



Phillip Guston. Coat. 1980

HUM 3. Drawing Upon Literature **First Year Seminar and Studio for Humanities Fellows**

Susan Lichtman: lichtman@brandeis.edu

Robin Feuer Miller: rfmiller@brandeis.edu

This interdisciplinary, team-taught course brings together the practice of studio art and the study of Russian literature. No experience in studio art and no knowledge of Russian is required. Students will use Russian fiction and poetry in English (and some critical theory) as source material for the creation of visual images. Mostly working in sketchbooks of various sizes, students will make exploratory drawings in different media, and will occasionally use digital photography and video. Students will complete three writing projects: **a short paper** (three to five pages), in which they explore some aspect of how, during this course, they have experienced narrative in an interdisciplinary way, that is through the media of fiction or poetry and the visual arts. Students will also write a **research paper** that explores any aspect of our course with which they have been particularly engaged. We will be giving you a more detailed hand-out about this essay some weeks before the paper is due as well as having individual conferences with each student. Students will have an opportunity to work on the first two papers in peer groups and to revise their first drafts in consultation both with their peer groups and with the instructors. Students will produce a **final project**, which will be presented to the rest of the class during our final class meetings. This project will involve the making of a book; thus it will combine both art and words so that each student will have an opportunity to create their own discourse.

This experimental course is both a studio arts course and a literature course. We will read works by the following writers as well as three poems by **Auden, Williams, and Sexton**:

Aleksandr Pushkin

“The Station Master,” 1830

Nikolai Gogol

“Diary of a Madman,” 1835

“The Nose,” 1836

“The Overcoat,” 1842

Fyodor Dostoevsky

Excerpt from The Idiot, 1868

“The Dream of a Ridiculous Man,” 1877

Leo Tolstoy

Selection from Anna Karenina, 1878

“Why do men stupefy themselves?” 1889

Anton Chekhov

“Sleepy,” 1888

“Anyuta,” 1886

“Agatha” 1886

“The House with a Mansard,” 1896

“Gusev,” 1890

“The Kiss,” 1887

Isaac Babel

“Crossing the Zbrucz,” 1920

“Pan Apollek,” 1923

“Gedali,” 1924

“My First Goose,” 1920

“Di Grasso,” 1937

“Guy de Maupassant,” 1932

“Line and Color,” 1923

Vladimir Nabokov

“Torpido Smoke,” 1935

“A Guide to Berlin,” 1925

“Signs and Symbols,” 1958

“The Word,” 1923

Victor Shklovsky

“Art as Technique,” 1917

Optional reading: Russian Fairy Tale, “The Frog Princess,” collected by **Afanasy Afanasiev**

Selections from **Vladimir Propp** (on the structure and morphology of the folk tale)

Outcomes:

We hope that as you progress through this course you will grow as an artist and humanist who reads closely, writes clearly and persuasively, and is able to engage in a variety of ways with literature, critical work, and the visual arts. Most exciting of all, in this course you will have an opportunity to develop your own new mode of expression: responding to and being inspired by works of art (in this case short stories) and expressing this response and inspiration through the making of your own creative work.

General Course Requirements

Drawing Upon Literature

1. Reading assignments are due on the date the book or text is first mentioned in the syllabus.
2. Class attendance and contributions to our discussions will be an important part of your grade.
3. Late work will be penalized, if it is accepted.
4. If you are a student with a documented disability on record at Brandeis University and wish to have a reasonable accommodation made for you in class, please see one of us immediately.

Student Accessibility Support:

Brandeis seeks to welcome and include all students. If you are a student who needs accommodations as outlined in an accommodations letter, please talk with me and present your letter of accommodation as soon as you can. I want to support you.

In order to provide test accommodations, I need the letter more than 48 hours in advance. I want to provide your accommodations, but cannot do so retroactively. If you have questions about documenting a disability or requesting accommodations, please contact Student Accessibility Support (SAS) at 781.736.3470 or access@brandeis.edu.

Course Materials:

If you are having difficulty purchasing course materials, please make an appointment with your Student Financial Services or Academic Services advisor to discuss possible funding options and/or textbook alternatives.

5. Academic integrity is essential. You are expected to be honest in all of your academic work. The Brandeis University policy on academic honesty is distributed annually as section 5 of the Rights and Responsibilities Handbook. Instances of alleged dishonesty will be forwarded to the Office of Campus Life for possible referral to the Student Judicial System. If you have any questions about our expectations, please ask. We value your own ideas and efforts and also expect you to identify clearly the contribution that others have made to your own thinking and writing.
6. We look forward to an exciting, intense and memorable experience for all in the studio as we undertake this experimental course together.



William Ketrige, Nose, 2007-10