ART (Div I)
GRAD ART

Director: Professor Marc Gotlieb

- Esther S. Bell, Lecturer in the Graduate Program in Art History
- Victoria Brooks, Visiting Lecturer in the Graduate Program in Art History
- Michael Conforti, Lecturer in the Graduate Program in Art History; affiliated with: Art Department
- Ezra D. Feldman, Visiting Assistant Professor of English; affiliated with: Science & Technology Studies, Graduate Program-Art History
- Caroline O. Fowler, Lecturer in the Graduate Program in Art History
- Marc Gotlieb, Halvorsen Director of the Graduate Program in Art History; affiliated with: Art Department; on leave Spring 2022
- Anne Lafont, Robert Sterling Clark Visiting Professor of Art History
- Anne R. Leonard, Lecturer in the Graduate Program in Art History
- Olivier Meslay, Lecturer in the Graduate Program in Art History

MASTER OF ARTS IN ART HISTORY

Requirements
To qualify for the Master of Arts degree in art history, candidates complete a minimum of twelve courses for graduate credit plus two winter study periods, the latter comprising an international Study Trip in the first year (ARTH 51) and preparation of a Draft Qualifying Paper in the second (ARTH 52). Students must also demonstrate reading proficiency in one foreign language, though further study in primary-research languages is encouraged. At the end of the second year, all students present a shortened version of the Qualifying Paper in the annual Graduate Symposium.

At least seven of the twelve courses required for graduation must be graduate seminars. (Students are free to pursue additional courses beyond those required for the degree.) Among the twelve courses counted towards the degree, three are required of all students: ARTH 504, “Proseminar in Research and Method,” to be taken in the first semester of study; ARTH 506, “Graduate Art History Writing Workshop,” to be taken in the second; and ARTH 509, “Graduate Student Symposium,” to be taken in the fourth semester. Additionally, all students must complete ARTH 507, “Object Workshop,” which is pass/fail, in their first year of study. The optional Curatorial Workshop, ARTH 563, is also pass/fail. Neither ARTH 507 nor ARTH 563 counts among the twelve courses required to complete the degree.

Students must also fulfill a distribution requirement by undertaking coursework in two of four geographical areas and two of three chronological periods.

Geographical Areas:
1) Europe and the Mediterranean Basin
2) Asia and the Pacific
3) The Americas
4) Africa and the Middle East

Chronological Periods:
1) Prehistoric to 1200
2) 1200 to 1800
3) 1800 to the present

Students may petition the Director to apply a thematic or non-period/geographic-specific course toward the distribution requirement by demonstrating substantial work in an appropriate area.

Undergraduate Courses and Independent Studies
With permission from the Director and the individual instructors, students may take up to five undergraduate courses for graduate credit, with the understanding that research papers submitted in such courses meet a standard commensurate with those prepared for graduate seminars.

In addition to regularly offered seminars and classes, students may arrange one independent study (ARTH 595/596) by submitting petitions to the Director describing the substance of their projects and the nature of the work they will submit for evaluation. The petitions must be co-signed in advance by both the student and their faculty supervisor.
Of the minimum requirement of twelve courses, the combined number of independent studies and undergraduate courses applied to the degree may not exceed five.

The Qualifying Paper

The Qualifying Paper is a substantially revised piece of academic writing produced in coursework at Williams in one of the previous three semesters, expanded and refined over the second Winter Study term and a portion of the fourth semester. Students submit the topic of the Qualifying Paper in writing by the final day of exams of their third semester. Before this, students must obtain their original faculty supervisor’s agreement to be engaged in the Qualifying Paper process.

Three weeks prior to the Friday before Spring Break, students submit the final draft of their Qualifying Paper, including illustrations, to three faculty readers (generally the original faculty supervisor, the Director, and the Associate Director). Qualifying Papers should not exceed 8,000 words, including footnotes and bibliography.

Before Spring Break, students meet with their three readers to receive critical comments on the final QP and discuss its transformation into a twenty-minute presentation.

The Graduate Symposium

All second-year students speak in the Symposium, presenting twenty-minute talks developed from their Qualifying Papers. Each student has an ad hoc committee to give advice in preparing these presentations (ad hoc committees comprise the Director, the Associate Director, one additional faculty mentor, one first-year graduate student, and one second-year graduate student). Preparations include at least three practice sessions for each student. Speakers present the first and third of these run-throughs to the ad hoc committee, the second to the other second-year students in a workshop scheduled by the Director. The Graduate Symposium is scheduled for the Friday immediately preceding Commencement.

Languages

The Graduate Program’s degree requires A2-level proficiency in one language other than English (or two college-level classes or equivalent) in a language of scholarly and academic relevance to the student’s art-historical interests. This requirement can be fulfilled by college-level language coursework prior to matriculating at Williams, by language coursework at Williams College, by summer language study, or by other methods (such as language exposure at home). The requirement represents the minimum for graduation; the program supports and strongly encourages proficiency in multiple languages. Beyond the required languages, a maximum number of two additional language courses may be applied to the degree. Such additional language work may not count towards the seven required graduate seminars. Additional language work may be taken for a letter grade, pass/fail, or audit, subject to instructor approval.

Grades and Academic Standing

The Program uses the following grading system:

- A+ = truly exceptional (4.33)
- A = outstanding (4.00)
- A- = excellent (3.67)
- B+ = good (3.33)
- B = satisfactory (3.00)
- B- = barely adequate (2.67)
- C = inadequate (0)
- E = failing (0)

The Director reviews students’ records at the end of their first year; those with GPAs of 3.00 or lower may be asked to withdraw from the Program. Letter grades are used in all seminars except ARTH 507, 509, and 563. These and the Winter Study courses (ARTH 51 and 52) are Pass/Fail.

Course instructors set the deadlines for coursework. If students seek and receive extensions that result in semester grades of Incomplete, they must hand in their work by the instructor’s revised deadline, which will be no later than the second Monday of the next semester’s classes. Extensions beyond this date will be solely at the discretion of the Director (in consultation with the instructor).

Students who withdraw from the Program may, after a period of at least one year, petition to the Director for re-admission. Such a petition must include evidence that deficiencies have been remedied and that the student is capable of completing the course of study without further interruption.

The M.A. requirements are designed for completion in two consecutive academic years in residence. There is no credit for coursework done prior to matriculation in the Program. The Program is full time, requires students to live in Williamstown or its vicinity, and does not normally admit students on a part-time basis.
ARTH 500  (F)  Clark Visiting Professor Seminar: Race and Visual Culture

Cross-listings:  ARTH 500  ARTH 400

Primary Cross-listing

Race does not exist. On a biological level, the idea of race as a grounded scientific category has been disqualified for decades. If it had an end, it necessarily had a beginning. One can identify this beginning in the middle ages and follow it through Renaissance as an idea of lineage; the modern intersection of race with skin color began with the early modern colonization process in the Americas and in Africa. From that time forward, the history of race and the history of art intersect. This course will try to show how art history’s tools are fundamental to understanding race as a modern category and social agency. We will focus on the raw materials of the painter (pigments); visuality as a modality of human categorization, the construction of human hierarchies or racial orders, the social efficiency of color theories and racial matrix of caricature. Course readings will privilege the wealth of recent research and historiography addressing the links between art, visual culture and race.

Requirements/Evaluation:  writing assignments, participation

Prerequisites:  none

Enrollment Limit:  16

Enrollment Preferences:  graduate students get preference; places for 8 undergraduate and 8 graduate students assured

Expected Class Size:  16

Grading:  no pass/fail option,  no fifth course option

Distributions:  (D1)

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:

ARTH 500 (D1) ARTH 400 (D1)

Fall 2021

SEM Section:  01    R 1:00 pm - 3:50 pm    Anne Lafont

ARTH 501  (S)  Museums: History and Practice

Cross-listings:  LEAD 301  ARTH 501  ARTH 401

Primary Cross-listing

Art museums not only express the political, economic and cultural values of their period of formation, but the evolution of those values that have resulted in today’s institutions. Looking at museums past and present internationally, seminar participants will envision the future of museums as we recognize programmatic and re-organizational developments in our own moment of civic and social unrest. The class will consider this future while examining existing governance and management policies and practices, the role of architecture and installation in interpretation and experience, guidelines in the accessioning and deaccessioning of works of art, and issues in repatriation and restitution of cultural property. Surveying museums ranging in size and type from the "encyclopedic" to newly established contemporary arts institutions and alternative spaces, we will investigate current trends in acquisition, exhibition and educational programming in light of a changing canon. In addition, class discussions will have a special focus on how museums might strive to balance their traditional scholarly and artistic roles with their future civic and social responsibilities, doing so while maintaining financial stability in the increasingly market-driven, metric-conscious, not-for-profit environment of our time.

