



JR 320 ARTS CRITICISM

IES Abroad Vienna

DESCRIPTION:

This course is an introduction to the history and traditions, artists and institutions of the performing and visual arts in Vienna as a basis for writing reviews and criticism for potential publication. Students will learn the principles of professional arts criticism and apply these to current events in theater, music, or visual arts. Students will attend performances and exhibitions and learn to capture in vivid, well-crafted prose the essence and value of an arts event.

CREDITS: 3 credits

CONTACT HOURS: 45 hours

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION: English

METHOD OF PRESENTATION:

- Seminar
- Field work
- Research and interviews

REQUIRED WORK AND FORM OF ASSESSMENT:

The course surveys theater, music, the visual arts, and other cultural events in Vienna. Class time includes lectures and discussion of the principles of professional arts criticism and is accompanied by selected readings that provide an introduction to the artists, ideas and events that have shaped Viennese culture as well as an analysis of representative examples of good criticism from various sources.

Students will be required to attend and review three different types of arts events, conducting interviews and researching the context and history of the work. Written work will be due on the first class of the week following the event. Students are graded on a grasp of the cultural context and how successfully each article achieves its journalistic aim. There will also be in-class assignments to test formal skills.

- Course participation - 10%
- Midterm Exam - 25%
- Final Exam - 25%
- Review papers – 4 X 10 %

Course Participation

Constructive participation starts with being there on time and continues with actively contributing, asking questions, discussing and evaluating readings and goings-on in class.

Grading Rubric for Student Participation

See below

A	Excellent participation The student's contributions reflect an active reading of the assigned bibliography. Skillfully synthesizes the main ideas of the readings and raises questions about the applications and implications of the material. Demonstrates, through questions and comments, that he or she has been capable of relating the main ideas in the readings to the other information discussed in the course, and with his or her own life experience. The student makes informed judgments about the readings and other ideas discussed in class, providing evidence and reasons. He/she respectfully states his/her reactions about other classmates' opinions, and is capable of contributing to the inquiry spiral with other questions. The student gets fully involved in the completion of the class activities.
B	Very good participation The student's contributions show that the assigned materials are usually read. Most of the time the main ideas are identified, even though sometimes it seems that applications and implications of the information read were not properly reflected upon. The student is able to construct over others' contributions, but sometimes seems to interrupt the shared construction to go over tangents. He/she is respectful of others' ideas. Regularly involved in the activities but occasionally loses concentration or energy.
C	Regular participation The participant evidences a regular reading of the bibliography, but in a superficial way. He/she tries to construct over others' ideas, but commonly provides comments that indicate lack of preparation about the material. Frequently, contributions are shallow or unarticulated with the discussion in hand.
F	Insufficient participation Consistently, the participant reads in a shallow way or does not read at all. Does not participate in an informed way, and shows lack of interest in constructing over others' ideas.

Midterm Exam

An essay or a prepared review written in class, and multiple-choice items.

Final Exam

An essay or a prepared review written in class, and multiple-choice items.

Research Paper:

The papers in this course are written reviews, including possibly visual documentation in new media.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- Research and prepare for reviews and interviews in the time available.
- Apply skills of observation to an arts event, expanding their descriptive vocabulary and continuing the development of their own, independent writing voice.
- Apply with some skill and security the principles of professional arts criticism, using the tools of creative non-fiction in making a disciplined and convincing argument.
- Identify and analyze expectations of professional writers in the industry, as well as what steps they need to go through to develop their own writing to this level.



ATTENDANCE POLICY:

IES Vienna requires attendance at all class sessions, including field study excursions, internship meetings, scheduled rehearsals, and all tests and exams. Attendance will be taken for every class. If a student misses more than two classes without an excuse, the final grade will be reduced by one-third of a letter grade (for example, A- to B+) for every additional unexcused absence.

Excused absences are permitted only when:

- 1) A student is ill (health issues),
- 2) When class is held on a recognized religious holiday traditionally observed by the particular student, or
- 3) In the case of a grave incident affecting family members;
- 4) Exceptions may be made for conflicting academic commitments, but only in writing and only well in advance of missed class time.

Please refer to IES Vienna Attendance Policy for details on how to get your absences excused.

