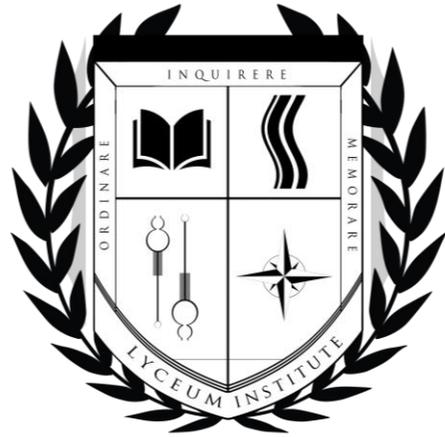


MORE THAN AESTHETICS: *ENS ARTIFICIALE* AND THE PHILOSOPHY OF ART

SEMINAR SYLLABUS

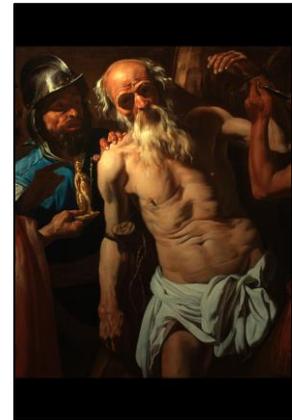
[FALL 2021]



DESCRIPTION

Human experience is filled with beings which are often considered a sort of “non-being” or, perhaps, “diminished” being by many scholastics: artifacts. Sometimes, we are told by this tradition that a door threshold is really just an accidental conjunction of a given shape with the substance of dead wood. However, a cursory glance around the world reveals the a host of realities which are structurally dependent upon human ingenuity and the long history of human exploration and creativity.

Exploring its topic from a broadly Aristotelian-Thomistic perspective, this course will use the work of Jacques Maritain to probe the broader set of philosophical issues involved in the “philosophy of art”: *ens artificiale*, the nature of practical reason, the metaphysics of art-craft, and topics pertaining to philosophical aesthetics, considered primarily from the perspective of this metaphysical consideration of the domain of *ens artificiale*. Throughout our course, we will discover how questions of philosophical anthropology are in fact pivotally important for fashioning a metaphysics that is broad enough to account for the phenomenon of “being of art.”



METHOD

The seminar is 8 weeks long, with one recorded lecture and one discussion session each week. Each discussion session is structured around a reading from Maritain. Participants are expected to have read the assigned reading and listened to the lecture prior to the session, so that they may engage in a semi-structured discussion directed and moderated by the instructor. As this is an advanced seminar, one *cannot* participate well without a *deep engagement* with the assigned reading. Moreover, *continual discussion* will foster that participation and engagement throughout the week. Participants will be expected to partake in these discussions on a regular basis, and will be challenged to do so directly.

READING

The primary readings for this course are available in republication by Cluny Media:

- Jacques Maritain, *Art and Scholasticism*, trans. J.F. Scanlan (Providence, RI: Cluny Media, 2020).
- Jacques Maritain, *Creative Intuition in Art & Poetry* (Providence, RI: Cluny Media, 2018).
- Beyond Non-Being: Thomistic Metaphysics on Second Intentions, *Ens morale*, and *Ens artificiale*,” *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 91, no. 3 (July, 2017): 353-379.

Additional content will be drawn from various sources. In particular, the student should consider consulting the works of M.-D. Philippe, though this content will solely be in the background, given how full the schedule will be merely with Maritain’s own rather-technical content:

- M.-D. Philippe, *L’Activité Artistique: Philosophie du Faire*, vols. 1 and 2 (Paris: Beauchesne, 1969).
- M.-D. Philippe, “Situation de la Philosophie de l’Art dans la Philosophie Aristotélico-Thomiste,” *Studia philosophica* 13 (1953): 99–112.

LECTURE

Each week there will also be a 20-40+ minute audio lecture, posted to Teams at the beginning of the week. This lecture will be based upon the assigned reading, but will also stray into related topics, or may use the reading as a launching point for addressing some related issue (perhaps one more general, or perhaps one more specific). The primary (but not sole) purpose of these lectures is to help clarify some of the more difficult concepts and arguments contained within the reading, as well as to raise specific questions that should help structure and guide our discussion sessions.

There *may* be accompanying visual aids (not necessarily) in order to provide some clarity as to textual points, but one *should* be able, in most cases, to simply listen to the lecture (and perhaps consult the visual aids later). This should allow more flexibility: making the lectures suitable accompaniment for a commute, while doing chores, going for a run, etc.

DISCUSSION

The heart of the seminar is the discussion session (**Saturdays at 1:15-2:15pm ET**): where all the thoughts emergent and encountered throughout the week—via the reading, lecture, and on-going conversations in the Teams channel—are brought into explicit conversation. This allows us to attempt a concerted effort at bringing resolution to our difficulties, and—failing such a resolution—to direct our inquiry further.

Each discussion session will begin with a brief synopsis of the week’s material and a focusing on whichever aspects of that material seem most pressing. Beyond the direction provided by the instructor, participants are encouraged to bring their own concerns explicitly into view and to engage with the instructor and one another in civil debate and collective inquiry.

