HISTORY OF ART

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

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Associate Professors Marisa Bass, Craig Buckley, Cécile Fromont, Jacqueline Jung, Jennifer Raab

Assistant Professors Joanna Fiduccia, Subhashini Kaligotla, Quincy Ngan

Lecturer Nenagh Hathaway

FIELDS OF STUDY

Fields include ancient Greek and Roman; Medieval and Byzantine; Renaissance; Early Modern; eighteenth-, nineteenth-, and twentieth-century European; Modern Architecture; African; African American and African diaspora; American; Material Culture and Decorative Arts; British; Pre-Columbian; Islamic; East Asian.

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.
The focus of the first-year colloquium is to analyze and critique the history of art history and its methodology from a variety of disciplinary perspectives. The seminar discusses foundational texts as well as new methods relevant to the study of the history of art and architecture today, notably those concerned with issues of race, gender, and representation. It also engages with debates about museums and the ethics of collecting and display. The seminar is structured around selected readings and includes workshops with guest speakers.
HSAR 512a or b, Directed Research  Staff
By arrangement with faculty.

HSAR 540b, The Decorative Threat  Joanna Fiduccia
“Decoration is the specter that haunts modern painting,” Clement Greenberg once claimed; it is modernism’s “symptomatic shadow,” wrote Peter Wollen. This course seeks to understand these statements by exploring the role of decoration in modernist aesthetics and modern ideology, in which the decorative was entangled with motifs of excess and desire, truth and deception, and gendered labor and space, along with Orientalist fantasies, bourgeois reveries, socialist aspirations, and metaphors for the interiority of the modern subject. Beginning with readings on the significance of ornamentation and decoration at the origins of modern art history, we examine the relationship between theories of modernism and the development of the decorative arts in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The course concludes by considering the cultural and political legacies of the decorative threat in art and art history today. Readings include Alois Riegl, John Ruskin, Gottfried Semper, Theodor Adorno, Joris-Karl Huysmans, Gertrude Stein, Clement Greenberg, Caroline Arscott, Gülru Necipoğlu, Oleg Grabar, Peter Wollen, Rae Beth Gordon, Partha Mitter, Whitney Davis, Nancy Troy, Tag Gronberg, Anne Cheng.

HSAR 542a, Global Materiality of Color  Quincy Ngan
This seminar explores a global phenomenon wherein color makes meaning beyond sheer coloration and complements the function and meaning of artworks, inseparable from their conceptual properties. The seminar has two fundamentally different but reciprocal inquiries. The first is to study how pigments and dyes entangle with the wider world, reconstructing the history of their production and circulation along with the worldview of minerals and dyes in a given civilization. This inquiry leads to a better understanding of the history of trade, economy, science, medicine, chemistry, technology, and culture. The second inquiry, which fundamentally concerns art historians, studies how the production and circulation of pigments and dyes, as well as views on the material, permeate the conceptual property of artworks, such as paintings and murals, and colored objects, such as textiles and sculptures. Together, we explore the multivalent significance of colors—cochineal, indigo, Maya blue, malachite, azurite, lapis lazuli, and gold—across cultures. For the final paper, students write about the materiality of color in their own field. Major texts include *Pigments and Power in the Andes* (2011), *Colors Between Two Worlds* (2011), *The Materiality of Color* (2012), *Colour, Art, and Empire* (2013), *A Red Like No Other* (2015), *Color in Ancient and Medieval East Asia* (2015), *Color in the Age of Impressionism* (2017), and *Colour and Light in Ancient and Medieval Art* (2018).

HSAR 545b, Research Methods in the Arts of the Americas  Jennifer Raab
Discussion of scholarly methods, research practices, and critical texts to facilitate the conceptualization and development of dissertation projects. Workshops and presentations to mark various stages (key questions, core objects, relevant literature, argument, outline, drafts). Intended primarily for students undertaking the dissertation prospectus on topics related to the arts of the Americas. Prior permission of the instructor required.

HSAR 546a, Critical Readings in American Art  Jennifer Raab
Readings in American art in preparation for Ph.D. examinations. Discussions of texts, methods, and works of art. Prior permission of the instructor required.

HSAR 547a or b, Futures in Art History  Jennifer Raab
Addresses professional development in the field of art history through workshops, discussions, and events. Open to all graduate students in the History of Art at any stage of the Ph.D. program.

