

Syllabus

Course title: Creative Writing / Text as a Zone of Thinking				
Language of instruction: English				
Study year and semester: spring 2020/21				
Course coordinator / lecturer: Patrick Tayler				
Contact details: patricktayler@gmail.com				
Level and Code: ...	Position in the Curriculum: ...	Recommended semester: ...	Credits: 5	Teaching hours: 1×120 min session / week
Related codes: ER-THEO-BA-ELM	Type: seminar	Is it open to sign-up as an elective? yes	Specific pre-conditions to sign-up as an elective: -	
Interlinkages: There are no prerequisites to participate in the seminar, which is independent and not connected to any parallel units.				
<p>Aims and Principles:</p> <p>The course investigates the various tactics of writing to find new ways of subverting conventions in art criticism, text-based art pieces and various forms of functional, ‘explaining’ writing. By seeking out well-grounded practices from literature, copywriting, social media and other zones of textuality we aim to discover a wide range of verbal possibilities. During the lessons, we will search for creative responses to the situations when somebody from the art world has to verbalise their thoughts and intuitions. Apart from developing practical writing skills, we examine the creative possibilities of the reader. We will rely on close-reading as a tool of self-reflection. By alluding to a wide range of case studies, we will collectively expand our perspectives in the domain of contemporary art.</p> <p>During the course I will be glad to help you in overcoming any possible language barriers. Whatever the level of your English knowledge might be at the moment, we will find a way to work together!</p>				
<p>Intended learning outcomes (professional and transitive competencies):</p> <p>Knowledge: Gaining new theoretical, practical and artistic perspectives on different forms of art writing. Investigating an expanded notion of creative writing. Utilising the tools and techniques of distinct areas of writing (literature, song lyrics, ad slogans, copywriting, etc.) to enhance personal, art-related projects.</p> <p>Skills: Art writing, creative writing, critical thinking and collaborative skills in text-based cultural interactions.</p> <p>Attitudes/attributes: A self-reflective approach to crafting sentences and paragraphs. An open attitude to creating new meanings through text. Close reading as a way to assure the precise expression of ideas. Charting new, personally relevant territories of thought.</p> <p>Autonomy and Responsibility: Understanding writing as a collective platform for collaboration and engagement. Developing skills in writing to let your personal voice contribute to local and global discourses. Helping you in gaining a more grounded, personal connection to the English language in art-related topics.</p>				

Course content (topics and themes):

The course will evolve and change according to the interests of the students and the direction that the discussion will take us into. Here is a selection of topics and themes we will possibly touch upon:

The Practical Toolkit:

- *How?* – the practical aspects of writing: drafting, restructuring, deleting, spellchecking and finalising
- *Close-reading* – how to construct a well-grounded sentence and paragraph? (case study: Lori Waxman: *60 wrd / min art critic*)
- *Hashtags, comments and posts* – various attitudes in the online sphere (hater, troll, fan, etc.)
- *The meme* (case study: @the_art_gorgeous; @artreviewpower100)
- *Social media as a platform for exchanging ideas* (case study: @jerrysaltz)
- *Subtext* – how do different layers of meaning creep into the equation?
- *Q&A* – how to formulate and answer questions during an interview
- *International Art English* – overcomplicating and simplifying sentences
- *To explain! To question! To sell! To subvert!* – the functions and aims of art writing
- *Boring vs. exciting text* – investigating possible explanations based on examples of literature
- *Subjective vs. objective text* – investigating the viewpoints, angles and the general perspective of the text
- *Linear vs. non-linear text* – writing as a temporal or as a spatial zone of thinking

The Role of Theory in Contemporary Art:

- *Embodiment of knowledge* (case study: *Young Girl Reading Group*)
- *Deconstructing cultural certainties* (case study: *Hungarofuturism*)

Future Perspectives in Art Writing:

- *'Criticofiction'* – facts, post-truth and subjective hallucinations in art writing
- *Alternatives* – extending language with lexical elements from various zones of pop culture

Specificity of the learning process:

Teaching method: We will start each lesson with a presentation on a given topic. A moderated group discussion will follow. In the second half, we will reflect on the finished assignments, examining possible issues and perspectives.