CONTENT:

The course will give students a grounding in Viennese culture and break down the process of preparing for and covering arts events into manageable steps and skill-building exercises, including conducting research and interviews, note taking, techniques of description and portraiture, selection of detail, vignette, narrative, and structure. Students learn how to combine observation, interviews and research using the tools of fiction in the service of fact to write reviews of arts events for potential publication.

Students will receive step-by-step practical guidance to develop a clear and informed critical perspective that is well argued and well evidenced and that is also a pleasure to read.

The course includes lecture and discussion of the traditions and principles of professional arts criticism accompanied by readings and analysis of representative examples from various sources.

Assignments include attending current arts events in theater, music, or visual art, and conducting background research and interviews with directors, curators, performers, or relevant scholars, learning what to look for, what questions to ask and how to take good notes. Assignments will also include researching the context and history of the work as well as why it matters and recreating what it was like to be at the event through the use of well observed detail, giving readers insights on the impact and quality of the concept and execution, individual works or performances and the production as a whole.

NOTE: Some of the visits and projects outlined are tentative and preliminary, or not yet defined. We will adapt the course depending on what will be offered in the fall of 2018 by institutions and venues in Vienna. Reading and reviewing assignments may be adjusted accordingly.

Week	Content	Assignments
Week 1	Intro Culture and Place Introduction to Arts Criticism. Goals, elements; the experience of art and how to reflect it. Aesthetics in Vienna. A discussion of the fin-de-siècle situation and of 1918 (the current anniversary year).	Readings (always for the current week): Allan Janik, Vienna 1900, A Creative Milieu (pdfs of the literature quoted will be available online, unless mentioned otherwise). William Zinsser, "On Writing Well" (2006 or earlier editions), selected chapters: 12, Writing about people; 13, Writing about places; and 18: Writing about the arts: critics and columnists. Agree on a date to visit the Otto Wagner show (see below).

		http://www.wienmuseum.at/en/exhibitions/detail/otto-wagner.html
Week 2	City of Stages, City of Dreams Performing Culture; traditions of theater in Vienna; Johann Nepomuk Nestroy, Max Reinhardt, Thomas Bernhard: examples of representing Austrian reality on stage. Writing a review: what to look for, how to take notes, choosing an angle, structuring the story. A choice of one of the following stage performances, to be reviewed by mid-October: - Theater an der Josefstadt: Schnitzler: <i>Professor Bernardi</i>, Sept. 26 or Oct. 4. - Burgtheater: Mann: <i>Mephisto</i>, Sept. 22, 25 or Oct. 3. (Copy of the eponymous movie will be available.) - Akademietheater: <i>Koltès – Kampf des Negers und der Hunde</i>, Sept. 29, 30 or Oct. 3. - <i>Details to follow.</i>	Readings: Carl Schorske, Ch.1, "Politics and the Psyche: Schnitzler and Hofmannsthal" (from <i>Fin de Siècle Vienna</i>), and Ch.2, "the Ringstrasse, Its Critics, and the Birth of Urban Modernism". Arthur Schnitzler, <i>Professor Bernardi</i>. Clive James, "Arthur Schnitzler" in: <i>Cultural Amnesia</i>. Specific passages in Edmund Burke Feldman, "Practical Art Criticism"; details to be determined. Visit to the exhibition "Otto Wagner" at the Wien Museum (until Oct. 7) (to be reviewed later on)
Week 3	Music, Part I 1. The Opera: What makes Viennese opera Viennese: composers, houses, traditions. 2. The role of music in Viennese culture. A choice of one of the following opera performances, to be reviewed by the end of October: - Staatsoper: Tchaikovsky: <i>Eugen Onegin</i>, Oct. 5, 7, 10, 13 - Staatsoper: R. Strauss: <i>Elektra</i>, Oct. 16, 19, 22, 25 - Volksoper: Kalman: <i>Csárdásfürstin</i>, Oct. 4, 9, 15 - Theater an der Wien: Rossini: <i>Guillaume Tell</i>, Oct. 13, 16, 18, 21, 23, 27	Readings: Herbert Linderberger, "On Opera and Society (assuming a relationship)" (pp. 44-61) and "A brief consumers' history of opera" (pp. 219-262) from <i>Situating Opera – Period, Genre, Reception</i> (2010). Alex Ross, "The Golden Age: Strauss, Mahler and the Fin de Siècle," from <i>The Rest is Noise</i> (2007). Librettos for works to be reviewed.

