

Music 780, Seminar in Theory: Rancière

Fall 2011

Professor Jairo Moreno

Tuesday 2:00 - 5:00 p.m., Music building room 210

Jacques Rancière's notions of the "distribution of the sensible," "the aesthetics of politics," and "regimes of arts," along with his axiomatic positing of equality as the basis of all dissensual politics, continue to gain relevance in fields addressing the relation of aesthetics and politics. Music studies, where recent efforts have been directed to refuse the logos in the name of an ethical, albeit moralizing, aural turn, might find in Rancière a sobering reminder that art is radically limited precisely because it is so fundamentally open and any claims to art's exceptional status necessarily exclusionary. The seminar is designed as an in-depth overview of his work: his critique of Althusserian and institutional Marxism, the archival study of C. 19 worker's aesthetic experiments and the C. 18-19 emancipatory pedagogy of Jacotot, his critique of political philosophy and sociology, and his turn towards aesthetics. As way of introduction to a number of these issues, we will read and/or consider authors he addresses, including Plato, Aristotle, Kant, Schiller, Marx, Althusser, Lyotard, Benjamin, Adorno, Bourdieu, and Badiou, along with relevant secondary literature.

Syllabus (draft)

WEEK	TOPIC	READING
1 9/13	Introduction	"Politics and Aesthetics: An Interview (with Peter Hallward)" Moreno and Steingo, "Rancière's Equal Music" Suggested: Tanke, "Why Rancière Now?"
2 9/20	Ideology	"On the theory of ideology (The politics of Althusser)" Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses"
3 9/27	Equality, Intelligence (& Aesthetics)	<i>The Nights of Labor</i> "Thinking Between the Disciplines" Kant, <i>Critique of Judgment</i>
4 10/4	Pedagogy	<i>The Ignorant Schoolmaster</i> Suggested: Bingham and Biesta, <i>J.R.: Education, Truth, Emancipation</i>

Fall Break		
6 10/18	Historiography	<i>Names of History</i> J. Michelet. T.B.D. E.P. Thompson, <i>Making of the English Working Class</i> Suggested: Ross, "Historicizing Untimeliness"
7 10/25	Against Disciplines	<i>The Philosopher and His Poor</i> Plato, <i>Republic</i> Marx, <i>Communist Manifesto</i> Bourdieu, <i>Distinction</i> Suggested: Pelletier, "Rancière's Critique of Bourdieu" Toscano, "Anti-Sociology and its Limits"
9 11/1	Political Philosophy	<i>Disagreement</i> Aristotle, <i>Politics</i> ; <i>Nichomachean Ethics</i>
10 11/8	Aesthetics 1: Politics of Aesthetics	<i>Politics of Aesthetics</i> n.a. "Oldest Systematic-Program of German Idealism" Schiller, <i>Letters on Aesthetic Education</i>
11 11/15	Aesthetics 2: Adorno, Benjamin	<i>Aesthetics and its Discontents</i> <i>Politics of Aesthetics</i> Suggested: Ferris, "Politics After Aesthetics: Disagreeing with Rancière"
12 11/22	Aesthetics 3: Lyotard, Bourriaud, and Badiou	<i>Aesthetics and its Discontents</i> <i>Future of the Image</i> Badiou, <i>Handbook of Inaesthetics</i> Bourriaud, <i>Relational Aesthetics</i> Lyotard: <i>The Inhuman; Cond. of Post-Mod.</i>
13 11/29	Aesthetics 4: Mute Speech Special Guest: Gabriel Rockhill	<i>Mute Speech</i>
14 12/6	Aesthetics 5: Images, Sounds	<i>Emancipated Spectator</i> <i>Metamorphoses of the Muses</i>