FALL 2010 PHILOSOPHY G9509 • METAPHYSICS: ONTOLOGY OF THE ARTS

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Call Number 67347
Day & Time M 4:10pm-6:00pm
Location To be announced
Points 3
Approvals Required None
Type Seminar
Website https://courseworks.columbia.edu

Topics
What is Art? What sort of thing is a Work of Art—a physical object, an event, ideal kind, imaginary entity, platonic form, type? Is there just one kind of WoA or are there substantive ontological differences between, say, paintings, sculptures, and musical works? How is art bounded by time and space? What would a geography of art look like? Do aesthetic or artistic differences make an ontological difference? How are WoAs related to the mental states and/or intentions of artists, critics, audiences? What role does interpretation and description play in determining the meaning or essence of art? What criteria of identity and individuation are relevant to WoAs? Under what conditions do WoAs come into existence, survive, or cease to exist? How do history and convention affect their ontology? What are hybrid arts or mixed-media artworks?

Readings
The readings, primary and supplemental, are drawn from classic and contemporary literature of the analytic tradition and with a special emphasis on music. All readings are available in electronic form through CourseWorks, section Class Files, folder Shared Files. Required readings should always be read in advance, according to the schedule below. (Unnumbered readings, marked by an asterisk, are supplemental.)

Requirements
Reading is essential; discussion is expected and will determine a significant part of the grade. For E-credit (letter grade) students, one final essay is due in the last week of classes (15-20 pp.). Topics should be approved in advance and ideally by mid-term. R-credit students are required to attend all classes and participate in a lively manner.
9/13, WEEK 1 – INTRODUCTION

9/20, WEEK 2 – DEFINITION

9/27, WEEK 3 – CONVENTION

10/4, WEEK 4 – CONCEPT

10/11, WEEK 5 – INSTITUTION AND ARTWORLD
10/18, WEEK 6 – DESCRIPTION


10/25, WEEK 7 – UNITY


11/1 – ACADEMIC HOLIDAY

11/8, WEEK 8 – PLATONISM


11/15, WEEK 9 – PLATONISM (2): TYPES AND TOKENS


11/22, WEEK 10 – NOMINALISM


11/29, WEEK 11 – NOMINALISM (2): IDENTITY AND INDETERMINACY


12/6, WEEK 12 – ART, ARTIFACT, MATTER


12/13, WEEK 13 – VARIATION AND IMPROVISATION