

ESAA29: Visual Aesthetics: Bloomsbury to Sociology – Kenneth G. Hay, University of Leeds

Autumn 2023

### Essay Questions

1. What did Bloomsbury writers Roger Fry and Clive Bell mean by ‘Significant Form’ as an aesthetic category? Discuss what the term might mean in relation to two or three paintings that they discussed in their books “Vision and Design” and/or “Art”.
2. Herbert Read wrote prolifically about art, education, industrial production and anarchism. Taking a few of his arguments, and a couple of concrete examples (artworks, texts) from his writings, discuss how he sees these aspects inter-relating.
3. Using some of the insights offered by John Berger’s book/TV Series: “Ways of Seeing”, make an analysis of some of the levels (literal, hidden, psychological etc) of meaning communicated in two paintings, advertisements or photographs.
4. Drawing on at least one of the authors discussed in the fourth lecture, discuss how they see the way artworks convey or conceal meaning, and how their theories help to make these meanings more visible/evident.
5. Modern art has often been poorly understood by its contemporary public. Discuss some examples of artworks, the public reaction to them at the time, and how any of the thinkers discussed in this lecture series might be utilised to help explain some of the complexities of modern art.