

PSYCHOLOGY AND/AS ART

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Office hours: T 1-3, Th 10-12 (virtual); and by appointment



This course has two interrelated purposes: 1) to explore fundamental concepts and questions tied to the psychology of art and creativity, and 2) to draw on these concepts and questions as a vehicle for re-imagining a portion of the discipline of psychology as art.

For the first portion of the course, we will address both the experience of encountering works of art (paintings, music, dance, etc.) and the creation of art. Topics will include the perception and interpretation of artworks, the nature of aesthetic experience, the psychology of creativity, and the place of art in contemporary culture. For the second portion, we will explore various attempts to fashion a more artful psychology. In doing so, the aim is not to replace psychology's longstanding commitment to science but to supplement it by bringing a portion of psychological inquiry into closer relationship with the arts and humanities.

Course requirements will consist of a mid-semester essay (due shortly after October break; date to be determined); a “psychology and/as art” portfolio/reflection journal (due each class [at least 10 entries required]); participation in class discussion; and a final project, including a class presentation/performance based on the same, to be held the final two sessions of the seminar. The mid-semester essay, portfolio/reflection journal, and participation in class discussion will each count for approximately 20% of your grade (for a total of 60%); the final project, including the presentation/performance, will account for the remaining 40% (roughly 30% for the project, 10% for the presentation).

REQUIRED TEXTS

Freeman, Mark. *Do I Look at You with Love?*

Jamison, Kay. *Touched with Fire*

Kandinsky, Wassily. *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*

Leavy, Patricia. *Method Meets Art*

Nachmanovitch, Stephen. *Free Play*

Winner, Ellen. *How Art Works*

OUTLINE OF COURSE TOPICS AND READINGS

September 7: **INTRODUCTION: WHY THIS COURSE?**

Sugarman & Martin, “Introduction,” from *A Humanities Approach to the Psychology of Personhood* (1-7)

Slaney, “The message in the medium: Knowing the psychological through art” (8-29)

Freeman, “Psychology as Literature” (30-48)

September 14: **IMPROVISATION IN LIFE AND ART**

Nachmanovitch, *Free Play*, “The Sources,” “The Work”

September 21: **ART-MAKING AND LIFE-MAKING**
(guest Jim Perry, guitarist and guitar teacher)

Nachmanovitch, *Free Play*, “Obstacles and Openings,”
“The Fruits”

September 28: **THE RIDDLE OF AESTHETIC EXPERIENCE**

Winner, *How Art Works*, Introduction, Chapters 1-2, 8-11

Freeman, “Is a Psychology of the Creative Process
Possible?” (possibly)

October 5: **THE MYSTERY OF MUSIC**

[The Music of Strangers](#) (on Tubi)

Winner, *How Art Works*, Chapters 3-4

Johnny Gandelsman, Violin
7:30, Brooks Concert Hall

NOTE: There is another event the day before (10/4)
On Bach: Johnny Gandelsman, violin, Jan Müller-
Szeraws, cello with composer Osvaldo Golijov

October 19: **THE SPIRIT OF ART, THE ART OF SPIRIT**

Kandinsky, *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*

Freeman, “How does the world become ecstatic?”
(possibly)

Absence: Terence Blanchard, featuring
The E-Collective and Turtle Island Quartet
October 21, 7:30pm, Mechanics Hall

October 26: **LIFE SOURCES**
(visit to Cantor Gallery; meet with Meredith Fluke)

Winner, Chapters 5-7, 15, 16

Afterwardsness, Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Company
October 27, 5pm & 8pm
Blaney Gym, Luth Athletic Complex

