University of Gdańsk

Subject card

Subject name and code	History of Art Theory I, PG_00201465		
Field of study	History of Art		
Date of commencement of studies	October 2026	Academic year of realisation of subject	2026/2027
Education level	Master's studies	Subject group	Obligatory subject group in the field of study
Mode of study	full-time studies	Mode of delivery	at the university
Year of study	1	Language of instruction	Polish
Semester of study	1	ECTS credits	2.0
Learning profile	academic	Assessment form	credit
Conducting unit	Division of Modern Art -> Institute of Art History -> Faculty of History -> Rector		
Name and surname of lecturer (lecturers)	Subject supervisor	dr Hubert Bilewicz	
	Teachers	dr Hubert Bilewicz	

Lesson types	Lesson type	Lecture	Tutorial	Laboratory	Project	Seminar	SUM
	Number of study hours	30.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	30
	E-learning hours included: 0.0						

Learning activity and number of study hours	Learning activity	Participation in didactic classes included in study plan	Participation in consultation hours	Self-study	SUM
	Number of study hours	30	2.0	18.0	50

Subject objectives	The aim is to present the development of theoretical reflection on the plastic arts from antiquity to the end of the 20th century: the basic concepts, the main ideas and the forms it took.

Learning outcomes

Course outcome	Subject outcome	Method of verification
[HISTSZMU2_W08] Has a knowledge and understanding of the various threats to cultural heritage and the fundamental dilemmas facing modern civilisation, particularly those relating to its protection, promotion and functioning in the context of global social, cultural and technological change	K_W08 Knows in depth the various threats to cultural heritage, understands the necessity of actions for its promotion and protection	[SW4] test/exam - oral or written
[HISTSZMU2_W07] Has in-depth knowledge of methods of disseminating knowledge in the arts sciences	has an in-depth understanding of methods for promoting knowledge of art	[SW4] test/exam - oral or written
[HISTSZMU2_W04] Is familiar with the main developments and major new developments in art history	K_W04 Knows the main directions of development and the most important new achievements in the field of art history	[SW4] test/exam - oral or written
[HISTSZMU2_W03] Knows and understands the interrelationship of art history with other humanities and social sciences, making it possible to integrate perspectives appropriate to several scientific disciplines	K_W03 Knows and understands to a deeper degree the connections of art history with other humanities and social sciences, making it possible to integrate perspectives appropriate to several scientific disciplines.	[SW4] test/exam - oral or written
[HISTSZMU2_U07] Defines, explains and uses correctly in speech and writing terms specific to the art sciences in working on selected topics	is able to use appropriate art-historical terminology correctly	[SU4] test/exam - oral or written
[HISTSZMU2_W05] Has an in-depth knowledge of the complex nature of a work of art	understands the complex nature of works of art and their contextual character	[SW4] test/exam - oral or written
[HISTSZMU2_W01] Has in-depth and structured knowledge of the subject specifics, terminology, theory and methodology of the art sciences	K_W01 Has in-depth, organized knowledge of reflection on the history of art.	[SW4] test/exam - oral or written

Subject contents

The lecture narrative is conducted on the basis of a chronological presentation (factual-descriptive and analytical-critical) of selected source texts of thinkers, theorists, historiographers, artists and critics from antiquity to the end of the 20th century.

The program content includes the following topics: Archetypes and symbols: Jung, Warburg, Eliade; Basic concepts of ancient reflection on art: techne, poiesis, sophia, mimesis, catharsis. On the origins of art in myths; Greek thought on art of the classical period: Pythagoreans, Sophists. Plato versus Aristotle; Forms of ancient writing on art: ekphrasis and periegetics; Artistic biography and ancient topoi in the history of art; Poetics and rhetorical theory in Roman thought on art: Horace, Quintilian, Pseudo-Longinus; Vitruvius' treatise and its continuations; Ancient traditions in medieval thought on art: Plotinus, Augustine, Dionysius the Areopagite; Art writing of the patristic period: attitude to imagery, dispute over the function and cult of images; Western theologians' views on art and beauty: Bernard of Clairvaux, Bonaventure, Thomas Aquinas; Art theory in Italy during the Trecento and Quattrocento periods. Early Renaissance Italian historiography; Renaissance treatises on art by Leone Battista Alberti; Florentine Neoplatonism: Marsilio Ficino. Theory of art of Michelangelo's circle; The main problems of writing about art in the 16th century: the relationship between art and science, paragone; Leonardo's treatise and Albrecht Dürer's thought on art; Reformation and co

Prerequisites and co-requisites

General knowledge of art history from antiquity to the 20th century. Assimilated basic concepts of aesthetics.Basic competencies related to the reception of source texts on visual arts and critical analysis of artistic discourse.

