

**INTRODUCTION TO ART HISTORY:  
AMERICAN PAINTING 1910-1940  
Frye Art Museum**

**Instructor:** Rebecca Albiani

**DATES:** July 28-31, 2009, 10:15 am-12:45 pm

**PREREQUISITES:** None

**NUMBER OF CREDITS OR CEU's:** One credit or 10 clock hours

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** An introductory class designed to introduce the major trends in American painting from about 1910 to 1940. This course will discuss the impact of European modernism on the American art scene in the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the efforts made by many artists in the U.S. to be both “American” and “modern.” Furthermore, we will examine the impact of major social forces – the Great War, increasing urbanization and industry, the Jazz Age, the Great Depression – on art-making in America.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:** The participant will acquire a vocabulary for discussing early 20<sup>th</sup> century painting. The participant will gain a basic familiarity with a number of artistic movements including the Ashcan School, Cubism, Futurism, Precisionism, Regionalism, and Social Realism. With a heightened understanding of the social forces that shaped this art, the participant will be well positioned to use this fall’s “American Modernism” exhibition at the Frye Art Museum as a tool in his or her own teaching.

**STUDENT EXPECTATIONS:**

1. Attend all sessions
2. Participate in discussions as appropriate
3. For credit, research one artistic development and present this research in written form

**INSTRUCTOR:** Rebecca Albiani, formerly a Ph.D. candidate in Renaissance art history, received her M.A. from Stanford University and her B.A. from U.C. Berkeley. She has taught aesthetics and introductory art history courses covering from ancient Egypt to the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

**METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:** This course will include illustrated slide lectures, interactive discussion of the works shown, and an opportunity for participants to present their own research in a written format.

**GRADING CRITERIA IF TAKING COURSE FOR CREDIT:** Participants will be graded pass/fail or with a letter grade as requested. **Projects (papers) are due one week following the last day of class.** Timely submission of papers is very important. A “P” or “C” grade requires full attendance, active participation in class activities, and the preparation of a 1-2 page typewritten (double-spaced) analysis of a work of art from the

period covered in class OR project (to be discussed with instructor) such as lesson plan for teaching the art of this period.

A “B” grade requires full attendance, active participation in class activities, and the preparation of a 2-3 page typewritten analysis two works of art from a period covered in class OR project (to be discussed with instructor) such as lesson plan for teaching the art of this period.

An “A” grade requires full attendance, active participation in class activities, and the preparation of a 3-5 page typewritten analysis of two or more works of art from a period covered in class OR project (to be discussed with instructor) such as lesson plan for teaching the art of this period.

Grading Criteria:	Class attendance	40%
	Discussion participation	20%
	Research paper	40%

**EVALUATION:** All participants will be provided with an evaluation form from Seattle Pacific University as well as an evaluation form for the use of the Frye. Feedback will be sought for appropriateness and usefulness of content information. Materials provided, effectiveness of instruction, course schedule and logistics of using the museum facility will be critiqued.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY:** Because of the condensed time period of this course, no required reading will be given. The following are suggested readings for further interest.

- Henry Adams. *Thomas Hart Benton, an American Original*. Knopf, 1989
- Baigell, Matthew. *A concise history of American painting and sculpture*. Harper & Row, 1984.
- Sylvan Barnet, *A Short Guide to Writing about Art*. Longman, 1996.
- John Cauman, *Inheriting Cubism: The Impact of Cubism on American Art, 1909-1936*. Hollis Taggart Galleries, 2001.
- Anine Cohen-Solal, *Painting American: The Rise of American Artists, Paris 1867-New York 1948*. Knopf, 2001
- Celeste Connor, *Democratic Visions: Art and Theory of the Stieglitz Circle, 1924-1934*. University of California Press, 2001
- Contreras, Belisario R., 1916. *Tradition and innovation in New Deal art*. Bucknell University Press ; Associated University Presses, c1983.
- Wanda Corn, *Grant Wood: The Regionalist Vision*. Yale, 1983
- Wanda Corn, *The Great American Thing: Modern Art and National Identity, 1915-1935*. University of California Press, 2001.
- Craven, Wayne. *American art : history and culture*. Harry N. Abrams, 1994.
- Abraham Davidson, *Early American Modernist Painting 1910-1935*. Harper, Row, 1981.
- Dennis, James M. *Renegade regionalists: The Modern Independence of Grant Wood, Thomas Hart Benton, and John Steuart Curry*. University of Wisconsin Press, 1998