Schedule: Wednesdays, 18¹⁰ – 20¹⁰, online

Possible tasks and assignments (with student notional workload):

- writing an advertisement – implicit and explicit ideas for selling an idea or art object
- explaining an artwork, project or exhibition for different target audiences and age groups
- collecting art talk clichés – writing a generic artwork description that could fit any piece
- handcrafting memes – using language and imagery in the context of a joke to shed light on issues
- group tasks, etc.

Learning environment: online platform

→ classroom at a later stage (depends on the pandemic)

Assessment:

Assignments: Students will be asked to write four short (1000-1500 character) assignments that will be connected to the topics discussed during the seminar. At the end of the course the students will be asked to create a more complex textual piece (4500-5000 characters), that will summarise the scope of the questions and issues touched upon during the seminar.

Assessment method: paper (4500-5000 characters)

Assessment criteria: Evaluation is to be based on the active participation of the student, the 4 short home work assignments and the final seminar paper.

Calculation of grade:

- classroom work (attendance, contribution): 10 %
- 4 short home work assignments: $4 \times 10 \% \rightarrow 40 \%$
- seminar paper: 50 %

Some books and other sources of information you might find useful and interesting:

- Charles Harrison and Paul Wood (ed.): *Art in Theory 1900-2000: An Anthology of Changing Ideas*, 2000, Oxford University Press, Oxford
- Craig Shriver: *Grammar Rules, Writing with Military Precision*, 2001, Kyle Books, London
- Gilda Williams: *How to Write About Contemporary Art*, 2014, Thames & Hudson, London
- Haruki Murakami: *What I talk about when I talk about running*, A memoir, Vintage Books, London, 2008
- Umberto Eco: *How to Write a Thesis*, 1977

Magazines:

- <https://www.juxtapoz.com/>
- <https://hyperallergic.com>
- <https://www.fuktmagazine.com/>
- <https://www.booooooom.com/>
- <https://hifructose.com/>
- <https://artviewer.org/>
- <https://elephant.art/>
- <https://spikeartmagazine.com/>

Theoretical journals:

- <https://www.e-flux.com/>
- <https://www.textezurkunst.de>
- <https://www.theoctobermagazine.com/>
- <http://semiotexte.com/>
- <http://www.cabinetmagazine.org/>
- <https://www.canopycanopycanopy.com/>

A selection of further readings:

- https://www.canopycanopycanopy.com/contents/international_art_english
- <https://www.e-flux.com/journal/45/60103/english-and-all-that/>
- <https://www.e-flux.com/journal/45/60100/international-disco-latin/>
- <https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2013/jan/27/users-guide-international-art-english>
- <https://hyperallergic.com/60675/how-not-to-write-like-an-art-critic/>
- <https://hyperallergic.com/66348/when-artspeak-masks-oppression/>
- https://monoskop.org/images/1/1e/Elkins_James_What_Happened_to_Art_Criticism_2003.pdf

- <http://www.cpanda.org/data/a00052/Visual%20Art%20Critic%20Report.pdf>
- <http://oritgat.com/Art-Criticism-in-the-Age-of-Yelp>
- <https://www.frieze.com/article/altercritics>
- <https://www.frieze.com/article/11-statements-around-art-writing>
- <https://www.frieze.com/article/who-do-you-think-youre-talking>
- <https://www.frieze.com/article/please-release-me>
- <https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/jonathanjonesblog/2009/apr/24/art-criticism>
- <https://archive.ica.art/bulletin/notes-art-criticism-practice>
- https://aklatangbayan.files.wordpress.com/2013/06/state_of_art_criticism.pdf
- <https://60wradmin.org/home.html>

Additional information:

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Prior learning recognition (based on application):

- *recognition is not applicable*

Schedule and venue for personal consultation: I am available for personal consultations (in English, German and Hungarian). You can reach me via email to discuss a one-on-one appointment: patricktaylor@gmail.com.