ARTH 354: Selected Topics in Art History 2
Latin American Art and the Violence of Modernism
Department of Art History and Communication Studies
McGill University
Fall 2020
Monday and Wednesday 11:35 am-12:55 pm 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.: Leighton Fenske
T.A.’s email: leighton.fenske@mail.mcgill.ca
NB: James McGill was a slave owner.

This course examines modern art produced by a range of Latin American artists based primarily in Paris and Mexico between the two World Wars. Major figures such as Frida Kahlo, Diego Rivera and Remedios Varo will be considered, as well as lesser-known artists. Works by Latin American artists will be examined in relation to modern art movements including Primitivism, Cubism, Expressionism, and Surrealism. The period between the wars 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. Readings and lectures will give particular attention to issues related to gender, class, race and sexuality. We will conclude the term by discussing contemporary female Latin American artists whose art is related to violence.

**Evaluation**
Midterm take-home exam (2 essays, 3-5 double-spaced pages) 30%
Final paper (max 8-10 pages double-spaced) 40%
Final take-home exam (2 essays, max 3-5 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 text
*You can purchase the book through the McGill bookstore or the Yale University Press website: [https://yalebooks.yale.edu/](https://yalebooks.yale.edu/)
**Despite initial indications to the contrary, you can in fact order the textbook from Yale University Press if you are in Canada. If you have any trouble doing so, you can make the order over the phone: 203-432-0966
***Any readings that are not in the textbook will be posted to mycourses in the content section.

Take-home Midterm (posted to mycourses Friday October 9th; due by midnight Montreal time Friday October 30th. 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 **between three and five double-spaced pages**. 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/readings, be sure to cite your sources (including author, chapter title and page numbers).

Final essay (Due by midnight Montreal time on Friday November 27th; upload to mycourses)
I will distribute a list of five essay prompts early in the term. Write a **max 8-10 page paper (double-spaced)** on your topic chosen from the list. 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. 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 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. **The textbook counts as one academic source. Your sources must be either academic journal articles [see JSTOR on the McGill library website] or books [for example e-books available through McGill’s library].** **Newspaper articles, magazine articles and websites do not count as academic sources.** 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 bibliography).** 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 November 27th; due by midnight Montreal time on Thursday December 17th; upload to mycourses as a single 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 **between three and five pages double-spaced**. Each essay will be graded out of ten 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).

**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**

Read “Introduction” in *Transatlantic Encounters*, 1-10.

**Week 2 (Sept. 7 and 9) – What I mean by the violence of modernism (both form and content)**

Monday Sept. 7 – Labour Day (no class)


*posted to mycourses
Week 3 (Sept. 14 and 16) – The Boss: Frida Kahlo Forever


Week 4 (Sept. 21 and 23) – Considering Cubism
Chapter 1 in Transatlantic Encounters, 11-31.

Week 5 (Sept. 28 and 30) – Paris between the Wars
Chapter 2 in Transatlantic Encounters, 32-55.
Chapter 3 in Transatlantic Encounters, 56-78.

Week 6 – (Oct. 5 and 7) – Salons and Galleries
Take-home midterm posted to mycourses on Friday October 9; due by midnight Montreal time Friday Oct. 30th. Upload to mycourses as a single word doc.
Chapter 4 in Transatlantic Encounters, 79-103.
Chapter 5 in Transatlantic Encounters, 104-121.

Week 7 (Oct. 12 and 14) – Thanksgiving/Study Day
Monday Oct. 12 – Thanksgiving (no class)
Wednesday Oct. 14 – class cancelled (study/writing day)

Week 8 (Oct. 19 and 21) – Women Painting Women
Chapter 6 in Transatlantic Encounters, 122-144.

Week 9 (Oct. 26 and 28) – Surrealism and Women Artists
Take-home midterm due Friday Oct. 30th by midnight (Montreal time)


Week 10 (Nov. 2 and 4) – Art Criticism: Considering Gender and Race
Chapter 7 in Transatlantic Encounters, 145-170.

Week 11 (Nov. 9 and 11) – Formalism, Abstraction and Modernism: A Man’s World?
Chapter 8 in *Transatlantic Encounters*, 171-196.

**Week 12 (Nov. 16 and 18) – The Violence of Surrealism: It Wasn’t Just Dali**

Chapter 9 in *Transatlantic Encounters*, 196-236.

**Week 13 (Nov. 23 and 25) – Once More unto the Breach: A Pre-World War II Resurgence**

*Final essay due by midnight Montreal time Friday November 27th; upload to mycourses*

**The take-home exam will be posted to mycourses on Friday November 27; due by midnight Montreal time Thursday Dec. 17th (upload to mycourses as a single pdf)**

Chapter 10 in *Transatlantic Encounters*, 237-257.

**Week 14 (Nov. 30 and Dec. 2) – Contemporary Latinx Artists and Violence**

*No class on Thursday Dec. 3 (Minerva says there is a class on Thursday Dec. 3)*


***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.”