Assessment methods and criteria

Subject passing criteria	Passing threshold	Percentage of the final grade
Attendance	75.0%	10.0%
Colloquium	51.0%	90.0%

Recommended reading	Basic literature	W. Tatarkiewicz, Dzieje sześciu pojęć. Sztuka, piękno, forma, twórczość, odtwórczość, przeżycie estetyczne, Warszawa 1988; W. Tatarkiewicz, Historia estetyki, t.1-3, warszawa 1988-1991; M. Rzepińska, Historia koloru w dziejach malarstwa europejskiego, Kraków 1983 Myśliciele, kronikarze i artyści o sztuce od starożytności do 1500, wyb. i oprac. J. Białostocki [Historia doktryn artystycznych. Wybór tekstów, t. 1], Warszawa 1988; Teoretycy, pisarze i artyści o sztuce 1500 - 1600, wyb. i oprac. J. Białostocki [Historia doktryn artystycznych. Wybór tekstów, t.2], Warszawa 1985; Teoretycy, historiografowie i artyści o sztuce 1600 - 1700, wyb. i oprac. J. Białostocki; red. i uzup. M. Poprzęcka, A. Ziemba [Historia doktryn artystycznych. Wybór tekstów, t.3], Warszawa 1994; Teoretycy, artyści i krytycy o sztuce 1700 - 1870, wyb. E. Grabska, M. Poprzęcka [Historia doktryn artystycznych. Wybór tekstów, t.4], Warszawa 1989; Moderniści o sztuce, wyb. i oprac. E. Grabska, Warszawa 1971; Artyści o sztuce. Od van Gogha do Picassa, wyb. i oprac. E. Grabska, H. Morawska, Warszawa 1977; Art in Theory 1648-1815, red. C. Harrison, Oxford 1993; Art in Theory 1815-1900, red. C. Harrison, P. Wood, J. Gaiger, Oxford 1998; Art in Theory 1900-2000, red. C. Harrison, P. Wood, J. Gaiger, Oxford 1991.

	Supplementary literature	W. Tatarkiewicz, Dzieje sześciu pojęć. Sztuka, piękno, forma, twórczość, odtwórczość, przeżycie estetyczne, Warszawa 1988; W. Tatarkiewicz, Historia estetyki, t.1-3, warszawa 1988-1991; M. Rzepińska, Historia koloru w dziejach malarstwa europejskiego, Kraków 1983 Myśliciele, kronikarze i artyści o sztuce od starożytności do 1500, wyb. i oprac. J. Białostocki [Historia doktryn artystycznych. Wybór tekstów, t. 1], Warszawa 1988; Teoretycy, pisarze i artyści o sztuce 1500 - 1600, wyb. i oprac. J. Białostocki [Historia doktryn artystycznych. Wybór tekstów, t.2], Warszawa 1985; Teoretycy, historiografowie i artyści o sztuce 1600 - 1700, wyb. i oprac. J. Białostocki; red. i uzup. M. Poprzęcka, A. Ziemba [Historia doktryn artystycznych. Wybór tekstów, t.3], Warszawa 1994; Teoretycy, artyści i krytycy o sztuce 1700 - 1870, wyb. E. Grabska, M. Poprzęcka [Historia doktryn artystycznych. Wybór tekstów, t.4], Warszawa 1989; Moderniści o sztuce, wyb. i oprac. E. Grabska, Warszawa 1971; Artyści o sztuce. Od van Gogha do Picassa, wyb. i oprac. E. Grabska, H. Morawska, Warszawa 1977; Art in Theory 1648-1815, red. C. Harrison, Oxford 1993; Art in Theory 1815-1900, red. C. Harrison, P. Wood, J. Gaiger, Oxford 1998; Art in Theory 1900-2000, red. C. Harrison, P. Wood, J. Gaiger, Oxford 1991.
	eResources addresses	
Example issues/ example questions/ tasks being completed	Plato versus Thomas Aquinas in views on art, the role and position of the artist Bernard of Clairvaux and his views on art English thought on art in the 18th century.	
Work placement	Not applicable	

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