Art and Public Sculpture in Liverpool

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Course Description

This course provides an introduction to the wide range of public sculpture and art collections in Liverpool. The wide range of the city’s sculpture will be explored through walking tours, and will include historic monuments and memorials, architectural commissions and modern site specific works. The collections of public art in the city’s galleries and museums will also be examined, including a “hands on” opportunity to touch sculptures in the Walker Art Gallery. Students will be able to examine the different materials and processes involved in creating sculpture, and to discuss issues and debates surrounding the patronage, creation and conservation of public art.

Aims:

• To examine the public sculptures of Liverpool in their historical, social and architectural context and to open up new ways of thinking about these sculptures.
• To examine the city’s art collections and to discuss museological aspects such as display, interpretation and presentation.
• To explore materials and processes involved in making art along with their maintenance and conservation

Learning Outcomes

• To gain a critical knowledge and understanding of art historical concepts and be able to identify major artistic styles
• To gain confidence in applying artistic terminology in discussion and written form
• To acquire knowledge of the work of major artists who feature in the collections and public art of Liverpool
• To gain an insight into how museums acquire, preserve and present and interpret art.
• To understand issues and debates surrounding the patronage, commission and conservation of public art

Course Structure

The course will be divided into theoretical and practice based sessions. Group discussion and sharing of knowledge is integral to the course. We will make several visits to locations around the city, usually in the form of walking tours and interactive workshops in galleries. Students should indicate whether they require assistance for these walks.
which may be up to two hours long. Students should also wear appropriate clothing and footwear for these walks!

Session One: Introduction to Public Art and the Collections of Liverpool: Tuesday 24th July
9-10.50 at 126 Mount Pleasant

This opening session will examine the historical origins of Liverpool’s extensive art collections and public works, in particular the ‘Mercantile Palaces’ and the city’s monuments and memorials to its worthies and heroes. We will discuss some of the issues and debates surrounding art in the public realm, such as planning, patronage and consultation.

Session Two: Hope Street Walk
Tuesday 24th July
11-12.50 Meet outside 126 Mount Pleasant

This session will examine the relationship between sculpture and architecture focusing on site specific sculptures of Hope Street. For the second part of the session, we will visit the Anglican Cathedral to examine the work of Edward Carter Preston along with works created for the cathedral by Arthur Dooley, Elizabeth Frink and Tracy Emin. There will be a focus on materials and processes employed by modern artists.

Session Three: A City Walk
Tuesday 31st July
9-10.50 Meet at 126 Mount Pleasant

This session will begin with a walk down to the Culture Quarter, looking at some of the monuments, memorials and architectural sculptures discussed last week. We will discuss projects recently carried out by The Conservation Centre and issues concerning the situation of works in public spaces. The tour will conclude with a workshop at the Walker Art Gallery

Session Four: The Walker Art Gallery
Tuesday 31st July
11-12.50 meet at the Walker Art Gallery

The Walker Art Gallery has a wide range of works from Classical sculptures to contemporary installations. The permanent displays include the Ince Blundell Collection; neo-classical works by John Gibson and George Frampton; Italian Renaissance painting;
and modern masters such as Auguste Rodin, Edgar Degas and Claude Monet. Workshops will take place in the galleries with an opportunity to touch some of the sculptures.

Session Five: The University Precinct and Victoria Gallery and Museum
Tuesday 7th August
9-10.50 Meet at 126 Mount Pleasant

The University has fine examples of architectural sculptures on campus and inside some of the faculty buildings. This session will take a short tour of the Precinct before spending the second part of the session exploring the exhibitions and permanent displays of the Victoria Gallery and Museum.

Session Six: Presentations and Synthesis
Tuesday 7th August
11-12.50 meet at 126 Mount Pleasant

We will use this concluding session to review and reflect on public art in Liverpool. Students will have the opportunity in this session to deliver a short presentation on a work of art as part of their assessment. (Details will be provided in Session One)

Reading List


Curtis, Penelope, *Patronage & practice: sculpture on Merseyside*, Tate Gallery Liverpool 1989

Harrison, Charles, *An Introduction to Art*, Yale University Press, 2010


Sharple, Joseph, *Liverpool*, University Press, 2004