
L'ART, LES FEMMES ET LA FOLIE in Fall 2019 (VC3090)

Course Code	VC3090	Professor(s)	Anne-Marie Picard
Prerequisites	None	Office Number	SD-11
Class Schedule	MR: 13:45-15:05 in SD-3	Office Hours	Tuesdays 2:15-3:00 or by appointment
Credits	4	Email	apicard@aup.edu
Semester	Fall 2019	Office Tel. Ext.	

Course Description

Ce cours s'adresse aux étudiants en humanités intéressés par l'art et la création, par ses fondements psychiques et par une approche interdisciplinaire (psychologique et sémiotique) de l'art visuel et de la littérature.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

From the early Romantic period to the end of the XIXth Century, women's *folie furieuse* or *melancholia* have been the subject of fascination and depicted in numerous literary works, from the French novelist Balzac's *Adieu* to Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* or the American Charlotte Perkins' [*The Yellow Wallpaper*](#).

The lives and works of French women artists such as Camille Claudel, the sculptress [Louise Bourgeois](#), the writers Marguerite Duras or [Chloé Delaume](#), the recent legitimization and recognition of the bodies of work of Séraphine de Senlis, [of Aloïse Corbaz](#), are testimonies of a drastic evolution in the way French society views women's contributions to art history and culture but also to mental health and imagination: not only has the social gaze drastically changed its judgment of women, but madness and reason, "Art brut" and "official Art" have appeared closer to each other, certainly not the polar opposites our "enlightened" ancestors had made them to be. By including the study of *Art Brut* (Outsider Art) in particular, the course thus aims at bringing students to questions their views of art, and their judgement on complex, sometimes intricate personalities.

Visits to the [Camille Claudel Museum](#), to the [Halle Saint-Pierre](#) in Montmartre and the [Collection ABCD](#) in Montreuil, study trips to the Lausanne [Collection de l'Art brut](#) and/or to Villeneuve d'Asq's [LAM museum](#) will allow students to visualize the disconcerting works created by rebellious, marginal and often solitary artists, experience the complexities of human expressions and the therapeutic value of art.

Sculptrices, peintres, poétesses, écrivaines, toutes les femmes étudiées dans le cours ont côtoyé la violence de la « création », ont éprouvé le doute profond. Il ne va pas de soi d'être femme-artiste au XIXe ou XXe siècles ! Il en faut de la confiance pour croire en son œuvre. Alors pour certaines, à défaut d'être soutenues par leurs proches ou les institutions, le doute devient destructeur, synonyme de dépression, de folie. Une folie qui les a poursuivies, guidées, inspirées mais aussi, parfois, anéanties.

A travers l'étude d'œuvres (littéraires ou visuelles) et de témoignages d'artistes représentatives ([Camille Claudel](#), Séraphine de Senlis, Marguerite Duras, Louise Bourgeois, Aïse Corbaz, Chloé Delaume), ce cours se propose d'étudier des œuvres représentatives et symboliques de ces transformations culturelles et sociales quant au statut des femmes-artistes et de la maladie mentale et d'éclairer la complexité des liens entre féminité et psychisme, créativité et folie.

VISITES :

Ces visites permettront aux étudiants de visualiser et de toucher du doigt les œuvres troublantes d'artistes rebelles, solitaires et marginales dont les modes d'expression éclectiques sont autant de témoignages de la complexité de l'âme humaine et la vertu thérapeutique de l'art. Elles donneront lieu à des boni (extra-credit).

Ainsi, un voyage d'étude est organisé à la [Collection de l'Art brut](#) de **Lausanne** en Suisse (musée unique au monde) du 11/9/2019 au 11/10/2019. **Inscrivez-vous !**

Une autre visite à la [Halle Saint-Pierre](#) à Montmartre sera organisée avec les étudiants du cours.

D'autres visites seront possibles et recommandées :

- au [musée Camille Claudel](#) à Nogent,
- à la [Collection ABCD](#) à Montreuil,
- au musée de Villeneuve d'Asq [LAM](#)

LEARNING OUTCOMES :

Students will be introduced to:

1. French society's and culture's views of women artists in history;
2. major literary and artistic works by French women *artistes*;
3. a discussion of mental health and creativity, and the therapeutic effect of art:
 - a. through the understanding of various forms of art considered marginal: Outsider Art in the US, "psychiatric art" or *Art Brut* in France. Museum visits will create a close and direct relationship with the chosen artists' sometimes troubled or disturbing visions;
 - b. through the reading of artists' autobiographies, correspondences or creative writing and/ or their published works;

4. the basic tools of art analysis:

- a. to understand how images do what they do to the spectator;
- b. to find efficient and personal ways to formulate in written or oral language the complexity of impulses at work in the artist' pictorial language, how they relate to her personal history, her relationship to her culture and surroundings, her education (or lack thereof), her gender and her familial attachments, her psyche and imaginary, her search for meaning and self-representation.

In this course, class discussions and readings (or viewing material) will be mostly in French, but students will be able to present and write in English.

Course Learning Outcomes

General Education

GENERAL EDUCATION: This course fulfills one or more General Education requirements

☒ Yes ☐ No

If yes specify:

Local and Global Perspectives: Students will enhance their intercultural understanding of languages, cultures, and histories of local societies and the global issues to which these relate.

Aesthetic Inquiry and Creative Expression: Students will engage with artistic or creative objects (e.g., visual art, theatrical works, film) in different media and from a range of cultural traditions.

Exploring and Engaging Difference: Students will think critically about cultural and social difference; they will identify and understand power structures that determine hierarchies and inequalities that can relate to race, ethnicity, gender, nationhood, religion, or class.

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Course Outline

Textbooks

This course doesn't have any textbook.

Attendance Policy

Students studying at The American University of Paris are expected to attend ALL scheduled classes, and in case of absence, should contact their professors to explain the situation. It is the student’s responsibility to be aware of any specific attendance policy that a faculty member might have set in the course syllabus. The French Department, for example, has its own attendance policy, and students are responsible for compliance. Academic Affairs will excuse an absence for students’ participation in study trips related to their courses.

Attendance at all exams is mandatory.

IN ALL CASES OF MISSED COURSE MEETINGS, THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR COMMUNICATION WITH THE PROFESSOR, AND FOR ARRANGING TO MAKE UP MISSED WORK, RESTS SOLELY WITH THE STUDENT.

Whether an absence is excused or not is ALWAYS up to the discretion of the professor or the department. Unexcused absences can result in a low or failing participation grade. In the case of excessive absences, it is up to the professor or the department to decide if the student will receive an “F” for the course. An instructor may recommend that a student withdraw, if absences have made it impossible to continue in the course at a satisfactory level.

Students must be mindful of this policy when making their travel arrangements, and especially during the Drop/Add and Exam Periods.

Grading Policy

Other
