

Czech Art & Architecture

(Art & Architecture in Prague)

Syllabus Fall 2010

Lecturer: Simon North

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Office hours: *after Thursday class (or by arrangement)*

IMPORTANT:

- *This course includes regular excursions, a few of which (marked 'Long Excursion') may run up to 30 minutes longer than regular class time.*
- *You are therefore advised not to enrol for this course if you have another class immediately before or after it.*
- *The maximum number of students for the class is 15.*

Prerequisites

- It is desirable to have completed at least one art history survey course. This is not a requirement, but it is an advantage to have some background in the humanities and you should be prepared for a course which depends on your skills of observation, description and analysis, where attention to detail goes hand in hand with the discussion of broader concepts and theories.
- It is assumed that students who take this course are curious and motivated to explore the place where they are studying (above all the city of Prague, its buildings and art collections), which requires a commitment beyond class time. You should be ready to take some initiative in discovering and selecting your own topics for analysis in assignments.
- Tolerance of all kinds of weather conditions on field trips.
- Commitment to reading required texts.

Course Description

This course presents a survey of art and architecture in Prague and its environs – from the Middle Ages to the modern era – with an emphasis on key periods in Czech history, and placed within the context of the main periods and movements of Western art history.

The course is rooted in a discussion of the city of Prague, and students are encouraged through excursions and assignments to become acquainted with the city's architecture, monuments and urban design.

Students learn to analyse formal aspects of art and architectural styles and are encouraged to investigate their sources and theoretical foundations.

Emphasis is given to the historical and cultural context of art styles and movements. We also look at art patronage in some key periods of Czech history to see how this reflects political, cultural and ideological change.

Classroom lectures are combined with regular field trips to examine works of art and architecture at first hand. These include architectural walking tours and visits to temporary exhibitions as well as the city's major art galleries.

Learning Goals

Desired outcomes:-

- A broad understanding of Czech history.
- An understanding of key periods in the history of Czech art and of the city of Prague.

- An understanding of the architectural and urbanistic evolution of the city of Prague.
- The ability to identify and explain art and architectural styles and relate them to their historical context.
- A broad understanding of how artistic production reflects political context and social change, exploring the theme of the patronage of art and architecture in key periods of Czech history.
- The development of skills in analysing and interpreting works of visual art.

Course Readings

- The course reader includes all required and some recommended readings. Books from which readings are taken (as well as other recommended titles) are available on reserve in the NYU Prague library.
- A full bibliography is available on request.

Evaluation and Grading

Components of Final Grade

Participation*	10%
Quizzes (4 x 10%)	40 %
3 Response Papers (observation, description, analysis, interpretation) [<i>topics must be approved by instructor</i>]	50 %
	100 %

* Participation grade includes regular attendance, making a positive contribution in class, handing work in on time, willingness to consult with the instructor regarding assignments, turning up at the correct time and place for field trips.

Schedule of classes – Fall 2010

[PLEASE NOTE: the content of classes may be subject to changes]

Week 1

Tuesday 7 September

- Overview of the course
- Myths & Legends
- Historical background: Establishment of the Czech state (Přemyslid dynasty); the Holy Roman Empire

READING: Agnew, Hugh: *The Czechs and the Lands of the Bohemian Crown* (3-26)
Norberg-Schulz, Christian: passage from *Genius Loci: Towards a Phenomenology of Architecture*

FURTHER READING: Demetz, Peter: *Prague in Black and Gold* (3-5, 11-16)
Teich, Mikuláš (ed.): *Bohemia in History*, Cambridge (UK) 1998

Thursday 9 September

- Romanesque art and architecture
- Introduction to Gothic art and architecture

READING: Benešová et al.: intro. to *Architecture of the Romanesque (Ten Centuries of Architecture, vol. 1)*
Chilvers, Ian: *Oxford Dictionary of Art & Artists* (455, 217)

Week 2

Tuesday 14 September

- Gothic art and architecture (Late Přemyslid and Luxemburg dynasties)
- Art at the Court of Emperor Charles IV:
- St Vitus Cathedral; Prague New Town (Nové město); Karlštejn Castle

READING: Agnew, Hugh: *The Czechs and the Lands of the Bohemian Crown*, (29-38)
Benešová et al.: *Ten Centuries of Architecture*, vol.2, *Gothic*(13-18,26-40,66-71)

FURTHER READING:
Sayer, Derek: *The Coasts of Bohemia: A Czech History* (ch.2, esp. 32-35)

Thursday 16 September

Please meet in front of Klub Roxy, Dlouhá street

Field trip: St Agnes Convent (Anežský klášter, U Milosrdných 17, Praha 1)

- St Agnes Convent: Early Gothic architecture
- National Gallery: Gothic painting and sculpture at the Courts of Emperor Charles IV and Václav IV

