

**Aesthetics**

Code: 100277  
ECTS Credits: 6

**2024/2025**

Degree	Type	Year
2500246 Philosophy	OB	2

## Contact

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## Teachers

Marta Tafalla Gonzalez

## Teaching groups languages

You can view this information at the [end](#) of this document.

## Prerequisites

There are no special prerequisites.

## Objectives and Contextualisation

The general objectives of the course are:

1. The knowledge of the fundamental texts of the history of aesthetics, as well as its vocabulary and argumentation
2. The application of this vocabulary and argumentation to contemporary discursive praxis and its connection with aesthetic practices. This second objective locates the subject in the field of applied aesthetics.

The specific objectives of the subject are:

1. The understanding of art as a privileged place for thinking
2. The knowledge of the points of intersection between aesthetics and the philosophical tradition
3. The knowledge of some of the fundamental texts of the aesthetic tradition
4. The presentation of aesthetics as a fundamental gnoseology
5. The knowledge of arguments and a vocabulary to understand the aesthetic tradition and the aesthetic dimension of the contemporary world
6. The establishment of a dialogue between the texts of the aesthetic tradition and contemporary art according to the procedures of applied aesthetics
7. The cultivation of the student's aesthetic sensitivity as a required sense for knowledge

## Competences

- Analysing and summarising the main arguments of fundamental texts of philosophy in its various disciplines.
- Identifying the main philosophical attitudes in the field of aesthetics and critically applying them in the art world.
- Recognising and interpreting topics and problems of philosophy in its various disciplines.
- Students must be capable of applying their knowledge to their work or vocation in a professional way and they should have building arguments and problem resolution skills within their area of study.
- Students must be capable of communicating information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialised and non-specialised audiences.
- Students must develop the necessary learning skills to undertake further training with a high degree of autonomy.
- Students must have and understand knowledge of an area of study built on the basis of general secondary education, and while it relies on some advanced textbooks it also includes some aspects coming from the forefront of its field of study.

## Learning Outcomes

1. Accurately describing an artistic object with the specific language of art criticism.
2. Accurately drawing up normative texts.
3. Accurately using the specific lexicon of the history of philosophy.
4. Analysing the fundamental concepts of Theory of Art with a critical eye.
5. Carrying out a planning for the development of a subject-related work.
6. Carrying out oral presentations using an appropriate academic vocabulary and style.
7. Correctly drawing up a previously analysed non-regulatory text.
8. Correctly, accurately and clearly communicating the acquired philosophical knowledge in oral and written form.
9. Distinguishing and analysing classical and current debates of the History of Art.
10. Distinguishing and analysing representative texts of the main genres of the philosophical literature.
11. Distinguishing and outlining the fundamental content of a philosophical text.
12. Establishing relationships between science, philosophy, art, religion, politics, etc.
13. Identifying the artistic imagery, placing it into its cultural context.
14. Identifying the main ideas of a related text and drawing a diagram.
15. Identifying the regulatory, stylistic or argumentative errors of a text.
16. Indicating and summarising the common content of several manifestations of various fields of culture.
17. Interpreting the contents of a text about Theory of Art.
18. Producing an individual work that specifies the work plan and timing of activities.
19. Recognise and define the common thinking present in a multidisciplinary context.
20. Recognising, with a critical eye, aesthetic referents of the past and present and assessing its importance.
21. Relating several ideas of the current philosophical debates.
22. Relating the characteristic elements and factors of the philosophical tradition.
23. Solving problems autonomously.
24. Submitting works in accordance with both individual and small group demands and personal styles.

## Content

The aim of this course is to develop theoretical and methodological tools that allow us to understand the transformations of the sensitive fabric that we call aisthesis. Although aesthetics is a relatively recent discipline, it has a broad, dense and stratified history. This is why we propose an entry into its vast territory from an approach that tackles a theoretical perspective from the knots and structural movements that constitute it. In

this sense, the subject is articulated on the basis of the tensions that have configured aisthesis as a history of contradictions, transits and disputes.

The programme will be articulated under the horizon of a double effort: on the one hand, the understanding of the fundamental notions of aesthetics; and, on the other hand, experimenting with its possible application to contemporary discursive praxis.

## Contents

### Subject 1

#### The aesthetic experience

Immanuel Kant made a decisive turn in what we understand today as Aesthetics by introducing a more comprehensive concept of aesthetic experience. This means that aesthetics no longer designates the attributes of an object, there is no defined domain where art takes place and its creations are not reduced to the positive experience of the beautiful. The modern era was characterised by the effort to systematise criteria and methods, which, although they did not initially have the vocation of a system, did seek to establish criteria that were not based solely on the authority of tradition and that made it possible to achieve a specific knowledge. How to justify the general validity of judgements based on singular experiences? In this section we will analyse how the notion of criticism is reformulated in relation to aesthetic judgement and the place of taste in these reflections. From here, we will think about various tensions between understanding and sensibility, as well as how art makes the sensible in appearance an ideality so that it can be understood and interpreted.