Requirements/Evaluation:  oral presentations and discussion in class and one seminar paper (with class presentation) at the end of the semester

Prerequisites:  undergraduates should email michael.conforti@williams.edu to schedule a discussion before registering for the course

Enrollment Limit:  10

Enrollment Preferences:  graduate students, then senior art history majors, then other undergraduates

Expected Class Size:  10

Grading:  no pass/fail option,  no fifth course option

Unit Notes:  satisfies the seminar requirement for the undergraduate Art History major

Distributions:  (D1)
This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:
LEAD 301 (D2) ARTH 501 (D1) ARTH 401 (D1)

Attributes: AMST Space and Place Electives  LEAD Facets or Domains of Leadership

Spring 2022
SEM Section: 01    T 1:00 pm - 3:50 pm     Michael Conforti

ARTH 503  (S) Clark Visiting Professor Seminar: The Making of African Art

Cross-listings: ARTH 503 ARTH 403

Primary Cross-listing

Where does African art come from? How do ritual objects from the African continent become works of art in western museums? What kind of discourses transformed artefacts (religious, magic, mundane or extraordinary) into fine arts masterpieces? How did European early modern and western contemporary texts qualify and impact the reception of African objects from the period of colonization and after? Discourse shapes materiality and visuality. Manipulations fashion things. The gaze acclimates to different volumes and forms. In this course, these different aesthetic regimes of the modern era will be explored regarding African art. From Olfert Dapper (Dutch polymath of the late 17th century) to Michel Leiris (French novelist and ethnographer of the 20th century) we will follow the diverse histories of African artefacts and creative processes as they developed in the West into the loose and pluridisciplinary domain of African Art History. The course will be an occasion to read different texts regarding African artefacts from 1680 to 1930 and discuss the perception of these objects in Europe as well as their transfiguration into the property and aesthetic objects of European museum.

Requirements/Evaluation: research paper, class presentations
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 16
Enrollment Preferences: second-year graduate students, then first-year graduate students, then advanced undergraduate students; places for 8 undergraduate and 8 graduate students assured
Expected Class Size: 16
Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option
Distributions: (D1)

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:
ARTH 503 (D1) ARTH 403 (D1)

Spring 2022
SEM Section: 01    R 1:00 pm - 3:50 pm     Anne Lafont

ARTH 504  (S) Proseminar in Research and Method

In this graduate Proseminar on Research and Method, we will read a number of texts that form the foundation of art history as a discipline, including the writings of Plato, Panofsky, Lessing, Heidegger, Wölfflin, and Barthes (among others). We will study these works against the grain, considering how art history is currently transforming under the fields of ecology, disability studies, queer theory, and radical black feminism. Students will work closely with the collections of the Clark to theorize how absences are integral to institutional histories, and we will think about how we can, as historians, responsibly address voices that have been removed from the canons of art history. This course considers not only central writings of art historical methodology but also the limits for decolonizing art history and the museum, as we will examine how the formation of the discipline depended upon absenting critical perspectives and voices.

Class Format: in-person seminar with option to attend remotely, remote learning after Thanksgiving
Requirements/Evaluation: class participation, writing assignments
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 12
Enrollment Preferences: limited to and required of first-year students in the Graduate Program in the History of Art
Expected Class Size: 12
Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

Distributions: (D1)

Spring 2022

SEM Section: 01    T 10:00 am - 12:50 pm    Caroline O. Fowler

ARTH 506  (F)  Expository Writing Workshop
This writing seminar for graduate students in Art History will afford intensive full group discussions of writing skills and substantial one-on-one writing consultations (to be held on Google Meet). Group discussions will center on three kinds of texts: Writing about writing, published writing in the discipline of Art History, and student writing in progress. In six such discussions we will improve our vocabulary and method for discussing writing; we will learn to build better and more sophisticated sentences, paragraphs, and arguments; and we will practice anticipatory reading and writing in order to strengthen our control of both voice and structure. Each discussion will be supported with both exempla and exercises, and our watchword in all cases will be "revision." In one-on-one consultations (3-4 per person), I will offer tailored critique of each student's work, setting aside time as needed to troubleshoot sentences, paragraphs, or arguments together.

Requirements/Evaluation: class participation, participation in consultation meetings, writing assignments,

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 14

Enrollment Preferences: limited to and required of first-year students in the Graduate Program in the History of Art

Expected Class Size: 14

Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

Distributions: (D1)

Attributes: ARTH post-1800 Courses

ARTh 507  (F)(S)  Object Workshop
Meeting for six sessions over the semester, this workshop is designed to introduce first-year graduate students to technical, material, and connoisseurial perspectives relevant to the study and analysis of art objects. We will draw on local collections and expertise for our case studies.

Requirements/Evaluation: participation

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 14

Enrollment Preferences: limited to and required of first-year students in the Graduate Program in the History of Art

Expected Class Size: 14

Grading: pass/fail option only

Distributions: (D1)

ARTh 508  (S)  Art and Conservation: An Inquiry into History, Methods, and Materials
This course is designed to acquaint students with observation and examination techniques for works of art, artifacts, and decorative arts objects; give them an understanding of the history of artist materials and methods; and familiarize them with the ethics and procedures of conservation. This is not a conservation training course but is structured to provide a broader awareness for those who are planning careers involving work with cultural objects.
Sessions will be held at the Williamstown Art Conservation Center, Williams College, the Clark Art Institute, and the Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller Empire State Plaza Art Collection in Albany. Examination questions may be formulated from exhibitions at these locations. Six exams will be given. Exam scores will be weighed in proportion to the number of sessions covered by the exam (e.g., the paintings exam, derived from six sessions of the course, will count as 25% of the final grade).

**Class Format:** slide presentations, lectures, gallery talks, hands-on opportunities, technical examinations, and group discussions

**Requirements/Evaluation:** attendance is required at all sessions; the course grade is based on exams given throughout the semester; there is no final exam

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 14

**Enrollment Preferences:** Graduate Program students, then students in art history or studio art

**Expected Class Size:** 14

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D1)

**Attributes:** EXPE Experiential Education Courses

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**ARTH 509 (S) Graduate Symposium**

This course is designed to assist qualified fourth-semester graduate students in preparing a scholarly paper to be presented at the annual Graduate Symposium. Working closely with a student and faculty ad hoc advisory committee, each student will prepare a twenty-minute presentation based on the Qualifying Paper. Special emphasis is placed on the development of effective oral presentation skills.

**Class Format:** symposium

**Requirements/Evaluation:** each student will present three practice runs and a final oral presentation at the symposium

**Prerequisites:** successful completion and acceptance of the Qualifying Paper

**Grading:** pass/fail option only

**Unit Notes:** limited to and required of second-year students in the Graduate Program in the History of Art

**Distributions:** (D1)

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**ARTH 510 (F) Approaches to Drawing from Connoisseurship to Conceptualism**

This course will consider the art of drawing as a pedagogical tool and cultural practice from the sixteenth to the twentieth century. Creative and commercial forces over four centuries have fostered different types of and reasons for production: presentation drawings in sixteenth century Italy, an increased market for drawings in seventeenth century Holland, a fashion for powdery pastels in eighteenth century France, and the critical promotion of drawing as a form of autographic thinking in the nineteenth century. Drawing has enjoyed a resurgence in the last fifty years as Minimalism and Conceptualism have pushed the medium's boundaries. Equal consideration will be given to the history of collecting and to materials from the invention of the Conté crayon to the deteriorating effects of acidic paper. The seminar will coincide with a major loan exhibition at the Clark of over one hundred drawings from the Renaissance through contemporary: Drawing in Depth: Master Drawings from the Thaw Collection. The class will be held in the Manton Study Center for Works on Paper and the Clark galleries with visits to the Williams College Museum of Art.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** involved class participation, several short presentations, one short paper, and a final paper approximately 20 pages

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 14

**Enrollment Preferences:** Graduate Program students and then to senior Art History majors

**Expected Class Size:** 8
ARTh 512 (F) Why Look at Animals? Some Contemporary Positions

This seminar, named for a 1977 essay by the art critic John Berger, considers a recent tendency in contemporary art to see nonhuman animals less as objects for human delectation—to be owned, eaten, or symbolized with—than as subjects, endowed with specific forms of intelligence, agency, and/or cross-species kinship. We will take as case studies the work of artists such as Francis Alÿs, Xu Bing, Sue Coe, Coco Fusco, Pierre Huyghe, Jochen Lempert, Chris Marker, and Lin May Saeed, among others. Readings will come in part from the rapidly growing, multidisciplinary field of animal studies. In the process, we will consider concepts such as animacy; animal ethics; animalization; the anthropocene; biopolitics; and posthumanism. This seminar anticipates two exhibitions concerning animals at the Clark in Summer 2020.