READING: Chilvers, Ian: *Oxford Dictionary of Art & Artists* (217, 258)
Cuttler, Charles: *Northern Painting* (44-50)
Royt, Jan: *Medieval Painting in Bohemia* (52-56ff.)
Fajt, Jiří/Royt, Jan: *Magister Theodoricus: Court Painter of Emperor Charles IV* (52-54)
Crossley, Paul, Opacic, Zoe, *Prague as a New Capital*, in Boehm, Barbara Drake / Fajt, Jiří (eds.), *Prague, The Crown of Bohemia* (59-72)

Week 3

Tuesday 21 September

Please meet at Prague Castle (at the obelisk beside the cathedral)

Long Excursion (finish 12.30 /3.30): Prague Castle:

- Basilica of St George; Cathedral of St Vitus; Old Royal Palace

READING: Soukupová, H.: extract from *The Grove Dictionary of Art* [ed. Turner] (vol., 437-443)
Benešová + Hlobil: *Peter Parler and St Vitus' Cathedral, 1356-1399*, (24-25)
St Vitus Cathedral: Stages of Construction
Coldstream, Nicola: *Medieval Architecture* (196-201)

ALSO RECOMMENDED:

Benešová et al.: *Ten Centuries of Architecture*, vol. 2, *Gothic* (56-63, 78-82)

Thursday 23 September

- Review: Art at the Courts of Emperor Charles IV and Václav IV

Week 4

Tuesday 28 September – National Holiday: No classes

Thursday 30 September

Quiz # 1: [10%] Questions selected from the following:-

(i) Architectural terms (Romanesque + Gothic)

(ii) Multiple-choice questions (Czech history up to c.1400;
Romanesque + Gothic art/architecture)

(iii) Multiple-choice questions / short answers (Artistic patronage of Emperor Charles IV)

- Historical background: The Bohemian Reform movement, the Hussite Wars (1419-1434) and their aftermath

READING: Agnew, Hugh: *The Czechs and the Lands of the Bohemian Crown*, (39-54)

FURTHER READING: Sayer, Derek: *The Coasts of Bohemia: A Czech History* (35-42)

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Week 5

Tuesday 5 October

- Renaissance art and architecture: background
- Late Gothic / Early Renaissance art / architecture in Prague (Jagiellonian dynasty)
- Renaissance architecture in Prague (Habsburg dynasty)

READING: Kaufmann, Thomas da Costa: *Court, Cloister & City* (59-66, 142-148)

Background for Renaissance art and architecture (recommended)

Chilvers, Ian: *Oxford Dictionary of Art & Artists* (439-441)

Sutton, Ian: *Western Architecture* (chapter 5, esp. 126-136)

FURTHER READING: Bialostocki, Jan: *The Art of the Renaissance in Eastern Europe*

Thursday 7 October *Paper # 1 due*

- Art at the Court of Emperor Rudolf II (circa 1600) –
 - Rudolf II as patron and collector
 - The Emperor’s Artists: “The School of Prague”

READING: Agnew, Hugh: *The Czechs and the Lands of the Bohemian Crown* (55-67)

Marshall, Peter: *The Mercurial Emperor* (43-86)

Chilvers, Ian: *Oxford Dictionary of Art & Artists* (318-319)

FURTHER READING:

Kaufmann, Thomas da Costa: *Court, Cloister & City* (167-203)

Burton, Richard: *Prague – A cultural and literary history* (52-54)

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Week 6

Tuesday 12 October

- The Counter-Reformation
- Introduction to Baroque art and architecture

READING [*Background for Baroque art*]

Chilvers, Ian: *Oxford Dictionary of Art & Artists* (36-37)

Martin, John Rupert: *Baroque*

Sutton, Ian: *Western Architecture* (chapter 6, 168-198)

Thursday 14 October

- Historical background: The Estates Uprising (1618-1620); The Battle of White Mountain / Bila hora (1620) and its aftermath
- Baroque art and architecture in Habsburg Prague (The Thirty Years War (1618-48) and after)

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Week 7

Tuesday 19 October

Long Excursion: Walking tour (finish 12.30/ 3.30) [meeting place to be announced]

- Baroque architecture; Baroque sculpture and painting in situ

READING: Sayer, Derek: *The Coasts of Bohemia: A Czech History* (42-52)
Kaufmann, Thomas da Costa: *Court, Cloister & City* (Baroque: 249-255, 341-365)

Thursday 21 October

- Quiz # 2:** [10%] (1) *Architectural terms*
(2) *Renaissance and Baroque Art & Architecture* [multiple-choice questions and short answers]
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Week 8 FALL BREAK – NO CLASSES

Week 9

Tuesday 2 November

- Historical background: Josef II and the Age of Reform
- Overview of later 18th and 19th century art and architecture:-
- Rococo, Neo-Classicism, Romanticism, History Painting
- The National Revival

