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Cornell Program in Rome
Modern Art in Italy: Contemporary Issues
Fall 2009

Course Description and Objectives

This course is designed to introduce the student to the contemporary art scene in Rome. We visit artists in their studios and in the gallery, and invite artists to speak in the classroom. We visit galleries and museums and speak to dealers, curators or directors. We make use of the resources that are particular to Rome, including the many international academies.

Handled as a type of workshop of contemporary art, class discussions focus on the understanding and analysis of the art system. We will consider the gallery as a cultural, didactic and commercial institution, and we will explore its relationship and responsibility to the artist and to the promotion of art, taking into consideration prices, values and art as investment. We will define the function and role of the museum as an important facility in the preservation and display of art. The class considers the means of viewing, and buying, art: exhibitions, galleries, fairs, auctions. We consider formulating an idea for an exhibition, carrying out the selection, and installation methods. Artist, curator, press release, invitation, labels, catalogue, lighting and opening reception become topics of study. We will discuss the role of the art critic, who writes about art and presents the artist to the public. An important part of our discussion is the process of selling and collecting, from private to corporate to commercial to institutional. Furthermore, our discussions touch on the “hot topics in the contemporary art news”, usually supported by an art magazine or journal article.

Our discussions are triggered by this city’s very particular position with respect to contemporary art and contemporary vocabulary in general. We will consider the issues of historical past and the present, the use of historical spaces for the display of contemporary art, how the new impacts the old and vice versa.

The course meets on Tuesday, 3:30-7:30.

I am available for students in the library every Tuesday from 1:00-3:30.

Requirements

There is no textbook for this course. There is however an extensive bibliography of articles and exhibition catalogues available on my reserve shelf in the library which the student should consult. Our library has Art in America and Art News.

A handbook for the class is available in the office: please see Anna Rita Flati

I will distribute articles that pertain to a specific lecture, gallery or studio visit.

Please purchase Roma C'è at the newsstand every Wednesday. This costs Euro 1.50 and is a very valuable guide to events in Rome.

Please have a bus ticket or pass ready before class.

Attendance is fundamental to the success of the class. The student is allowed one excused absence; after each subsequent absence the student will be lowered one grade point.

Discussion and student feedback is an important part of the class.

Assignments

Readings: weekly readings from the art magazines, with short responses

Course journal: the student should keep a course journal, to include personal comments, responses to weekly readings, ideas generated during visits outside of class time.

Project or Term Paper: The student is required to complete an independent research project. This should address some aspect of art in Rome, inspired by a personal interest or by ideas generated in class discussion. This research will be presented orally during the final exam time.

Exams: There will be a mid-term and a final exam. The mid term exam is a take-home essay. The final exam is the oral presentation of the independent research project.

INTRODUCTION Some of the main issues of contemporary art in Rome. Socio-economic-geographic factors that influence art in Rome. Family, Church and culture as considerations. The education of the artist. Where to find the spaces for contemporary art.

Lecture Survey of major movements and ideas of XXth century Italian art

Visit Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna and exhibition of "Palma Bucarelli: Il museo come Avanguardia"
Viale delle Belle Arti 131

Visit Macro Future
Via Galvani, Testaccio neighborhood
To view New York Minute: 60 artists on the NY scene

Visit Fondazione Guastalla and discussion with director Ludovico Pratesi: what is a collection; relationship with the collector

Lecture by Francesco Cascino, Art Advisor and Curator

Visit and Lecture Forte Prenestino and Street Art, with Maria Teresa Natale

Deadline for mid term exam

Visit Studio of Roman artist Pietro Ruffo, the Pastificio Cerere, Galleria Pino Casagrande (and the chocolate factory)
Via degli Ausoni 7

Visit Collector (tba)

tba

tba

Deadline for final projects

tba

Concluding comments

Final Exam or Oral Presentations

