



SUBJECT DATASHEET

Contemporary Debates in Philosophy of Art

BMEGT43XXYY

I. SUBJECT DESCRIPTION

1. SUBJECT DATA

Subject name

Contemporary Debates in Philosophy of Art

ID (subject code)

BMEGT43XXYY

Type of subject

class

Course types and lessons

<i>Type</i>	<i>Lessons</i>
Lecture	0
Practice	2
Laboratory	0

Type of assessment

term mark

Number of credits

2

Subject Coordinator

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Contact details</i>
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Dr. Gács Anna	associate professor	gacs.anna@gtk.bme.hu
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Educational organisational unit for the subject

Department of Sociology and Communication

Subject website

<https://edu.gtk.bme.hu>

Language of the subject

English - EN

Curricular role of the subject, recommended number of terms

Programme: **Communication and media studies Bachelor's Programme from 2021/22/Term 1**

Subject Role: **Elective**

Recommended semester: **0**

Programme: **MA in Communication and Media Studies**

Subject Role: **Elective**

Recommended semester: **0**

Direct prerequisites

Strong None

Weak None

Parallel None

Exclusion None

Validity of the Subject Description

Approved by the Faculty Board of Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences, Decree No: 580466/11/2025registration number. Valid from: 2025.06.25.

2. OBJECTIVES AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

Objectives

By completing the course students • will be familiar with core philosophical questions that arise in understanding the nature, artistic (and moral, cognitive, etc.) value and interpretation of artworks; • will be able to distinguish different theoretical positions and understand their strengths and weaknesses; • will be able, by applying these theoretical tools, to reformulate, theoretically and critically approach contemporary public discourses of art; • will be able to reflect argumentatively on personal experiences of artworks; • will gain knowledge on how the technological and economic environment shapes societal attitudes toward works of art and norms governing cultural discourses.

Academic results

Knowledge

1. Reliable and sound knowledge of conceptual systems and methodologies of philosophy.
2. Solid knowledge of conceptualization for studying communication and media phenomena
3. Solid knowledge of the most important social science conceptualizations needed to study the communication phenomena

Skills

1. Skills of working out proposals and executing projects in her professional fields
2. Research skills
3. Analytical skills

Attitude

1. Based on his/her own professional knowledge, he/she will recognise the specificities of communication and information in this field.
2. Presence from social science egocentrism in social science fields
3. Az innovációra való kritikai nyitottság

Independence and responsibility

1. Adoption and enforcement of professional standards
2. Independence
3. Proficiency in professional communication both in oral and written form

Teaching methodology

The course consists of three modules. In each module, first a central case study (an interesting public discourse or “scandal” regarding artworks) is introduced to provoke group discussion and to gather pre-philosophical intuitions and opinions regarding the topic. In discussion classes we read and analyze theoretical texts (one paper or book excerpt for each class) through group work and joint discussion. For presentation classes students bring new case studies of their own choice and reformulate them by applying the previously encountered concepts and theories. In one module (The definition of art) we visit a contemporary art gallery.

Materials supporting learning

- Danto, Arthur C. (1981). The Transfiguration of the Commonplace. Ch. 1. Works of art and mere real things. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. 1–32.
- Abell, Catharine (2012). Art: what it is and why it matters. *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 85: 671–691.
- Levinson, Jerrold (1979/2004). Defining art historically. In P. Lamarque és S. H. Olsen, szerk.: *Aesthetics and the philosophy of art*. Blackwell, 35–46.
- Carroll, Noël (1996). Moderate moralism. *British Journal of Aesthetics*, 36: 223–238.
- Eaton, Anne W. (2012). Robust immoralism. *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 70: 281–292.
- Gaut, Berys (1998). The ethical criticism of art. In J. Levinson, ed.: *Aesthetics and ethics. Essays at the intersection*. Cambridge University Press, 182–203.
- Kieran, Matthew (2001). In defence of the ethical evaluation of narrative art. *British Journal of Aesthetics*, 41: 26–38.
- Hume, David (1757). Of the standard of taste.
- Goldie, Peter (2007). Towards a virtue theory of art. *British Journal of Aesthetics*, 47: 372–387.
- Levinson, Jerrold (2002). Hume's standard of taste. The real problem. *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 60: 227–238.
- Ross, Stephanie (2008). Humean critics: real or ideal? *British Journal of Aesthetics*, 48: 20–28.

II. SUBJECT REQUIREMENTS

TESTING AND ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING PERFORMANCE

General Rules

Participation is mandatory. No more than 3 classes may be missed.

Performance assessment methods

Based on activity, homeworks, presentation and exam.

Percentage of performance assessments, conducted during the study period, within the rating

- Participation: 15
- Presentation: 30
- Homework: 15
- End-of-term exam: 40
- sum: 100

Percentage of exam elements within the rating

Conditions for obtaining a signature, validity of the signature

Participation.

Issuing grades

Excellent	97
Very good	90-96
Good	80-89
Satisfactory	70-79
Pass	60-69
Fail	0-59

Retake and late completion

Retake and make-up test options are defined by the valid regulations of the University's Code on Education and Examination.

Coursework required for the completion of the subject

Class	28
Homework and presentation	15
Preparation for exam	17
sum	60

Approval and validity of subject requirements

Consulted with the Faculty Student Representative Committee, approved by the Vice Dean for Education, valid from: 02.06.2024.

III. COURSE CURRICULUM

THEMATIC UNITS AND FURTHER DETAILS

Topics covered during the term

Why do we find it important to express our firm views—whether on social media or in cultural magazines—that the last season of Game of Thrones was a flop? And if others disagree, how can we determine which side is right in such debates? Are works that contain sexist or racist elements necessarily bad works of art? What kind of expert knowledge exists in the field of art, and should we generally trust critics? The primary goal of the course is to explore how contemporary public discourse on art take shape—from comment wars on social media platforms to critical debates, from high-profile cultural “scandals” to pressing funding issues. By engaging with contemporary analytical views in the philosophy of art and applying them to case studies (selected together by the instructors and the students), the course examines how philosophical questions about art manifest in the everyday realities of cultural production and consumption and how they influence the practice of artistic communication. The course will explore key problems in the philosophy

of art while introducing analytical methods and conceptual tools that enable the clear formulation and examination of fundamental questions

of art through the analysis of theoretical texts and discussions of specific art debates and “scandals”. In addition to conceptual analysis, we will place a strong emphasis on the social context of art, the functioning of contemporary art institutions, and the norms of communication that govern cultural discourses—many of which are being reshaped by the changing technological environment.

- 1 1-4: The definition of art: What do you mean when you say “art”?
- 2 5-8: Art & morality: When are moral sentiments (prompted by works of art) justified?
- 3 9-12: Art & interpretation: When are judgments of taste (concerning artworks) justified?
- 4 13: Exam

Additional lecturers

Approval and validity of subject requirements