HISTORY OF ART

Loria Center, Rm. 251, 203.432.2668
http://arthistory.yale.edu
M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D.

Chair
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Associate Professors Craig Buckley, Cécile Fromont, Jennifer Raab

Assistant Professors Joanna Fiduccia, Subhashini Kaligotla, Morgan Ng, Quincy Ngan

FIELDS OF STUDY
African art; African American art; Byzantine art and architecture; Caribbean art; contemporary art; early modern art and architecture; East Asian art; eighteenth-century art; film and media; global modernisms; Greek and Roman art and architecture; history of photography; Indian Ocean art; Indigenous art; Islamic art and architecture; Italian Renaissance art and architecture; Latin American art; material culture and decorative arts; medieval European art and architecture; modern architecture; modern art; Netherlandish, Dutch, and Flemish art; nineteenth-century art; North American art; Northern Renaissance art; Precolumbian art; South Asian art and architecture; Southern Baroque.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PH.D. DEGREE
All students must pass examinations in at least two languages pertinent to their field of study, to be determined and by agreement with the adviser and director of graduate studies (DGS). One examination must be passed during the first year of study, the other not later than the beginning of the third term. During the first two years of study, students typically take twelve term courses. In March of the second year, students submit a qualifying paper that should demonstrate the candidate's ability successfully to complete a Ph.D. dissertation in art history. During the fall term of the third year, students are expected to take the qualifying examination. Candidates must demonstrate knowledge of their field and related areas, as well as a good grounding in method and bibliography. By the end of the second term of the third year, students are expected to have established a dissertation topic. A prospectus outlining the topic must be approved by a committee at a colloquium by the end of the third year. Students are admitted to candidacy for the Ph.D. upon completion of all predissertation requirements, including the prospectus and qualifying examination. Admission to candidacy must take place by the end of the third year.

The faculty considers teaching to be an important part of the professional preparation of graduate students. Students are required to complete four terms of teaching. This requirement is fulfilled in the second and third years. Students may also serve as a graduate research assistant at either the Yale University Art Gallery or the Yale Center for British Art. This can be accepted in lieu of one or two terms of teaching, but students may accept a graduate research assistant position at any time after the end of their first year. Application for these R.A. positions is competitive.

COMBINED PH.D. PROGRAMS

History of Art and African American Studies
The Department of the History of Art offers, in conjunction with the Department of African American Studies, a combined Ph.D. in History of Art and African American Studies. Students in the combined-degree program must take five courses in African American Studies as part of the required twelve courses and are subject to the language requirement for the Ph.D. in History of Art. The dissertation prospectus and the dissertation itself must be approved by both History of Art and African American Studies. For further details, see African American Studies.

History of Art and English
The Department of the History of Art also offers, in conjunction with the Department of English Language and Literature, a combined Ph.D. degree in History of Art and English Language and Literature. The requirements are designed to emphasize the interdisciplinarity of the combined degree program.

Course work In years one and two, a student in the combined program will complete sixteen courses: ten seminars in English, including The Teaching of English (ENGL 990) and one course in each of four historical periods (Medieval, Renaissance, eighteenth–nineteenth century, twentieth–twenty-first century), and six in History of Art, including HSAR 500 and one course outside the student's core area. Up to two cross-listed seminars may count toward the number in both units, reducing the total number of courses to fourteen.
Linguistics

Two languages pertinent to the student's field of study, to be determined and by agreement with the advisers and directors of graduate studies. Normally the language requirement will be satisfied by passing a translation exam administered by one of Yale's language departments. One examination must be passed during the first year of study, the other by the end of the third year.

Qualifying paper

History of Art requires a qualifying paper in the spring term of the second year. The paper must demonstrate original research, a logical conceptual structure, stylistic lucidity, and the ability to successfully complete a Ph.D. dissertation. The qualifying paper will be evaluated by two professors from History of Art and one professor from English.