CONTRIBUTION

It is hoped and expected that each participant in the seminar will provide a contribution: a piece of writing, recorded presentation, or something else, within one month of the seminar’s conclusion, as a way of coalescing what has been learned in a demonstrative manner. Topics are suggested, and the instructor is available for discussions and assistance in composing your contribution.

SESSION SCHEDULE

<p>Discussion on Oct. 2</p>	<p>The Philosophy of Art</p> <p>Lecture:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Division of Philosophy and the Place of Art • The Human Person, Art, and Metaphysics <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maritain, <i>Art and Scholasticism</i>, chs. 1 and 2 (“The Schoolmen and the Theory of Art” and “The Speculative Order and the Practical Order”) • Maritain, <i>Creative Intuition</i>, ch. 1 (“Poetry, Man, and Things”) • (Optional) Philippe, “Situation...” (Translation to be provided) • (Optional) Philippe, <i>L’activité</i>, vol. 1, chs. 6-8 (“Les arts principaux”, “Art artisanal et habilité des techniques,” “Le poète, l’artiste, l’artisan”)
<p>Discussion on Oct. 9</p>	<p>Art as <i>Habitus</i></p> <p>Lecture:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic discussion of the “philosophical psychology” presupposed for a generally Aristotelian-Thomistic account of “the philosophy of art” <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maritain, <i>Art and Scholasticism</i>, chs. 3 and 4 (“Making and Action” and “Art: An Intellectual Virtue”) • Maritain, <i>Creative Intuition</i>, ch. 2 (“Art as a Virtue of the Practical Intellect”) • (Optional) Philippe, <i>L’activité</i>, vol. 1, chs. 1 and 2 (“L’art, perfection de l’homme” and “L’art et la prudence”)
<p>Discussion on Oct. 16</p> <p>Oct. 23</p> <p>Oct. 30</p>	<p>Art and the Intellect (three weeks)</p> <p>Lecture:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A “deep dive” into the issues the intellectual-epistemological issues involved in artistic creativity <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (Translation) Philippe, <i>L’activité</i>, vol. 1, pt. 2, ch. 2 (“L’idea et le concept”) • Maritain, <i>Creative Intuition</i>, chs. 3, 4, and 7 (“The Preconscious Life of the Intellect”, “Creative Intuition and Poetic Knowledge”, and “Poetic Experience and Poetic Sense”) • (Optional) Philippe, <i>L’activité</i>, vol. 2, ch. 2 (“Structure de l’activité artistique”); vol. 2, ch. 6 (“Le choix artistique”); vol. 2, ch. 4 (“La contemplation artistique”); also see <i>ibid.</i>, chs.3-5, and 8 (“L’expérience artistique”, “La contemplation artistique”, “L’inspiration” and “Le jugement de valeur artistique”) • (Optional) Maritain, <i>Creative Intuition</i>, ch. 9 (“The Three Epiphanies of Creative Intuition”)
<p>Discussion on Nov. 6</p>	<p>Art and Metaphysics</p> <p>Lecture:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Metaphysical “Situation” of <i>Ens artificiale</i> • The Problem of the Dictum “Art Imitates Nature” <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minerd, “Beyond Non-Being” • (Translated) Philippe, <i>L’activité</i>, vol. 1, pt. 2, ch. 2 (“L’art imite la nature”)
<p>Discussion on Nov. 13</p>	<p>Beauty and Creativity</p> <p>Lecture:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beauty as a transcendental • The implications of the phenomenon of artistic creativity

	<p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maritain, <i>Art and Scholasticism</i>, chs. 5-7 (“Art and Beauty”, “The Rules of Art”, “The Purity of Art”) • (Optional) Maritain, <i>Creative Intuition</i>, chs. 5 and 6 (“Poetry and Beauty” and “Beauty and Modern Painting”) • (Optional) Philippe, <i>L’activité</i>, vol. 1, pt. 2, ch. 1 §§4-5 (“Détermination philosophique du beau” and “Les diverses modalités du beau”). See whole chapter. Also, see vol 2, ch. 6, §3 (“Nature du Choix artistique”) and <i>ibid.</i>, ch. 8, §6-8 (“Jugement artistique et jugement du créateur,” “Comment l’oeuvre peut-elle être jugée par ceux qui ne l’ont pas produite?”, and “Création divine, procreation humaine, et réalisation artistique”); vol. 1, pt. 2, ch. 4 (“Les ‘voies déterminées’ de l’art”)
<p>Discussion on Nov. 20</p>	<p>Art, Religion, and Morality</p> <p>Lecture:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion of the points of intersection (and distinction) among the domains of art, morality, and religion <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maritain, <i>Art and Scholasticism</i>, chs. 8 and 9 (“Christian Art” and “Art and Morality”) • (Optional) Philippe, <i>L’activité</i>, vol. 1, chs. 2 and 4 (“L’art et la prudence” and “L’art, la religion, la foi chrétienne”)