

**ART WORLDS, SCENES AND BOHEMIAS**

**MDIA 321: Special Topics**  
**TRIMESTER 2, 2006**

∞ **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The social shape of artistic worlds has long been an object of fascination for scholars seeking to explain the social function and value of cultural and media production. Beyond the singular artistic act, there exists a social world in which the artist finds him or herself, one which provides, among other things, support networks, various resources, inspiration, and labour. This course is designed to historically situate many of the studies of artist-centered social *milieux*, within which we will define *media* broadly to include a variety of artistic practices and objects. With this definition in mind, we will move from the dominance and eventual decline of the patronage system and salons, charting the emergence of the independent artist during the nineteenth century, and conclude with twentieth-century examples.

We will take the different models used in the study of cultural worlds and examine them in relation to specific media forms (painting, film, poetry, music, new media). In moving from the life and work of Courbet to Warhol, from the Beats to Punk, this course is above all concerned with the sociological dimensions of cultural and media production and will therefore take a number of related areas into consideration, including politics, spatial and social relations in the city, the complex figuration and role of the bourgeoisie/straight society/mainstream as 'other,' as well as the function of gender, race, sexuality and class as markers of inclusion and/or exclusion.

There will be optional screenings held on Friday afternoons. Students are not required to come, but are encouraged to attend these screenings as many of these films are not easy to obtain and/or view outside of this course.

∞ **COORDINATOR**

**Dr. Geoff Stahl**  
42-44 Kelburn Parade, Room 103  
Office Hours: Thursday & Friday 10:00-12:00, and by appointment  
✉ [geoff.stahl@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:geoff.stahl@vuw.ac.nz)  
☎ 463-5233 ext. 7472

∞ **COURSE FORMAT**

Once weekly two-hour lecture  
Once weekly tutorial (to begin Week Two)

∞ **MEETING TIME AND PLACE**

Wednesday 11-12:50, Trimester 2  
Room: HU LT 119  
Screenings (Optional): Fridays 15:00-17:00

**Room: KK 202**

∞ **TUTORIALS**

**Tutorials begin in the second week of class. A list of groups and tutors will be posted on the notice board in the office of Media Studies, Kelburn Parade 42-44. They will also be posted on Blackboard.**

∞ **COURSE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

**This course is designed to introduce students to issues, ideas and categories used to describe and analyze cultural production in relation to a range of media. Culture and the media are broadly defined here, which will allow the student to explore a variety of issues that relate to the social worlds associated with the production and consumption of different types of media and artistic practices.**

**The course will concentrate on the value of selected descriptive categories, referring to examples that relate to specific historically situated artistic *milieux*.**

**The students will be introduced to differing approaches in order to provide an overview of some of the issues that define media studies and the social worlds related to the production of culture, as they unfold in historical contexts.**

**Students will be expected to understand and put into use critical terms and concepts they are presented with in the course in the form of oral presentations and written assignments.**

**The ultimate objective of the course is to deepen the student's historical knowledge of media and its social aspects, by introducing them to a range of possible analytical methods and modes of conceiving those worlds associated with cultural production as they have been described from the mid-nineteenth century through to the present day.**

∞ **WORK LOAD**

**Students are expected to devote at least twenty hours per week to the course (including attending lectures and tutorials, as well as class preparation and library time).**

∞ **COURSE ASSESSMENT**

**There are three pieces of assessment for this course.**

**Students are required to submit ONE reading report, based on one week's readings. You are expected to give a *précis* of the readings and then engage with them critically. You can use secondary sources, at your discretion**

<b>∞ Length is <u>500-600</u> words.</b>	<b>[30% of total grade]</b>
<b>Due Date:</b>	<b>Friday, August 11, 4 PM</b>

**Students will also be expected to do ONE oral presentation, to be given in tutorials, and based on a reading different than those chosen for their reading reports.**

⌘ Length is 10-12 minutes. [10% of total grade]

The final assignment is ONE essay, based on an area or object of interest that takes up a select number of issues discussed in lectures and readings. It can be an example drawn from the past or a study based on a contemporary case. You are expected to discuss the topic with the lecturer before starting your assignment. You can use many of the articles included in your course readings, but as this is a research assignment you should refer to secondary sources. Internet sources are to be limited to 20% of your references. Use of Wikipedia is discouraged. Please use proper academic sources and a consistent citation style. If in doubt as to what constitutes an academic source, please ask the course coordinator.

