This course is about art and politics: it will examine the Russian Revolution broadly defined and its effect on art and visual culture. We will begin with the lead-up to the Revolution of 1905, followed by a focus on the crucial years surrounding the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, and ending with the Stalin Revolution in the 1930s. The course will approach Russian and Soviet culture as a distinct model of modernity, both sharing and departing from more familiar Western models of modernism. Russian artists were among the first to invent abstraction in the 1910s, and, after the 1917 Revolution, to insist on a utilitarian function for art in relation to everyday life and social needs. They also invented Socialist Realism, otherwise known as “totalitarian art.” We will begin by examining late 19th-century Russian traditions of realism and Impressionism, and then address such modernist movements as Neo-primitivism, Cubo-futurism, Suprematism, Constructivism, photomontage, and photography, as well as the parallel development of a modern form of realism in the 1920s, culminating in the invention, in the early 1930s, of Socialist Realism as an alternate model of modern art.