

Re-Considering British Art

History of Art and Theory Course

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

Course Overview

This course interrogates the contested narratives that have shaped what is considered “British Art”. Through feminist, post-colonial, and queer theoretical approaches, the four sessions develop critical methods for 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 national identity, and the politics of what is publicly circulated and what is hidden from view.

In the second session 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.

The third session develops these ideas further to consider notions of **diasporic identity** within Britain, including the cultural impact of the Windrush Generation and contemporary practitioners who explore issues of migration and community-making.

‘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. 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 both their written and oral visual analysis and critical skills.

Teaching methods and assessment

This course will be taught through seminars, intensive small-group tutorials, and a teaching session at the Tate Britain, London. Assessment will comprise of essays (25% x 3), visual analysis (15%) and course participation (10%).

Supplementary activities

As part of the course students will visit Tate Britain, London, and will also be expected to independently visit museums and galleries in Oxford.

The course will be led by **Dr Kate Keohane**, Leverhulme Early Career Fellow in the History of Art, 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.