⌘ Length is 3000-3500 words. [60% of total grade]  
Due Date: October 27, 2006

➤ Assessment Breakdown:	1 Reading Reports:	30%
	1 Oral Presentation:	10%
	1 Final Essay:	60%

You are expected to attend all tutorials. Please notify me if you cannot make a tutorial, as absenteeism will affect your final grade.

∞ COMMUNICATION OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Course information will be made available through Blackboard. Please be sure to check your Blackboard pages regularly as information regarding the course will be posted there. Students are encouraged to use the Discussion board to address questions regarding assignments, set up study groups, etc.

∞ REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION POLICY – STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The University has a policy of reasonable accommodation of the needs of students with disabilities. The policy aims to give students with disabilities an equal opportunity with all other students to demonstrate their abilities. If you have a disability, impairment or chronic medical condition (temporary, permanent or recurring) that may impact on your ability to participate, learn and/or achieve in lectures and tutorials or in meeting the course requirements, then please contact the Course Coordinator as early in the course as possible. Alternatively you may wish to approach a Student Adviser from Disability Support Services to confidentially discuss your individual needs and the options and support that are available.

Disability Support Services are located on Level 1, Robert Stout Building, or phoning 463-6070, email [disability@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:disability@vuw.ac.nz). Joost de Bruin is the Media Studies' Disability Liaison Person and can be reached at: [joost.debruin@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:joost.debruin@vuw.ac.nz).

∞ UNIVERSITY REQUIREMENTS AND ACADEMIC GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

Students should familiarize themselves with the University's requirements, particularly those regarding assessment and course of study requirements, and formal academic grievance procedures, contained in the Statutes in the Calendar, and should read the requirements of this course outline in that context. The Calendar also contains the Statute on Conduct which ensures that members of the University community are able to work, learn, study and participate in the academic and social aspects of the University's life in an environment of safety and respect.

**The statute contains information on what conduct is prohibited and what steps can be taken if there is a complaint.**

**If you have any academic problems with your course, you should talk to the tutor or lecturer concerned, or meet with the Head Convenor. If you are not satisfied with the result of that meeting, see the Head of School, or the Associate Dean (Students) of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences. Class representatives are available to assist you with this process.**

☞ **PLAGIARISM**

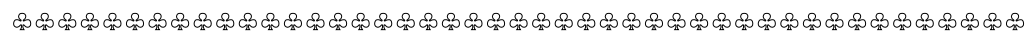
**Plagiarism is a form of academic dishonesty that involves claiming someone else's work (or ideas) as your own. Plagiarism sometimes arises because students are not aware of how to reference other people's work correctly. This, however, is not a defence. Plagiarism is defined by this University as follows:**

**Plagiarism is presenting someone else's work as if it were your own, whether you mean to or not.**

**'Someone else's work' means anything that is not your own idea, even if it is presented in your own style. It includes material from books, journals or any other printed source, the work of other students or staff, information from the Internet, software programmes and other electronic material, designs and ideas. It also includes the organization or structuring of any such material.**

**Students who commit any form of plagiarism outlined above are risking an automatic fail for the piece of work involved. To find out more about plagiarism and how to avoid it, see the University's website at: [www.vuw.ac.nz/home/studying/plagiarism.html](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/home/studying/plagiarism.html)**

**You will also find detailed explanations and rules regarding quoting and referencing in the Guidelines for SEFTMS Students.**



**Week One \***

**INTRODUCTION/GROUNDWORK**

Cultural sociology... is concerned with the social processes of all cultural production, including those forms of production which can be designated as ideologies. This defines a field, but the work now being done, from so many different starting points, is still a convergence of interests and methods, and there are still crucial theoretical differences at every stage.