HSAR 549b, Thinking Small  Marisa Bass
How do we think differently with images and objects that are small in scale? Do small-scale works have a particular ability to rouse the imagination, to engage the senses, or to operate in the political sphere? What are the implications of working small for artists in terms of their approach to technique, materiality, and composition? What kinds of knowledge and engagement do small works demand on the part of the viewer or user? And how might we extend the concept of thinking small even to large-scale works, for instance, by considering painting in terms of the unit of the brushstroke or the level of detail? When does smallness result in greater abstraction or obscurity rather than greater realism or clarity? This seminar explores the concept of thinking small across media, including but also looking beyond the usual categories of the miniature and the microscopic. Our particular focus is on the art of the early modern Netherlands, but readings and discussion range more widely. A major component of the course is planning a prospective exhibition on Dutch art at the Yale Art Gallery and attendant discussion of curatorial issues and practice.

HSAR 550a, Early Indian Afterlives  Subhashini Kaligotla
This seminar combines close looking and reading with writing imaginatively. With the help of an array of texts and visual material we explore how early South Asians thought about death, dying, and the afterlife. Students are encouraged to react to these primary sources in order to develop their writing muscles and incorporate a range of ekphrastic stances into their writing. Students write weekly creative texts that culminate in a final longer work, which can take the form of a literary essay, a poem sequence, short story, film, or a mixed media project. Topics of discussion include the moment of death and the kinds of death valorized by social groups; rituals of mourning, grief, and remembrance; the iconography of death; conceptions of afterworlds and their inhabitants; and such Indic concepts as rebirth, karma, and nirvana. We read literary, political, religious, and art historical texts, and consider Buddhist, Hindu, and Jain perspectives as well as contemporary prose and poetry such as Joan Didion’s *The Year of Magical Thinking*, Mary Jo Bang’s *Elegy*, and Marie Howe’s *What the Living Do*. Visual examples run the gamut: memorial buildings, relics and reliquaries, prints capturing the rewards and punishments of the afterlife, mandalas and cosmological maps, and the striking portrayals of the god of death and ghosts and ghouls on temple walls, paintings, and textiles.
This seminar investigates the many entanglements between art, race, and violence in the early modern Atlantic world and the long shadow these entanglements have cast on the contemporary era. Readings, class discussions, assignments, and invited speakers address topics such as racial construction in colonial Latin America; the visual culture of slavery; race and the advent of photography; the memorialization of slavery and colonialism; and race, piety, and aesthetics.

HSAR 600b, Painting and Poetry in Islamic Art  Kishwar Rizvi
An exploration of the intersection between objects and texts in Islamic art with a focus on the arts of Iran, Turkey, and India. The seminar studies holdings in Yale’s libraries and art galleries, which include ninth-century Qurans, thirteenth-century ceramics, and nineteenth-century lithographs, in order to gain an understanding of the manner in which poetic texts were deployed as an inspiration for visual art while serving as a critique of its very materiality.

HSAR 678a / ENGL 830a, Portraiture and Character from Hogarth to Woolf  Ruth Yeazell
Case studies in the visual and verbal representation of persons in Anglo-American painting and fiction, with particular attention to novels that themselves include portraits or address relations between the two media. Novelists tentatively include Henry Fielding, Jane Austen, Henry James, Edith Wharton, Oscar Wilde, and Virginia Woolf. Painters include William Hogarth, Joshua Reynolds, Thomas Lawrence, James McNeill Whistler, John Singer Sargent, and Vanessa Bell. Selected readings in recent theories of fictional character and in the history and theory of portraiture. Whenever possible, we draw on paintings in Yale’s collections.

HSAR 682b, The Matter of Still Life  Carol Armstrong
This seminar concerns the history of still-life painting and photography from the seventeenth through the twentieth century, with an emphasis on the nineteenth century in France. We consider the genre of painting that was the lowest on the old hierarchy of genres as a site of contemplation of the following themes of modernity and modernism: materiality and commodification, medium-specificity, the gendering of the private sphere, fetishism, fantasy and displacement, subject/object relations, relations between the optical and the tactile, and the transformation of the artist’s studio. We also consider the theory of the genres to which this particular genre belonged.

HSAR 694a, Edwardian Modernities  Timothy Barringer
This seminar explores the complex and heterogeneous culture of Edwardian Britain and its empire, 1901–1910, and in the following years leading to the First World War. Recent scholarship has emphasized the transitional nature of Edwardian culture. Radical shifts in social, political, and economic structures, and demands for the representation of women, for Indian and Irish independence, coincided with displays of opulence and imperial bravado. New technologies such as the motor car proliferated, and popular culture took on distinctively modern forms through the music halls, illustrated press, gramophone, and cinema. This was the moment of the emergence of distinctively British forms of modern art, literature, and music. Particular emphasis is placed on relationships between the arts: paintings by Sargent, Orpen, Conder, and Vanessa Bell; the literary work of Hardy, H.G. Wells, and Rudyard Kipling; and music by Elgar, Delius, and Vaughan Williams. Architecture and urbanism in Britain, its colonies, and dominions are also considered.

