Aesthetics and Cognitive Science (revised Fall 2014)
Yale University, Franklin & Marshall University, Bates College
William P. Seeley (office hours T/Th 11:00-12:00 at the rink during the lunch skate, bring your skates!)

Aesthetics and Cognitive Science is an examination of philosophical issues associated with interdisciplinary research in aesthetics and cognitive science. The aim of the course is to introduce students to the interdisciplinary field of cognitive science and to investigate the role psychology and neuroscience can play in explanations of art and aesthetic experience. The first part of the course introduces central concepts in philosophy of art and aesthetics, the general methodology underlying research in aesthetics and cognitive science, and philosophical issues surrounding any attempt to explain aesthetics in terms of the natural psychological processes involved in perception and cognition, e.g. what is an aesthetic experience; how do aesthetic judgments differ from ordinary perceptual judgments; what is the role of the aesthetic in art; how does the choice of a theory of art shape our understanding of what an artwork is and what a successful biologically based theory of art would have to explain? The second part of the course critically evaluates whether an understanding of the perceptual relationship between viewers and works of visual art can play a role in explanations of art and aesthetic experience.

The general goals of the course are threefold. First, the course is designed to provide students with an understanding of the objectives and interdisciplinary methods of the study of aesthetics and cognitive science with a focus on neuroscience of art. Second, the course is designed to provide students with a background in philosophy of art sufficient to enable them to evaluate research at the junction of the philosophy, psychology, and neuroscience of art. Third, the course is designed to provide students from within the humanities with an introduction to some key issues in contemporary vision science.

The seminar is designed around what I will call the problem of interpretation. Aesthetic theories of art locate the defining features of art in the phenomenal character of aesthetic experiences (e.g., perceptual and affective responses to artworks). A standard objection to these sorts of theories is that they do not adequately account for the role that meaning and interpretation play in our understanding and engagement with artworks. Theorists who push this objection locate the defining features of art in the art historical and socio-cultural relevance of particular artworks. The question at the core of this debate is whether, and if so how, our understanding of the meaning of a work is related to our affective and perceptual responses to it.

Current research on the role of memory and attention in perception demonstrates that background knowledge shapes the way we perceive our environment. This entails that perception and interpretation are not necessarily distinct events in our engagement with artworks.

In the context of this debate the course pursues several core questions. First, what is an aesthetic theory of art and how does it differ from other theories of art. Second, what kind of information is available in a painting to drive a viewer's aesthetic and artistic interactions with it. Third, what is the relationship between the cognitive and sensory inputs to perception? Fourth, what role does background knowledge and interpretation play in our perceptual engagement with an artwork? When two people interpret a work of art in different, artistically salient ways do they perceive it differently, do they merely conceive it differently, or is this a coherent distinction? Lastly, if our engagement with artworks is explained by...
appeal to the cognitive and sensory processes operative in ordinary perception, what, if anything, differentiates them from ordinary artifacts?

The current syllabus proposal has been updated from the syllabi used in past years to include current experimental research in neuroaesthetics (Session 1 & Session 7), current critiques of neuroaesthetics (Session 1 and Session 13), a discussion of the role knowledge of categories of art play in our engagement with artworks (Session 8 and Session 12), a general discussion of the nature of artifact concepts/categories (Session 9), and a general discussion of the role affective processes (e.g., aesthetic responses) play in perception and attention (Session 10). In addition I have added an online weekly discussion forum to enhance and facilitate student participation in class discussion.
Course Description (Yale Course Bulletin text from previous seminar offerings: 2003, 2005, 2010):

An examination of philosophical issues associated with interdisciplinary research in aesthetics and cognitive science. The aim of the course is to introduce students to the interdisciplinary field of cognitive science and to investigate the role psychology and cognitive neuroscience can play in explanations of art and aesthetic experience. The first part of the course introduces central concepts in aesthetics and the philosophy of art and the general methodology underlying research in aesthetics and cognitive science. The second part of the course examines whether an understanding of the perceptual relationship between viewers and works of visual art can play a role in explanations of art and aesthetic experience.

see http://abacus.bates.edu/~wseeley/AeCS.html for syllabi for this course from previous years.