- Raymond Williams, The Sociology of Culture (1982)

Alexander, Victoria D. "Artists," in Sociology of the Arts: Exploring Fine and Popular Forms, New York: Blackwell, 2003. pp. 131-151.

Wolff, Janet. "The Social Production of Art," in The Social Production of Art, New York: New York University Press, 1993. pp. 26-48.

**Week Two \***

**BEGINNINGS**

I am incapable of teaching my own art, or the art of any school whatsoever, as I hold that art cannot be taught, and believe art is completely individual. For each particular artist it is nothing more or less than a talent of his own inspiration, and his own studies of the artistic tradition.

- Gustave Courbet, "Letter to Young Artists" (1861)

Shiner, Larry. "The Artist, the Work, and the Market"; "The Exalted Image of the Artist," in The Invention of Art, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003. pp. 99-129; 197-212.

Hauser, Arnold. "The Social Status of the Renaissance Artist," in The Sociology of Art: A Reader, Jeremy Tanner, ed., New York: Routledge, 2003. pp. 113-122.

☛ *La Commune (Paris 1871)* (Peter Watkins, 2000)

**Week Three \***

**BOHEMIA**

A bohemian may be defined as the only kind of gentleman permanently in temporary difficulties who is neither a sponge nor a cheat. He is a type that has existed in all ages and always will exist. He is a man who lacks certain elements necessary to success in this world, who manages to keep fairly even with the world, by dint of ingenious shift and expedient; never fully succeeding, never wholly failing. He is a man, in fact, who can't swim, but can tread water.

- H.C. Bunner, Invading Bohemia (1896)

In addition to the glamour of the free, dreamy interludes of bohemian life as popularly conceived, bohemia is a necessity to certain types. It is the asylum of the egoist. For the opportunist it appears to be the most direct road to intimacy with the brilliant and creative and even the most ordinary occasions combine the cultured atmosphere with the unconventional.

- George Snyderman & William Josephs, The Underworld of Art (1939)

Baudelaire, Charles. "Ill-Starred," "Parisian Dream," "The Happy Dead Man," in The Flowers of Evil, trans. George Dillon and Edna St. Vincent Millay, Harper and Brothers Publishers: New York, 1936. pp. 49, 53-59, 257.

-. "The Painter of Modern Life" in The Painter of Modern Life and Other Essays, New York: Phaidon, 1995. pp. 1-41. (*optional reading*)

Benjamin, Walter. "On Some Motifs in Baudelaire," "Paris: Capital of the Nineteenth Century," in Rethinking Architecture: A Reader in Cultural Theory, Neil Leach, ed., New York: Routledge, 1997. pp. 24-40.

Murger, Henri. "The Bohemians of the Latin Quarter: Original Preface, 1850," in On Bohemia: The Code of the Self-Exiled, Cesar Graña and Marigay Graña, eds., New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1990. pp. 42-50.

Bourdieu, Pierre. "A Structural Subordination"; "Bohemia and the Invention of an Art of Living"; "The 'Rupture' with the Bourgeoisie"; "Baudelaire the Founder," in The Rules of Art: Genesis of Structure of the Literary Field, trans. Susan Emanuel, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992. pp. 47-68.

☛ *La Vie de Bohème* (Aki Kaurismaki, 1993)

**Week Four \*                    PARIS: THE NINETEENTH CENTURY WORLD CITY**

The universe does nothing but gather the cigar butts of Paris.

• Theophile Gautier, Paris et les Parisiens au XIX<sup>e</sup> Siecle (1856)

du Maurier, George. "Decor for a Bohemian Studio," in Graña and Graña. pp. 280-281.

Clark, T.J. "The View from Notre Dame," in The Painting of Modern Life: Paris in the Art of Manet and His Followers, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982. pp. 23-78.

☛ *Paris: Spectacle of Modernity* (Neil Levinson, 1987)  
*Paris, Roman d'une Ville* (Stan Neumann, 1993)

**Week Five \*                    INTO THE TWENTIETH CENTURY: PARIS REVISITED**

More and more the passport to both popularity and society is ostentatious display; and though it is silly to say that the Parisians themselves are better-behaved, yet it is true to say that the unprecedented influx of foreigners since the War has helped to throw the classes together in a higgledy-piggledy vulgarity, and has converted Paris into a vast bazaar of pleasure.