Requirements/Evaluation: active class participation, presentations, writing assignments

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 14

Enrollment Preferences: MA students, then advanced Art History undergraduates

Expected Class Size: 12

Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

Distributions: (D1)

Not offered current academic year

ARTh 513 (S) Contours of Abstraction in Modern and Contemporary Art

Abstraction, be it gestural or geometrical, was a protagonist of global modernisms and continues to be a powerful visual language in contemporary art. The term "abstraction" may first appear straightforward, but its associations are quite complex: in varying historical contexts, abstraction has signaled formalist rupture, revolutionary politics, appropriation, as well as racial, feminist, and queer critique. We will delve deeply into abstraction in global modern and contemporary art through myriad primary documents and theoretical frameworks so as to revise and expand its canonical contours and cartographies.

Requirements/Evaluation: Weekly presentations, response papers, final 20-page research paper

Prerequisites: Students at the undergraduate level must be seniors and Art History majors

Enrollment Limit: 12

Enrollment Preferences: Art History MA students and undergraduate Art History seniors

Expected Class Size: 10

Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

Distributions: (D1)

Attributes: ARTh post-1800 Courses

Spring 2022

SEM Section: 01 W 10:00 am - 12:50 pm Mari Rodriguez Binnie

ARTh 515 (F) Creating Whiteness: Racial Taxonomies in 'American' Art, 1650-1900

Cross-listings: AMST 355 ARTh 515

Primary Cross-listing

"What is race?" "How is a race created?" "What are the racial histories and subsequent political implications of 'American' art?" These are the central questions of our exploration. Drawing on two centuries of making in the Americas—from 17th century casta paintings of New Spain to the pictorialist photographs of Fred Holland Day—from this object-based seminar for graduate students (and undergraduates with instructor's approval) draws upon area collections (including WCMA and The Clark Art Institute) to make the argument that racial ideologies have always been sutured to definitions of an American canon. Our approach is the case study: devoting one or two class meetings to the exploration of eight specific moments/artists in order to
engage with the intersectional ideologies of personal and collective identity, e.g., self and the Divine; portraiture and the nation, armed conflict, and the constructed mutabilities of gender and sexuality. Additional artists and topics include: the Stuart family's images of George Washington and Thomas Jefferson; advances in photographic technology vis-à-vis the amputated bodies of Civil War veterans; gender fluidity in John Singer Sargent; and the equation of homoeroticism and black bodies in pictorialism. Designed to provide breadth and specific moments of depth, we will be covering processes of making across multiple mediums and time periods. An elementary reading knowledge of French, Latin, Portuguese, and/or Spanish will not go amiss.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** research paper, presentations

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 16

**Enrollment Preferences:** second-year graduate students, then first-year graduate students, then advanced undergraduate students

**Expected Class Size:** 12

**Grading:** no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D1)

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:

AMST 355 (D1) ARTH 515 (D1)

Not offered current academic year

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**ARTH 519 (S) Architectural Theory and Modernity, 1750-1968**

Why do buildings need words, or do they? For most of the world and most of history, buildings are made without the benefit of formal architectural thought. But at various times, ideas about the aesthetics of buildings, their cultural and philosophical meaning, and their underlying principles, have been matters of great public interest. And architectural theory—in the form of treatises, manifestos, and critical reviews—has exercised an enormous effect on building. This theory can be prescriptive, presenting categorical rules for making good buildings; it can be descriptive, looking at how buildings perform in the real world; and it can be radical, seeking to change the essence and definition of architecture. Theory seemed very important to architects twenty years ago, but no longer. Why is that? We will investigate. Students will give short presentations on key theorists, such as Vitruvius, Alberti, Palladio, Laugier, Boulée, A. W. N. Pugin, Viollet-le-Duc, Gotthfried Semper, Le Corbusier, and Robert Venturi. The semester will conclude with a 15- to 20-page seminar paper, based on comments and discussion following a classroom presentation.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** class participation, writing assignments

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** none

**Enrollment Preferences:** MA students, then advanced undergraduates

**Expected Class Size:** 12

**Grading:** no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D1)

Not offered current academic year

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**ARTH 521 (S) Islam and the Image in Indian Painting, c.1450-c.1750**

This seminar will explore Indian painting made for Muslim patrons from the medieval period to the early modern era. The course considers how paintings produced for an elite Indo-Muslim audience can be situated within the frameworks of "Islamic art," a loaded historiographical term that has been questioned in recent times. The seminar will also address some of the major problems that continue to haunt Indian art scholarship. For most of its history, the academic study of Indian painting has seldom considered contemporaneous literary voices that shed light on the motivations behind artworks. Furthermore, the historiography, deeply entrenched in its colonial and orientalist roots, has largely isolated images from their supporting texts—a curious oversight in light of the fact that miniature painting is primarily an art of the book. These biases have affected the way museums have collected, displayed, and interpreted miniature paintings. Western museums continue to place paintings made for books and albums in their "South Asian" collections while textual manuscripts and calligraphic specimens made for the same Muslim audiences—even at times bound in the same albums—are categorized as "Islamic art." What does this isolation of text from image imply about prevailing views of Islamic art? In order to understand the various intended functions of miniature painting and its possible role as an "Islamic" art, the seminar will explore ways to conceptually reintegrate images and texts belonging to key manuscripts and albums that were dispersed during the colonial and post-colonial periods. To better understand the cultural, historical and religious context surrounding artworks students will read primary literature ranging from autobiography to devotional poetry,
often written by the very patrons and subjects of the paintings to be discussed.

Requirements/Evaluation: class participation, writing assignments

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: none

Enrollment Preferences: MA students, then advanced undergraduates

Expected Class Size: 12

Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

Distributions: (D1)

Not offered current academic year

ARTH 523  (S)  Heaven's Gate:The Romanesque Sculpted Portal and the Creation of Sacred Space Through Art

Cross-listings: ARTH 523  ARTH 424

Secondary Cross-listing

During the course of the eleventh century, the designers of European churches fashioned a new architectural language that we now label "Romanesque." One of the most innovative and dramatic aspects of this new language was its assimilation of monumental sculpture, absent in Europe since the fifth century. The focus of attention in this regard was the portal, which marked the threshold between the profane realm of the outside world and the sacred space of the church. Often characterized as the "marquee of the Middle Ages," the Romanesque sculpted portal, with its startling juxtaposition of the spiritual and the physical, of ecstatic visions of the heavenly realm and writhing, biting monsters, constitutes one of the true high-points of creativity in medieval art. Through the lens of modern scholarship, this seminar will investigate the antecedents and origins of the Romanesque sculpted portal and examine in detail its most renowned manifestations. Emphasis will be placed on understanding these often complex sculptural schemes within their original functional and material contexts, especially in terms of how they helped to create the sacred space of the church behind. Students will then have the opportunity to develop their own research projects, informed by what we have learned in the seminar, but focused on an example of sacred threshold art of their own choosing.

Requirements/Evaluation: class discussion/participation, oral presentation, and a 15- to 20-page research paper

Prerequisites: permission of instructor

Enrollment Limit: 14

Enrollment Preferences: Art majors and graduate students

Expected Class Size: 8

Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

Distributions: (D1)

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:

ARTH 523 (D1)  ARTH 424 (D1)

Attributes: ARTH pre-1800 Courses

Not offered current academic year

ARTH 524  (F)  The Watchful Object

What is implied by an object that "watches"? Is it sentient? Animate? Through what apparatus does it gain the power to perceive and in turn generate some type of action? Watchful objects--sometimes known problematically as 'fetishes,' 'idols,' and 'totems'--have existed in numerous material cultures in Africa over time and have often been saddled with titles and labels that largely reflect colonial-era notions of primitivism linked with non-Western objects, spaces, and peoples. Even today, many of these objects are still inappropriately connected to systems of the occult rather than being recognized as crucial cogs in the socio-political, cultural, and spiritual mechanics of lived experience on the continent both past and in some cases present. The purpose of this seminar, thus, is to unpack the multiple identities that these objects have experienced as a way of understanding 1.) the circumstances and situations that catalyzed their production; and 2.) how their various material and metaphorical components function as power-producing elements that enable these forms to become 'watchful' presences in society that operate in accordance with their 'observations' of the human condition. This course will also address how the psychological agency of many of these material traditions has prompted their inclusion and absorption within contemporary artistic practices as well, often in the form of productions and performances that provoke unsettling and often transformative experiences in viewers.