November 2: **DREADFUL DEPTHS, HEALING POSSIBILITIES**

Jamison, *Touched with Fire*, Chapters 1-3, 4, 7

November 9 **ART AND/AS RESEARCH I**

Freeman, *Do I Look at You with Love?*

November 16: **ART AND/AS RESEARCH II**

Leavy, *Method Meets Art*, readings to be determined

November 30: **PRESENTATIONS AND PERFORMANCES I**

December 7: **PRESENTATIONS AND PERFORMANCES II**

A FEW WORDS ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

Here is what I want to say, in the simplest of terms: *the work you do for this course must be your own*. This doesn't mean that you can't draw on others' work or be influenced by it. What it means is that the product you create must reflect *your* efforts, *your* efforts, *your* imagination. This will involve proper citation and so on. As importantly, though, it will also involve a moral promise on your part—a promise that you must uphold and enact as

you go about your work. **Please familiarize yourself with the College's [Academic Integrity Policy](#). You are responsible for knowing the Policy and abiding by it.** Academic integrity is not only about honesty, however. It is about preparedness for class, intellectual commitment, openness to new ideas, the capacity to listen to others, the *ability to engage in sustained dialogue and debate about important issues*, and much more. Let's work together to create the best possible learning environment.

REGARDING ATTENDANCE AND EXCUSED ABSENCES:

I expect you to attend class regularly and to fulfill all obligations of the course as outlined on this syllabus and discussed during class. Also, please read and abide by the [College's Class Attendance Policy](#).

SOME IMPORTANT ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Accessibility Resources and Requests for Reasonable Academic Accommodations. For the College policy, please check out <https://catalog.holycross.edu/requirements-policies/academic-policies/#coursepolicies>. For information regarding the resources of the Office of Accessibility Services, check out <https://www.holycross.edu/health-wellness-and-access/office-accessibility-services>.

Textbook Affordability

If you are unable to purchase books for our course, please let me know. There are several options available for providing course materials to students at no or low cost, and I'll be glad to help in whatever way I can.

Holy Cross Academic Resources

Academic Services and Learning Resources
(<https://www.holycross.edu/support-and-resources/academic-services-and-learning-resources>)

Center for Writing (<https://www.holycross.edu/academics/support-and-resources/center-for-writing>)

Writers' Workshop (<https://www.holycross.edu/academics/support-and-resources/center-for-writing/writers-workshop>)

Class Deans (<https://www.holycross.edu/mentored-learning/class-deans>)
Library (<https://www.holycross.edu/support-and-resources/holy-cross-libraries>)

Holy Cross Student Support Resources

Counseling Center (<https://www.holycross.edu/health-wellness-and-access/counseling-center>)

Office of the College Chaplains (<https://www.holycross.edu/faith-service/office-college-chaplains>)

Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
(<https://www.holycross.edu/campus-life/diversity-and-inclusion>)

Office of Multicultural Education (<https://www.holycross.edu/diversity-and-inclusion/office-multicultural-education>)

One other issue, regarding confidentiality and mandatory reporting:

“As an instructor, one of my responsibilities is to help create a safe learning environment on our campus. I also have a mandatory reporting responsibility related to my role as your professor. It is my goal that you feel able to share information related to your life experiences in classroom discussions, in your written work, and in our one-on-one meetings. I will seek to keep the information you share private to the greatest extent possible. However, any information that you disclose that addresses sexual misconduct or relates to a prior suicide attempt or an intention to attempt suicide requires my sharing that information with those on campus who are able to provide you with necessary resources.

Following the **College's Sexual Misconduct Policy**, I will share information about sexual misconduct with the College's Office of Title IX Initiatives. If you would like to talk to Title IX directly, they can be reached at 508-793-3336 or [email](#). For more information, please visit the [Sexual Respect and Title IX](#) website. If you would like to discuss the matter confidentially, the following confidential resources are available to you: the [Chaplains' Office](#), 508-793-2448; [Counseling Center](#), 508-793-3363; [Health Services](#), 508-793-2276. Following the **College's Suicide Protocol**, if you disclose a prior suicide attempt or an intention or plan to attempt suicide, I will share that information with the Chair of our student CARE Team, who will engage in appropriate outreach.”