



Art History/Studio Art 3502G

Winter 2020

Art History and Studio in Dialogue: The Conundrum of Creativity (in Two Parts)

Tuesdays, 9:30-11:30

Online synchronous

Professor John G. Hatch

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Hours: by appointment

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Prerequisite: Registration in years 2-4 of a Department of Visual Arts Honours Specialization or Major, or permission of the Department.

Course Description: Creativity is a strange beast. In many ancient cultures it was a divine gift, oftentimes reserved solely for the divine. Today some believe it is possessed in some measure by all, while others hold it as a quality of genius alone. It is a concept that has been around so long that it has acquired too many meanings, shaped by so many cultural lenses, as to be almost meaningless. Yet creativity continues to fascinate many and has even managed to find its way today into the business world under several guises, design thinking being one example. Despite creativity's elusiveness, this course attempts to chart a journey through creativity in two parts to provide as broad an image of the concept as possible.

Course Roles: part 1, the instructor: I will focus on how creativity has manifested itself in the arts, with an emphasis on the last 150 years, looking at examples from painting, design, sculpture, popular music, architecture, film, and literature. Topics will range from the use of chance in the paintings of Francis Bacon, cultural cross-fertilization in the photomontages of Hannah Höch, the absurd as a device in the literary work of Italo Calvino and the comedy of Monty Python, to technologically driven innovation in the music of the Beatles and the architecture of Frank Gehry. We'll also explore various cultural notions of creativity, including the Chinese concept of co-creativity, and the various studies that have attempted to pin-down scientifically what creativity is from the Institute of Personality Assessment and Research's study of creativity at the end of the 1950s involving some of the world's best-known architects to more recent neuroscience assessments.

Course Roles: part 2, the student: Through your dedicated reading of a single text on creativity selected from the list below, and the presentations you'll be making to the class on that text, as well as the dedicated reading of a text on creativity by your peers, and their presentations to the class, you'll be providing and provided with a wide array of studies on creativity ranging from the historical to the psychological with stops in the arts, philosophy, business, etc. There will be redundancies, overlap, boring bits, but overall, it should be interesting, enriching -- as for the boring parts, they won't last too long. I will be moderating all of these presentations, peppering them with my own, as noted above, and guiding our exploration into creativity to a conclusion without an end.

Learning Outcomes: The point of this course, beyond the obvious acquisition of knowledge of the topic we will be addressing over the term, is to have you engage in an open and active discussion of key historical and contemporary issues from the various perspectives offered by the authors we read, the course instructor, as well the thoughts of your peers on the topics addressed in class discussions. You should be able to critically engage with the works encountered in this course, both verbally and in writing, and both in a summary form and more expansively. The writing assignment will provide you with valuable editing skills, while teaching you how to summarize effectively your ideas on your chosen

text for the course. Additionally, the class presentations will teach you how to communicate effectively within a restricted timeframe. By the end of this course, you will have acquired a thorough understanding of how creativity has been described, how it is believed to best function, and a catalogue of excellent and inspiring examples.

Progression: There are 23 different "textbooks" for this course, but each student only needs to acquire one. In other words, each student will be adopting one text and will be solely responsible for it throughout the term. Every three weeks you'll be making a 7-10-minute presentation, serving as a report on the portion of your text you'll have read up to that time. Presentations will be made during the first half of the class either live or as a narrated Powerpoint and then we'll have a discussion of those presentations during the second half. Additionally, you'll be writing a 7-page analysis of your initial presentation and every three weeks you'll be modifying that 7-page analysis to incorporate the new material you'll subsequently present every three weeks. In other words, the analysis of your text for this course will remain 7 pages in length, however, you'll be adding information as the course progresses so that by the end of the term the whole book will be presented and discussed in 7 pages.

To be more specific, what is expected of you for each presentation is the following:

1. A PowerPoint presentation (or suitable alternative such as Prezi) of the portion of your text you've read by the week of your presentation. As your talk is scheduled for 7 to 10 minutes, ensure that you can complete what you want to discuss within that timeframe. What you are offering to the class is not necessarily a summary of what you've read in your text so far, but rather what you feel are the most interesting or valuable parts of the text you'd like to convey to the class.

2. The day before your scheduled class talk you must submit to me through the OWL site your Powerpoint and script or simply your narrated Powerpoint, by 5pm.

3. The day after your presentation you must submit your 7-page essay (about 1750 words, double-spaced) which is the cumulative analysis of your text up to that point through the OWL site by 11:59:59pm. For the initial submission, I will accept 5 pages (about 1250 words), but subsequent ones must be 7 pages. These are and are not a summary of the text; the latter in that it can never be complete, the former in that your final 7-page text submitted at the end of this course must manage to encapsulate the gist of the whole of your text. I will not concern myself with spelling, grammar, etc., with the two drafts submitted over the course of the term; however, the final version must be "clean".

Evaluation: marks will be based on the following:

10% - class participation

30% (10% each) - in-class presentations (your PowerPoint/script must be submitted the day before your scheduled presentation by 5pm on the course OWL site)

50% (10% the first; 15% the second; 25% the last) - text summaries (these are to be submitted the day after your scheduled class presentation by 11:59:59pm)

Attendance: Under university regulations, if someone misses more than 15% of their classes (15% is equivalent to missing 8 hours of Lecture and/or Studio Lab, due to absence or lateness, or a combination of both, per semester) without written corroboration for health or bereavement, students can be debarred from participation in final evaluations and/or assignments.

Note that if a student is consistently absent from a 3-hour class for 1 hour, they will exceed the 15% cutoff and be debarred; assignments may stop being accepted and such assignments will receive a mark of 0 (zero).

Penalties: any assignment submitted late will be penalized 5% per day and will not be accepted 5 days past its due date. If there are medical grounds, then documentation must be provided to the Academic Counselling Office of your home Faculty for any missed graded component of the course worth 10% or more; for anything worth less than 10%, a make-up or mark re-assignment will be arranged.