#### Readings

Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgement*, Madrid, Espasa Calpe, [1790] 1987, [selected fragments].

G.W.F Hegel, *Aesthetics*. Introduction "Delimitaciones de la estética y réplica a algunas objeciones contra la filosofía del arte"; "La forma romántica del arte", Barcelona, Península; *Lecciones sobre estética*, Madrid, Akal ediciones, [selected fragments].

Friedrich Schiller, *Letters on the Aesthetics of Art*, Madrid, Akal editions, [selected fragments].

### Subject 2

#### Art and politics

When we talk about the relationship between art and politics, we tend to assimilate it to denouncing art. In particular, to what is known as "art of commitment", that is, art in the service of the people and the revolution. However, in this block we will see that the relationship between art and politics is much more complex. It is not a question of affirming that art is political when artists do not allow themselves to be alienated by bourgeois art forms and the commodification of their work, or when they place their creative work at the disposal of the process of social transformation, but rather that the relationship between art and politics concerns an economy of the sensitive.

#### Readings

Walter Benjamin, "La obra de arte en la época de su reproductibilidad técnica", [1935] in W. B.: *Obras*, libro I, vol. 2, Abada, 2008; *El surrealismo*, [1929], [selected excerpts].

Max Horkheimer, Theodor Adorno, "The Culture Industry, Enlightenment as Mass Deception", *Dialectics of Enlightenment*, Trotta Editorial, Madrid, [1944] (2018), pp. 161- 205.

Jacques Rancière, *El reparto de lo sensible. Aesthetics and Politics*, Santiago de Chile, LOM, 2009, [selected fragments].

### Subject 3

#### Art and the thought of difference

If the systematic gesture had been to stabilise contradiction and the multiple, the twentieth century underwent a progressive transformation that came to affect not only the foundations of thinking, but also the assumptions on which it was based. Faced with the constant threat of the 'death of art', various avant-garde artistic movements began to appear, while a whole theoretical fabric was being articulated that distanced itself from the radical separation between form and content, reason and sensibility, knowledge and ignorance, fiction and history and, more broadly, from all binary metaphysics, opening up space for what would later be known as 'thinking of difference', of multiplicity, of that which resists the One.

#### Readings

Martin Heidegger, "El origen de la obra de arte", in *Arte y poesía*, Mexico, Ed. Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1973, [selected fragments].

Gilles Deleuze, Francis Bacon: Logic of Sensation, Madrid, Arena Libros [Selected excerpts].  
 Catherine Malabou, "un ojo al borde del discurso", La plasticidad en espera, Palinodia, Santiago de Chile, 2010.  
 Adriana Cavarero, Inclinations. Crítica a la rectitud, Fragmenta, Barcelona, 2022, [selected fragments].  
 Griselda Pollock, Visión y diferencia: feminismo, feminidad e historias del arte, Buenos Aires, Fiordo, 2013, [selected fragments].  
 María Laura Rosa, Legacies of freedom. El arte feminista en la efervescencia democrática, Buenos Aires, Buenos Aires, Fiordo, 2013, [selected excerpts] María Laura Rosa, Legados de libertad.

#### Subject 4

#### Aesthetic appreciation of the other species and ecosystems

Human beings have always admired the beauty, elegance, or strength of other living beings and ecosystems. Considering aesthetics necessarily involves analyzing the appreciation of what has not been created by humans. Moreover, in a context of ecological crisis, which can be understood as a war against other forms of life, it is essential to ask whether aesthetic experiences could help us reconcile with nature.

#### Readings

Allen Carlson, "Environmental Aesthetics", Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2019.

Henry David Thoreau, *Walden o la vida en los bosques*, [1854] Madrid, Errata Naturae, 2013. [selected excerpts]

### Activities and Methodology

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Type: Directed			
Lectures, seminars, small-group and individual tutorials	60	2.4	4, 10, 12, 17, 20, 21, 22, 3
Type: Supervised			
Exhibition visits, artistic events, tests, participation in seminars	30	1.2	8, 2, 11, 6, 15, 14, 24, 7
Type: Autonomous			
Individual and group readings, making of conceptual and evolutive maps	50	2	2, 11, 18, 5, 15, 24, 7, 23

The methodology of the classes will combine lectures and seminars, with the use of texts, visual and audiovisual material. In preparation for the seminars, students must read the texts proposed in each topic on a weekly basis, so the subject requires a commitment to individual reading, on the basis of which they will work in the group sessions. In the same way, situated knowledge will be promoted, hence the importance of the perspective of thinking through different artistic practices, within their sensitive fabric. Students will also have individual tutorials in which they can be accompanied in the development of their work or in specific doubts related to their own research.