A cocktail epoch! That is a good phrase which will doubtless stick.

• Sisley Huddleston, Bohemian Literary and Social Life in Paris (1928)

Seigel, Jerrold. "From Bohemia to Avant-Garde: Dissolving Boundaries," in Graña and Graña. pp. 796-806.

Hewitt, Nicholas. "Shifting Cultural Centres in Twentieth-Century Paris," in Parisian Fields, Michael Sheringham, ed., London: Reaktion Books, 1996. pp. 30-45.

☛ ***The Moderns* (Alan Rudolph, 1988)**

**Week Six \* WEIMAR BERLIN**

It happens from time to time that I fail to distinguish a cabaret from a crematorium, and pass certain scenes actually intended to be amusing, with the quiet shudder that the attributes of death still elicit.

- Joseph Roth, "Architecture" (1929)

Jelavich, Peter. "Introduction"; "Cabaret as Metropolitan Montage," in Berlin Cabaret, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993. pp. 1-9, 10-35.

Sladek, Maximilian. "Our Show," in The Weimar Republic Sourcebook, Anton Kaes, et al, eds., California: University of California Press, 1994. p. 556.

Goebbels, Joseph. "Around the Gedächtniskirche," in Kaes, et al. pp. 560-562.

Moreck, Curt. "We Will Show You Berlin," in Kaes, et al. pp. 563-564.

Hollaender, Friedrich. "Cabaret," in Kaes, et al. pp. 566-567.

Hitler, Adolf. "Speech Inaugurating the 'Great Exhibition of German Art'" in Art in Theory: 1900-2000, Charles Harrison and Paul Wood, eds., London: Blackwell, 2003. pp. 439-441.

☛ ***Blue Angel* (Josef von Sternberg, 1929)**

**Week Seven \* THE AMERICAN EXAMPLE**

Against images of the metropolis as the chaotic site of a harsh and undisciplined modernity, the bohemians promoted notions of the city as infinitely knowable and nourishing.

- Christine Stansell, American Moderns (2000)

The Bohemianism of the 1950s...is hostile to civilization; it worships primitivism, instinct, energy, "blood." To the extent that it has intellectual interests at all, they run to mystical doctrines, (and) irrationalist philosophies.... The only art the new Bohemians have any use of is jazz, mainly of the cool variety. Their predilection for bop language is a way of demonstrating solidarity with the primitive vitality and spontaneity they find in jazz and of expressing contempt for coherent, rational discourse which, being a product of the mind, is in their view a form of death.

- Norman Podhoretz, The Know-Nothing Bohemians (1958)

Becker, Howard. "The Culture of a Deviant Group: The Jazz Musician," in The Subcultures Reader, Ken Gelder and Sarah Thornton, eds., New York: Routledge, 1997. pp. 55-65.

Mailer, Norman. "The White Negro," in Graña and Graña. pp. 185-194.

Kerouac, Jack. "The Origins of the Beat Generation," in Graña and Graña. pp. 195-202.

☛ ***The Beat Generation* (Janet Forman, 1998)**

**Week Eight \*                    ART WORLDS AND THE CITY**

The artworld allows for such safe postmodern distancing. Just like the treadmill fetishists need. Just as reduced lazy perverts spout when they're frantically trying to defend themselves against criminal prosecution. Grubbing job-hunting artists and art aficionados who prefer art that "raises questions" are certainly as disgusting as those rubbered dilettantes who recognize that the answers are what you masturbate over. Once you're out of school, you can't appreciate mere questions. Unless, of course, you'd prefer to not acknowledge the responses that those questions produce in public.

So better to just shut your fucking mouth.  
• Whitehouse, *Cruise* (2001)

It seems to me that there is no consensus within the art world about what all this stuff is being done for, who benefits, and what the nature of those benefits might be. So I want to ask why people make art (or any other cultural activity) in the first place, and what they get from doing it.  
• Brian Eno, *W Magazine* (1996)

Becker, Howard. "Art Worlds and Collective Activity," in Art Worlds, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982. pp. 1-39.

