

## ***Re-Considering British Art***

### **History of Art and Theory Course**

**Offered during Septembers for students studying for the fall term or extended academic year**

#### **Course Overview**

Combining visual art and associated literary, theoretical, and historical writings, *'Re-Considering British Art'* introduces students to the key debates in modern and contemporary art history, as well as providing a broad overview of the writers and artists who have shaped Britain's cultural environment.

Based upon a thematic approach – as opposed to a chronological survey – this course interrogates the contested narratives that have shaped what is considered “British Art”. Through feminist, post-colonial, and queer theoretical approaches, this course helps you to develop new, comparative ways of viewing works by a wide range of practitioners from 1850 to now.

Foregrounding the interdisciplinary and activist potential of art history, the course begins by considering the value of **national affiliation**. Examining the histories of the regional and international display of British Art in museum collections and temporary exhibitions, we will discuss the limitations, and creative possibilities of correlating artistic practice with personal identity, and the politics of what is publicly circulated and what is hidden from view. Next the course moves on to consider issues of **place specificity**. Focussing on the genre of landscape, and the associated traditions of the sublime and picturesque, we will investigate the ways in which these themes and histories have been re-adapted to deal with present day issues of landownership and climate change. These ideas are developed further to think about notions of **the 'home-space' and rebuilding**, particularly within British Post-War Art. The surreal and graphic responses developed during this time of crisis illuminate global connections and broader conversations around modernism. Lastly the course focuses further upon notions of **diasporic identity** within Britain, including the Windrush Generation and contemporary practitioners who explore issues of migration and community-making.

By the end of the course, students will be equipped to discuss the British cultural and political milieu, as well as global connections and resonances. They will also have developed their visual analysis skills and ability to explain and compare works of art to a range of audiences.

### Teaching methods and assessment

This course will be taught through seminars, intensive small-group tutorials, and teaching session/s museums/galleries. Assessment will comprise of essays visual analysis and course participation.

### Supplementary activities

In addition to course trip/s students will be expected to visit museums/galleries and are actively encouraged to spend time in museums and galleries in Oxford and beyond and to pursue further independent study.

The course will be led by **Dr Kate Keohane**, Leverhulme Early Career Fellow in the History of Art, and Fine Art Tutor at St Anne's College and The Ruskin School of Art, University of Oxford.



Sonia Boyce, 'Lay back, keep quiet and think of what made Britain so great' (1986)

Charcoal, pastel and watercolour on paper; four parts, each 152.5 x 65 cm.