ARTh 204-601  Neoclassicism to Art Nouveau: Nineteenth-Century Decorative Arts and Design

Instructor  George H. Marcus
Class hours  Wednesday 5:30 to 8:20
Location  McNeil Building (MCNB) 169
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Course Description
Design in the nineteenth century meant decoration, and this course traces the emergence of the many decorative styles, both historic revivals and exotic translations, and the many theories of design that came to define the period. Adapting John Steegman’s vision of Victorian taste, we will use the following themes to bring order to our study of this seemingly chaotic expression: Design for Intellect’s Sake, Design for Commerce’s Sake, Design for Morals’ Sake, and Design for Art’s Sake. Readings and lectures will focus principally on Great Britain, the hotbed of 19th-century design theory and reform, while student reports will explore how these styles and attitudes were elaborated in other countries.

Course Requirements
1. Students are responsible for completing the required readings in advance of class. Attendance and preparation (which should include reviewing the study images for each lecture that are on the web) will make the course most meaningful for students.
2. There will be two, hour-long quizzes, which will include: (1) identifications from among the study images from each lecture that are posted on the web; (2) discussion of an image in relation to one of the readings; and (3) identification and short discussion of terms, names, and concepts (15% each). No final exam will be given for this course.
3. Two short papers are required, one investigating style, based on a visit to the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and a glossary research project (15% each).
4. An illustrated class presentation (revised and submitted as a final paper) based on your research of a major expression of nineteenth-century design outside of Great Britain will complete the semester (40%). Goals for the paper will be discussed in class and an instruction sheet with suggested topics will be distributed.

Course Readings
Two texts and a Course Pack of supplemental readings will be used in this course:
Michael Snodin and John Styles. Design & the Decorative Arts: Britain, 1500-1900. London: V&A Publications, 2001. This is out-of-print in the U.S. but there are many copies available on the web, the most reasonable from ABE Books. The book has also been published as three paperbacks, also with many copies available on the web. If you buy the paperback version, we will be using the second and third volumes, Georgian Britain and Victorian Britain.

Alf Boe. From Gothic Revival to Functional Form: A Study in Victorian Theories of Design. New York: Da Capo Press, 1979. This also is out-of-print but is included in photocopy form in the Course Pack.

Course Pack This compilation of excerpts and articles, and the Boe text, is available at Campus Copy Center, 3907 Walnut Street.

Additional readings may be assigned during the semester.
Syllabus
The text and supplemental readings are listed in abbreviated form under the class date to which they relate, and the supplemental readings are cited in full at the end of the Syllabus in the sequence in which they are assigned and appear in the Course Pack.

January 16  Introduction
ASSIGNMENT: GLOSSARY PAPER (due April 2)

January 23  Lecture 1: The Battle of the Styles
Readings Schapiro, pp. 287-90; Wornum, pp. II***-V***
In Addition Study the “Understanding Styles” guides at the Victoria & Albert Museum web site beginning with the Neo-Classicism style guide: http://www.vam.ac.uk/collections/british_galls/styles/index.html
ASSIGNMENT: STYLE PAPER (due February 6)

Design for Intellect’s Sake
January 30  Lecture 2: Regency Design: Authority and Individualism

Design for Commerce’s Sake
February 6  Lecture 3: Design and Industry
Readings Snodin and Styles, pp. 281-307, 235-42, 341-45, 374-75; Bøe, pp. 7-56; Smith, pp. 1-9; Morrison, pp. 13-21
STYLE PAPER DUE
ASSIGNMENT: RESEARCH PAPER (proposals due February 20, presentations April 16 and April 23, paper due May 7)

February 13  Lecture 4: The Great Exhibition
Readings Snodin and Styles, pp. 309-36, 376-77; Bøe, pp. 57-65; Mayhew, pp. 127-38, 153-62; Wornum, pp. V***-VI***; Redgrave, pp. 2-11
In Addition Study the 1851 Art Journal Illustrated Catalogue at http://digicoll.library.wisc.edu/DLDecArts/Browse.html

February 20  Lecture 5: New Principles of Design
Readings Snodin and Styles, pp. 375-85, 346-48, 431-59; Bøe, pp. 66-84, 134-46; Dickens, pp. 265-70; Jones, in Bøe, pp. 153-58; Dresser, pp. 1-21; Ruskin, “Manufacture,” pp. 54-77
RESEARCH PAPER PROPOSAL DUE

February 27  Part 1: Quiz
Part 2: CWIC Workshop

Design for Morals’ Sake
March 5  Lecture 6: Gothic Reform

March 12  NO CLASS (SPRING BREAK)
March 19
Lecture 7: Arts and Crafts Movement

Design for Art’s Sake
March 26
Lecture 8: The Aesthetic Movement
Readings: Snodin and Styles, pp. 401-29, 357-62, 388-90, 395-99; Bøe, pp. 128-34; Hamilton, pp. v-viii, 31-37, 111-23; Pater, pp. 10-12; Wilde, pp. 7-8; Godwin, pp. 192-200

April 2
Lecture 9: Art Nouveau
GLOSSARY PAPER DUE

April 9
Part 1: Quiz
Part 2: Discussion: The Tyranny of Taste

April 16
Presentation of Research Topics

April 23
Presentation of Research Topics

May 7
RESEARCH PAPER DUE

Supplemental Readings


Henry Mayhew. 1851, or, The Adventures of Mr. and Mrs. Sandboys, Their Son and Daughter, Who Came up to London to Enjoy Themselves and to See the Great Exhibition, pp. 127-38, 153-62. New York: Stringer and Townsend, 1851.


