Course Evaluation

You will be evaluated on the basis of:

5 response sheets (turn in at the end of class sessions)	15 points
3 take-home exams/response papers	900 words 45 points
1 class essay	1500 words 20 points
1 task card	300-450 words 10 points
Participation	10 points

	100 points

Grading:

4.0	100 - 93
3.5	92 - 87
3	86 - 82
2.5	81 - 77
2	76 - 72
1.5	71 - 65

1.0	64 – 60
0.0	< 60

GENERIC SYLLABUS (might not be applicable to each class)

Class Attendance

I do not employ in my classes a class attendance policy. Having said this, you should be aware that class attendance is very important. When engaging in a philosophical and humanistic dialogue it is necessary to be an active and present participant in the ongoing discussion. If you miss class please do not email me asking if you missed anything important. Every class is important. You should get a study buddy for the class; a student in class who will inform you of what you missed. If you miss a class you can come to my office hours or make an appointment to discuss the material, providing you have read the material and you simply want to see if your understanding of the material is on target. Time in office hours will not be used to repeat the class lectures.

Grading Criteria

Check out this page for grading criteria, example of assignments, etc.

Helpful information about oral presentations, paper writing and plagiarism

Click here to find help on your presentations and your writing

Online Research Sources

Unfortunately, some people think that the internet as such is a reliable source of information. If you decide to use online sources for additional information or your paper then do not just use one of the common internet search engines, such as Google; rather, use **reliable academic** sources, such as *Britannica Online*, or the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. Here are other resources: Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy - Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy - Encyclopedia of Continental Philosophy (e-book) - The Oxford Companion to Philosophy. The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy isn't very good, but still acceptable. Check out MSU's library resources! And, as with other sources, you must cite any online sources to which you refer in your essay.

Writing Center Information

MSU's writing center offers excellent help on all matters regarding writing and learning. Check the website at <http://writing.msu.edu> for an overview and hours. For more information, please call 517.432.3610 or send an e-mail to writing@msu.edu.

Integrity of Scholarship and Grades (Plagiarism)

The following statement of University policy addresses principles and procedures to be used in instances of academic dishonesty, violations of professional standards, and falsification of academic or admission records, herein after referred to as academic misconduct. [See General Student Regulation 1.00, Protection of Scholarship and Grades.]: [download document \(pdf\)](#)

Academic Honesty

Article 2.3.3 of the Academic Freedom Report states that "The student shares with the faculty the responsibility for maintaining the integrity of scholarship, grades, and professional standards." In addition, the (insert name of unit offering course) adheres to the policies on academic honesty as specified in General Student Regulations 1.0, Protection of Scholarship and Grades; the all-University Policy on Integrity of Scholarship and Grades; and Ordinance 17.00, Examinations. (See Spartan Life: Student Handbook and Resource Guide and/or the MSU Web site: www.msu.edu) Therefore, unless authorized by your instructor, you are expected to complete all course assignments, including homework, lab work, quizzes, tests and exams, without assistance from any source. You are expected to develop original work for this course; therefore, you may not submit course work completed for another course to satisfy the requirements for this course. Students who violate MSU rules may receive a penalty grade, including but not limited to a failing grade on the assignment or in the course. Contact your instructor if you are unsure about the appropriateness of your course work. (See also <http://www.msu.edu/unit/ombud/honestylinks.html>)

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities should contact the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities to establish reasonable accommodations. For an appointment with a counselor, call 353-9642 (voice) or 355-1293 (TTY)

Drops and Adds

The last day to add this course is the end of the first week of classes. The last day to drop this course with a 100 percent refund and no grade reported is (see Academic Calendar). The last day to drop this course with no refund and no grade reported is (see Academic Calendar). You should immediately make a copy of your amended schedule to verify you have added or dropped this course.

Note on Attendance

Students who fail to attend the first four class sessions or class by the fifth day of the semester, whichever occurs first, may be dropped from the course

[Back to Homepage](#)