

Phil of Beauty 3502. MW 11-12.15. Fall 2012. A. Nuzzo. [anuzzo@brooklyn.cuny.edu](mailto:anuzzo@brooklyn.cuny.edu) Office hours by appointment.

### I. Course Description

What is beauty and what is the sublime in nature and art? On what are our judgments regarding beauty based? What do we express when we judge something beautiful? Is beauty only a matter of individual, subjective "taste" or does beauty claim a more universal validity? Is there a relation between aesthetic and moral values? In this course we will discuss these questions guided by texts by Plato, Plotinus, Hume, Burke, Kant, Hegel, and Benjamin among others. The study of Kant's "Critique of Aesthetic Judgment" will occupy a central part of the course. The format of the course includes lecture, class discussion, and student presentation. Particular emphasis will be placed on the careful reading, interpretation, and discussion of texts. **Objectives:** The course will teach (i) how to read, explain, analyze, and critically interpret philosophical texts; (ii) how to extend the discussion to touch upon contemporary philosophical issues and problems; (iii) how to follow historical development of ideas.

**II. Required Texts** \* course pack to be purchased at Far Better Copies, Campus Rd.

- Plato, *Republic*, Book X (course pack)\*; Plotinus, (course pack).
- D. Hume, *Of the Standard of Taste* (course pack or: <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1760hume-taste.html> )
- E. Burke, *A Philosophical Inquiry Into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful*, Oxford UP, 1998.
- I. Kant, *Critique of Judgment*, trans. by W. Pluhar, Hackett.
- G.W.F. Hegel, *On Art, Religion, and the History of Philosophy*, ed. by G. Gray, Hackett.
- A. Nuzzo, *Kant and the Unity of Reason*, Purdue University Press, 2005.
- W. Benjamin, *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction* (course pack or: <http://bid.berkeley.edu/bidclass/readings/benjamin.html> )

### III. Assignments

1. *Midterm exam and Final paper* (30% of final grade each). Final paper: 7-10pp., **due Fri Dec. 14**. No late papers accepted.
  2. *Protocol* (10% of final grade). You are responsible for 2-3 *protocols* (depending on class size) in which you will present briefly what we discussed in the previous class (1 page typewritten summary in a coherent narrative, not an outline). At the beginning of each class you should give a copy of the protocol to all participants. The protocol is to be read by the student at the beginning of class.
  3. *Oral Presentation* (20% of final grade). You are responsible for an oral presentation on an assigned portion of the readings. In your presentation you should offer a critical exposition of the material to be discussed and formulate **at least three major questions** for discussion. A copy of the presentation is to be turned in to me **before** class (3-4 pages). When you are in charge of a presentation you are expected to make yourself understandable to the whole class (not read mechanically from a manuscript) and to stimulate discussion. The presentation is evaluated according to (a) the student's capacity of presenting the material to the class and (b) his/her capacity of raising critical questions.
  4. *Attendance and participation* (10% of final grade). Attendance is required with two exceptions. Coming to class late or leaving early will count as absence. In exceptional cases, if you need to come late or leave early you should previously talk to me. Active and informed participation to class discussion is counted as an essential element toward the final grade.
  5. *Plagiarism* and any form of cheating will not be tolerated. Anyone caught plagiarizing will fail the course.
- All assignments must be completed in order to pass the course. Once you sign up for a protocol/presentation for a given date you commit yourself for that date. **Failure to present on that date results in an F grade for that assignment.** You are responsible for keeping copies of your assignments and for checking your progress with me. All the above items are subject to change for educational reasons

### IV. Schedule

<b>Week 1-2 M Aug. 27:</b> Organization; <b>W Aug. 29/W Sept 5:</b> Plato, <i>Republic</i> , X, course pack. <b>W Sept. 5, Presentation 1:</b> Plato pp. 459-465.	<b>Week 10 MW 29,31:</b> <i>CJ Beauty</i> §§18-22,40; <i>Unity</i> Ch.10; <b>W Pres. 7</b> §40.
<b>Week 3 MW Sept. 10, 12:</b> Plotinus, course pack. <b>W Pres.2:</b> pp. 39-43.	<b>Week 11 MW Nov.5,7:</b> <i>CJ Sublime</i> §§23, 25, 28-29; <b>W Pres.8</b> §28.
<b>Week 4-5 W Sept. 19:</b> Hume, course pack. <b>M Sept. 24:</b> Hume <b>Pres.3:</b> pp. 8-10.	<b>Week 12 MW Nov. 12,14:</b> Hegel, 22-37.
<b>Week 6 MW Oct. 1,3:</b> Burke, 11-26; <b>W Pres. 4:</b> Burke 39-44.	<b>Week 13 MW Nov. 19,21:</b> Hegel, 103-127, <b>W Pres. 9:</b> 119-127.
<b>Week 7 W (conv. M) Oct. 10:</b> Burke 53-54; 59-64; <b>Pres. 5:</b> pp. 59-64.	<b>Week 14:</b> MW Nov. 26,28: Benjamin I-VI; <b>W Pres.10</b> Benjamin IV-VI.
<b>Week 8 MW Oct. 15,17:</b> Kant <i>CJ Beauty</i> §§1-6. <i>Unity of Reason</i> , Ch.1, 9. <b>W Pres.6:</b> <i>CJ</i> §5.	<b>Week 15 MW Dec. 5,7:</b> Benjamin, VII-XV, <b>W Pres. 11:</b> Benjamin X-XV.
<b>Week 9 MW Oct. 22,24:</b> M: <b>Review. W 24: Midterm</b>	<b>Week 16: MW Dec. 10,12:</b> Review.

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**PHIL 3502 NUZZO - Schedule of Presentations: sign up: x \_\_\_\_\_;**

<b>September</b> WED 5	Pres.1: Plato, pp. 459-465    x x
WED 12	Pres. 2: Plotinus, pp. 39-43    x x
Mon 24	Pres. 3: Hume, pp. 8-10    x x
<b>October</b>	
WED 3	Pres.4: Burke, pp. 39-44    x x
Wed. 10	Pres. 5: Burke: pp. 59-64    x x
Wed. 17	Pres. 6: Kant, <i>Critique of Judgment</i> , Beautiful §5:    x x
Wed. 31	Pres. 7: <i>Critique of Judgment</i> , Beautiful §40:    x x
<b>November</b>	
WED 7	Pres. 8: <i>Critique of Judgment</i> , Sublime §28:    x x
WED 21	Pres. 9: Hegel, pp. 119-127    x x
Wed. 28	Pres. 10: Benjamin §IV-VI:    x x
<b>Dec. WED 5</b>	Pres. 11: Benjamin §X-XV:    x x