HSAR 709a, Precarity  Pamela Lee
An intensive reading seminar on precarity and neoliberalism, and the aesthetic and art-critical responses to the diverse phenomena these terms encompass and name. Topics include bio- and necropolitics; the Anthropocene and environmental justice; human capital and its complements in immaterial, reproductive, and contingent labor; black, brown, and red bodies under perpetual siege and surveillance; education, credit, and debt. Readings in autonomist/workerist and post-Marxist literature; debates on the status of critique within the arts; strategies of protest and/or refusal/withdrawal within the art world and its institutions; and how artists, students, and arts professionals confront the material realities of precarious life. Enrollment limited and by approval of the instructor.

HSAR 714b, Globalization of Modern Craft  Edward Cooke
This seminar explores the development of self-conscious craft in the condition of modernity. Emerging from the work of the English designer-writer William Morris, modern craft has been intertwined with issues of identity (national and personal), class, and politics. Its intellectual foundation in the writings of Morris has also permitted modern craft to spread throughout the globe, taking root in different ways and at different times. The seminar investigates this geographic and temporal spread in a comparative fashion.

HSAR 727a, The American Interior  Edward Cooke
The course historicizes and theorizes the furnishing and cultural function of American domestic space from the colonial period to the present. It charts developments over time with an eye toward themes such as gendered consumption, accumulated possessions, en suite decoration, separation of public and private space, identity formation, interest in domesticking cultural tourism, professionalization of the interior designer or architect, desire to reshape domesticity, rise of interior decorators, and impact of technology. The course also makes use of collections at Yale.

HSAR 731a / JDST 692a / RLST 798a, Witnessing, Remembrance, Commemoration  Margaret Olin
Memory and its expressions structure and inform many aspects of contemporary visual culture. Beginning with Albert Camus’s novel *The Plague*, this seminar pursues readings about memory and witnessing chosen from among the works of such writers as Sigmund Freud, Frances Yates, Maurice Halbwachs, and the authors of the book of Genesis, as well as writings about commemoration by James Young and Pierre Nora, among others. Discussions apply these readings to the study of witnessing and memorializing as artistic practices and examine visual realizations of such works, including some monuments and memorials near campus—but with a nonexclusive emphasis on Jewish examples, such as videos in the Fortunoff archive. Student projects center on theory or on special cases of witnessing or commemoration, ritual, memorial practice, and monuments, whether built, written, aural, electronic, or played out on the streets. Qualified undergraduates welcome.
HSAR 752a, Art and the American Civil War: Violence, Race, and Memory  Jennifer Raab
The military battles of the American Civil War may have been fought between 1861 and 1865, the Emancipation Proclamation issued in 1863, but the pain, injustice, structural inequalities, and state-sponsored violence that are the legacies of chattel slavery remain. One might say that the Civil War has never really ended. This course looks not only at the visual and material culture produced during the conflict but also its far-reaching future effects. We explore the emergence of photojournalism and the illustrated newspaper; African American activism and the use of photographic portraiture; radical shifts in religious and cultural rituals surrounding death and mourning; the material culture of disability; the absence of traditional history paintings and the surge of white supremacist sculptures after Reconstruction; and how the violence and trauma of war and enslavement pose distinct ethical and representational challenges for visual media. The course ends by considering the recent movement to take down Confederate statues and monuments and the broader questions raised about art in public spaces, the suppression of histories of racial violence and imperialism, and the possibilities and limitations of memorialization. Permission of instructor required; priority is given to graduate students.

HSAR 785b / AFAM 839b, Cross-Cultural Issues: From Modern to Contemporary  Kobena Mercer
Examines the changing vocabulary in which cross-cultural aesthetics have been discussed in the twentieth-century shift from “modern” to “contemporary” art. Concepts of creolization, hybridity, syncretism, and transculturation are examined in their disciplinary sources and as taken up in art criticism, against the background of modernist paradigms of primitivism, internationalism, and universalism. More so than artists or artworks, the basic unit of analysis is the art exhibition, from the national pavilions of the first Venice Biennale in 1895 to such curatorial initiatives as Jean Hubert Martin’s *Magiciens de la terre* and Okwui Enwezor’s *The Short Century: Independence and Liberation Movements in Africa, 1945–1994*.

HSAR 834a / AMST 816a / RLST 859a, Pilgrimage and Religious Tourism  Sally Promey and Orgu Dalgic
This interdisciplinary seminar explores the subjects of pilgrimage and religious tourism. With few exceptions, case studies in class sessions focus on the United States and/or Christianities across time. Students are encouraged to select presentation topics across a broad range of religions, times, and spaces. Theoretical and methodological reading assignments reflect this larger content.

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  Paul Sabin and Kalyanakrishnan Sivaramakrishnan
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