

## HER-H497/597: Exploring Art in Central Europe

Tentative Syllabus for Summer 2014

### Course Description

This study abroad course will provide students with the opportunity to explore art and culture in Central Europe. After preliminary instructional meetings in Indianapolis, students and faculty will travel as a group to Berlin, Prague, and Vienna, where we will study significant objects and sites in person. The curriculum for this course is fairly flexible. Theoretical approaches to the study of memory will provide the foundation for the independent research projects that students undertake prior to departure and while we are abroad. Through formal presentations, class discussion, and reflective writing, students will synthesize the material and methods they learn from assigned readings and their own analysis of primary sources.

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| Pre-Departure Meetings: | Two 3-hour sessions, dates TBD  |
| Study Abroad Program:   | 9 days in Berlin, including day-trip to Potsdam<br>5 days in Prague<br>7 days in Vienna, including day-trip to Bratislava, Slovakia |
| Post-Travel Meeting:    | One 1-hour session, date TBD  |

### Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course you should be able to:

- Deliver an oral presentation in which you teach your classmates about an object or site in Central Europe that you select and study before encountering it in person.
- Analyze an unfamiliar artwork or site by evaluating form, content, and context, and prepare a research plan that outlines how you will support or expand your findings.
- Describe the ways in which art historical methods can inform and enhance the experience of exploring art and culture abroad.
- Compare and contrast different models for thinking about memory, including postmemory, sites of memory, the urban palimpsest, and screen memories.

### Course Requirements

Readings: Much of what you read for this course will be determined by your independent research project. Many of the assigned texts that we will read as a class are available through Oncourse. There is one required text which you may purchase or borrow from the library:

WG Sebald, Austerlitz, Anthea Bell, transl. (New York: Modern Library, 2011)

Attendance and Participation: This course is structured around class discussion and site visits, so attendance and participation are vital. You should come to each class meeting prepared to discuss assigned readings, share your writing, and engage in collaborative exploration of course material. If you miss more than two meetings without prior consent from the instructor, it is unlikely that you will pass the class.

Assignments:

On-site presentation:

A 15-minute talk about an object or site of your choosing, to be delivered on-location. Prepare follow-up questions for thought to facilitate discussion among your peers.

At our first pre-departure content meeting I will provide a list of sites and objects for you to choose from. Each object/site listing will include at least one research source to get you started, but it will be up to you to do the bulk of the research in order to prepare for your presentation.

Daily journal:

Throughout the trip, you will reflect on your experiences encountering art and culture in Central Europe in person. Entries may evaluate display, objects, and interpretation at the sites we visit, or consider the ways in which the sites we visit and the objects we view engage the different models for understanding memory that we encounter in assigned readings.

With feedback from peer editors, you will transform at least 3 of these entries into blog posts for our class website.

Final essay about a work first encountered abroad:

In this essay, you will consider three main questions: What is your preliminary analysis of the object or site? What else do you want to know about it? Where would you go to seek out that information?

This assignment is due within 3 weeks of the end of the travel portion of the trip.

Graduate students will consult with supervising faculty to develop a personalized research/assignment plan based on student interests. Supplemental work for graduate credit may include additional on-site presentations, additional blog entries, or a research paper.

**Grading\***

Attendance and participation: 30%

On-site presentation: 20%

Daily journal and contributions to program blog: 35%

Essay based on object/site first encountered abroad: 15%

\* Assignments and percentage breakdown for graduate students may vary based on instructor's discretion. Graduate students will consult with instructor to develop an individualized work plan prior to departure.

Late Assignment Policy: You will only receive credit for work that you submit on time. I typically only grant deadline extensions in the case of a documented family or medical emergency. If you think that you will need an extension on an assignment, contact me as early as possible.

### **Class Schedule: Pre-departure**

Orientation meeting 1 (early spring semester): An overview of program structure and basic travel information.

Orientation meeting 2 (April): A detailed review of program logistics, travel information, and health and safety procedures.

Content meeting 1: An introduction to the content and themes of this course

Read:

Pierre Nora, "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire," Marc Roudebush, transl. *Representations*, no. 26 (Spring 1989).

Content meeting 2: Exploring Memory

Read:

Sigmund Freud, "Screen Memories," in *Early Psycho-Analytic Publications*, James Strachey, ed. Vol. 3 (1891-99). *The Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud* (London: The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 1962)

Marianne Hirsch, "The Generation of Postmemory," *Poetics Today* 29:1 (Spring 2008)

Andreas Huyssen, "Berlin as Palimpsest," *Present Pasts: Urban Palimpsests and the Politics of Memory* (Stanford University Press, 2003).

Screen in class:

Orson Welles' *Vienna* (1968) <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6kz39VdxoQc>

### **Class Schedule: Abroad**

While we are traveling, your primary task is to observe and reflect on the objects and sites you encounter. Through group discussions and independent writing activities, you will interpret your experiences as they relate to course readings.

We will meet daily, M-F, for at least 3 hours a day. Class meetings will typically occur at a museum or other cultural site. I will begin each meeting with a brief lecture. We will then have time for student presentations, class discussion, and independent research/exploration of the site we are visiting.

Berlin (9 days total; 6 instructional days, including day-trip to Potsdam)

Read:

Andreas Huyssen, "Monumental Seduction," *New German Critique*, No. 69, Richard Wagner (Autumn 1996), 181-200.

Andreas Huyssen, "Of Mice and Mimesis: Reading Spiegelman with Adorno," *New German Critique*, No. 81, Dialectic of Enlightenment (Autumn 2000), 65-82.

