

Course Schedule

Writing on Art

October 2014

A short course exploring practicalities and concepts of writing about art, led by art critic and editor, Colin Perry.

Writing on Art consists of four evening sessions lasting two hours each, a seminar and a one-to-one tutorial session. In the first week, there will be an introductory session, looking at the practical skills, possibilities and ethics of art writing. In the following weeks, sessions will look at core aspects of writing on art, including in-depth reflections on works, as well as critical and contextual analysis. Participants will also work on a piece of writing of their choice, which will be the subject of a one-to-one tutorial at the end of the course. Accompanying the programme will be a public seminar examining approaches to art writing today, featuring presentations from contemporary art professionals.

Introduction session: skills and possibilities

Tuesday 7 October, 6.30 pm (2 hours)

Writing about art is a skill that relies on a deep knowledge of the field and a love of words. Some of these skills take years to develop. However, writing on art also relies on more basic skills and rules of thumb that help the art writer review an exhibition or write a monograph or critical essay. This session introduces some of the techniques of writing for magazines, journals and other publications. How do we communicate about art – quickly, concisely and with passion?

Public seminar: *Writing on Art*

Friday 10 October, 6.30 pm (2 hours)

Accompanying the programme is a seminar event that addresses the question: how can we write about art today? Speakers include Patricia Bickers (Editor of *Art Monthly*, art historian and critic), Omar Kholeif (writer, editor and Curator at Whitechapel Gallery) and writer Sally O'Reilly. The speakers will provide an insider account to writing from their professional perspectives as writers, editors and curators.

Critical analysis and close readings

Wednesday 15 October, 6.30 pm (2 hours)

How do we 'read' a work? How do we mediate between our own subjective experience and that of other viewers of a work? Can a work be judged on its own terms? What is the role of aesthetics, pleasure, style and humour in appreciating art? These issues are some of the foundations of writing on art. This session looks at how, practically, we might begin to respond to such concerns.

Contextual analysis

Tuesday 21 October, 6.30 pm (2 hours)

Contextual analysis is another fundamental concern of art writing. How is a work enriched or impoverished by the social, cultural, critical, urban or architectural context in which it is shown? How does a work fit within art history? Has it been made by someone else before? How might differing audiences react to a work or exhibition? This session looks at the ways an art writer might respond to such questions.

One-to-one sessions

Individual appointments by arrangement

At the start of the course, you will be invited to write a text of between 500 and 1,000 words on an artist or exhibition of your choice. Texts will need to be submitted by 21 October. This session will involve a one-to-one session with Colin Perry. He will give direct feedback on the texts, giving both a critical overview and helping with editorial feedback. The session is confidential, and is designed to encourage writers to explore their own skills, ideas and interests.

Possibilities, permutations and ethical questions

Tuesday 28 October, 6.30pm (2 hours)

This final session examines some of the broader questions about what we choose to write about, as well as how, when and where we write. These issues are underpinned by ethical, practical, social and aesthetic concerns. This session looks at some of the dilemmas and opportunities of art writing.

Bookings and more information here <http://drawingroom.org.uk/events/writing-about-art>