Course Goals:

1. Provide a general understanding of the objectives and interdisciplinary methods of the study of aesthetics and cognitive science with a focus on neuroscience of art.
2. Provide students with a background in philosophy of art sufficient to enable them to evaluate research at the junction of the philosophy, psychology, and neuroscience of art.
3. Provide students from within the humanities with an introduction to some key issues in contemporary vision science.

Requirements:

- Class participation & contributions to weekly online forum discussions (10%).
- a 6 page paper early in the semester on an assigned topic (20%)
- a 6 page mid-term paper on an assigned topic (20%)
- a 12 page final paper on a topic of your own choosing. Students must see me to discuss the topic of their term papers by the end of week 10. (50%)

Texts:

- Course Packet available through YaleRIS (CP)
- journal articles available online as indicated on the syllabus (Onl)
- readings on reserve in Bass Library (B)

** This course does not presuppose any specialized knowledge of cognitive science or philosophy. The majority of readings are drawn from philosophical aesthetics and scientific review articles, perspectives, and opinion pieces. Students will not be expected to be able to evaluate the experiments or data presented in scientific papers on their own. We will discuss how to interpret relevant results in class. Our interest is in the value of the arguments provided in these texts for the theories under consideration.
REQUIREMENTS:
All assignments should be handed in electronically via the Classes Server. Discussion forum contributions are due the night before the regularly scheduled class meeting. All other assignments, including weekly comments on discussion forum contributions, must be handed in electronically by 5pm Fridays.

- This course is a seminar. The pace and content of our discussions should, ideally, be student driven. Students are expected to come prepared to participate in discussion each day and class participation will factor into your grade.

- In order to facilitate class discussion students will be asked to contribute to a weekly online discussion forum. I will post discussion questions each week. These prompts will be derived from topical interests that emerge in class discussion and designed to help guide students through the interdisciplinary readings. Participation in class discussion and online forums will be factored in as 10% of the final grade. (10%)

- A 6-page (1800 word) paper on one of two assigned topics due at the end of week 5. The goal of this assignment is to analyze and evaluate the structure of a standard argument or model within the aesthetics and cognitive science literature. (20%)

- A 6-page (1800 word) mid-term paper on one of two assigned topics due week 8. The goal of this assignment is to track and analyze the structure of some broad foundational debate within the literature covered by the syllabus readings. (20%)

- A 12-page term paper (3600 word) on a topic of your own choice due week 13. You must meet with me to discuss your topic by the end of week 10. (50%)

Some Miscellaneous Notes and Guidelines: Moral behavior is the grounds for, and the framework of, a healthy society. In this regard it is each of our responsibility as individuals within the community of our classroom to act responsibly. This includes following the rules and guidelines set out by Yale University for academic behavior. Plagiarism is a serious matter. It goes without saying that each of you is expected to do his or her own work and to cite EVERY text that is used to prepare a paper for this class. In general philosophy papers are NOT research papers. Your preparations for papers and presentations should focus on material from the syllabus, assigned supplemental readings, and class discussion.

The written assignments are designed to give you a chance to stretch your legs a bit while you learn about aesthetics & cognitive science (and to give me a chance to assess your understanding of the material). Your job for each of the writing assignments is to offer a defense of your take on the issue at hand. However, this does not mean that the papers are a free forum for opinions. Make sure that your discussions remain focused on the philosophical problems that surround the assigned question or topic.

I will occasionally suggest supplementary materials for students who want to pursue particular issues beyond class discussion. I also reserve the right to modify the syllabus as needed to accommodate our interests as a group.

