



Expressive Culture: Art and Culture in Contemporary Israel

Lecturer: Dr. Aviv Livnat

Guest Lecturer: Hadas Kedar

The location of Israel at the geographic junction between the West and the East, between the Arab world and the Western world, against the background of the long historical complexity of this piece of land provides the context for this course, which will offer a panoramic view of expressive cultures in modern Israel. This course will provide an introduction to Israeli culture and art by examining thematic crossroads and ideas, via problems and social conflicts which lie at the heart of those art works and are reflected by them.

Themes to be addressed will include: religion and secularism, universalism/globalism versus localism, Jews and Arabs, Ashkenazic and Sephardic cultures, multiculturalism in Israel, Zionism and Post-Zionism, right and left political world views, questions of gender, historical perspectives on war and peace and the Holocaust. Students will explore the way different forms of art

– visual, literary, and performance – reflect and shape the understanding of the "Israeli mosaic" while learning about the way the artists and writers internalize, consciously and unconsciously, the complex Israeli reality.

Towards this end, the course will incorporate an exclusive audiography, image bank and collection of video materials and will include excursions to cultural institutions and events in Tel Aviv-Jaffa.

Course Overview and Goals

Upon Completion of this Course, students will be able to:

- Understand formal methods of interpretation, which will include approaches, and structures of interpretation and reception specific to various art forms.
- Understand Israel's cultural and artistic arena in its wider perspective, namely through the complexities and diversities of modern Israeli identities.
- Appreciate the need to analyze and interpret some of Israel's social phenomena and problematic through expressive cultural manifestations.
- Pursue ongoing interest and future engagement with Israeli culture and to engage students with the rich cultural resources of Tel-Aviv.