



EXPRESSIONISM: THEN AND NOW

Fall 2016: Mary Ball Howkins and Mary Snowden

Lifelong Learning Collaborative

Course Description: From Munch, Van Gogh and Ensor to Pollock and Dana Schutz, expressionism in painting has ripped through conventional surfaces. To what use do artists put their expressive imaginations? Are all expressionists antithetical to the notion of beauty? Expressionism in painting has been a thread for over one hundred years. Is it still relevant to artists now? We will explore a selection of artists from the late nineteenth century to the present looking for answers to these questions. Join us!

Class meeting structure: each meeting, from September 13th on, will consist of two participants presentations and class discussion of the images offered via PowerPoint (organized by the presenter or with the help of a coordinator if that program is not familiar). The material to be explored in the course will be organized chronologically so that various forms of Expressionism from the nineteenth century to the present will follow logically via their sequential appearance in the art world.

Discussion of visual, content and media similarities and differences will follow presentations, with the ultimate course goal of ferreting out new understandings and appreciations of what Expressionist artists explored and how each Expressionist movement related to the next. There will be some short lectures by the coordinators to elucidate more complex, obscure or interesting contemporary trends. Short readings may be given out from time to time for clarification of challenging contemporary issues. If you are passionate about a particular artist, we can arrange a short time for you to share your passion and knowledge with the class. Hopefully, we will be able as a group to shape a working definition of Expressionism by the end of the course.

QUESTIONS

- Can we find a working definition for all Expressionist approaches?
- What seemed to motivate the forerunners of 20th century Expressionism to move in that direction?
- Is the Expressionist approach always critical of life's problems?
- How are Abstract Expressionism and Neo-Expressionism distinct from earlier Expressionisms?
- What has become of Expressionism now, in the early 21st century?
- Is there a contemporary undertow of Expressionist rebellion via-a-vis current widespread anxiety in North America?

MEETING SCHEDULE

September 13th: **Introduction**, housekeeping; Howkins lecture: What is Expressionism and what are its roots?

Sept. 20 **The Bridge**, Germany (Ludwig Kirchner, Emile Nolde)

Sept. 27 **Austrian Expressionism** (Egon Schiele, Gustave Klimt)

Oct. 18 **The Blue Rider** (Wassily Kandinsky, Franz Marc) Howkins lecture on Blue Rider Ideals

Oct. 25 **Abstract Expressionism** (Franz Kline) Snowden lecture on Pollock and de Kooning, Guston film

Nov. 1 **Neo-Expressionism** Snowden lecture introducing Neo-expressionism (Eric Fischl, Francesco Clemente)

Nov. 8 **Neo-Expressionism** (Anselm Kiefer, Jorg Immendorff)

Nov. 15 **Contemporary Expressionism** (Marlene Dumas, Ida Applebroog)

Nov. 22 **Contemporary Expressionism** (Nicole Eisenman, Frank Auerbach)

Nov. 29 **Expressionist pairs? How similar are they?** (de Kooning and Applebroog; Eisenman and Ensor) **celebration**