Finally, please come see me at the beginning of the semester to discuss athletic schedules, extracurricular activities, or any accommodations you might need for the class work.
ASSIGNMENTS: All assignments are to be handed in electronically via the Classes server.

Class Participation – In addition to in-class discussion, very student is required to participate in a weekly forum discussion on the seminar website on the Classes Server by:

- posting a response to the discussion prompt
- commenting on at least one other prompt (please be respectful of each other in forums).

Due Date: Responses are due the evening before regularly scheduled class meetings in order to facilitate seminar discussion.

Comments are due each Friday at 5pm.

Project 1: First Paper - Please write a 6 page (1800 word) paper on one of the following topics. Your paper should be double-spaced in 12 point font with 1” margins. The purpose of this assignment is to critically evaluate a central argument from our discussions of the general methodology of aesthetics and cognitive science.

Paper Topic (1a): Evaluate Gombrich's critique of John Ruskin and Roger Fry in his chapter “The Analysis of Vision in Art.” What does Gombrich's argument teach us about artists methods? How does his notion of "making and matching" inform our understanding of the relationship between vision science (or just perception), art, and aesthetic experience? Is this a plausible foundation for a theory of art?

Paper Topic (1b): Zeki's thesis concerning the relationship between vision and art can be construed as both a perceptual and an aesthetic hypothesis. Do either Latto's discussion of half-shadows and irradiation or Livingstone’s discussion of Mona Lisa’s enigmatic expression suffice as a case studies to establish neuroaesthetics as an aesthetic hypothesis? Please discuss both examples in your paper.

Due Date: Week 5, Friday @ 5pm

Project 2: Midterm Paper - Write a 6 page paper (1800 words) on one of the following topics. Your paper should be double-spaced in 12 point font with 1” margins. The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate that you can synthesize the range material covered in the 1st half of the semester into a coherent position.

Paper Topic (2a): Neuroaesthetics can be interpreted as an aesthetic theory of art. How does neuroaesthetics fare in this regard? Does neuroaesthetics breathe life into aesthetic theories of art or do skeptical arguments against these theories of art extend to neuroaesthetics? In constructing your answer make sure to address the material from the discussion of conceptual art and the more general relationship between art and meaning.

Paper Topic (2b): Anjan Chatterjee has drawn a distinction between descriptive and experimental approaches within the neuroscience of art. He argues that the natural progression of the field should be from the former to the latter. Evaluate the relative
merits of these two programs and discuss whether you think either provides a sound foundation for a biologically based theory of art. Make sure to use concrete examples from the syllabus readings in constructing your argument.

**Paper Topic (2c):** The starting point for a biologically-based neuroscience of art is the observation that artists' productive practices are naturally coupled to a range of evolved solutions for recognizing objects in a spatially ambiguous visual field. Do you find this strategy plausible? What sorts of problems are associated with it? Make sure to use evidence from the case studies described in the syllabus readings in constructing your answer.

**Due Date:** Week 8, Friday @ 5pm

**Project 3: Final Paper** Write a 12 page (3600 word) paper on a topic of your choosing. Your paper might focus on the critique of a position, the solution to a problem, or the evaluation of a debate within neuroscience of art. You might also undertake a discussion of an area you find under-represented in the literature. All students need to see me to discuss paper topics by the end of week 10.

**Topics Due:** You must email or meet with me to discuss your topic by the end of week 10.

**Due Date:** Week 13, Friday @5pm
COURSE OUTLINE AND READINGS (total: 382 pages / average: 29 pages per class session):

Session 1. Introductory Lecture:

The goal of this session is to open discussion by introducing students to some key philosophical concepts and the basic model for interdisciplinary research in aesthetics and cognitive science.

a) a philosophical definition of aesthetics as the study of sensory cognition and the phenomenal character of experiences associated with artworks.

b) a distinction between theories of aesthetics and theories of art.