- Greif, Martin, 1938. *Depression Modern : The Thirties Style in America*. Universe Books, 1975.
- Haskell, Barbara. *The American Century: Art and Culture 1900-1950*. Norton, 1999
- Heller, Nancy and Julia Williams. *The Regionalists*. Watson-Guptill Publications, 1976
- Henkes, Robert. *American Women Painters of the 1930s and 1940s: The Lives and Work of Ten Artists*. McFarland, 1991
- Homer, William Innes. *Alfred Stieglitz and the American Avant-garde*. New York Graphic Society, c1977.
- Hughes, Robert. *American Visions: The Epic History of Art in America* . Knopf, 1999.
- Hutton Turner, Elizabeth. *In the American grain: Arthur Dove, Marsden Hartley, John Marin, Georgia O'Keeffe, and Alfred Stieglitz: the Stieglitz circle at the Phillips Collection*. Counterpoint, 1995
- Langa, Helen. *Radical Art : Printmaking and the Left in 1930s New York*. University of California Press, 2004
- Mathey, François. *American Realism: A Pictorial Survey from the Early Eighteenth Century to the 1970s*. Portland House : Distributed by Crown Publishers, 1987, c1978.
- Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York, N.Y.). *African-American artists, 1929-1945 : prints, drawings, and paintings in the Metropolitan Museum of Art*. Yale, 2003
- Perlman, Bennard. *Painters of the Ashcan School: The Immortal Eight*. Dover, 1988
- O'Connor, Francis. *Art for the Millions; Essays from the 1930s by artists and administrators of the WPA Federal Art Project*. New York Graphic Society, 1973
- Pohl, Frances. *Framing America: A social history of American art*. Thames & Hudson, 2002.
- Rose, Barbara. *American Painting, the Twentieth Century*. Skira/Rizzoli, 1986.
- Stokes Sims, Lowery. *Stuart Davis, American Painter*. Abrams, 1991
- Stokstad, Marilyn. *Art History*. Abrams, 1995
- Troyen, Carol. *Edward Hopper*. Boston MFA, 2007.
- Weinberg, H. Barbara et al. *American Impressionism and Realism: The Painting of Modern Life, 1885-1915*. Abrams, 1994
- Wells, Walter. *Silent Theater: The Art of Edward Hopper*. Phaidon, 2007
- Young, Mahonri. *Early American Moderns: Painters of the Stieglitz Group*. Watson-Guptill Publications, 1974
- Zayas, Marius de, *How, When, and Why Modern Art Came to New York*. MIT, 1996
- Zurier, Rebecca, et al. *Metropolitan Lives: The Ashcan Artists and Their New York*. Norton, 1995

### **Lesson 1: Introduction and Beginnings**

- The state of American art in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century
  - European influences: Academicism, Impressionism
  - Homegrown realist styles – Homer, Eakins
- “Apostles of ugliness:” the Ashcan School (The Eight)
  - Realists under the mentorship of Robert Henri
  - Bellows, Sloan, Glackens, Shinn, Luks

### **Lesson 2: Early American Modernism**

Impact of the Armory Show 1913 (organized by Arthur Davies)

Futurism – Joseph Stella, Max Weber

Cubism – Stuart Davis, Marsden Hartley

Stieglitz circle: introducing European modernism, promoting American Modernism

Arthur Dove, Hartley, John Marin, Georgia O’Keeffe, Charles Demuth

Precisionism – Demuth, Charles Sheeler

### **Lesson 3: American Scene Painting**

Impact of the First World War – isolationism

Regionalism

One response to Great Depression: return to agricultural roots

Thomas Hart Benton (Missouri), Grant Wood (Iowa), John Steuart Curry (Kansas)

Hopper’s unaffiliated realism

Harlem Renaissance: an alternate regionalism

Jacob Lawrence and black history

### **Lesson 4: Socially Committed Painting**

Satirizing Roaring 20s society; “Riding the Gilded Juggernaut of Jazz & Gin”

Social Realism, American-style

Political radicalism and its relationship to style and technique

Ben Shahn, William Gropper, Reginald Marsh, Isabel Bishop

Impact of the Great Depression on the arts

WPA art: Public Works of Art Project, Federal Art Project

Response to the Mexican muralist movement; WPA poster art, art education