

Academy for Lifelong Learning 2021-2022

Mirror, Mirror on the Wall: Portraits Then and Now

Greetings to those who love portraits or to those who are curious and intrigued by the attempt to portray the human form. We welcome new and veteran Academy members. You do NOT have to be an art connoisseur to enjoy this course. We look forward to exploring together the evolution of portraits throughout the ages. We will be looking at particular artists who specialize in portraiture, raising issues and questions about the role, affect, and interpretation of portraits and comparing portrait artists to gain greater insights into this type of work. We will cover painters, sculptors, photographers, and those who use other media in

art. We hope this course will be both an enriching aesthetic and intellectual experience.

Our first meeting will be held on **Thursday, September 16th (2:00pm-4:00pm)**

Each workshop member will be expected to choose a topic and then share their findings in a brief illustrated presentation (approximately 20 -30 minutes) followed by questions and general discussion. If doing a presentation poses an issue for you, do not hesitate to speak to us and we will work something out.

We have attached a blank timetable and a list of possible topics and references to help you get started. The list is absolutely not exhaustive, so please feel free to suggest other topics.

Presentation Guidelines

This is not an exhaustive list, but we are suggesting three general types of presentations.

1. Presenting on one portrait artist, such as

- Rembrandt, Cindy Sherman, or Bisa Butler.
2. Comparing two or more portrait artists. What do we learn by looking at Picasso and Matisse?
 3. Highlighting a particular theme. For example, “Does portraiture tell us anything about the nature of beauty?” “What are the characteristics of Renaissance portraits?” “How are African-American artists changing our view of portraits?”

Your presentation should be about **20-30 minutes**, allowing plenty of time for discussion.

For discussion: Try to come up with a few “essential” or “deeper” questions that might stimulate discussion. For example, “How has the “male gaze” affected the art of portraiture?”

Here is one reference to help you get started and inspired.

West, Shearer. *Portraiture*. London: Oxford University Press, 2004.

The Internet is obviously a great source of information, but please do not rely exclusively on Wikipedia. YouTube and DVD's from the Library are both excellent sources of videos.

Please examine the list of topics and timetable and let us know as soon as possible which topic interests you and your preferred date for presenting. As we start receiving responses (first come, first serve), we will send out schedule updates.

If you would like to discuss a topic or are concerned about preparing a presentation, do not hesitate to contact Alan or Yvette.

Participants are encouraged to avail themselves of technical support by the Academy Tech team throughout the year and we are happy to provide assistance and support in helping you prepare your presentation.

References and the updated schedule will be available on the academy website

(<http://www.allto.ca>) under the workshop title, Mirror, Mirror, on the Wall: Portraiture Then and Now, then click Facilitators' Notes

If you have any questions about this, or just want to say 'hello', feel free to contact either or both of us by phone or email.

Looking forward to our first meeting.

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