Kadushin, Charles. "Networks and Circles in the Production of Culture," in The Production of Culture, Richard A. Peterson, ed., New York: Sage, 1976. pp 107-122.

Crane, Diana. "Class Cultures in the City: Culture Organizations and Urban Arts Cultures," in The Production of Culture: Media and the Urban Arts, Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1992. pp. 109-142.

☛ ***Downtown 81* (Edo Bertoglio, 2000)**

**Week Nine \*                    THE SITUATIONIST CITY**

La beauté est dans la rue.  
Sur les pavés, la plage.  
• Situationist slogans (1968)

Debord, Guy. "Writings from the Situationist International," in Harrison and Wood, London: Blackwell, 2003. pp. 701-707.

Sadler, Simon. "Rethinking the City," in The Situationist City, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999. pp. 69-103.

☛ ***La société du spectacle* (Guy Debord, 1973)**

**Week Ten \*                    SUBCULTURES**

Subcultures represent noise (as opposed to sound): interference in the orderly sequence which leads from real events and phenomena to their representation in the media. We should



therefore not underestimate the signifying power of the spectacular subculture not only as a metaphor for potential anarchy 'out there' but as an actual mechanism of semantic disorder: a kind of temporary blockage in the system of representation.

- Dick Hebdige, Subculture: The Meaning of Style (1979)

Hebdige, Dick. "Subculture: The Meaning of Style," in Gelder and Thornton, eds., New York: Routledge, 1998. pp. 130-144.

Frith, Simon. "The Punk Bohemians," in *New Society* (9 March, 1978). pp. 535-536.

Fischer, Claude. "Toward a Subcultural Theory of Urbanism," in *American Journal of Sociology*, 80 (6). pp. 1319-1341.

☛ *D.O.A: Rite of Passage* (Lech Kowalski, 1978)

#### Week Eleven \* ART SCENES/MUSIC SCENES

There is no doubt that, looked at coldly and calmly, the New Bohemia is berserk. The great, unknown, and forbidding territory of insanity is being tapped as a natural resource—not in the quest of sickness, but in the quest of an expanded idea of sanity.

- John Gruen, The New Bohemia (1966)

Pop was not an isolated art. It came with an entire Pop scene in which everything was Pop. In other words, what happened is that it was truly an expression of its moment; the clothes, people, vinyl, movies, fads... it was so new that it took our breath away. The high luster of it was the way we were living; the parties we were giving, the good times, the Pop scene, the whole crack out of breaking the old mores, traditions; and living was swinging; and it was exemplified by the fact that an artist can do it on canvas or do it with his work. There were no more restrictions. Everything is possible. Everything was possible. And that's what we learned from Pop.

- Robert Scull (1972)

Blum, Alan. "Scenes," in *Public* (22/23), Fall 2001. pp. 7-35.

Straw, Will. "Cultural Scenes," in *Society and Leisure*, Vol. 27, No. 2 (2004). pp. 411-422.

☛ *Ciao! Manhattan* (John Palmer and David Weisman, 1972)

#### Week Twelve \* NEW BEGINNINGS OR THE SAME OLD STORY?

The Bohemian served a useful purpose in his day, and, while we may sigh over his passing, we are just as glad his day is over because it means that we are finally on the way to producing that cultural climate in which the Bohemian will be unnecessary and the artist will take his place as a useful and respected member of society.

- Robert Dunavon, The Revolution in Bohemia (1958)

Thornton, Sarah. "The Social Logic of Subcultural Capital" in Gelder and Thornton, eds. pp. 200-209.

**Muggleton, David. "The Post-Subculturalist," in The Club Cultures Reader, Steve Redhead, Derek Wynne, Justin O'Connor, eds., New York: Blackwell Publishers, 1997. pp. 185-203.**

**McRobbie, Angela. "Clubs To Companies: Notes On The Decline Of Political Culture In Speeded Up Creative Worlds" in *Cultural Studies*, Vol. 16, No. 4 (July 2002). pp. 516-531.**

☛ ***24-Hour Party People* (Mike Figgis, 2001)**