UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Psychology of Art

2021-2-E2004P013

Learning area

2: Study of the psychological aspects underlying communication

Learning objectives

Knowledge and understanding

- Theories and methods in psychology of art.
- The relationship between style, shape and content.
- Structure and aesthetic appreciation.
- The relationship between art and communication.

Applying knowledge and understanding

- Understanding the perceptual, cognitive and affective components of the aesthetic experience .
- The ability to relate to artworks regardless of one's own taste.
- Practical exercises for the development of 'soft skills' relatable to communication practices in arts contexts and in general. The exercises are optional and their function is to highlight problems, critically connect students to their territory, help develop better analytic and synthesis skills.

Contents

How psychology approaches the arts will be analysed, as well as the similarities and differences between the practices of art and science. The following relationships will be discussed: 1) shape, content, and style; 2) art and communication; 3) the role of beauty and the ugliness in art; 4) style versus taste.

Detailed program

- Definitions of ‘art’ and ‘psychology of art’.
- Psychological theories on art. Materials and methods.
- The origins of art: a hypothesis.
- The problem of verisimilitude.
- Art and Science.
- Form e content; style and taste.
- Art and communication.
- Short monographic theme: Drawing as a communication tool.

Prerequisites

It is assumed that the student already passed a course such as Introduction to Psychology and that s/he possesses basic knowledge about history of art.

Teaching methods

Lectures, discussions, video presentations, optional exercises. Optional exercises allow to accumulate bonus points. If the student accumulates at least 10 bonus points, these may positively affect the final score of the exam.

Assessment methods

The exam is written, with thirty multiple-choice questions and three essay questions. With regards to the essay

questions, the accuracy of the answers, the ability to discuss the issue, and the ability to summarize and create connections will be evaluated. Students who attend lessons on a regular basis are allowed to carry out the optional exercises, which allow to accumulate bonus points. If a student accumulates at least 10 bonus points, s/he will receive an exam point if the written exam totalized at least 18/30. Oral integrations are possible and can lead to an increment of maximum 4 points on the exam score.

The modality of the exam will be updated in accordance with the rules for COVID-19 emergency.

Textbooks and Reading Materials

Main text: Massironi M. (2013). *L'osteria dei dadi truccati*. Milano: Mimesis.

A book chosen among the following three:

1. Gombrich, E.H. (qualsiasi edizione). *Freud e la psicologia dell'arte*. Torino: Einaudi.

2. Arnheim, R. (2005). *Guernica. Genesi di un dipinto*. Abscondita
3. Bonfante, L. (2019). *Catastrofi d'arte. Storie di opere che hanno diviso il Novecento.* Joahn & Levi.

All materials published on the course's webpage (lesson slides, movies, images, papers, documents) are also material of study.