

The lectures for this course will be scheduled on Thursday 1-3pm, Spring Term 2013.

PY2005 Philosophy and The Arts

Available to second year students registered on a degree programme within the Faculty of Arts

Value 0.5 Unit

Taught Spring Term

Convenor Neil Gascoigne (English)

Tutors Andrew Bowie (SMLLC), Bob Eaglestone (English), Neil Gascoigne (English), Dan Rebellato (Drama and Theatre), Adam Roberts (English)

Course Outline

Why do we tell stories, paint pictures, make movies, compose music, write poems, make theatrical performances? Is art and culture essentially frivolous escapism or does it have fundamental value to human life? Do we have limitless freedom of interpretation of a work of art? Does the intention of the artist constrain what we can take from a work of art? Are there objective standards for what makes a good film, poem, play, novel, or painting? Or is everyone's valuation of art equally valid? Is there a valid distinction to be made between high art and low culture? Does art simply reflect the values of the society and the times it came from or does it transcend its time?

This half unit course will expose students to current philosophical debates in aesthetics, including questions about the nature and value of art; the roles of intention, imagination and interpretation; and the emotional and ethical responses they provoke. Although theoretically informed, each presentation will be take as its focus particular case studies –a play, poem, musical composition, movie, TV show, novel or any other forms of creative expression – to ground and illuminate the debates.

Structure

The course will be delivered as a ten-week lecture course. Each 90-minute lecture will offer a structured presentation of the key debates, with interactive opportunities for students to develop their own ideas, engaging directly in debates about issues of the lecture.

Opportunities for student engagement and debate will be further facilitated through a special Moodle site, available only to students enrolled on the course.

Assessment

Formative: one page essay plan (0%)

Assessed Essay: 2500 – 3000 words (100%)

Deadlines

Assessed Essay: First day of Week One, Summer Term