Annotation: Within the schedule set by the centre or degree programme, 15 minutes of one class will be reserved for students to evaluate their lecturers and their courses or modules through questionnaires.

### Assessment

## Continuous Assessment Activities

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Film visual essay	34%	4	0.16	4, 16, 8, 1, 9, 12, 5, 6, 13, 14, 17, 24, 19, 21, 22, 23, 3
Written exam (Subject 4)	33%	3	0.12	16, 8, 2, 10, 11, 12, 5, 15, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23
Written exam (Subjects 2 and 3)	33%	3	0.12	2, 10, 11, 18, 15, 14, 17, 7, 22, 3

### OPCION 1

Continuous evaluation

There will be three compulsory assessment tests. The evaluation will consist of:

- A presentation in the form of a visual essay in which one of the fundamental transformations of aesthetics is analysed according to the theoretical framework worked on in class, putting conceptual developments into operation (34%) (Maximum 10 min, can be done individually or in pairs).
- The completion of a written exam in which subjects two and three will be evaluated (individual activity) (33%).
- The completion of a written exam in which subject four will be evaluated (individual activity) (33%).

The exact dates of the deliveries will be announced in the first days of class, in order to be able to coordinate it with the other subjects of the Department.

### OPCION 2

Single evaluation, will consist of:

The completion of a written exam in which all the contents of the subject will be evaluated (100%) (individual activity).

Recovery

In the case of continuous evaluation, students who have failed one, two or all three tests may sit a re-evaluation and recovery the test or tests they have failed. In order to be re-evaluated, it will be necessary to have taken at least two of the three tests.

If a student has not taken any of the tests, or has only taken one of the tests, he/she will be considered "not evaluable".

All three tests must be passed in order to pass the course. The final mark will be the average mark of the three tests.

In the case of a single evaluation, the reevaluation will consist of a written exam in which all the contents will be evaluated.

In the event that the student makes any irregularity that may lead to a significant variation in the grade of an evaluation act, this evaluation act will be graded with 0, regardless of the learning process that may be instructed. In case of several irregularities in the assessment acts of the same subject, the final grade of this subject will be 0.

## Bibliography

### 1. Compulsory readings

Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgement*, Oxford University Press, [1790] 2008, [selected fragments].

G.W.F Hegel, *Lectures on Aesthetics*, [selected fragments].

Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" [1935]; *Surrealism*, [1929], [selected fragments].

Jacques Rancière, *The Distribution of the Sensible: Politics and Aesthetics*, [selected fragments].

Martin Heidegger, "The Origin of the Work of Art", [selected fragments].

Gilles Deleuze, Francis Bacon *The Logic of Sensation* [selected fragments].

Catherine Malabou, "an eye on the edge of discourse", 2010.

Adriana Cavarero, *Inclinations. Criticism of righteousness*, 2022 [selected fragments].

Griselda Pollock, *Vision and Difference: Femininity, Feminism and Histories of Art*, [selected fragments].

Allen Carlson, "Environmental Aesthetics", *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 2019.

Henry David Thoreau, *Walden o la vida en los bosques*, [1854] Madrid, Errata Naturae, 2013. [selected excerpts]

### 2. Secondary Bibliography

ARNHEIM, R., *Arte y percepción visual*, Alianza Forma, Madrid, 2002

BARASCH, M., *Teorías del Arte: De Platón a Winckelmann*, Alianza, Madrid, 1991; *Modern Theories of Art, 1: From Winckelmann to Baudelaire*, New York University Press, New York, 1990; *Modern Theories of Art, 2: From Impressionism to Kandinsky*, New York University press, New York and London, 1998.

BOZAL, V., *Historia de las ideas estéticas I* ill, *Historia 16*, Madrid 1998; (ed.), *Historia de las ideas estéticas y de las teorías artísticas contemporáneas*. Visor, Madrid, 1996.

CARROLL, N., *Philosophy of Art*. Routledge, 1999.

CASACUBERTA, D., "[Nueve escollos para entender la cultura digital](#)". *Enrahonar: Quaderns de filosofia*, ISSN 0211-402X, [Nº 32-33, 2001](#), pags. 235-244

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DANTO, A. C., *El abuso de la belleza. La estética y el concepto del arte*. Paidós, Barcelona, 2005.