Not offered current academic year
Requirements/Evaluation: in-class presentations, class discussion, and a final research project
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 16
Enrollment Preferences: second-year graduate students, then first-year graduate students, then advanced undergraduate students
Expected Class Size: 12
Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option
Distributions: (D1)

Not offered current academic year

ARTH 527  (F)  Acquiring Art: Selecting and Purchasing Objects For WCMA
Cross-listings: ARTH 527  ECON 227  ARTH 327
Secondary Cross-listing

How do museums acquire art? Factors considered in selecting objects include: the museum's existing collection, its mission, the availability of suitable objects, evaluation of the art historical importance of potential purchases, and the available budget. How can objects be identified and obtained at the most reasonable cost? How do auctions work and what strategies are best for purchasing works at auction? Is it more economical to purchase art at auction or to work with dealers or (for contemporary works) directly with artists? Do museums consider value in the same way as private collectors? What role does an object's history and condition play in the evaluation process? In this course students will work as teams to identify and propose objects for addition to the collection of the Williams College Museum of Art (WCMA). A significant budget will be made available for the acquisition. We will discuss approaches for identification, acquisition and evaluation of objects. Student teams will be responsible for identifying a set of objects that would make appropriate additions to the WCMA collection, and a strategy for acquiring one or more of those objects. Working with the advice of WCMA curatorial staff, one or more of these objects will be acquired using the agreed strategy, and the object will become part of the WCMA permanent collection. Graduate students will participate in all aspects of the class but may be required to undertake different assignments.

Requirements/Evaluation: three papers of 10-15 pages each and class participation; student teams will make proposals for objects; each student will be required to submit three papers, dealing with the objects, the likely cost, and the best strategy
Prerequisites: ECON 110 or permission of instructor
Enrollment Limit: 20
Enrollment Preferences: senior majors in Art History, Economics and Political Economy; graduate students will be admitted only by permission of instructors
Expected Class Size: 20
Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option
Distributions: (D1)

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:
ARTH 527 (D1) ECON 227 (D2) ARTH 327 (D1)

Fall 2021
SEM Section: 01  MR 1:10 pm - 2:25 pm  Stephen C. Sheppard, Kevin M. Murphy

ARTH 530  (S)  Demigods: Nature, Social Theory, and Visual Imagination in Art and Literature, Ancient to Modern
Cross-listings: ARTH 530  CLAS 236
Primary Cross-listing

Embodied in satyrs, centaurs, nymphs, and other demigods is a vision of an alternative evolutionary and cultural history. In it, humans and animals live together. The distinction between nature and culture is not meaningful. Male and female are equal. The industrial revolution never happens. This course traces the history of demigods from its origins in ancient Greek art and poetry until today. We pay special attention to three points: the relationship between mythology of demigods and ancient political theory about primitive life; evolving conceptions of the environment, and the capacity of the visual arts to create mythology that has a limited literary counterpart. The first half of the course examines the origins and character of the demigods, in works of ancient art, e.g. the François vase and the Parthenon, as well as ancient texts, including Hesiod's Theogony and Ovid's Metamorphoses. We examine relevant cultural practices, intellectual history, and conceptions of nature, in texts such as Euripides and Lucretius. The
second half of the course investigates the post-classical survival of demigods. We consider the "rediscovery" of demigods in the work of Renaissance artists such as Botticelli, Michelangelo, Dürer, and Titian. We consider in detail the important role played by demigods in the formation of Modernism in art and literature. Key texts include Schiller, "Naive and sentimental poetry," Nietzsche, Birth of Tragedy, Mallermé, "L'Apres midi d'une faun," Aby Warburg, and Stoppard's Arcadia. Problems include the relationship between nymphs and prostitutes in Manet, and the meaning of fauns and the Minotaur in Picasso. We conclude with demigods in popular culture such as the Narnia chronicles or Hunger Games.

Requirements/Evaluation: attendance, participation in discussion, one short presentation on a demigod in ancient art, one longer presentation on demigods in early modern, modern, or contemporary art, and a 20-page research paper

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 16

Enrollment Preferences: first year graduate students, then second year graduate students; undergraduates by permission only

Expected Class Size: 12

Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

Distributions: (D1)

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:

ARTH 530 (D1) CLAS 236 (D1)

Attributes: ARTH pre-1800 Courses

Not offered current academic year

ARTH 532 (F) Creative Life: The Visual Economy of Work

This course is a seminar on life and work focusing on methodologies of production--art, creative writing, history, theory, and criticism. With an initial focus on the pivotal period from the invention of photography until the onset of World War II, the course will examine the economy of work within modern visual culture. What were the considerations at stake in capturing the "facts" of industrial production? We will examine historical definitions of work, and practices and activities from life that have typically qualified or have the potential to qualify as work (in addition to critiques of these equivalencies). The latter half of the course will be driven by considerations of these themes in relation to student and workers movements of 1968, and contemporary forms of globalization and pluralist subjectivities. One related concern will be the consideration of intersubjective relations--professional and personal partnerships, friendships, and networks--which not only influence the trajectory of one's life, but also the research one chooses to undertake. With the awareness that a range of drives and investments inhabit one's production, participants will be asked to reflect upon their own working practices as a means of critically engaging the affective relations governing artistic and intellectual labor. There will be an emphasis on cross-disciplinary ideas and influences--ranging from art history, film and media studies, the history of science, literature, and political history as a means of integrating theoretical approaches with a range of materials, including photography, cinema, illustrated magazines, advertisements, archives, world exhibitions, and product showrooms.

Requirements/Evaluation: Requirements/Evaluation: Active discussion participation; rough draft (mid semester) and final research paper (20-25 pages)

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 12

Enrollment Preferences: MA students, then undergraduate art history majors

Expected Class Size: 12

Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

Distributions: (D1)

Fall 2021

SEM Section: 01 W 10:00 am - 12:50 pm Alena Williams

ARTH 535 (F) The Medieval Object

Cross-listings: ARTH 535 ARTH 435

Secondary Cross-listing

After years of focusing on theory, scholars of medieval art have returned to an examination of physical objects. Distinctly strange and even monstrous,
such small material things as reliquaries, liturgical vessels, game pieces, and textiles transgress the traditional categories of art, some made from precious materials and others of such base substances as bones and dirt. Even books were treated as tangible things, not only to be read as texts, but also to be looked at, paraded, and displayed with the Eucharist. Collected in church treasuries during the Middle Ages, exchanged, and reconfigured, medieval objects served simultaneously as earthly assets and spiritual investments. The seminar will focus on the making, function, and collecting of medieval objects. Each student will participate in weekly discussions stimulated by the instructor’s presentations and selected readings. Students will also conduct research on an object available for study, will present an analysis of it for discussion by the class, and submit a 15- to 20-page term paper taking into account any comments and criticisms.

Class Format: three hours per week

Requirements/Evaluation: class participation, oral presentation, 15- to 20-page research paper

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 16

Enrollment Preferences: Art majors and Art History graduate students; 16 (8 undergrad, 8 graduate)

Expected Class Size: 14

Grading: no pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

Distributions: (D1)

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:

ARTH 535 (D1) ARTH 435 (D1)

Attributes: ARTH pre-1800 Courses

Not offered current academic year

ARTH 536  (S)  Charles and Maurice Prendergrast in WCMA Collections

This seminar will investigate the careers of Maurice and Charles Prendergast, who occupy curious positions in American art. Students will work closely with the art and archival collections of the Prendergasts at WCMA, which is the largest repository of their work in the world. Maurice’s Post-Impressionism placed him at the forefront of American modernism in the first decades of the twentieth century, culminating with his inclusion in the infamous Armory Show of 1913. Charles, a leading frame maker before adapting techniques of his craft to create incised panels, intersects with the Arts & Crafts Movement, Symbolism, and vernacular material culture. While the brothers are firmly canonical, they are often regarded as isolated from major formal and iconographic concerns of their peers. Scholarship, much of it produced at WCMA, has often focused on their subject matter. Participants in this class will consider new material and theoretical approaches to the brothers’ work that may (or may not) prove productive in resituating their place in American art.

