

ART AND CULTURE

Professor: Marta Slaughter, MFA

Hi. I want to welcome you to the course Art and Culture. My name is Marta Slaughter and I'll be your instructor this semester. My background is in studio art, primarily painting and sculpture. I received my master's degree right here at USF and my undergrad degree in Tennessee, where I'm from originally. I love art, I love talking about it, I love viewing it, I love making art, and I love transferring my passion and excitement for the subject to the students I encounter.

One of the most exciting things about art is that it comes with a bit of mystery. It's open to interpretation, it's subjective. In fact, you'll probably come to this class having an idea of the type of artwork that you like the most or you appreciate the most, or the artistic style that most moves you. Perhaps knowing, or having a feeling for work that you don't appreciate as much or you don't understand. But I do implore you to come to the class with an open mind. Feel free to ask questions, interrogate your own feelings about the subject, keeping in mind that art can sometimes leave you with more questions than answers.

In this course we will talk about the fundamentals of art, the language of art. You will develop a visual vocabulary, a formalized language of how to identify, describe, and talk about what you see. You will also be exposed and explore different media and processes with which artists have to make art works. This includes painting, drawing, and sculpture, things that you may be familiar with already. Maybe you've even explored it on your own as well. But we will also look at alternative processes, and look deeper at the various possibilities available to artists today.

Another thing we'll do is learn to analyze art works critically. And part of what that means is looking at art for its historical context. Historical context means-- that's a term you'll hear again-- means looking at the art work, analyzing the art work for the time period, the history, the society, culture in which it was produced.

Sprinkled throughout the course as well we will look at various key artists and art works from the history of art and different stylistic periods in the history of art, non-Western and Western. And we will also look at artists that work in the contemporary period as well.

I hope that by the end of the class you take away a deeper knowledge, a deeper appreciation, and an enjoyment for the subject that you can take with you beyond this online course experience.