Site visits may include:

- Alexanderplatz (Major commercial hub in early-20th-century Berlin; destroyed during WWII; rebuilt in the 1960s. The largest public square in Germany, Alexanderplatz is now the subject of public debate about future plans for urban development.)
- Altes Museum - Old Museum (Includes well-known collection of Greek and Roman antiquities)
- Alte National Gallerie – Old National Gallery (Collection of 19th-century painting includes works by Caspar David Friedrich, Adolph Menzel, Edouard Manet, Claude Monet, Auguste Renoir, and Auguste Rodin)
- Berlinische Gallerie (Collection features fine art, photography, and architecture, with a local emphasis)
- Brandenburg Gate (A former symbol of the divided city)
- Checkpoint Charlie (Cold War-era border-crossing)
- The Gedächtniskirche - Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church (Symbolic center of West Berlin; after it was bombed during WWII, the west tower was left in ruins as an anti-war memorial.)
- Gemäldegalerie – Picture Gallery (An impressive collection of European painting from the 13th to the 18th centuries; includes works by Botticelli, Dürer, Rembrandt, Rubens and Titian)
- Hamburger Bahnhof – Museum für Gegenwart - Contemporary Art Museum
- Holocaust Memorial (Designed by Peter Eisenmann and Buro Happold; located near the Brandenburg Gate.)
- Neue National Gallerie (Designed by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe; houses Berlin's permanent exhibition of 20th century European art)
- Pergamon Museum (Includes the Collection of Classical Antiquities, the Museum of the Ancient Near East, and the Museum of Islamic Art)
- Potsdamer Platz (An urban hub that was nearly razed during WWII and was divided by the Berlin Wall. 21st-century building projects revitalized the neighborhood.)
- Reichstag (Restored in 1990 as the seat of Parliament in Berlin, featured in 1995 Wrapped Reichstag project by Christo and Jeanne Claude)

Potsdam (day-trip from Berlin)

Site visits may include:

- Sanssouci Park:
  - o Bildergalerie - The Art Gallery at Sanssouci Palace (Collection includes paintings by Caravaggio, Rubens, Reni, Rembrandt, and van Dyck)
  - o The Chinese House (An example of 18th-century Chinoiserie)
  - o Neues Palais - New Palace (Built in the 18th century as a palace for guests of the king.)
  - o Sanssouci Palace (Summer residence of King Frederic II, an exemplar of German rococo architecture)

### Prague (5 days total; 4 instructional days)

Read:

WG Sebald, Austerlitz, Anthea Bell, transl. (New York: Modern Library, 2011)

Site visits may include:

- Artbanka Museum of Young Art (Contemporary Czech and international art)
- Jewish Museum (Includes Pinkas Synagogue, dedicated to Jewish victims of the Holocaust)
- Národní galerie - National Gallery
- Schwarzenberský palác - Schwarzenberg Palace (Collection includes Bohemian art produced from the late 16th through the 18th century)
- Šternberský Palác - Sternberg Palace (Collection primarily features European art from the 14th to 18th centuries)
- Veletržní palác - Trade Fair Palace (Holdings include art from the 19th to 21st centuries)
- Nové Město - The New Town (Includes Vaclavski Namesti - Wenceslas Square, and the state opera)
- Pražský hrad - Prague Castle (Large complex includes St. Vitus Cathedral, three courtyards, and St. George's Basilica)
- Staré Město - The Old Town (An organized walking tour will include Karluv Most – Charles Bridge, Staromestske namesti – Old Town Square, Orloj, - Prague Astronomic Clock, and Jozefov – The Jewish Quarter)
- Uměleckoprůmyslové museum - Museum of Decorative Arts (Collection includes textiles, fashion, applied graphic art, photography, glass, ceramics, and metalwork)

### Vienna (7 days total; 5 instructional days, including day-trip to Bratislava)

Site visits may include:

- 21er Haus (Austrian art from the 20th and 21st centuries)

- Belvedere (Formerly palaces, these baroque structures house Austrian art from the Middle Ages to the 21st century)
- Judenplatz Holocaust Memorial (Designed by Rachel Whiteread.)
- Kunsthistorisches Museum (Formerly an imperial palace, the site now displays one of the most significant art collections in the world, including the largest holdings of works by Bruegel)
- Museum Quartier
- MUMOK- Museum of Modern Art (Art of the 20th and 21st centuries)
- Leopold Museum (Viennese art nouveau, the Vienna Workshop, and Expressionist art)
- Naturhistorisches Museum (Collection of 20 million objects includes the prehistoric stone figure, The Venus of Willendorf)
- Ringstrasse (5.3 kilometer-long boulevard lined with museums, former palaces, and other notable buildings including City Hall, the Austrian Parliament, and the Opera House)
- Secession House (Collection includes Gustav Klimt's 112-foot Beethoven Frieze, an interpretation of the 9th Symphony)
- Schloss Schönbrunn (The baroque complex is the former summer residence of the Habsburg family)
- St. Stephen's Cathedral (Late 15th-century cathedral in the Gothic style)

#### Bratislava (day-trip from Vienna)

Site visits may include:

- Bratislavsky Hrad – Bratislava Castle (Centuries old castle, the site was first inhabited during the Stone Age)
- Katedrál Sv. Martina - St. Martin's Cathedral (Served as coronation church for Hungarian kings between 1563 and 1830)

#### **Class Schedule: Post-Travel**

We will have one follow-up group meeting in either July or August to debrief.