THE GLOBAL AVANT-GARDE

COURSE INFORMATION

Course ID: LIT 2230  Instructor: Nick Sturm
Semester: 2014 Spring  Office: WMS 327
Classroom: WMS 319  Office Hours: W 11am-2pm
Time: M/W 2-3:15  Contact: ns12b@my.fsu.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

“Most reckless things are beautiful in some way, and recklessness is what makes experimental art beautiful, just as religions are beautiful because of the strong possibility that they are founded on nothing.” Assuming the validity of this aesthetic/ontological statement from American poet John Ashbery’s 1968 essay “The Invisible Avant-Garde,” this class will take a global perspective on the literary history of a number of 20th century experimental movements and practices to uncover the foundations of the global avant-garde. Considering manifestos, novels, poetry, films, photography, painting, and music from a wide range of political, cultural, and geographical backgrounds, this class will be a kaleidoscopic tour de force exploration of some of the most provocative, enigmatic art movements of the last 100 years.

COURSE OUTCOMES

Students leaving this course can expect to have achieved a general understanding of global avant-garde literature as well as the key critical debates surrounding this literature. In turn, this should provide students with a greater understanding of important aesthetical and ethical issues related to global literature and culture.

Students will also gain an appreciation for the diversity of voices that have often tended to be marginalized by literary tradition, which will allow students to develop the ability to read texts in relation to their historical and cultural contexts, in order to gain a richer understanding of both text and context, and to become more aware of themselves as situated historically and culturally.

Students will also be able to generate an in-depth analysis of a work of literature, as well as write critical responses to secondary sources. Additionally, through creative exercises and engagements, students will be able to situate their own aesthetic concerns in relation to literary texts.

Feedback designed to foster students’ writing proficiency will be provided.

COURSE TEXTS

Andre Breton – Nadja (1928)
Clarice Lispector – The Hour of the Star (1977)
Raúl Zurita – *Song for His Disappeared Love* (1985)
Italo Calvino – *If on a winter’s night a traveler* (1979)
Inger Christensen – *alphabet* (1981)

*Various supplementary materials in the form of hyperlinks or PDFs found on Blackboard*

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

- Complete all assigned readings
- Complete all Tests
- Complete all Papers
- Participate actively and relevantly in class discussion

**GRADING DISTRIBUTION**

- 25% Tests 100 Points (25 each)
- 12.5% Experiment/Experience Notebook 50 Points
- 12.5% Roundtable Paper 50 Points
- 50% Midterm and Final Papers 200 Points (100 each)

A = Outstanding achievement. Student performance demonstrates full command of the course materials and evinces a high level of originality and/or creativity that far surpasses course expectations.

A- = Excellent achievement. Student performance demonstrates thorough knowledge of the course materials and exceeds course expectations by completing all requirements in a superior manner.

B+ = Very good work. Student performance demonstrates above-average comprehension of the course materials and exceeds course expectations on all tasks as defined in the course syllabus.

B = Good work. Student performance meets designated course expectations and demonstrates understanding of the course materials at an acceptable level.

B- = Marginal work. Student performance demonstrates incomplete understanding of course materials.

C = Unsatisfactory work. Student performance demonstrates incomplete and inadequate understanding of course materials.

D = Unacceptable work.

F = Failure to complete work.
EXPERIMENT/EXPERIENCE NOTEBOOK

The words “experiment” and “experience” share the root word *experi*ri “to try, test.” All learning is an overlapping of experiment and experience. This class will encourage you to think of experiments and experience as synonyms, especially in relation to how you encounter the texts we read. Confusion and understanding, the results of both experiments and experience, are often thought of as opposing states; however, and fortunately for us, this is not true. Both are active terms, implying participation with and curiosity of the world. Your experiment/experience notebook will be an informal accumulation of writings, sketches, collages, poems, stories, scribbles, erasures, paintings, and any other productive responses to this class. This notebook should be only for this class and will be turned in and returned at the end of the semester. We are reading six books, one anthology, nineteen secondary theoretical/aesthetic essays, and a variety of other “texts” – your experiment/experience notebook should include, at minimum, the following:

- creative/critical responses to all 5 books
- creative/critical responses to at least 5 secondary materials
- creative/critical responses to 5 cultural/art events: poetry readings, gallery openings, concerts, etc.
- you may include your notes from class but it is not required
- any and all other joys and confusions that demand you take action

TESTS

There will be FOUR scheduled tests given over the semester, which will check both reading comprehension and command of the critical concepts we’ll be developing throughout the semester. Each test will ask you to respond in short answer format to questions arising from our study of the primary and secondary texts as well as the accompanying critical concepts. In order to take the test you must be in class. The only way to “make-up” a test is if you have contacted me before class about your impending absence, or if your absence is excused.

CRITICAL PAPERS

You will write three papers this semester: one as an analysis of a secondary source (3 pages), one as a mid-term (6 pages), and one as a final (8 pages), each to be double-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman, 1-inch margins, and thoroughly proofread. The work is due as noted; plan accordingly. I highly recommend you meet with me in my office hours to discuss your ideas well in advance of the due date.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance in this course is integral to your success and education. Failure to attend deprives you of a chance of developing fundamental skills of reading, writing, and critical thinking. If you accrue more than *four* unexcused absences you risk failing the course. Excused absences include
documented illness, deaths in the family and other documented crises, call to active military duty or jury duty, religious holy days, and official University activities. Note: being hungover or “having the flu” does not constitute an excused absence, as it is not an emergency situation. These absences will be accommodated in a way that does not arbitrarily penalize students who have a valid excuse. Consideration will also be given to students whose dependent children experience serious illness.

