ARTh 205: Introduction to modern art
Department of Art History and Communication Studies
McGill University
Fall 2020
Monday and Wednesday 10:05-11:25 am Montreal time via Zoom
All lectures will be delivered live, recorded and subsequently posted to mycourses
**As per McGill’s suggestion, lectures will be around an hour, and may be divided up into shorter modules.

Instructor: Dr. Julia Skelly
julia.skelly232@gmail.com
**Please note that I much prefer to be contacted at my gmail address.
Office: n/a
Office hours: Thursday 2:30-4:00 pm or by appointment. I will hold office hours using the Zoom waiting room, which allows me to let students in one at a time. I recommend posting any general questions on the discussions page of MyCourses, so that my responses can be seen by the whole class.
T.A.: Mitra Kazemi
T.A.’s email: mitra.kazemi@mail.mcgill.ca
NB: James McGill was a slave owner.

This course examines modern art produced in France, Germany, and Mexico from approximately 1850 until 1945. Major figures, including Courbet, Monet, Manet, Ernst Ludwig Kirchner and Frida Kahlo, will be considered, as well as lesser-known artists such as Tamara de Lempicka. Modern art movements including Impressionism, Post-Impressionism, Primitivism, German Expressionism, New Objectivity, Dada and Surrealism will be discussed. The period between 1850 and 1945 was a time of rapid social, economic, and political change, and modern art movements will be considered in light of socio-historical contexts. In other words, we will be using a social history of art methodology throughout the term, drawing on T.J. Clark’s important scholarship. Readings and lectures will give particular attention to issues related to gender, class, race and sexuality.

Evaluation
Take-home Midterm (2 essays, max 3 double-spaced pages) 30%
Final paper (max 6 pages double-spaced) 40%
Final take-home exam (2 essays, max 3 double-spaced pages) 30%
*You are not required or expected to use outside sources for the take-home exams.
**You will submit all three assignments via mycourses in the assignments section.
Required texts
Coursepack
NB: The coursepack will be available as an e-book through the McGill bookstore. Feel free to share the e-book as you see fit.

Midterm take-home exam posted to mycourses on Friday Oct. 9; due by midnight (Montreal time) on Tuesday Oct. 20th. Upload to mycourses as a single document. You will be given a choice of three essay topics, and you will choose two. Your primary objective should be to demonstrate that you have absorbed, understood, and engaged with the material covered in the course. Each essay should be no longer than three pages double-spaced. Each essay will be graded out of fifteen marks. Writing style, grammar and coherence will be taken into account, so don’t forget to read through your essays before you submit the exam. If you quote from the textbook, be sure to cite your sources (including author, chapter title and page numbers). The strongest exams will have a thesis statement clearly articulated in the introduction, that is then supported in the body paragraphs.

Final essay (Due Friday Nov. 20th by midnight Montreal time; upload to mycourses as a word doc)
This is an opportunity to choose a topic that interests you and write a paper about it. You can choose to write about one artist (you can discuss as many artworks as you wish), a single artwork, or a theme (for example, sex work and how it was depicted in modernist art). I recommended having at least one research question that guides your research. The answer to that question might be a jumping off point for developing a tight, clear, supportable thesis. Write a max six page paper (double-spaced) on your topic. Develop a clear thesis statement/argument based on the texts that we have read this term as well as the external research that you undertake. Also, don’t forget to look closely at your chosen artworks. Using visual evidence found in your artworks is an excellent way to support a thesis. You may organize the essay any way you wish, but you must have a clear argument, which you support with visual evidence (that is, what is visible in the work of art) and/or textual evidence (that is, research that you do for this essay). You must cite at least seven academic sources. You do not necessarily need to quote from each of the sources, but you must cite the source and the page number when you are referring to another scholar’s text. A maximum of three of these sources can be taken from the coursepack. Your sources must be either academic journal articles or books. Newspaper articles, magazine articles and websites do not count as academic sources. *Given the pandemic, you will likely have to rely on e-books available through the McGill library or Google books. See JSTOR on the McGill library website for academic articles. Citation style is your choice, but be consistent. Include images of the artworks that you discuss at the end of your paper (but before the
Each artwork should have a caption underneath the image with the artist, title, date, materials, and location of the artwork if known. Identify each artwork in the essay by including (Fig. 1), (Fig. 2) etc. after you refer to the artwork the first time; the captions under the artworks should have corresponding figure numbers. For example, in the text you may refer to Manet’s *Olympia* (Fig. 1). At the end of the essay, when you include the reproduction (image) of the artwork, underneath the image the caption will read: Fig. 1. Edouard Manet, *Olympia*, 1863. Oil on canvas, Musée d’Orsay, Paris.