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- GOMBRICH, E. H., *Breve historia de la cultura*, Ediciones Península, Barcelona, 2004.
- GOMBRICH, E. H., *La historia del arte*. Madrid, Phaidon (1950).
- GUASCH, Anna Maria (coord.), *La crítica de arte*, Ediciones del Serbal, Barcelona, 2003.
- JAQUES, J., "El sentido estético", *Disturbis* 3 <  
[http://www.disturbis.esteticauab.org/Disturbis234/Disturbis\\_3.html](http://www.disturbis.esteticauab.org/Disturbis234/Disturbis_3.html)>
- JAQUES, J., "Ernst Cassirer y la urdimbre de la memoria simbólica", *Er* 33, pp. 59-73, 2004.
- JAUSS, H. R., *Pequeña apología de la experiencia estética*. Barcelona, Paidós, 2002 (1972)
- JIMENEZ, M., *¿Qué es la estética?*, Barcelona, Idea Books, 1999.
- JIMÉNEZ, J., *Teoría del Arte*, Tecnos, Madrid, 2002.
- KELLY, M., (ed.), ***Oxford Encyclopedia of Aesthetics***, 1998. 2a edició, 2014. (Especialment recomanat)
- KIERAN, M., (ed.), *Contemporary Debates in Aesthetics and Philosophy of Art*. Blackwell, 2006.
- KRIS, E. i KURZ, O., *La Leyenda del artista*, Ensayos Arte Cátedra, Madrid, 1982.
- LAMARQUE, P., - H. OLSEN, H., (eds.), *Aesthetics and the Philosophy of Art. The Analytic Tradition. An Anthology*. Oxford, Blackwell, 2004.
- LYNCH, Enrique, *Sobre la belleza*, Anaya, Madrid, 1999.
- LEVINSON, J., *Oxford Handbook of Aesthetics*, 2003.
- MURRAY, Chris, *Key Writers on art: From Antiquity to the Ninetenth Century*, Routledge, London and new York, 2003; *Pensadores clave sobre el arte: el siglo XX*. Ensayos arte Cátedra, Madrid 2006.
- NIETZSCHE, F., *El naixement de la Tragèdia*. Madrid, Alianza Editorial, 1995 (1872).
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- SHINER, Larry, *La invención del arte*, Paidós Estética 36, Barcelona, 2004.
- SOTO CALDERÓN, A., *La performatividad de las imágenes*, Metales Pesados, Santiago de Chile, 2020.
- SOTO CALDERÓN, A., *Imaginación material*, Metales Pesados, Santiago de Chile, 2022.
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- TAFALLA, MARTA, "Rehabilitating the Aesthetics of Nature: Hepburn and Adorno", *Environmental Ethics*, The University of North Texas, vol 33, pp 45-56, 2011.
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- TAFALLA, MARTA, *Ecoanimal. Una estética plurisensorial, ecologista y animalista*, Plaza y Valdés, Madrid, 2019.

TAFALLA, MARTA, "Animals as Ornaments: On the Aesthetic Instrumentalization of Animals", Margarita Carretero González (ed.), *Spanish Thinking about Animals*, Michigan State University Press, pp 51-66, 2020.

TAFALLA, MARTA, "Overcoming Climate Breakdown Denial and Neglect through the Aesthetics of Nature", *Contemporary Aesthetics*, vol. 21, 2023.

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VALVERDE, J. M., *Breve historia y antología de la estética*, Barcelona, Ariel. (Especialment recomanat)

VILAR, G., *Las razones del arte*. Madrid, Antonio Machado, 2005.

VILAR, G., *La desartización del arte*. Universidad de Salamanca, 2012.

#### C. Online sources

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<https://vimeo.com/instituthumanitatsbcn>

[www.museupicasso.bcn.es](http://www.museupicasso.bcn.es)

<http://fundacionmiro-bcn.org>

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[www.fundaciontapies.org](http://www.fundaciontapies.org)

[www.museoreinasofia.es](http://www.museoreinasofia.es)

[www.museodelprado.es](http://www.museodelprado.es)

[www.tate.org.uk/modern](http://www.tate.org.uk/modern)

[www.centrepompidou.fr](http://www.centrepompidou.fr)

[www.palaisdetokyo.com](http://www.palaisdetokyo.com)

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<https://www.ted.com/talks>

#### Software

No specific software is needed.



## Language list

Name	Group	Language	Semester	Turn
(PAUL) Classroom practices	1	Spanish	first semester	morning-mixed
(TE) Theory	1	Spanish	first semester	morning-mixed

PROVISIONAL