Week 4	Music, Part II 1. The concert stage: context, composers, culture, performance traditions. 2. Bringing music alive on the page.	Readings: George Bernard Shaw, "The Point of View" (Preface to London Music 1888-89) Hans Fantel, "Land of the Waltz", in Fodor's Vienna and the Danube Valley (2001) pp. 38-42. Lawrence Kramer, "Crisis and Memory," from Why Classical Music Still Matters (2007), pp. 171 - 204. Marjorie Perloff, "From the Ringstrasse to the King's Road: Arnold Schönberg and John Cage," from The Vienna Paradox (2003). Reviews: To be announced.
	No class on October 18	
Week 5	Heuriger, Wienerlied and Cabaret: beyond classical music 1. Of Taverns and Tyrants: Satire as rebellion; Nostalgia, Decadence and Death. 2. Wiener Kabarett – the Viennese Cabaret/Stage Comedy/"Doppelconference". 3. From the 1920s to post-War Vienna: Helmut Qualtinger, Gerhard Bronner, Georg Kreisler et al. 'Poisoning Pigeons in the Park': The lawsuit, Tom Lehrer vs. Georg Kreisler. 4. Qualtinger, Der Herr Karl, and the sequel by Josef Hader: Hader im Keller MIDTERM	Readings: Franz Endler, "The Brothers Schrammel," and "The Viennese Popular Song," in: Vienna, A Guide to Its Music and Musicians, 1989, pp.73-81). Paul Hofmann, "Wine Mystique," (The Viennese, 1988, pp.14-19) Alan Levy, "The Law of the Heuriger", in: Fodor's Vienna and the Danube Valley, 2001, pp.44-47. Friedrich Torberg, Tante Jolesch or the Decline of the West in Anecdotes. (2008; see also: http://www.ariadnebooks.com/ProductInfo.aspx?productid=157241149X) Reviews: TBA
	Fall break	
Week 6	Vienna in comparison with the other cultural centers in Europe London, Paris, Vienna, Berlin: The cultural centers around the fin-de siècle: Their differences, similarities and developments after WW1.	Reading: Berlinische Galerie & Belvedere Wien (Eds.), <i>Vienna – Berlin. Art of Two Cities from Schiele to Grosz</i> (2013) Howard Segel, <i>Turn-of-the-Century Cabaret: Paris, Barcelona, Berlin, Munich, Vienna, Cracow, Moscow, St. Petersburg, Zurich</i> (1987)

		Malcolm Bradbury, "The Cities of Modernism" from Modernism, 1890-1930 (1976).
Week 7	Visual and applied arts, part 1 The past: brief overview of applied arts and architecture in the 18 th and 19 th centuries; Maria Theresa; Joseph II; Fischer von Erlach; Biedermeier and Historicism. 20 th century Jugendstil and Modernism; Gustav Klimt, Otto Wagner. Wiener Werkstätte and "Red Vienna" – aspects of applied art and architecture between the Wars; Haus Wittgenstein.	Readings: Carl Schorske, "Gustav Klimt: Painting and the Crisis of the Liberal Ego," in <i>Fin de Siècle Vienna</i> , (1980) Ch. 5. Martina Pippal, <i>A Short History of Art in Vienna</i> , (2001). Allan Janik and Stephen Toulmin, "Culture and Critique, Social Criticism and the Limits of Artistic Expression," in <i>Wittgenstein's Vienna</i> (1973) Ch. 4. Bruno Munari, Design as Art, Penguin Modern Classics (2009). <i>Vienna Modernism, 1890-1910</i> , Federal Press Service (1999). Visit plus reviews of special exhibits at the MAK Museum of Applied Arts and/or Belvedere.
Week 8	Visual and applied arts, part 2: Post-war and contemporary arts and cultural politics Restoration, restitution and new beginnings: an overview. Viennese and Austrian movements and groups: Fantastic Realism, "Aktionismus", konkrete Poesie. Hundertwasser: "Green" artist avant la lettre and producer of anti-modernist/anti-geometric architecture and design. Post-modern architecture: Coop Himmelblau, Hausrucker & Co., Hans Hollein.	Readings: Hundertwasser: "Green" artist avant la lettre and producer of anti-modernist/anti-geometric architecture and design. Visit and reviews: to be selected from Kunsthalle, Museum Koderer Kunst (MuMoK), Design Center, Architekturzentrum Wien, Quartier 21 (all at Museumsquartier), Hundertwasserhaus & KunstHaus Wien (both by Hundertwasser); contemporary art galleries A visit by Allan Janik may be arranged. See e.g. http://www.uib.no/en/fof/63035/allan-janik-philosophical-importance-wittgensteins-war-experiences
Week 9	The image of Vienna in cinema: Vienna as backdrop, urban reality, state of mind. From earliest examples (frères Lumière) to <i>Heimatfilme</i> and stark post-WW2 reality to a modern urban setting. How to review a movie.	Excerpts from following movies: <i>The Third Man</i> (1949) <i>Sissi</i> (1955) <i>Scorpio</i> (1973) <i>The Night Porter</i> (1974) <i>Amadeus</i> (1984) <i>Before Sunrise</i> (1995) <i>Museum Hours</i> (2012) <i>Sommer in Wien</i> (2015)