Thursday 4 November

- 19th century art movements
- Urban development in the 19th century

READING: Chilvers, Ian, *Oxford Dictionary of Art & Artists* (364-365, 455-456, 434-435)
Sayer, Derek: *The Coasts of Bohemia: A Czech History* (ch.4, selections t.b.a.)
Background for 19th Century architecture (recommended):
Sutton, Ian: *Western Architecture* (chapter 8)

Week 10

Tuesday 9 November Paper # 2 due

Field trip: Walking tour [meeting place to be announced]

- Architecture from the National Revival to the *fin-de-siecle*
- From *Historicism* to *Art Nouveau*

READING: Huig, Michael: "From Provincial Capital to Metropolis" in : *Prague 1900: Poetry and Ecstasy* (9-21)
Alofsin, Anthony, *When Buildings Speak* (30-43)

Thursday 11 November

- Symbolism and Art Nouveau

READING: Chilvers, Ian: *Oxford Dictionary of Art & Artists* (518-519, 24-25)
Greenhalgh, Paul (ed.): *Art Nouveau* (15-32, 73-90)
Lamarová, Milena: "The New Art in Prague"(361-373 in Greenhalgh,(ed.): *Art Nouveau*)

FURTHER READING: Howard, Jeremy: *Art Nouveau* (79-102)
various authors, *Prague 1900: Poetry and Ecstasy*

Week 11

Tuesday 16 November Long Excursion (finish 12.30 /3.30): Walking tour [meeting place to be announced]

- Architecture from the *fin-de-siecle* to the First Czechoslovak Republic
- Late 19th - early 20th century architecture in Prague New Town:-

Art Nouveau – Cubism – Modernism – Functionalism

READING: Escritt, Stephen: *Art Nouveau* (97-104, 319-323, 383-395)
Wittlich, Petr: *Prague, Fin-de-siecle* (90-91, 177-186)
Background for early 20th Century architecture (recommended):
Sutton, Ian: *Western Architecture* (290-303, chapter 9)

Thursday 18 November **Field trip: Please meet at National Gallery: Trade Fair Palace / Veletržní Palác, Dukelských hrdinů 47, Praha 7 [trams 5, 12, 17 to Veletržní]**

- Collection of French art (from Romanticism to Cubism)
 - Czech 19th → 20th Century Painting and Sculpture:-
 - Overview of 19th century art up to the “National Theatre generation
 - Symbolism, Art Nouveau
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Week 12

Tuesday 23 November

- Early 20th Century Avant-Garde movements: Expressionism, Cubism
- Czech Cubist architecture

READING: Chilvers, Ian: *Oxford Dictionary of Art & Artists* (173, 130-131)
Mansbach, Steven: *Modern Art in Eastern Europe* (9-54)

Czech Cubist Architecture (recommended):

von Vegesack (ed.): *Czech Cubism* (12-20, 53-54)

Moravansky: *Competing Visions: Aesthetic Invention and Social Imagination in Central European Architecture, 1867-1918*, (Chapter 8)

Thursday 25 November

Quiz # 3 [10%] Details to be announced

- Art and architecture in Czechoslovakia during the First Republic (1918-1938)
 - ‘Devětsil’, Surrealism
 - Architecture: from the Art Deco ‘National Style’ to International Modernism (‘Functionalism’)

READING: Mansbach, Steven: *Modern Art in Eastern Europe* (56-82)
Sayer, Derek: *The Coasts of Bohemia: A Czech History* (195-220)
Šmejkal /Elliott: *Devětsil: The Czech avant-garde of the 1920s & 1930s* (18-26)

Background: Chilvers, Ian: *Oxford Dictionary of Art & Artists* (Surrealism 516-517)
Sutton, Ian: *Western Architecture* (ch.9, 317ff)

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Week 13

Tuesday 30 November

Field trip: Please meet at National Gallery: Trade Fair Palace / Veletržní Palác, Dukelských hrdinů 47, Praha 7 [trams 5, 12, 17 to Veletržní]

- Overview of Czech 20th Century Painting and Sculpture:
Expressionism, Cubism, Abstract art, [‘Devětsil’, Surrealism...]

Thursday 2 December **Paper # 3 due**

Art and architecture in the Communist era (1948-1989)
- Socialist Realism (1950s)

READING: Sayer, Derek: *The Coasts of Bohemia: A Czech History* (270-282)

Background (required):

Foster /Krauss /Bois /Buchloh: *Art Since 1900* (260-265)
Sutton, Ian: *Western Architecture* (344-346)

Week 14

Tuesday 7 December

Art and architecture since 1989

Thursday 9 December

Field trip: [*meeting place to be announced*]

READING: Snodgrass, Susan: *Report from Prague: Toward a New Bohemia* (*Art in America*, April 2000)

RESOURCES FOR CONTEMPORAY CZECH ART:- www.artlist.cz

FURTHER READING (Background for contemporary architecture):
Sutton, Ian: *Western Architecture* (ch.10)

Week 15 -- Exam week

Tuesday 15 December

Quiz # 4 [10%] *Details to be announced*

Thursday 17 December

Optional field trip