c) a definition of interpretation as the use of background art historical and cultural knowledge to determine the meaning, of a work of art.

d) a basic philosophical conflict between aesthetic theories of art and the role background knowledge and interpretation play in our engagement with artworks: it has been argued that what differentiates artworks from ordinary artifacts is not the phenomenal content of aesthetic experience, but rather the way viewers interpret their meanings.

e) a general model for the contributions of memory, affect, and attention to perception:
   - knowledge of the structure, function, and value of objects and events within a particular context shapes the way we see our environment.
   - the contributions of background art historical and cultural knowledge cannot, therefore, be easily separated from the phenomenal content of aesthetic experiences.

f) a definition within aesthetics and cognitive science of artworks as perceptual strategies intentionally designed to direct attention to features responsible for the aesthetic effects and semantic associations constitutive of their artistic content.

g) a first skeptical concern: does the definition of artworks as perceptual strategies provide a means to resolve the objection to aesthetic theories of art raised in (d).

h) a second skeptical concern: are researchers within aesthetics and cognitive science asking questions germane to the general practices that define our concept of art.

READINGS (6 pages):

  (Onl): http://www.cell.com/trends/cognitive-sciences/references/S1364-6613(14)00075-8


Recommended Supplemental Readings:

  (B)
Session 2. What's in a Picture?

The goal of this session is to a) introduce students to some foundational concepts in vision science by discussing Gibsonian and constructivist approaches to picture perception and b) provide a rudimentary model for thinking about our engagement with artworks as an information processing problem (i.e., discuss what kind of information is available in a picture and what psychological processes are involved in using that information to recover the content of the work).

READINGS (28 pages):

  *(CP) & (B)*


Recommended Supplemental Reading:

  *(CP) & (B)*

Session 3. The Analysis of Vision in Art:
The goal of this session is to introduce a set of fundamental claims that underlie research in aesthetics and cognitive science: a) visual artists derive the content of their works from a careful examination of the underlying structure of natural appearances; b) viewers reconstruct the representational content of these works from visual cues derived from this examination; however c) there is no preferred set of image cues for producing even a realistic landscape painting, rather artists choose their formal vocabularies and compositional strategies relative to the aesthetic effects they intend their works to produce; as result, d) an understanding of how artworks work as perceptual stimuli should also explain how they work to produce aesthetic experiences.

READINGS (44 pages):

Recommended Supplemental Readings:
Session 4. Neuroaesthetics I:
Semir Zeki claims that a) the function of art is analogous to the function of vision, b) artists are intuitive neurophysiologists whose works and formal vocabularies reveal a tacit understanding of the mechanisms and processes of early vision, and c) an investigation of correlations between the formal structure of artworks and the operation of the early visual cortex can serve as the foundation for a biologically based theory of art. The goal of this session is to evaluate two case studies that illustrate Zeki’s claims with an eye to Gombrich’s analysis of the role of vision in art.

READINGS (36 pages):
  (CP) & (B)
  (CP) & (B)
  (CP) & (B)
  (CP) & (B)

Recommended Supplemental Readings:
  (B)
Session 5: Neuroaesthetics II
The goal of this session is to introduce and evaluate a distinction drawn by Anjan Chatterjee between descriptive approaches like those adopted by Zeki and Livingstone and experimental research in neuroaesthetics.

FIRST PAPER DUE FRIDAY @ 5PM

READINGS (31 pages):

Recommended Supplemental Reading:
Session 6: Aesthetics & the Philosophy of Art

The goal of this session is to define aesthetic theories of art and clarify the meaning of the notion of disinterested attention that is central to contemporary work in neuroscience of art. Supplemental readings for this week include primary source material and secondary resources that address the origins of this concept in 18th century philosophy.