		Introductory reading on movie reviewing: https://edusson.com/blog/how-to-write-movie-review Current examples of movie reviews in www.metacritic.com (specific movies to be discussed)
Week 10	Review of the course; additional items ad lib	
Week 11	Final Exam	

REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDED READINGS:

Books, Selections and Excerpts:

- Berger, John, *Ways of Seeing*, Penguin Modern Classics (1972).
- Brayfield, Celia, *Arts Reviews: And How to Write Them*, Creative Essentials (2008).
- Feldman, Edmund Burke, *Practical Art Criticism*, Pearson (1994).
- Hofmann, Paul, *The Viennese: Splendor, Twilight and Exile*, Anchor Books (1988). Selections.
- Johnston, William, *The Austrian Mind* (1972), Part 2, *Aestheticism and Vienna*.
- Kramer, Lawrence, *Why Classical Music Still Matters*, Univ. of California Press (2007). Selections.
- Munari, Bruno, *Design as Art*, Penguin Modern Classics (2009). Excerpt.
- Pippal, Martina, *A Short History of Art in Vienna*, (2001).
- Perloff, Marjorie, *The Vienna Paradox*, (2003). Selections.
- Rich, Alan, *Simon & Schuster Listener's Guide to Opera*, Simon & Schuster (1980).
- Schnitzler, Arthur, *Traumnovelle (Dream Story)*, 1926. Penguin Modern Classics (1999).
- Schorske, Carl, *Fin-de-Siecle Vienna: Politics and Culture*, Vintage, New York (1981). Selections.
- Torberg, Friedrich, *Tante Jolesch and the Decline of the West in Anecdotes*, Ariadne Press (2008)
- Zinsser, William, *On Writing Well*, Collins (2006)

Articles:

- Canby, Vincent, "Salieri, Still a Perfect Prism for Mozart's Genius," (2000).
- Endler, Franz, "The Brothers Schrammel," and "The Viennese Popular Song," (in *Vienna, A Guide to Its Music and Musicians*, 1989, pp.73-81)
- Fantel, Hans, "Land of the Waltz," in *Fodor's Vienna and the Danube Valley* (1992) pp. 38-42.
- Hofmann, Paul, *The Viennese: Splendor, Twilight and Exile*, Anchor Books (1988). Selections.
- James, Clive, *Cultural Amnesia: Notes in the Margins of My Time*, Picador (2007). Selections.
- Janik, Allan and Toulmin, Stephen, "Culture and Critique, Social Criticism and the Limits of Artistic Expression," *Wittgenstein's Vienna* (1973) Ch.4.
- Levy, Alan, "The Law of the Heuriger," (in *Fodor's Vienna and the Danube Valley*, 1992, pp.44-47).
- New York Times: "Bernard Shaw Snubs England," *Pygmalion* premieres at the Hofburgtheater, Vienna, Oct 16, 1913; "The Modest Shaw Again," (23.11 1913)
- Orwell, George, "Why I Write", from *Collected Essays* (1961).
- Rich, Alan, "Schubert Finished and Unfinished" in *So I've Heard*, Amadeus Press (2006).
- Ross, Alex, "The Golden Age: Strauss, Mahler and the Fin de Siecle," from *The Rest is Noise* (2007)
- Shaw, G.B., "The Point of View," *Preface to London Music, 1888-9*, Vienna House Edition (1973). First published, 1937.

Current periodicals:



- Metropole (monthly magazine about life in Vienna, in English)
- Falter (weekly Vienna city paper, extended arts & culture section, in German)
- Die Presse, Standard (daily papers, art & culture sections)