Qualifying examination

Written exam: addressing a question or questions having to do with a broad state-of-the-field or historiographic topic. Three hours, closed book, written by hand or on a non-networked computer. Oral exam: given one week after the written exam, covering six fields, including three in English (question periods of twenty minutes each, covering thirty texts each, representing three distinct fields of literary history) and three in History of Art (twenty-five minutes each, fields to be agreed on in advance with advisers and DGS). Exam lists will be developed by the student in consultation with faculty examiners.

Teaching

Two years of teaching—one course per term in years three and four— are required: two in English (up to two sections per course) and two in History of Art.

Prospectus

The dissertation prospectus must be approved by both English and History of Art. The colloquium will take place in the spring term of the third year of study. The committee will include at least one faculty member from each department. As is implied by its title, the colloquium is not an examination, but a meeting during which the student can present ideas to a faculty committee and receive advice from its members. The colloquium should be jointly chaired by the directors of graduate studies of both departments.

First chapter reading

Students will participate in a first chapter reading (also known as a first chapter conference) normally within a year of advancing to candidacy (spring term of year four). The dissertation committee, including faculty members from both programs, will discuss the progress of the student's work in a seminar-style format.

Dissertation defense

The hour-long defense is a serious intellectual conversation between the student and the committee. Present at the defense will be the student's advisors, committee, and the directors of graduate studies in both English and History of Art; others may be invited to comment after the committee's questioning is completed.

History of Art and Film and Media Studies

The Department of the History of Art offers, in conjunction with the Film and Media Studies Program, a combined Ph.D. in the History of Art and Film and Media Studies. Students are required to meet all departmental requirements, but many courses may count toward completing both degrees at the discretion of the directors of graduate studies in History of Art and Film and Media Studies. For further details, see Film and Media Studies.

History of Art and Renaissance Studies

The Department of the History of Art offers, in conjunction with the Renaissance Studies Program, a combined Ph.D. in the History of Art and Renaissance Studies. For further details, see Renaissance Studies.

THE CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF AMERICAN ART AND MATERIAL CULTURE

The Center for the Study of American Art and Material Culture provides a programmatic link among the Yale faculty, museum professionals, and graduate students who maintain a scholarly interest in the study, analysis, and interpretation of American art and material culture. It brings together colleagues from a variety of disciplines—from History of Art and American Studies to Anthropology, Archaeological Studies, and Earth and Planetary Sciences—and from some of Yale's remarkable museum collections, from the Art Gallery and Peabody Museum to Beinecke Library. Center activities will focus upon one particular theme each year and will include hosting one or more visiting American Art and Material Culture Fellows to teach a course each term and interact with Yale colleagues; weekly lunch meetings in which a member makes a short presentation centered on an artifact or group of artifacts followed by lively discussion about methodology, interpretation, and context; and an annual three-day Yale-Smithsonian Seminar on Material Culture.

MASTER'S DEGREES

M.Phil. See Degree Requirements under Policies and Regulations.

M.A. (en route to the Ph.D.) This degree is awarded after the satisfactory completion of eight term courses and after evidence of proficiency in one required foreign language.

Program materials are available online at http://arthistory.yale.edu.

COURSES

HSAR 529a / AMST 630a / RLST 819a, Religion and Museums Sally Promey

This interdisciplinary seminar focuses on the tangled relations of religion and museums, historically and in the present. What does it mean to “exhibit religion” in the institutional context of the museum? What practices of display might one encounter for this subject? What kinds of museums most frequently invite religious display? How is religion suited (or not) for museum exhibition and museum education? Permission of the instructor required; qualified undergraduates are welcome.
HSAR 555b / RUSS 655b, Russian Style: Material Culture and the Decorative Arts in Imperial Russia  
Molly Brunson