Final take-home exam (posted to mycourses Friday Nov. 20; due by midnight Montreal time on Tuesday Dec. 8; upload to mycourses as a single document/pdf)
You will be given a choice of three essay topics, and you will choose two. Your primary objective should be to demonstrate that you have absorbed, understood, and engaged with the material covered in the course. Each essay should be **no longer than three pages double-spaced**. Each essay will be graded out of fifteen marks. Writing style, grammar and coherence will be taken into account, so don’t forget to read through your essays before you submit the exam. If you quote from the textbook, be sure to cite your sources (including author, chapter title and page numbers). **Again, the strongest essays will have a clear thesis statement in the introduction, that you support in your body paragraphs.**

**Attendance and Participation**
Given the circumstances, discussion is difficult—but not impossible—on zoom. I will ask questions often, and I will do my best to make you feel like you are part of an academic community despite the limitations of zoom. I know a lot of you will be watching the recorded lectures rather than attending the live lectures, because of different time zones, work, family responsibilities, etc. That is absolutely fine. I will not be taking attendance at any point this term; I trust that you will do your part by watching the lectures and doing the readings.

**Late marks**
Late assignments will be penalized by 1 mark *per day* (including weekends) after the deadline. Extensions will be given according to the instructor’s discretion.

**Reading Schedule**
**Week 1 (Sept. 2) – Introduction to course**
**Week 2 (Sept. 7 and 9) – Courbet and Realism**
*No class on Monday Sept. 7 (Labour Day)*

**Week 3 (Sept. 14 and 16) – Impressionism**


**Week 4 (Sept. 21 and 23) – Berthe Morisot and Mary Cassatt**


**Week 5 (Sept. 28 and 30) – Symbolism and Decadence**

**Week 6 (Oct. 5 and 7) – Post-Impressionism**

**Week 7 (Oct. 12 and 14) – Classes cancelled on Monday (Thanksgiving) and Wednesday (study day)**
Midterm posted to mycourses Friday Oct. 9; due Tuesday Oct. 20th by midnight Montreal time (upload to mycourses as a single doc)
*I will still hold office hours on Thursday.*

**Week 8 (Oct. 19 and 21) – Post-Impressionism continued**

**Week 9 (Oct. 26 and 28) – Modernism in early 20th-Century France**

Week 10 (Nov. 2 and 4) – The Fragmented Female Body: Dada and Surrealism through a Feminist Lens


Week 11 (Nov. 9 and 11) – German Art and Sex Work

Week 12 (Nov. 16 and 18) – Women artists in Germany: The Neue Frau
**Final essay is due Friday November 20th by midnight Montreal time; upload to mycourses as a word doc.


Week 13 (Nov. 23 and 25) – Frida Kahlo
**The take-home exam will be posted to mycourses on Friday Nov. 20th; due Tuesday December 8th by midnight Montreal time. Upload to mycourses as a single doc/pdf.


Week 14 (Nov. 30 and Dec. 2) – Tying up Loose Ends
*No class on Thursday Dec. 3 (Minerva says there is a class on Thurs. Dec. 3)
No readings
***If you’re having a hard time this term, there are mental health resources at McGill: [http://www.mcgillmentalhealthhub.ca/](http://www.mcgillmentalhealthhub.ca/). If you’re not finding the help you need, come talk to me.

McGill University is located on land that has long served as a site of meeting and exchange amongst Indigenous peoples, including the Haudenosaunee and Anishinabeg nations. McGill honours, recognizes and respects these nations as the traditional stewards of these lands and waters.

“McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see [www.mcgill.ca/integrity](http://www.mcgill.ca/integrity) for more information).”

« L’université McGill attache une haute importance à l’honnêteté académique. Il incombe par conséquent à tous les étudiants de comprendre ce que l’on entend par tricherie, plagiat et autres infractions académiques, ainsi que les conséquences que peuvent avoir de telles actions, selon le Code de conduite de l’étudiant et des procédures disciplinaires (pour de plus amples renseignements, veuillez consulter le site [www.mcgill.ca/integrity](http://www.mcgill.ca/integrity)). »

“In accord with McGill University’s Charter of Students’ Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded. (Approved by Senate on 21 January 2009)”

“In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University’s control, the content and/or evaluation scheme in this course is subject to change.”