READINGS: (28 pages)

  (CP) & (B)

  (CP) & (B)

Recommended Supplemental Readings

  (Onl): http://www.jstor.org/stable/20009119

  (B)

  (B)

  - Chapter 2: The Dialectic of Disinterestedness
  - Chapter 4: The Perfections of Art
  (B)
**Session 7: Art, Meaning, & Aesthetics**

The goal of this session is to a) introduce contemporary skepticism about the scope of aesthetic theories of art, b) evaluate the general research model for neuroaesthetics in light of this skepticism, and c) introduce the idea that the purpose of the formal and compositional structure of an artwork is to direct attention to features responsible for its *artistically salient* content (e.g., formal aesthetic properties, expressive properties, and the semantic associations that determine its meaning).

**READINGS:** (27 pages)

  *(CP) & (B)*

  *(CP) & (B)*

  *(CP) & (B)*
Session 8: Art, Meaning, & Intentions
The goal of this session is to a) discuss the role artists’ intentions play in our interaction with artworks, b) evaluate a debate within the philosophy of art between actual and hypothetical intentionalism, and c) introduce a distinction between semantic and categorial intentions.

MIDTERM PAPERS DUE FRIDAY @ 5PM

READINGS (26 pages):


Session 9: Concepts and Categories

The goal of this session is to discuss Fodor and Carroll's account of how we engage with artworks in the context of research about the structure of artifact concepts and categories. This research suggests that knowledge of the intended function of artifacts plays a critical role in object identification in everyday contexts. This class will set a foundation for understanding the structure of categories of art and the role they play in directing our engagement with artworks.

READINGS: (28 pages)

  \( (CP) \) & \( (B) \)

  \( (Onl): http://pss.sagepub.com/content/9/3/200.abstract \)

Recommended Supplemental Readings:

  \( (B) \)


  \( (Onl): http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/00100795006990# \)
Session 10: Memory, Attention, and Perception I

The goal of this session is to a) develop an understanding of the sorts of psychological processes that support our engagement with visual artworks, b) discuss the ways that goals, expectations, and background knowledge can shape how we see objects and events in our environment, and c) and discuss how these effects might generalize to the influence of background knowledge on our engagement with artworks.

READINGS: (34 pages)


  *(CP) & (B)*


Recommended Supplemental Readings:


  *(Onl):* [http://www.cse.buffalo.edu/~shapiro/Courses/CSE575/FSslides/psyche-4-12-milner.html](http://www.cse.buffalo.edu/~shapiro/Courses/CSE575/FSslides/psyche-4-12-milner.html)
Session 11: Memory, Attention, and Perception II

The goal of this session is to explore a) the various ways background knowledge, task demands, and affect contribute to attention and shape seeing and b) continue discussion of how these effects might shape our engagement with artworks.

READINGS: (31 pages)


  (Onl): http://www.jneurosci.org/content/23/10/3990.full

  (Onl): http://rstb.royalsocietypublishing.org/content/364/1521/1325.long

Recommended Supplemental Readings:


  (CP) & (B)

  (Onl): http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/cgi-bin/fulltext/118505433/PDFSTART
**Session 12: Categories of Art**

The goal of this session is to a) explore the structure of categories of art and b) discuss the productive role that categories of art play in our perceptual engagement with artworks with an eye to the discussions of artifact categories and vision science above.

**READINGS (33 pages):**

  
Session 13: Art, Meaning, and Aesthetics Revisited

The goal of this session is to revisit skeptical questions raised about the limited scope of research in aesthetics and cognitive science in light of syllabus material introduced in the second half of the course. The central question in this regard is whether aligning the information-processing model of aesthetics and cognitive science more closely with cognitivist models from philosophy of art (e.g., Carroll, Danto, and Fodor) suffices to meet the kinds of anti-aesthetic contextualist objections Blake Gopnik raises for contemporary research in neuroscience of art.