This seminar examines the historical development of a national style in Russian decorative arts and material culture from the eighteenth century to the early twentieth. Although known for borrowing liberally from western European artistic traditions, Russian imperial culture—from the baroque and neoclassical courts of Elizabeth and Catherine to the exported “native” imaginaries of the Ballets Russes—also sought to distinguish itself in design, scale, manufacture, and style. Structured around a series of case studies, this seminar considers highlights from the history of Russian decorative arts, all while exploring broader questions about the transnational movement of style, the intersection of nationalism and design, the invention of “native” cultures, and the materialities of empire and modernity. Topics include the branding of Catherine the Great; Russia’s natural resources and trade networks; consumer culture in St. Petersburg; the materialism of realism; the Abramtsevo artists’ colony and the discovery of folk art; russkii stil’ (Russian Style) at the World’s Fairs; curating ethnographies and archaeologies; and the “relics” of the Romanovs. Organized as an intensive research seminar, this course brings the central conceptual and theoretical concerns of visual and material culture studies (e.g., materiality and thing theory, ornament and the decorative, the socioeconomics of taste) to a historical and object-based consideration of Russian style. Significant use is made of the museum and library collections at Yale and nearby.

HSAR 555a, Embodied Artisanal Knowledge  
Edward Cooke

The development and transmission of knowledge during the early modern European world has lately been a dynamic subject of scholarly inquiry. Much of this work has focused upon the work of royal academies’ explorations of natural philosophy and the mechanical arts. This seminar seeks to move beyond that narrow geographic focus and descriptive taxonomies to consider embodied artisanal knowledge throughout the world in the period from 1500 to 1800. As Tim Ingold reminds us, embodied knowledge is a skilled, socially generated practice distinct from the innate talents of mechanical execution. It is a cognitive skill that prizes resourcefulness; efficiency of effort; and informed, intensive use of tools. This tacit knowledge, the intellect of the hand, is experienced and felt rather than written about and illustrated. Making things depends upon constant attention to the transmission of ideas from brain to hand and from tool to material, with feedback channeled back through the tool to the body and mind of the maker. This seminar combines reading, object-driven inquiry, and hands-on exercises to explore the role of materials, techniques, and human agency in the making of objects. Students expand their own approaches to the study of artisans and objects from many periods and places.

HSAR 593a / MDVL 593a, The Body as Medium in Medieval Art and Culture  
Jacqueline Jung

Since the publication of pioneering studies by Caroline Walker Bynum in the late 1980s, the European Middle Ages has come to be recognized not as an “age of spirituality” but as an emphatically body-oriented culture. The paradoxical bodies of Christ (at once wholly divine and wholly human) and his Virgin Mother were the subject of extensive speculation, scrutiny, and loving devotion in literature, theology, and art; the fragmented remains of the saints were housed in glittering containers for the faithful to venerate; and the living bodies of charismatic men and women became both the vehicles for their own communion with the divine and objects themselves for the devotional (or skeptical) gazes of others. It is the latter facet of medieval visual culture to which this seminar is dedicated. Although we look closely at works of art in various media (especially manuscript painting and sculpture), in which bodies function as representational signs, our main objective is to understand the variety of ways in which active, living bodies could serve as communicative media in spheres both public and private, religious and secular. Topics include the physical and sensory apparatus of the body in medieval science and medicine; the body as vehicle for the individual’s communication with God; the stigmatic body; the rapturous or possessed body as site of discernment; the tortured body as teaching tool; the self-punished body as mimetic spectacle; the courtly body as aesthetic object; and the dissected body as revelation of both personal virtues and cosmic forces. Reading knowledge of French and German is highly recommended but not required.

HSAR 690a, Cézanne and His Afterlives  
Carol Armstrong

This course looks at the actual and possible afterlives of Cézanne’s life of painting through a series of pairings of other figures with this progenitor of twentieth-century abstraction. Beginning with Cézanne’s own pairing of his early work with that of Manet, and proceeding through Émile Zola’s fictionalization of Cézanne in L’OEuvre of 1886, the seminar considers Cézanne’s work in light of critics and philosophers who wrote about him—such as Rainer Maria Rilke, Roger Fry, Clement Greenberg, and Maurice Merleau-Ponty; later painters to whom his work was important, from Émile Bernard and Maurice Denis to Matisse, Braque, Picasso, Mondrian, de Kooning, and others; and later authors and thinkers in various fields whose ideas may fruitfully be compared to his way of picturing reality, from Virginia Woolf and Albert Einstein to R.D. Laing and Luce Irigaray. In each case, the pairing serves both as a two-way screen of mutual inflection and as a means of complicating and reconfiguring the chronologies and teleologies of what has come to be called modernism. Readings, presentations, and class discussions, one short preliminary paper, and a final research paper.

