University of Gdańsk

Subject card

Subject name and code	Theory of contemporary visual culture, PG_00168315		
Field of study	History of Art		
Date of commencement of studies	October 2025	Academic year of realisation of subject	2025/2026
Education level	Master's studies	Subject group	Obligatory subject group in the field of study Subject group related to scientific research in the field of study
Mode of study	full-time studies	Mode of delivery	at the university
Year of study	1	Language of instruction	Polish
Semester of study	1	ECTS credits	3.0
Learning profile	academic	Assessment form	credit
Conducting unit	Division of Modern Art -> Institute of Art History -> Faculty of History -> Rector		
Name and surname of lecturer (lecturers)	Subject supervisor	dr Hubert Bilewicz	
	Teachers	dr Hubert Bilewicz	

Lesson types

Lesson type	Lecture	Tutorial	Laboratory	Project	Seminar	SUM
Number of study hours	20.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	20

E-learning hours included: 0.0

Learning activity and number of study hours

Learning activity	Participation in didactic classes included in study plan	Participation in consultation hours	Self-study	SUM
Number of study hours	20	2.0	55.0	77

Subject objectives

The general goal is to familiarize the student with the theoretical aspects of contemporary visual culture; while the specific goals are to provoke reflection on the contemporary iconosphere, sharpen the sense of its critical analysis, revise the procedures of its interpretation and deconstruct hegemonic visual discourses. The art historian's traditional competence as a professional observer will be enriched with alternative optics and non-canonical ways of seeing, while his eyes will be opened wide to the "other" areas of visuality.

Learning outcomes

Course outcome	Subject outcome	Method of verification
[HISTSZMU2_U05] Has the ability to integrate knowledge in art history and apply it to unusual professional situations	K_U05 Has the ability to integrate knowledge in the field of contemporary visual culture and its application in unusual professional situations	[SU1] oral statement/conversation/ discussion [SU4] test/exam - oral or written
[HISTSZMU2_K08] Participates systematically in cultural life, is interested in current cultural events, innovative forms of artistic expression, new phenomena in art	K_K08 Systematically participates in cultural life, is interested in current cultural events, innovative forms of artistic expression, new phenomena in art	[SK1] oral statement/conversation/ discussion [SK4] test/exam - oral or written
[HISTSZMU2_K04] Demonstrates readiness to work for the integration of cultures, carries out independent or group projects in this respect, establishes contacts with cultural institutions	K_K04 Demonstrates readiness to act for the integration of cultures, carries out independent or group projects in this regard, establishes contacts with cultural institutions	[SK1] oral statement/conversation/ discussion [SK4] test/exam - oral or written
[HISTSZMU2_U02] Acquires, verifies, analyses and systematises information relating to the humanities and related sciences, using bibliographies, archival aids, databases and internet resources useful for researching issues related to the arts sciences	K_U02 Acquires, verifies, analyzes, and systematizes information on contemporary visual culture, using bibliographies, archival aids, databases, and Internet resources useful in researching issues related to the art sciences	[SU1] oral statement/conversation/ discussion [SU4] test/exam - oral or written
[HISTSZMU2_U08] Communicates in Polish and foreign languages using professional terminology specific to the arts sciences	K_U08 Communicates in Polish and foreign language using professional terminology appropriate to contemporary visual culture.	[SU1] oral statement/conversation/ discussion [SU4] test/exam - oral or written
[HISTSZMU2_K02] Recognises the importance of knowledge in solving cognitive and practical problems, and is willing to consult experts when having difficulty solving a problem independently	K_K02 Recognizes the importance of knowledge in solving cognitive and practical problems, is willing to consult with experts in case of difficulties in solving the problem independently	[SK1] oral statement/conversation/ discussion [SK4] test/exam - oral or written
[HISTSZMU2_U04] Is able to carry out a critical analysis and interpretation of different types of works of art and other cultural artefacts, using original approaches, taking into account new developments in the humanities in order to determine the meanings, social impact and place of the object under study in the historical-cultural process	K_U04 Be able to carry out a critical analysis and interpretation of different types of contemporary visual culture products, using original approaches, taking into account new developments in the humanities in order to determine the meanings, social impact and place of the studied object in the historical-cultural process	[SU1] oral statement/conversation/ discussion [SU4] test/exam - oral or written
[HISTSZMU2_W02] Has in-depth, structured detailed knowledge in selected areas of the art sciences	K_W02 Has in-depth, structured detailed knowledge of contemporary visual culture.	[SW4] test/exam - oral or written [SW1] oral statement/ conversation/discussion
[HISTSZMU2_W06] Knows and understands the research methods and tools of the art historian's workshop, in particular advanced methods of analysing, interpreting, valuing and problematising works of art and artistic eras	K_W06 Knows and understands the research methods and tools of the art historian's workshop, especially advanced methods of analyzing, interpreting, valuing and problematizing works of contemporary art.	[SW4] test/exam - oral or written [SW1] oral statement/ conversation/discussion
[HISTSZMU2_W07] Has in-depth knowledge of methods of disseminating knowledge in the arts sciences	K_W07 Has an in-depth knowledge of the methods of disseminating knowledge of contemporary visual culture.	[SW4] test/exam - oral or written [SW1] oral statement/ conversation/discussion
[HISTSZMU2_W09] Knows and understands the economic, legal, ethical and other considerations of different professional activities, including the principles of industrial property protection and copyright law	K_W09 Knows and understands the economic, legal, ethical and other conditions of various professional activities, including the principles of protection of industrial property and copyright law.	[SW4] test/exam - oral or written [SW1] oral statement/ conversation/discussion
[HISTSZMU2_K03] Is ready to initiate and carry out activities for the protection and promotion of national and world cultural heritage	K_K03 Is ready to initiate and carry out activities for the protection and promotion of national and world cultural heritage in the field of contemporary visual culture.	[SK1] oral statement/conversation/ discussion [SK4] test/exam - oral or written