READINGS (30 pages):


  *(CP) & (B)*

*Recommended Supplemental Readings:*


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Readings:</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
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| 1    | - Chatterjee & Vartanian, Neuroaesthetics: 370-375. *(Onl)*  
- Noë, Art & the Limits of Neuroscience. *(Onl)* |             |
| 2    | - Winner, What’s in a Picture? 81-95; 98-104. *(CP) & (B)*  
- Bonnar et al, Understanding Dali: 683-691. *(Onl)* |             |
| 3    | - Gombrich, The Analysis of Vision in Art: 291-329. *(CP) & (B)*  
- Ruskin, The Elements of Drawing: fn. p. 27. *(CP) & (B)*  
- Fry, The Artist's Vision: 33-38. *(CP) & (B)* |             |
| 4    | - Zeki, *Inner Vision* (excerpts), 1-21. *(CP) & (B)*  
- Latto, The Brain of the Beholder (excerpt), 66-74. *(CP) & (B)*  
- Livingstone, *Vision and Art* (excerpt), 68-73. *(CP) & (B)*  
- Gombrich, *The Story of Art* (excerpt), 300-303. *(CP) & (B)* |             |
| 5    | - Chatterjee, Descriptive Science of the Arts…: 127-133. *(CP) & (B)*  
- Chatterjee, Experimental Science of the Arts: 134-142. *(CP) & (B)*  
- Nadal et al, Towards a Framework…: 379-396. *(Onl)* | First Paper Due Friday 5pm |
| 6    | - Stolnitz, The Aesthetic Attitude: 334-341. *(Onl)*  
- Carroll, Beauty…Genealogy of Art Theory: 307-334. *(CP) & (B)* |             |
| 7    | - Chatterjee, Conceptual Art: 143-149.  
- Danto, Art and Meaning, 306-317. *(Onl)*  
- Carroll, What is Artistic Form,” 137-148. *(CP) & (B)* |             |
| 8    | - Fodor, Dëjà-vu All Over Again: 41-54. *(CP) & (B)*  
- Carroll, Interpretation and Intention: 75-95. *(Onl) & (B)*  
- Levinson, Intention & Interpretation (excerpt): 188-189. *(CP) & (B)* | Mid-Term Papers Due Friday 5pm |
| 9    | - Bloom, Concepts and Categories: 145-169. *(CP) & (B)*  
- Bloom, naming Representations: 171-190. *(CP) & (B)* |             |
| 10   | - Palmer, Four Stages of Visual Processing: 55-59; 85-92. *(CP) & (B)*  
- Schyns, Diagnostic recognition (excerpt): 147-151. *(Onl)*  
- Leder et al, A Model of Aesthetic Appreciation: 489-508. *(Onl)* | Final Paper Topics Discussions must be completed by Friday 5pm |
- Pessoa et al, Neuroimaging Studies of Attention: 3990-3998. *(Onl)*  
- Land and Hayhoe, In What Ways Do Eye …: 3559-3566. *(Onl)*  
- Barrett & Bar, See It with Feeling: 1325-1334. *(Onl)* |             |
| 12   | - Walton, Categories of Art: 334-367. *(Onl)* |             |
| 13   | - Gopnik, Aesthetic Science... Artistic Knowledge: 129-159. *(CP) & (B)* | Final Papers Due Friday 5pm |
Potential Discussion Forum Topics:

Week 2: Given your understanding of our ordinary interactions with artworks, how plausible is it that the information processing stories Ellen Winner and Lizann Bonnar et al. tell about our interactions with paintings can serve as the foundation for a psychologically grounded explanation/theory of art.

Week 3: Do you think that E. H. Gombrich's psychological point about making and matching might help account for the role meaning plays in our understanding of art?

Given E. H. Gombrich's story about making and matching, do you think it is plausible to ignore the role meaning and interpretation play in art as aesthetic theorists often do?

Week 4: Does the story Semir Zeki, Richard Latto, and Margaret Livingstone tell about our basic visual sensory interactions with paintings suffice to account for the target aesthetic properties that they have set out to explain? Why or why not?

