Required Text: All readings and handouts will be posted online at Sakai.

Course Description
What is art? Why do we care about it? As far as we know, every human culture makes art, though in very different ways; and most people engage passionately with art in some way, whether Beyoncé or Beethoven. Is there some distinctive quality that all works of art have, which makes them art? Do they have a special kind of meaning? What makes art good or bad: should it be beautiful? original? morally uplifting?

To ask these questions well, we need to test our answers on actual artworks. I’ll therefore be asking you to spend as much time with art as possible this semester, and to apply the questions and theories we discuss to actual art in your papers and online discussion.

Course Goals
Students in this course will learn to:
• understand the benefits of, and challenges to, the traditional philosophical method of conceptual analysis through necessary and sufficient conditions.
• appreciate the diversity of art: ‘high’ and ‘low’, within and across cultures, and across media.
• apply specific questions about art and theories of art and in engaging with actual artworks.

In pursuing these aims, students will also acquire the following skills:
• the ability to engage in close reading of sophisticated theoretical and empirical arguments.
• the ability to articulate clear, structured, well-supported arguments for your own conclusions.
• the ability to engage in respectful, reasoned, and passionate debate with your peers about complex topics that lack clear answers.

Course Requirements
• Daily readings, to be completed before class, and brought to class.
• Attendance and participation in class (10% of course grade).
• Weekly blog posts (20% of course grade).
• Three short papers, 2-3 pages (15% each of course grade).
• A final paper, 4-5 pages (25% of course grade).

Papers should be ‘blinded’ (by substituting your student ID for your name) and submitted as .pdfs through Sakai. Except in extreme conditions, extensions must be granted well before the due date, and only at my discretion; otherwise, late papers will be downgraded 1/3 letter grade per day.

You are expected to be familiar with and to abide by RU’s policy on academic and intellectual integrity: http://studentconduct.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity

If you need special accommodations because of a learning disability or for any other reason, please let me know, or have the Office of Disabilities get in touch with me.
Blog posts
You are required to post a brief comment (1 paragraph) for each forum, once a week. These are aimed to get you thinking and talking about the material before class, so we can have a richer discussion in class. I will post an opening question on Friday morning.

Posts will be graded on a 3-point scale:
1 point for posting by Sunday night or Wednesday night (depending on which reading the question asks about), in a way that shows you’ve done the reading;
1 point for being one of the first 2 posters, OR for responding to someone else’s post;
1 point for contributing an original thought about the question and/or material.
Number your post based on the order in which it comes in.

BEFORE class: review the posts, and vote for a post at webclicker.org.
(Sign in to webclicker.org with the Class ID: PhilArt-173.)

Here are some useful online resources for philosophy and art:
American Society for Aesthetics:  http://www.aesthetics-online.org
ArtLex (a dictionary of art):  http://www.artlex.com/
ARTstor (a database of visual images):  http://www.artstor.org
Schedule of Topics and Readings

Th 9/3   Introduction

What is art? What does it do?

Mimesis and Catharsis

TUES 9/8  Plato: *Republic* II, III, X (excerpts)
Th 9/10  Aristotle: *Poetics* §§4-7 (excerpts)

Expression and Inspiration

M 9/14  Plato: *Ion* (excerpt)
Th 9/17  Tolstoy: *What is Art?* (excerpts)
M 9/21  Collingwood: *Principles of Art*, chs. 2 & 7

First paper topics handed out

Pleasures and Forms

Th 9/24  Bentham: *Rationale of Reward* (excerpt)
Kant: *Critique of Judgment* §§1-9, 14-16, 19-22, 43-45
M 9/28  Kant cont’d
Th 10/1  Bell: “The Aesthetic Hypothesis”
Greenberg: “Modernist Painting”

First papers due

Nature and Culture

M 10/5  Dutton: *The Art Instinct*, chs. 1-3
Th 10/8  Danto: “The Artworld”

How does art mean?

Medium and Message

M 10/12  Dewey: *Art as Experience* (excerpt)
Bosanquet: “Three Lectures on Aesthetic” (excerpt)
Th 10/15  Stolnitz: “On the Cognitive Triviality of Art”
Brooks: “The Heresy of Paraphrase”
Keats: “Ode on a Grecian Urn”
M 10/19  Levinson: “Messages in Art”
Ice T: “High Rollers”

Second paper topics handed out

Idea as Medium

Th 10/22  LeWitt: “Paragraphs on Conceptual Art”
Lippard: “Escape Attempts”
Vogel: “Swimming with Famous Dead Sharks”
What determines aesthetic value?

Who's judgment matters?

M 10/26  Hume: “On the Standard of Taste”

Th 10/29  Kant: Critique of Judgment §§32-42

**Second papers due**

M 11/2  Babbitt: “Who Cares if You Listen?”

Th 11/5  Weingarten: “Pearls Before Breakfast”

Does morality matter?

M 11/9  Gaut: “The Ethical Criticism of Art”

Nussbaum: “Fancy”

**Watch Talk to Her (outside class)**

M 11/16  Eaton: “Robust Immoralism”

“Almodovar’s Immoralism”

Does originality matter?

Th 11/19  Kant: Critique of Judgment §§46-50

Eliot: “Tradition and the Individual Talent”

Borges: “Pierre Menard, Author of the Quixote”

M 11/23  Lessing: “What is Wrong with a Forgery?”

Russell: “As Long as Men Make Art…”

**Watch Who the #$&% Is Jackson Pollock? (outside class)**

Third papers due

Th 11/26  **NO CLASS**

Why care about criticism?

M 11/30  Nehamas: “Essay on Beauty and Judgment”

Th 12/3  Harrison: “Some Uses of ‘Good’ in Criticism”

M 12/7  Walton: “How Marvelous! Toward a Theory of Aesthetic Value”

Th 12/10  **Review and Conclusion**

**Final Paper Topics Handed Out**

Fri 12/18  **Final Paper Due**