Subject contents	The class deals with a broad reflection on current visual culture. The transdisciplinary (or even postdisciplinary?) problem field is defined by: philosophy, history of ideas, cultural anthropology, history of art, architecture and design, sociology and psychology of art, history of customs and contemporary material culture, as well as film and media studies. Sample topics: High culture / low culture; elite culture / popular culture; Free culture; Author / creator; original / repetition; Cultural remix and recycling; Urban art guerrillas; Art (on) the street; Art and censorship; Contemporary Art World and pop culture; Reception of contemporary art: Stereotypes / Prejudices; Right / Left / Art; The Performative Turn; City - Performatics - Art; Art and Political Activism; Between Art Scandal, Blasphemy and Profanity; Feminist Perspective in Art; Bio art and Posthumanism; Animal studies, the study of things and art; Visual Culture and Art History.	
Prerequisites and co-requisites	General knowledge of modern art history and contemporary culture	
Assessment methods and criteria		

Subject passing criteria	Passing threshold	Percentage of the final grade
Coursework	51.0%	90.0%
Attendance	75.0%	10.0%

Recommended reading	Basic literature	Baldwin Elaine, Longhurst Brian, McCracken Scott, Ogborn Miles, Smith Greg, Wstęp do kulturoznawstwa, Zysk i S-ka, Poznań 2007; Antropologia kultury wizualnej. Zagadnienia i wybór tekstów, oprac. Iwona Kurz, Paulina Kwiatkowska, Łukasz Zaremba, Wyd. UW, Warszawa 2012; Barker Chris, Studia kulturowe. Teoria i praktyka, Wyd. UJ, Kraków 2005; Strinati Dominic, Wprowadzenie do kultury popularnej, Zysk i S-ka, Poznań 1998; Burke Peter, Naoczność. Materiały wizualne jako świadectwa historyczne, Wyd. UJ, Kraków 2012; Kultura wizualna w Polsce, t. 1 Fragmenty; t. 2 Spojrzenia, red. Iwona Kurz, Paulina Kwiatkowska, Magda Szcześniak, Łukasz Zaremba, Fundacja Bęc Zmiana, Instytut Kultury Polskiej UW, Warszawa 2017; Mirzoeff Nicholas, Jak zobaczyć świat, Wyd. Karakter, Muzeum Sztuki Nowoczesnej w Warszawie, Kraków Warszawa 2016.
	Supplementary literature	Baldwin Elaine, Longhurst Brian, McCracken Scott, Ogborn Miles, Smith Greg, Wstęp do kulturoznawstwa, Zysk i S-ka, Poznań 2007; Antropologia kultury wizualnej. Zagadnienia i wybór tekstów, oprac. Iwona Kurz, Paulina Kwiatkowska, Łukasz Zaremba, Wyd. UW, Warszawa 2012; Barker Chris, Studia kulturowe. Teoria i praktyka, Wyd. UJ, Kraków 2005; Strinati Dominic, Wprowadzenie do kultury popularnej, Zysk i S-ka, Poznań 1998; Burke Peter, Naoczność. Materiały wizualne jako świadectwa historyczne, Wyd. UJ, Kraków 2012; Kultura wizualna w Polsce, t. 1 Fragmenty; t. 2 Spojrzenia, red. Iwona Kurz, Paulina Kwiatkowska, Magda Szcześniak, Łukasz Zaremba, Fundacja Bęc Zmiana, Instytut Kultury Polskiej UW, Warszawa 2017; Mirzoeff Nicholas, Jak zobaczyć świat, Wyd. Karakter, Muzeum Sztuki Nowoczesnej w Warszawie, Kraków Warszawa 2016.
	eResources addresses	

Example issues/ example questions/ tasks being completed	Cultural anthropology vs. art history High culture vs. popular culture Art and censorship
Work placement	Not applicable

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