Week 5: Is experimental neuroaesthetics an improvement over descriptive neuroaesthetics? Why or why not? Are there differences in scope between the two approaches that influence your answer?

Week 6: Is an aesthetic theory of art a plausible approach?

Is the anti-historicism or anti-contextualism of an aesthetic theory of art a strength or a difficulty?

What might be the stumbling block for a contextualist aesthetic theory of art?

Is the concept of disinterested attention incoherent?

Week 7: Do you find Arthur Danto's story about the relative roles of art theory and the aesthetic in art plausible? Why or why not?

Do you find Anjan Chatterjee's discussion of conceptual art a stumbling block for neuroaesthetics? Or do you find conceptual art to be an outlier in the broader history of artistic practice?

How does E. H. Gombrich fit into the discussion of this week's syllabus material?

Week 8: Imagine artist's intentions are important to our understanding of artworks. Can they do the work Jerry Fodor / Noel Carroll want them to?

Can artist's intentions do the work Noel Carroll asks of them in last week's reading about artistic form?

Do artist's intentions matter in the way Jerry Fodor / Noel Carroll suggest?

Week 9: Does Paul Bloom's story about artifact concepts and naming artifacts support Carroll's story about the nature of artistic form from week 7?

How are Noel Carroll's account of artistic form, Noel Carroll / Jerry Fodor's story about artist's intentions, and Paul Bloom's story about artifact concepts tied together? Is this a sensible account of our engagement with artworks?

Can we use Paul Bloom's story about artifact concepts and Noel Carroll's story about artistic form to model Arthur Danto's account of artworks?
Week 10: Can Helmut Leder's hierarchical model for the range of psychological processes involved in our engagement with art motivate a rapprochement between aesthetic and contextualist approaches to art? Why or why not?

Can you map Noel Carroll's story about the way we retrieve the artistic form of an artwork to the general computational model for vision laid out by Stephen Palmer?

Week 11: Can you map Noel Carroll's story about the way we retrieve the artistic form of an artwork to the general story about the role of memory and attention in perception laid out in this week's syllabus material?

Does the general story about the role of memory and attention in perception laid out in this week's syllabus material support a cognitivist or an aesthetic interpretation of Helmut Leder's model?

How does the general story about the role of memory and attention in perception laid out in this week's syllabus material influence your evaluation of aesthetic theories of art or the concept of disinterested attention?

Week 12: Does Kendall Walton's thought experiment about cubist painting and Picasso's Guernica support Noel Carroll's story about artistic form? How does your answer influence your evaluation of the general model for neuroscience of art we have been trying to develop since the midterm?

Week 13: Does the story we have developed about the influence of artistic knowledge (background knowledge about categories of art) in our perceptual interactions with artworks suffice to answer Blake Gopnik's challenges to aesthetic science?
Supplemental Reading Topics / Research Paper Topics: what follows is an example of a supplemental reading list for a student interested in writing their final term paper on research in neuroscience of dance.

Normativity, Artistic Value, & Appreciation in the Philosophy/Neuroscience of Dance:
The psychological processes that underwrite our ordinary affective, perceptual, and cognitive interactions with objects and events in the environment are equally involved in our perception of good artworks, bad artworks, and non-artworks. It has been argued, as a result, that psychological explanations of our engagement with artworks cannot help us understand the distinctive features and appreciative practices that define our concept of art. The goal of this reading/research topic is to evaluate this long standing philosophical objection to the relevance of psychology and neuroscience to our understanding of art in the context of current research in the neuroscience of dance.

  (B)

  (Onl): http://www.jstor.org/stable/2183429

  (B)

  (Onl): http://cercor.oxfordjournals.org/content/15/8/1243.long


  (Onl): http://link.springer.com/journal/11097/11/1/page/1

  (Onl): http://www.plosone.org/article/info%3Adoi%2F10.1371%2Fjournal.pone.0033343