Requirements/Evaluation: class participation and writing assignments

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: none

Enrollment Preferences: MA students, then advanced art history undergraduates

Expected Class Size: 12

Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

Distributions: (D1)

Not offered current academic year

ARTH 537  (F)  HIV + AIDS in Film and Video  (DPE) (WS)

Spanning activist works, experimental film, Hollywood dramas and documentary, this course examines the role of moving images in the global AIDS crisis, its aftermath, and its ongoing aftershocks. The AIDS crisis of the 1980s and 1990s was, in the words of Larry Kramer, a ‘plague’ of epic proportions, with an entire generation obliterated before it could reach maturity. And yet, the plague years also spawned a remarkable amount of creative and activist image-making aimed at fighting, mourning, and grappling with AIDS. Now, we find ourselves in another pivotal moment: while the past decade has provoked a new wave of AIDS historiography, the COVID-19 pandemic has caused AIDS to reverberate with even greater force. Together, we will ask difficult and probing questions about this phenomenon called the 'AIDS epidemic,' examining the role of art in frontline activism, the ethics of AIDS historiography, mainstream visions of the AIDS body, and the need for a diversity of AIDS narratives. This seminar-style course will combine weekly screenings with readings, short writing assignments, student-led discussion, and a final research project of the student's design. In order to facilitate robust discussions and maximize student and faculty safety, the majority of this course will occur online. It will contain some...
in-person experiences when possible.

Class Format: This course will be largely conducted online, in order to facilitate robust discussions and maximize student and faculty safety. It will contain some in-person experiences when possible.

Requirements/Evaluation: Students will be evaluated according to the following criteria: weekly attendance, readings and participation in seminar discussion; leading class discussion once during the semester; 3 short response papers; one paper of 20+ pages of original student research.

Prerequisites: MA student, Art History or Studio Art major, or instructor permission

Enrollment Limit: 10

Enrollment Preferences: MA students first, followed by Art History and Studio Art majors

Expected Class Size: 10

Grading: yes pass/fail option, no fifth course option

Distributions: (D1) (DPE) (WS)

Writing Skills Notes: Students will be required to conduct regular writing assignments which will culminate in a graduate-level research paper.

Difference, Power, and Equity Notes: This course explores an epidemic that had devastating effects on LGBTQ+ people, and has disproportionately affected communities of color. Questions of difference, power, and equity are absolutely central to the course.

Attributes: ARTH post-1800 Courses

Not offered current academic year

ARTH 538 (F) Realms of Earth and Sky: Indian Painting, ca. 600-1857 (WS)

On the basis of technique, Indian painting forms a continuum from the beginning of the first millennium down to the mid-nineteenth century: an outline in ink filled with flat, opaque colors which are burnished between each layer to give them opacity. In its media, its subject matter, regional variation, range of patronage, and artistic virtuosity, it displays startling diversity. From the northern Himalayan hills to Mysore in the south, artists, often working in family workshops for royalty, priests and wealthy merchants, have adorned caves and temples, illustrated books, and created lavish albums with themes ranging from the sacred to the secular. The study of Indian painting itself is a vast, evolving body of literature that continues to oscillate between discussions of artistic style and a concentration on content and context. The aim of this seminar is twofold: to outline the development of Indian painting historically; and to understand the political, social and religious circumstances that produced some of the greatest masterworks in Indian art. How was Indian painting used? Who were the patrons? How does the art form reflect the particular cultural values of its time? As an analytic framework, the seminar will consider Indian miniature painting both in light of primary literary sources as well as through current scholarship.

Requirements/Evaluation: Class participation. Short weekly responses. Final 15- to 20-page paper to be developed with the instructor throughout the semester.

Prerequisites: none, open to all students

Enrollment Limit: 19

Enrollment Preferences: graduate students, undergraduate art majors

Expected Class Size: 8

Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

Distributions: (D1) (WS)

Writing Skills Notes: Students will submit short written assignments weekly. They will also be required to submit a final paper which they will develop throughout the semester. Students will receive comments and suggestions from the instructor on their writing skills.

Not offered current academic year

ARTH 540 (F) In Vinculus Invictus: Portraits in Prison

Among all the portraits produced during the modern period, some have been painted or, more recently, photographed in prison. Portraits in prison exist at a crossroad of politics, law, and identity; they offer a great opportunity to think about art and society. Artists themselves have made self-portraits during their own imprisonments, or sometimes a portrait of one of their fellow prisoners. More often it was the prisoners or their relatives who commissioned an artistic record of their detention. The idea of commemorating such a moment, or to evoke it as a claim to fame, seems surprising at best, outrageous and provocative at worst. But there has been, since the 16th century, an enduring tradition of portraiture in prison with its masterpieces and its pantheon, a tradition that fits into the wider pictorial attention to the prison itself. With the French Revolution, the nature of prison changed. It became a tragic symbol of political "debates." Within a few years, a terrifying series of portraits appeared that would nurture
Western political thought and visual culture until now. Since the 18th century, these portraits have become more concerned with ideas that stretch beyond the individual and into the realm of social justice, mass incarceration, and the prison-industrialization complex.

Requirements/Evaluation: oral and written assignments
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 16
Enrollment Preferences: graduate students, then upper level undergraduate Art History majors
Expected Class Size: 12
Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option
Distributions: (D1)

Not offered current academic year

ARTH 541 (F) Aesthetics After Evolutionary Biology: Darwin, Nietzsche, Freud
This interdisciplinary seminar examines the rise of evolutionary biology, a new explanatory paradigm that solidified in Europe in the middle of the nineteenth century, and its ramifications in art and aesthetic theory in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. We will consider how natural histories of creation, and corresponding reclassifications of the human as a species category, went hand in hand with a reconceptualization of the aesthetic faculties, and the processes of art's production and reception. A core component of this seminar will be the close study of key texts by Charles Darwin, and two thinkers who were among the most radical in extending his key insights into the domain of aesthetic theory—the psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud, and the philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche. These primary texts will provide points of departure for studying the work of a number of innovative practitioners working across a range of media, among them the composer Richard Wagner, the Neo-Impressionist painter Georges Seurat, the architect Adolf Loos, the choreographer Vaslav Nijinsky, and the art historian Aby Warburg. Methodologically a major aim of this seminar is to think together critically about the nature of art's relations to other domains of cultural production such as science or philosophy, and to interrogate what it means, both practically and epistemologically, to pursue "interdisciplinarity" as a strategy for art history.

Requirements/Evaluation: seminar presentations, research paper
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 16
Enrollment Preferences: graduate students, then advanced undergraduate students
Expected Class Size: 12
Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option
Distributions: (D1)
Attributes: PHIL Related Courses

Not offered current academic year

ARTH 542 (F) Insubordinate Bodies: The Body in Conceptual Art in Latin America, 1960-1980
The use of the body—be it the artist's or those of willing and unwilling participants—is among art's most significant developments internationally since the 1960s. In Latin America between the 1960s and 1980s, activating the body not only was a strong conceptual strategy to escape object-based practices; it was also a potent way for artists to disobey and confront forms of violence and control exerted by repressive regimes. But the body too was a forceful medium by which artists could subvert heteronormative frameworks, through the visualization and performance of feminist critiques and queer identities. This seminar will explore the role of the body in Latin American conceptual art through localized case studies, elucidating the body's particular strength as a vehicle for political and institutional critique, as well as its potential to unlock alternate narratives of conceptual practices in the region.

Requirements/Evaluation: active participation and weekly assignments, leading class discussion, three short responses, and final research paper
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 12
Expected Class Size: 10
Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option
Distributions: (D1)

Not offered current academic year
ARTH 543 (F) Color, High and Low

Why should color in prints be controversial? For most of the nineteenth century—even as technical advances encouraged a flowering of color in woodcut, intaglio, and especially lithographic production—entrenched voices in the art establishment continued to insist on printmaking as an art of black and white. Drawing upon a wide variety of examples from the Clark’s collection, this course will explore the range of associations that attached to color prints, along a broad spectrum from highbrow preciousness and subtlety to lowbrow commercialism and bad taste. Color lithography was a particular lightning rod for controversy: although chromatic experiments in this medium enabled striking aesthetic innovations, the extreme complexity of the process also meant that the designer of a print became farther and farther removed from its actual production. This was just as true for the delicate and exquisite suites produced in limited editions by Pierre Bonnard, Edouard Vuillard, and Maurice Denis as it was for the large-scale, brightly-colored lithographic posters of Jules Chéret and Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, used to advertise popular urban entertainments. Alongside the close examination of original works of art, a set of critical and theoretical readings will help us navigate the paradoxes of printed color. Apart from the standard requirements, including a research paper and class presentation, students will have an option to participate in a summer 2020 exhibition based on the course findings. This course will take place in the Manton Study Center for Works on Paper at the Clark.

