Module Title | Art and Society in Nineteenth-Century Britain
---|---
Module Code | ARVC082H4
Programme | Cert HE History of Art
Credits/Level | 15 credits at Level 4
Class Time | Tuesdays 18:00-20:00
Class Dates | 1 Oct - 10 Dec 2019
Term Dates | 30 September - 13 December 2019
Taught By | Dr Prasannajit de Silva

Module Description

The nineteenth century was marked by huge social, political and technological changes. This module will consider how artists engaged with key issues of the time such as urbanisation and industrialisation, nation and empire, gender and class, and modernity and tradition. It will encompass the study of a wide range of materials including paintings, photographs, printed material, and the applied arts.

Provisional Course Content

**Session 1: 1 October 2019 – Introduction**
- Introduction to the module
- Aims and learning outcomes
- Some key issues and themes
- The British art world in 1800

**Session 2: 8 October 2019 – Art institutions**
- What was the significance of the Royal Academy during the nineteenth century?
- How and why did art galleries develop in Britain?
- What were the reasons behind and the impact of The Great Exhibition?

**Session 3: 15 October 2019 – Early nineteenth-century landscapes**
- What contributed to the interest in topographical images, and how were they made available to a wider public?
- What were the art-historical roots of the picturesque, and what political or social messages did the picturesque landscape convey?
- How did early nineteenth-century landscape painting relate to British national identity?
- How did landscape artists engage with the industrialisation of Britain?
Session 4: 22 October 2019 – Looking back – the classical and Gothic revivals
- What factors drove the vogue for classicism in the nineteenth century?
- What lay behind the growing interest in medievalism in nineteenth-century Britain?
- What does the Gothic Revival tell us about notions of national identity?

Session 5: 29 October 2019 – Genre painting and social realism
- How did the changing nature of society contribute to the success of genre painting?
- Who were the new patrons of art and what were they looking for?
- What was the underlying tone of social realist painting, and what was its appeal?

Session 6: 5 November 2019– The Pre-Raphaelites
- What were the aims and objectives of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood?
- What factors contributed to the early success of the Pre-Raphaelites?
- As the interests of the members of the original grouping diverged, how did the movement evolve?

Session 7: 12 November 2019 – Gender
- What was the position of women artists in nineteenth-century Britain?
- In what ways were women depicted in nineteenth-century British art?
- How were nineteenth-century depictions of the nude regarded in the world of ‘Victorian values’?

Session 8: 19 November 2019 – Towards ‘modern’ art
- What were the aims and objectives of members of the aesthetic movement?
- What was the impact of the establishment of the Grosvenor Gallery and other private exhibition spaces?
- How was the late Victorian art world affected by developments in France?

Session 9: 26 November 2019 – Empire
- How did artists depict the people and places encountered across the Empire?
- How did visual culture reflect and/or help to shape prevailing attitudes in Britain?
- What role did visual material play in the construction of British imperial history?

Session 10: 30 November 2016 (date TBC) – Visit to Tate Britain

Session 11: 10 December 2019 – Design reform and the arts and crafts movement
- What influences drove design in the second half of the nineteenth century?
- What were the main characteristics of arts and crafts products?
- How important were social ideas and attitudes to the arts and crafts movement, and how were these reflected in its practices and products?
Taster Images

J. M. W. Turner, *Rain, Steam and Speed*, c1844, oil on canvas (National Gallery)

The Chancel, All Saints, Margaret Street, London (William Butterfield, 1850-59).

Coursework and Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessed Component</th>
<th>Basic Requirements/Word Count</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
<th>Deadline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Essay</td>
<td>2,500 words</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>13 December 2019</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key Readings

*Students are advised not to purchase extensively from the list prior to ensuring that their chosen module will be running.*


Teaching and Learning Methods

Teaching on our modules is varied and interactive. It may include seminars, short lectures, group work, discussion, and student presentations. Active student participation is encouraged in all our classes. Reasonable adjustments will be made to accommodate students with disabilities.

Aims

Module aims describe the knowledge and skills that the module seeks to advance.

This module aims to:

- Develop students’ knowledge and understanding of British nineteenth-century visual culture and its relationship to contemporary society;
- Provide students with first-hand experience of architecture, art objects and images;
- Develop students’ critical analysis and judgement in relation to the different themes and styles seen in nineteenth-century British art and design;
- Provide students with experience of close textual analysis of different kinds of art historical writing;
- Demonstrate the importance of context and the relationship of art history to other disciplines such as literature, social history, film and visual media and the history of ideas;
• Develop academic study and writing skills.

Outcomes
Learning outcomes are directly linked to the aims set out above. They describe what you should know and be able to do by the end of the module.

By the end of this module, you should be able to:
• Begin to engage with the concepts, values and debates that inform the study and practice of the history of art, including an awareness of the limitations and partiality of all historical knowledge
• Analyse, describe and interpret objects, images, buildings and artefacts closely and systematically
• Show understanding of the objects, contexts and issues relevant to two or more specific areas of the history of art
• Select relevant evidence from the wide range of possible types of evidence used in the history of art and apply it to the examination of art historical issues and problems
• Complete all coursework and assessment requirements.