Also note: no electronic devices are to be used in the classroom: no cell phones, no computers, etc., unless I have granted you specific permission.

ACADEMIC HONOR POLICY

The Florida State University Academic Honor Policy outlines the University’s expectations for the integrity of students’ academic work, the procedures for resolving alleged violations of those expectations, and the rights and responsibilities of students and faculty members throughout the process. Students are responsible for reading the Academic Honor Policy and for living up to their pledge to “. . . be honest and truthful and . . . [to] strive for personal and institutional integrity at Florida State University.” (Florida State University Academic Honor Policy, found at http://dof.fsu.edu/honorpolicy.htm.)

GORDON RULE

In order to fulfill FSU’s Gordon Rule “W” Designation (writing) credit, the student must earn a “C-” or better in the course, and in order to receive a “C-” or better in the course, the student must earn at least a “C-” on the required writing assignments for the course. If the student does not earn a “C-” or better on the required writing assignments for the course, the student will not earn an overall grade of “C-” or better in the course, no matter how well the student performs in the remaining portion of the course.

ADA STATEMENT

Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should: (1) register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center; and (2) bring a letter to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type. This should be done during the first week of class.

This syllabus and other class materials are available in alternative format upon request.

For more information about services available to FSU students with disabilities, contact the:

Student Disability Resource Center 874 Traditions Way 108 Student Services Building Florida State University Tallahassee, FL 32306-4167 (850) 644-9566 (voice) (850) 644-8504 (TDD) sdrc@admin.fsu.edu http://www.disabilitycenter.fsu.edu/
The RWC offers one-on-one help for students with their writing, whether they need help with a writing problem, understanding what their teacher wants, or just want to do better on their writing assignments. The Center is staffed by teaching assistants who are trained in writing and teaching. Make an appointment by calling ahead (644-6495) or stopping in – room 222C of the Williams Building.

*Standardized Essay Grading Rubric for Gordon Rule, Y, and X courses*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BASIC CRITERIA</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>THESIS and CONTENT (Development)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The essay has a thesis—a single, central point that is interesting, original, striking and substantial. The central idea is developed in the essay through well-chosen, appropriate, concrete details that show originality and freshness. Author shows rather than merely tells. Generalizations and assertions are defended. Arguments are logical.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORGANIZATION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The essay is organized and well structured (there is a beginning, a body, and a conclusion). The essay exhibits a clear strategy for persuasion and development. The organization works with the thesis so that the thesis and the organization serve the purpose of the essay. Essay does not digress from central point. Transitions help the paper flow smoothly. Introductory paragraph(s) is (are) interesting and appropriate. Concluding paragraph is clear and convincing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PARAGRAPHS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paragraphs are organized, unified and coherent. Each supporting paragraph has a controlling idea. In supporting paragraphs, topic idea helps further the thesis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STYLE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentences are well constructed. Writer avoids modifier problems. Sentences show variety of pattern and are rhetorically effective. The essay is written in a style and tone appropriate to the audience, topic and purpose. Words are appropriate and well chosen. Writer avoids jargon and sexist language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRAMMAR, SPELLING, MECHANICS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Writer avoids errors in grammar, spelling, and mechanics.</td>
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COURSE SCHEDULE

Except for changes that substantially affect implementation of the evaluation (grading) statement, this syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice.

WEEK ONE – January 6 - 8

M  Introduction – Historical Background of Avant-Garde

W  “Simultaneous Contrast,” “The Painting of Sounds, Noises, and Smells,” and “Notes on Existence” [pdf]

WEEK TWO – January 13 - 15

M  “The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism” and “Futurist Manifesto of Lust” [pdf]

W  “Dada Excites Everything” and “Dada Manifesto” [pdf]

WEEK THREE – January 20 - 22
M        No Class – Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

WEEK FOUR – January 27 - 29
 M        Nadja pg 1-60
 W        Nadja pg 63-108

WEEK FIVE – February 3 - 5
 M        Nadja pg 108-160
 W        Test #1

WEEK SIX – February 10 - 12
 M        “Ultraist Manifesto” and “To Be in the Book” [pdf] and If on a winter's night a traveler pg 1-53
 W        If on a winter's night a traveler pg 54-131

WEEK SEVEN -- February 17 - 19
 M        If on a winter's night a traveler pg 132-198
 W        If on a winter's night a traveler pg 199-260

WEEKS EIGHT – February 24 - 26
 M        Test #2
 W        No Class

WEEK NINE – March 3 - 5
 M        No Class
 W        Ingmar Bergman’s Persona (1966) / Paper #1 Due

SPRING BREAK – March 10 - 12

WEEK TEN – March 17 - 19
“Composition as Explanation” [pdf] and *The Hour of the Star* pg 1-44

*The Hour of the Star* pg 45-86

**WEEK ELEVEN – March 24 - 26**

**M**

“Abstraction and Time in Music,” “Experiment, Ostriches and Music,” and “Demythologizing the Conductor” [pdf]

**W**

Test #3

**WEEK TWELVE – March 31 – April 2**

**M**

*Song for His Disappeared Love*

**W**

*Song for His Disappeared Love*

**WEEK THIRTEEN – April 7 - 9**

**M**

*alphabet*

**W**

*alphabet*

**WEEK FOURTEEN – April 14 - 16**

**M**

Test #4

**W**

Pierre Etaix’s *Land of Milk and Honey* (1971) / Paper #2 Due

**WEEK FIFTEEN – April 21- 23**

**M**

Chris Marker’s *Sans Soleil* (1983)

**W**

films continued