Requirements/Evaluation: class participation and writing assignments
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: none
Enrollment Preferences: MA students, then advanced Art History undergraduates
Expected Class Size: 12
Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option
Distributions: (D1)
Not offered current academic year

ARTH 544 (S) Women Artists in Paris, 1850-1900

In this seminar, we will examine the historically undervalued contributions of women in the art of the later nineteenth century. During this period, leading artists from around the world, including many women, were drawn to the academies, museums, salons, and studios of Paris. While women were largely excluded from formal training, many nonetheless navigated the complex systems of artistic production. We will focus on this multinational group of talented women (including Marie Bashkirtseff, Rosa Bonheur, Anna Ancher, Mary Cassatt), and we will assess their work against contemporary sociopolitical thought and aesthetic theories. Readings will draw upon early critical reviews of public exhibitions, biographical materials, studies of pedagogical and institutional practices, and social histories of art. In and through these materials, we will explore the marginalizing narrative that was created for women artists in Paris, and, most importantly, we will reconstruct an alternative history through our discussions and class presentations.

Requirements/Evaluation: seminar presentations and research paper
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 14
Enrollment Preferences: preference given to graduate students and then to senior Art History majors
Expected Class Size: 14
Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option
Distributions: (D1)
Not offered current academic year

ARTH 545 Architectural Theory in Crisis

Why do buildings need words, or do they? For most of the world and most of history, buildings are made without the benefit of formal architectural thought. But at various times, ideas about the aesthetics of buildings, their cultural and philosophical meaning, and their underlying principles, have been matters of great public interest. And architectural theory—in the form of treatises, manifestos, and critical reviews—has exercised an enormous effect on building. This theory can be prescriptive, presenting categorical rules for making good buildings; it can be descriptive, looking at how buildings perform in the real world; and it can be radical, seeking to change the essence and definition of architecture. Theory seemed very important to architects twenty years ago, but that is not the case today. Why? We will investigate. Students will give short presentations on key theorists, such as Vitruvius, Alberti, Palladio, Laugier, Boulée, A. W. N. Pugin, Viollet-le-Duc, Gottfried Semper, Le Corbusier, and Robert Venturi. The semester will
conclude with a 20-page seminar paper, based on comments and discussion following a classroom presentation.

**Class Format:** presentations

**Requirements/Evaluation:** several short presentations and a final 30-minute presentation, to be followed by a 20-page paper

**Prerequisites:** permission of instructor

**Enrollment Limit:** 11

**Enrollment Preferences:** Graduate students

**Expected Class Size:** 10

**Grading:**

**Distributions:** (D1)

Not offered current academic year

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**ARTH 546 (F) Texere: The Material Philosophy of Print and Textile, ca. 1500-1900**

It is a commonplace in the literature on textiles that the words for both text and textile derive from the Latin texere: to weave. As this etymological root indicates, the action of making cloth provides the metaphoric structure by which we conceive of language from the threading of thought to the weaving of prose and poetry. In the recent theoretical writings of Tim Ingold, among others, the processes of weaving-textility-offer a model against which to conceive of the dominant hylomorphic conception of matter and form as a process of imprint. Instead, textiles illustrate a world that is created through forces in motion, never imprinting, but moving against and within one another. This seminar will use these questions as the starting point to examine the interaction between printed matter (embodying a hylomorphic process) and textile (a material challenge to hylomorphism). The Clark Art Library contains a preeminent collection of textile material, and this seminar will dive into the Mary Ann Beinecke collection to examine histories of gender and labor, figuration and ornament, mobility and place, and finally, form and matter. The case studies will range from sixteenth-century needlepoint model books to twentieth-century kimono design.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** class participation, writing assignments

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** none

**Enrollment Preferences:** MA students, then advanced Art History major undergraduates

**Expected Class Size:** 12

**Grading:** no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D1)

Not offered current academic year

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**ARTH 547 (F) The Studio, The Bedroom, & the Tomb: Artists and Artistic Biographies in the 19th Century&Beyond**

How was the vocation of the artist thematized in the European cultural imagination in the Romantic age and its aftermath? Even more, how did artists themselves articulate, experience, and reproduce that sense of vocation?—What were its mythologies and poetics, at once as they were circulated in visual culture, but also as they were lived, experienced, and reproduced by artists themselves? We will explore such question across three historically, psychologically, and tropologically configured “sites”: the artist's studio, the artist's desire, and the artist's death. Readings by Freud, Balzac, Kris and Kurtz, along with scholarship largely centered on the visual arts of the 18th and 19th centuries. With instructor permission, students may undertake research projects in any field of the history of art.

**Class Format:** in person class with remote learning option, switch to all remote learning after thanksgiving

**Requirements/Evaluation:** presentations, research paper

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 16

**Enrollment Preferences:** graduate students, then advanced Art History major undergrads

**Expected Class Size:** 12

**Grading:** no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D1)

Not offered current academic year
ARTH 548 (S) Landscape, Theory, Ideology
To use the term "landscape" is to imply and assume a subject position. Unlike the categories of "nature," "wilderness," "vista," or "ecology," a landscape is something invented and experienced (or observed, or represented, or cultivated) solely by human agents. The term "landscape" is variously deployed in the service of a range of political and philosophical positions. This seminar explores "landscape" as a fruitful agitation in critical theory and aesthetic discourse over the past thirty years. The course will interact with the artists and photographic works on view in the exhibition, Landmarks, a 150-year survey of landscape photography in WCMA's collection. We will examine i) how landscape as medium and as genre moves from literature to painting to photography; ii) how to read and employ contemporary theory in the service of artwork from bygone eras; and iii) we will ask who exercises the agency and privilege to name, to invent, to denote a space or a view as worthy of sight.

Requirements/Evaluation: class participation, writing assignments
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 16
Enrollment Preferences: MA students, then advanced art history undergraduates
Expected Class Size: 12
Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option
Distributions: (D1)
Not offered current academic year

ARTH 549 (F) Art, Biology, Beauty
This interdisciplinary seminar is offered in conjunction with the upcoming RAP Colloquium scheduled for March 2020, "Beauty, Sexuality, Selection: Darwinian Revolutions in Aesthetics." (Seminar participants will be expected to attend.) Our theme will be Charles Darwin's controversial theory of "sexual selection" as both a historical idea of aesthetic response and beauty, and as a theoretical concept that is back in play in current evolutionary thinking. Readings will be drawn from ancient philosophy, current science, art history, the history of science, and other fields, to engage the following questions: how did the existence of difference in the organic world—gender difference broadly but also more specifically racial difference in the human species—motivate Darwin's theory of an "aesthetic evolution" driven by animal and human perception of visual beauty? How did philosophical aesthetics contribute to Darwin's biological theory of beauty, and how did Darwin's biological theory of beauty unsettle the discipline of philosophical aesthetics? In which ways did the arts and visual cultures of Europe and elsewhere shape Darwin's aesthetic assumptions? How did, and how does, the concept of sexual selection destabilize the concept of "art" as a human cultural activity? How might "sexual selection" complicate historical and current delineations drawn between nature and culture, between the innate and the arbitrary?

Requirements/Evaluation: seminar participation, presentations, research paper
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: none
Enrollment Preferences: MA students, then advanced Art History major undergraduates
Expected Class Size: 12
Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option
Distributions: (D1)
Not offered current academic year

ARTH 550 (S) The History, Theory, and Problem of Connoisseurship
The museum and market have long relied upon the "talent" of a chosen few "connoisseurs," whose abilities (i.e. "the expert eye")-shrouded in mythology and vaguery-have profoundly influenced the interpretation of objects. This seminar will interrogate the problematic construct of connoisseurship in the market (Duveen), in the museum (Pope-Hennessy), and in the academy (Berenson). Through readings about the history and theory of the practice from the sixteenth century to the modern day, we will reassess the meaning, and validity, of connoisseurship in visual culture. And, through conversations about authorship, working methods, and artistic intent, we will question what we learn from close looking. This seminar will include case studies using objects in the Clark's permanent collection, focusing on in-depth discussions of materials, techniques, attribution, quality, and the burgeoning field of conservation science. Students will be asked to conduct their own rigorous object-based research.