HSAR 705a, Representing the American West  
Jennifer Raab

The American West holds a powerful place in the cultural and political imagination of the United States. Taught at the Beinecke, this course examines settler colonial art and visual culture from the early republic to the present, considering changing conceptions of the land across media—from maps, aquatints, and guidebooks to paintings, panoramas, and photographs. We consider the representation of railroads, National Parks, ghost towns, and highways; terms such as distance, aridity, seriality, mythology, and the frontier; artists’ engagement with ecological questions; the construction of whiteness in and through the landscape; and sites of indigenous resistance. The seminar foregrounds research and writing, with the term structured around the conceptualization and development of student papers emerging from the Beinecke’s extraordinary collection of Western Americana. Prior permission of the instructor is required.
History of Art

HSAR 759b / AFAM 724b / AMST 732b / FILM 693b / WGSS 693b, Imaging War, Imagining Peace: Memory, Justice, and Repair
Laura Wexler

This course explores the ways in which both war and peace have been imagined and represented, and how those visual practices might be unlearned and reimagined. What do images and imaginings of war and peace leave out of view, and how can we bring both underlying social vulnerability and extant networks of protest and resistance into greater visibility? How might we avoid automatized reiterations of well-worn locations and scenarios of violence, for example in constructions of “the enemy,” and develop new approaches to the nationalist, racialized, and gendered stakes of conflict? What alternative acts of intervention, witnessing, and reparation might we create so as to see emergencies more freshly – at a time of conflict, as well as in anticipation and in retrospect? Can the visual archives of violence be reframed and recalibrated to shape more firmly the potential of justice, cohabitation, and peace? How can visualizations of antiwar movements and peace actions be mobilized more effectively? This team-taught course is inspired by the documentary work of Susan Meiselas. Her distinctive photographic practice with communities in Nicaragua, El Salvador, Chile, Kurdistan, and elsewhere, her repeated return to sites of conflict over time, and her collaboration with the subjects of her images, as well as her extensive and innovative archival work, serve as one model for the kinds of approaches we want to explore and foster. In addition, our work is guided by close study of authors such as Leni Riefenstahl, Virginia Woolf, Alain Resnais, Susan Sontag, Sigmund Freud, Errol Morris, Judith Butler, Ariella Azoulay, Diana Taylor, Thy Phu, David Shneer, Amitav Ghosh, Anne McClintock, Grace Paley, Maaza Mengiste, Viet Thanh Nguyen, Karla Cornejo Villavicencio, Jenny Holzer, Walid Raad, Harun Farocki, Sam Durant, Sim Chi Yin, and more.

HSAR 804b / ANTH 787b / ARCG 787b, East Asian Objects and Museums: Collection, Curation, and Display
Anne Underhill

This course explores the East Asian art and anthropological collections at Yale’s museums and at other major museums in North America and East Asia. Students study collections and their histories; gain experience in museum practices; and learn from specialists through class visits to other relevant museums in the United States.

HSAR 841a and HSAR 842b / ANTH 963a and ANTH 964b / HIST 963a and HIST 964b / HSHM 691a and HSHM 692b, Topics in the Environmental Humanities
Kalyanakrishnan Sivaramakrishnan and Paul Sabin

This is the required workshop for the Graduate Certificate in Environmental Humanities. The workshop meets six times per term to explore concepts, methods, and pedagogy in the environmental humanities, and to share student and faculty research. Each student pursuing the Graduate Certificate in Environmental Humanities must complete both a fall term and a spring term of the workshop, but the two terms of student participation need not be consecutive. The fall term each year emphasizes key concepts and major intellectual currents. The spring term each year emphasizes pedagogy, methods, and public practice. Specific topics vary each year. Students who have previously enrolled in the course may audit the course in a subsequent year. Open only to students pursuing the Graduate Certificate in Environmental Humanities. ½ Course cr per term