
ENGL 009H

First-Year Seminar

Portraits of the Artist (W)



Professor Schmidt
MWF 9:20am – 10:10am
LANGPA 201

In this English 009H seminar we will study works portraying artists in a variety of media, seeking a critical understanding of the ways in which artists in different times and places have interacted with their societies. We'll also seek to tackle answers to broader questions:

- What is cultural studies?
- How can we ask better questions about how a particular story-world creates meaning?
- In what ways are artists part of their place & time, yet also able to imagine worlds that may resonate with audiences in very different eras?
- How does literature inspire critical thinking and imagining a different future?

Here are some of the materials being considered for the Fall 2020 syllabus:

- Zoey's Extraordinary Playlist, NBC TV series pilot (episode 1)(2020)
- Lin-Manuel Miranda, "Breathe" from In the Heights (2008) and "My Shot" from Hamilton(2015)
- Hope Boykin, choreographer: "It's OK too. Feel" (dance during 2020 quarantine)
- Plato (Parable of the Cave, from The Republic)
- Ted Chiang, "The Merchant and the Alchemist's Gate" (2019)
- Akwaete Emezi, Pet (YA fiction, 2019)
- Louis Armstrong, West End Blues (jazz; 1928)
- Janelle Monáe, Dirty Computer 2019 "emotion picture"/music video