Requirements/Evaluation: class participation, writing assignments
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: none
Enrollment Preferences: MA students, then advanced art history major undergraduates
Expected Class Size: 12
Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option
Distributions: (D1)

Not offered current academic year

ARTH 560  (S)  Repairing a Broken World: Intro to North African Contemporary Art  (DPE)
Cross-listings: ARTH 460  COMP 361  ARAB 360  RLFR 360  ARTH 560
Secondary Cross-listing

How do artists respond to a world in crisis? How does visual art engage violent histories, injured bodies, social injustice and ecological disaster? In this course we will explore the political and ethical concept of repair as it emerges in the work of contemporary North African visual artists. Repair is both a material and symbolic transformational practice of putting together something that is torn or broken. It is never complete, nor does it redeem a history of harm or violence. Rather repair is an invitation: a bringing of people, histories, objects, buildings, feelings and geographies into relation with one another in order to link worlds that have been splintered and separated. It is also a call to imagine other futures. North African contemporary artists have deeply engaged in this type of repair work, attending to colonial history, economies of extraction and environmental damage, race and slavery, housing inequity, gender identity and broken transmission of memory. We will dive into the work of individual artists as well as collectives while reading theoretical texts about broken-world thinking, reparative epistemology, alternative archives, and material reparations.

Class Format: Conducted in English. All students have the option of reading selected texts in either French or English. Students taking the course for RLFR credit will read selected texts in French, participate in occasional French discussion sessions, and write the mid-term paper in French. Grad Art Students will occasionally meet as a group with the instructor and will write a longer final paper.

Requirements/Evaluation: For undergrads: Active participation, weekly glow posts, 5-page mid-term paper, 12-page final paper and presentation. For grad students: Active participation, weekly glow posts, 5-page mid-term paper, and 20-page final paper and presentation.

Prerequisites: For RLFR students, any RLFR 200-level course or above, or by permission of instructor.

Enrollment Limit: 18
Enrollment Preferences: If over-enrolled, preference will be given to RLFR, ARAB, ARTH and COMP majors, and only 4 spots will be offered to Grad Art students.

Expected Class Size: 15
Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option
Distributions: (D1)  (DPE)

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:
ARTH 460  (D1)  COMP 361  (D1)  ARAB 360  (D1)  RLFR 360  (D1)  ARTH 560  (D1)

Difference, Power, and Equity Notes: This course critically examines art work that engages colonial history, economies of extraction and environmental damage, race and slavery, housing inequity, gender identity.

Spring 2022
SEM Section: 01    TR 11:20 am - 12:35 pm    Katarzyna M. Pieprzak

ARTH 561  (F)  Land, Memory, Materiality: Histories and Futures of Indigenous North American Arts  (DPE)
Cross-listings: ARTH 561  HIST 454
Primary Cross-listing

This course engages Indigenous North American traditions of creative expression, remembrance, and representation in historical, contemporary, and future-facing ways. Drawing upon diverse Native American and First Nations theories and practices, it ranges widely across the continent to consider Indigenous arts and material culture within specific cultural, socioeconomic, and political contexts. Part of the course is grounded in the Native Northeast, including the Indigenous homelands of the Stockbridge-Munsee Mohican Community in which the Graduate Art Program and Williams College are situated. Other units will focus on continuities and transformations in artistic and maker-traditions within and across specific Indigenous
nations and communities. The course is especially interested in connections between past and present, and the innovative ways Indigenous artists, makers, and knowledge-keepers have reckoned with what has come before, while also mapping meaningful future pathways. Topics will include repatriation and community-led restorative efforts to bring home ancestors and important heritage items "collected" over the centuries following 1492; concepts and practices of cultural, intellectual, visual, and political sovereignty, as well as of decolonizing museums; the complex dynamics of collaboration; and Indigenous challenges to Eurocentric and settler colonial approaches to preservation, interpretation, and classification. Class members will develop familiarity with methods and ethics grounded in Native American and Indigenous Studies, and with new scholarship by leading and emerging critics and creators.

**Class Format:** The course will feature seminar discussions as well as local field trips to museums, libraries, and archives with pertinent collections.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** Engaged participation in discussions; in-class presentations; short writing assignments in preparation for final project; final original research and interpretive project

**Prerequisites:** For undergraduates, at least two prior courses in or related to History, Art History, Native American and Indigenous Studies, and/or Museum Studies.

**Enrollment Limit:** 16

**Enrollment Preferences:** Priority for Graduate Art students. Four seats will be reserved for undergraduates, with preference to junior and senior majors in Art History and History. Undergraduates should email a brief statement of interest to cd10@williams.edu.

**Expected Class Size:** 16

**Grading:** no pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D1) (DPE)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

ARTH 561 (D1) HIST 454 (D2)

**Difference, Power, and Equity Notes:** The course centers theories, experiences, and expressions from Native American/Indigenous communities, scholars, and artists/makers, while engaging foundational and new work in Native American and Indigenous Studies (NAIS). The course also provides students with critical tools for reckoning with settler colonialism and its historical as well as enduring impacts in Indigenous contexts; and with race, ethnicity, sovereignty, and tribal nationhood as key interpretive frames.

**Attributes:** HIST Group F Electives - U.S. + Canada

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Fall 2021

SEM Section: 01  R 10:00 am - 12:50 pm  Christine DeLucia

**ARTH 562 (F) Art of California: Pacific Standard Time** (DPE) (WS)

**Cross-listings:** ARTH 462 AMST 462 LATS 462 ARTH 562

**Secondary Cross-listing**

In this course, we will study the visual arts and culture of California after 1960 and consider the region's place in modern art history. We will focus on a series of recent exhibitions organized as part of a Getty initiative entitled Pacific Standard Time. Diverse in scope, these shows explored important developments in postwar art in California, including feminist art, African American assemblage, Chicano collectives, Modernist architecture, craft, and queer activism. In this seminar, we will pursue research projects directly related to the art exhibitions we study, and examine southern California conceptualism, photography, performance, painting, sculpture (including assemblage and installation), and video by artists both canonical and lesser known. Student projects will analyze the critical responses to the exhibitions, while also exploring the roles of archives, art criticism, and curatorial practice in contemporary art history.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** Several short writing and research assignments, oral presentations, class participation, and a final research paper of 16-20 pages written in stages over the course of the semester. The course will feature synchronous online class meetings with some small discussion groups. Student presentations will be recorded offline and posted to GLOW.

**Prerequisites:** ARTH 102 - Grad Art exempt from ARTH 102 prerequisite

**Enrollment Limit:** 12

**Enrollment Preferences:** senior Art major and senior Latina/o Studies concentrators

**Expected Class Size:** 12

**Grading:** no pass/fail option, no fifth course option
**Distributions:** (D1) (DPE) (WS)

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:

ARTH 462 (D1) AMST 462 (D2) LATS 462 (D1) ARTH 562 (D1)

**Writing Skills Notes:** There will be considerable focus on writing and peer-editing as a means of shaping critical thinking. We will treat writing as a process; revision is built into the syllabus. Students will receive from the instructor timely comments on their writing skills, with suggestions for improvement.

**Difference, Power, and Equity Notes:** Course themes of art and activism, borders and diaspora, globalism and modernism in the visual arts and how they intersect with the exploration of difference, power, and equity and the various ways that artists have produced works and developed practices that critically probe this intersection. Through discussion, presentations, and writing assignments students will develop skills in analyzing artworks and exhibitions that respond to and/or document social inequality and social injustice.

**Attributes:** AMST Arts in Context Electives AMST Space and Place Electives ARTH post-1800 Courses LATS Comparative Race + Ethnic Studies Electives

Not offered current academic year

**ARTH 563  (F)(S)  Contemporary Curatorial Workshop**

Bi-weekly workshop for graduate students working on contemporary art and curatorial projects. Under the direction of the chair, students will present on-going curatorial projects, undertake studio and site visits, host local and visiting curators for presentations, and explore key topics in modern and contemporary art and curatorial practice.

