

Excellence in Teaching

Leda Cempellin

Art

Biography

Italian Art History Leda Cempellin joined the faculty this fall. Leda was awarded the Dottore in Lettere Moderne at the University of Padua (1999), and the Dottore di Ricerca in Storia dell'Arte at the University of Parma (2004), Italy. In addition to her studies in Italy, Leda also studied in the United States at the University of California at Santa Barbara. Her area of specialty is American Photorealism.

Leda resides in Monmouth and enjoys being in walking distance of campus. She loves the abundance of color in Oregon, from the greens of the hills and evergreens to the rich browns of the soil, as well as the ever changing quality of light. She says that Monmouth is similar to rural towns in Italy, and she enjoys being away from the hectic pace of urban life.

Teaching

Leda teaches all of the courses in the Art History minor (she taught 9 different course preparations this year), including:

A204, A205, A206; Survey of Art History, Prehistoric to Romanesque, Gothic through Rococo, Neoclassicism through Contemporary

A304; Modernism I, (19th century, art history survey + theory)

A305, A306; Modernism II and III, (20th century, art history survey + theory)

A404C: Non-Western Art (this year: Japanese)

A405C: Gender and Art

A406W; Special Topics (this year: Pop Art)

Leda is passionate about teaching. As evidence of her commitment, she creates detailed typewritten notes for the lecture portion of all her classes. These notes summarize and synthesize the readings. She then makes the lectures available to students after class through E reserve in the Hamersly Library. Not only does she invest considerable time in making the content available to students, she also makes the content accessible to students. Leda supplements the lectures with multimedia, incorporating films, slides and other visuals to give students multiple ways of accessing the information.

Students appreciate Leda's passion and her kind assistance

Thanks so much for the great information. I am looking forward to starting the reading early. Thanks for your assistance – this helps me process new information and feel more comfortable in class.

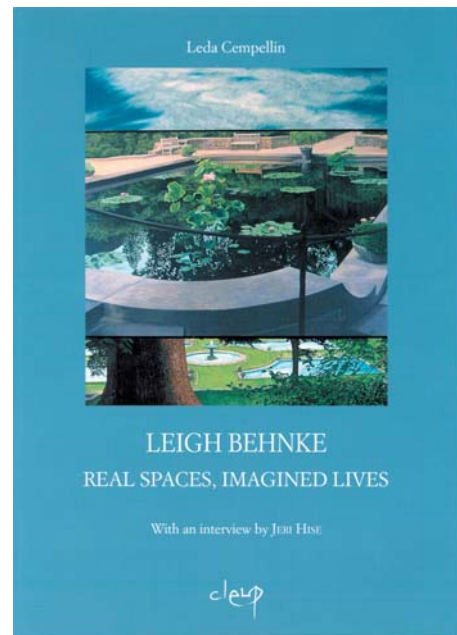
Thanks for taking the time to talk with me and for having a honest concern for a student's well being. I have been at other colleges and not many people at those schools treated me well. I just wanted to thank you again for treating me so fairly and taking the time to show me my options. That type of generosity is not seen as much as it should be these days and I just wanted to say once again that I appreciate it greatly.

Thanks for your prompt reply and the information- it sounds perfect. I'm even going to recommend this course to the other students attempting the German Major. Thanks again.

Sample student work

Leda considers Jessica Leach's paper, "Futurism and Cubism," written for A305 – Art History: MODERNISM II, Winter Quarter 2006, an exemplary piece of scholarship. Jessica writes;

The story of the Cubist-Futurist era is one of the cold, detached machine gaining ascendancy over the impulsive femininity of nature. It is the story of the sensual experience of empty space and the solidity of matter being declared an illusion: It is the death of god and the vilification of religion through such nihilistic philosophers as Nietzsche: It is the story of an increased class-consciousness inspired by the anti-capitalist theories of Marx: It is the story of a world in transition: a world groaning, and eventually collapsing, under the political tensions of the early twentieth century. In few other times have the dynamics of life progressed so quickly and so radically. As a result, our experience of philosophical truth and physical reality was forever changed. This change demanded new means of representation, and opened vast new realms of creative expression.



Scholarship

Leda is also an active researcher and scholar. She is the author of *Leigh Behnke: Real spaces, Imagined lives*.

Her colleague, Rebecca Chance, reviewed this work. She notes: Leda Cempellin writes of the artist, Leigh Behnke, "She is interested in how the human hand intervenes in the natural landscape. From this, other sets of contrasts arise: between interior and exterior spaces...between order and chaos, between artificial and natural light, between dense and open space..." Leda Cempellin is an "artist" of the same type: poetic in her discussion yet grounded, as concrete as the paintings' formalism, which she understands. Her well-reasoned explorations into Behnke's country of images are both thorough and creative, making substantive relationships across art history that are more than speculative and better than esoteric. They have integrity and resonate for the artist that picks up this piece of writing: "...collective history triggered by specific iconography... personal experience of place...a site for memory...", intimacy of the mundane, canvas as both object and window, the fragmentary nature of perception, perspective used to "...create spatial tension between figurative and abstract elements."

Her written structure parallels the structures in Behnke's paintings, a multi-paneled yet cohesive narrative that is like in experience to a visual perusal of the paintings (were one to regard the paintings as long as Cempellin apparently has and with as much background and presence of mind). This is how to look at a painting. This is how to look at an artist.

Quotations

*Who dares to teach must never cease to learn. John Cotton Dana
Mistakes are the portals of discovery. James Joyce
I cannot teach anybody anything, I can only make them think. Socrates*

Fun fact

True to her heritage, Leda enjoys her daily espresso and brought her stove top espresso maker with her from Italy.

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