**Class Format:** workshop, meets all year

**Requirements/Evaluation:** no requirements except participation and attendance

**Prerequisites:** graduate art students

**Enrollment Limit:** 25

**Enrollment Preferences:** only open to graduate students

**Expected Class Size:** 25

**Grading:**  pass/fail option only

**Distributions:**  (D1)

**Attributes:** ARTH post-1800 Courses

**ARTH 569  (F)  Gérôme**

This course explores work and career of Jean-Léon Gérôme (1824-1904), perhaps the most renowned, popular, and influential artist of the later nineteenth century. With commercial and artistic relationships that spread his influence across the globe, Gérôme has come to seem very much like a highly successful contemporary artist, specifically with regard to his place in an international art world that married elite institutional practices to new technologies of reproduction, marketing techniques, and other instruments of modern mass culture. Gérôme's fame was short lived, however. In the wake of the Modernist revolution on the one hand, and Post-Colonial critique on the other, no discussion of the artist can avoid wrestling with complaints that have left him thoroughly diminished—though less forgotten than scorned. Not only did his art, as it seemed, help perpetrate a gigantic aesthetic error, it blundered onto ethically compromising terrain. Today Gérôme stands as Exhibit A in wide-ranging critique of Orientalism's ideological work. The course will interrogate the Modernist and Post-Colonial complaints against Gérôme in detail, even as it also explores his art from a range of other perspectives, many developed very recently. Topics include Gérôme's relationship to photography, to Orientalism and animal studies, to the cinema, to polychrome sculpture, his approach to historical narrative, and well as his voyeurism and other other manipulations of viewer experience so critical to his art. The seminar will engage the Clark's important collection of Gérôme paintings, and also travel to the Walters Art Gallery in Baltimore, conditions permitting. Students may prepare papers on any aspect of global late-nineteenth-century "academic" or "official" art that was informed by Gérôme's example.
Images enjoy extraordinary power in the spaces between self and other, human and divine. They play myriad roles--witness, surrogate, instigator, supplicant--and travel freely across political, religious and cultural boundaries. They are also subject to reproduction, alteration and destruction as disparate visual cultures interact and globalizing processes ensue. This course will focus on various regions--e.g. United States, France, Turkey, and the Perso-Islamic sphere--and the images that factor in the intervening spaces, from 1800 to the present. We will begin with the theme of self-fashioning and the peculiar nature of portraiture. Thereafter, the entanglement of religious beliefs and visual traditions will broaden our inquiry, leading us to contested dynamics like iconoclasm and aniconism, and reductionist types like veiled women and pious men. Along the way, proliferating and palimpsestic forms of Orientalism will oblige us to consider the very concept of global visual culture. Students will submit weekly GLOW posts to foster class discussion and undertake a major research project over the course of the semester.

Class Format: Remote synchronous

Requirements/Evaluation: Class participation, weekly oral presentations, 15-20 page term research project.
Prerequisites: None
Enrollment Limit: 12
Enrollment Preferences: Graduate students
Expected Class Size: 8
Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option
Distributions: (D1)
Attributes: ARTH post-1800 Courses
Not offered current academic year

ARTh 575 (F) Regression as Modern Fantasy: Archaism, Primitivism, Prehistory

This course analyzes the implications of European modernity's engagement with cultural artifacts it wanted to classify beneath the prefix "pre." We take as our object an aesthetic strategy employed with increasing frequency by modern artists in Europe after 1800: the self-conscious mobilization of visual forms thought to telegraph priority to later advancements, whether historically or developmentally. Our inquiry, beginning with the German Nazarenes and extending into the early twentieth century around the moment of WW1, foregrounds such strategies as key to grasping new notions of temporality and geography that emerged in European modernity. We will inquire into the historical and intellectual contexts that sustained chronological and cultural primitivisms, including the history of colonialism, discoveries of Paleolithic cave art, and the emergence of the modern disciplines of archeology, anthropology, ethnography, child psychology, and psychoanalysis. Alongside close visual scrutiny of some of modernism's most canonical and problematic objects, including key works by Picasso and Gauguin, we will examine the literature that proliferated in this period devoted to the art of peoples deemed "primitive," including the Greeks in the pre-classical period, non-Western peoples, and children.

Requirements/Evaluation: seminar presentations, research paper
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 16
Enrollment Preferences: graduate students, then advanced undergraduate students
Expected Class Size: 12
Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option
Distributions: (D1)
Not offered current academic year

ARTH 576  (F)  Paper, Process, Practice
Works on paper, particularly multiples, confound many of the received ideas around artistic invention and originality. This course will address the varied functions of printmaking in Europe over four centuries (1500-1900), giving special attention to the following questions: What is the relationship between prints and other artistic media? How do the material constraints involved in printmaking lead to a particular set of practices, and how in turn do those marry with technological advances to produce new aesthetic possibilities? To what extent did Old Masters such as Dürer and Rembrandt define the terms for later printmakers, and how did their example enable and/or discourage innovation in printed subject matter and style? What was the role of prints in creating both new forums for public discourse and new collecting publics? Arranged thematically rather than chronologically, this course will cover a wide array of printmakers and types of printed media.

Requirements/Evaluation: class participation, class presentation, research paper
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 16
Enrollment Preferences: Art history MA students, then advanced undergraduates
Expected Class Size: 16
Grading: pass/fail option only
Distributions: (D1)
Attributes: ARTH pre-1800 Courses

Fall 2021
SEM Section: 01    M 10:00 am - 12:50 pm     Anne R. Leonard

ARTH 577  Questions for Global Art History: A Workshop
Art history’s so-called “global turn” has been underway for over twenty years, but it would be difficult to say that it has yielded a consistent set of methodological approaches. When we consider a project global in scope does that mean simply thinking beyond national or regional designations? Are we looking for expansive networks of materials and makers? Evidence of intercultural exchange? In this seminar, we will begin by looking at several recent approaches to defining global art history and consider terms like contact, exchange, appropriation, transculturation, and cosmopolitanism. We will discuss the spatial vocabulary of oceans and borderlands and the dynamics of power engendered by colonialism, imperialism, and racialization. Thereafter, our weekly case studies will come from the students’ research projects. Though students are not expected to begin the seminar with an argument for their final paper, they should arrive with a topic in mind that pertains to a “global” art history subject in the period between 1500 and 1900 CE. In consultation with the professor, each student will then select readings to discuss with the group so we can work together to come up with questions and approaches that are commensurate to the topic. Our course may end in affirming the heterogeneity of global methods, deciding that this is a benefit rather than deficit. The collective aim is to understand, problematize, and reformulate the approaches available to us so that we can better address the topics that interest us as a group.

Requirements/Evaluation: Students are required to participate in discussion every week, lead one week of discussion, give a brief paper presentation, and submit a 20-page final essay.
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 16
Enrollment Preferences: Graduate students, then advanced undergraduate students with permission of the professor.
Expected Class Size: 10
Grading: 
Distributions: (D1)
Not offered current academic year

ARTH 580  (S)  Picturing God in the Middle Ages
ARTH 5-- Spring 2022 Peter Low
How did medieval Europeans imagine their God and how did they give what they imagined pictorial form? How were these pictures used, both in public and in private life, and why? Paying particular attention as well to the materiality, experience, and manifold audiences of medieval works of art, this seminar will examine the evolution of images of God, in both the Eastern and Western halves of Europe, and the problems these images often generated. Through readings and class discussion, the course will investigate, among other specific topics: the varied attitudes toward the representability of God in Judaism, Islam, and Christianity; the tensions manifest in or evoked by this art, including picture vs. text, symbolism vs. mimesis, and asceticism vs. splendor; the impact of the Roman cult of the emperor and of images of the pagan deities on the earliest portraits of Christ; the cult of the icon, concerns over idolatry, and the destruction of images; ideas about the relationship between spiritual and physical vision and their influence on the making and viewing of pictures; the relationship of sacred images to the Eucharist and other aspects of Christian ritual; the role of the senses beyond vision in engaging with sacred art especially in the later Middle Ages; and the pictorial exploration of both the torture and sexuality of Christ. Students will also pursue an individual research project, in which they will examine in greater depth a specific depiction of God of their choosing, from any place and any time, in light of what we have considered together in the seminar.

Requirements/Evaluation:  Evaluation will be based on class participation, oral presentations, and a final research paper (15-25 pages).
Prerequisites:  none
Enrollment Limit:  12
Enrollment Preferences:  MA students, then senior art history majors
Expected Class Size:  12
Grading:  no pass/fail option, yes fifth course option
Distributions:  (D1)

Spring 2022
SEM Section: 01   F 1:00 pm - 3:50 pm   Peter D. Low

ARTH 581  Creative Life: The Visual Economy of Work
This course is a seminar on life and work focusing on methodologies of production--art, creative writing, history, theory, and criticism. With an initial focus on the pivotal period from the invention of photography until the onset of World War II, the course will examine the economy of work within modern visual culture. What were the considerations at stake in capturing the "facts" of industrial production? We will examine historical definitions of work, and practices and activities from life that have typically qualified or have the potential to qualify as work (in addition to critiques of these equivalencies). The latter half of the course will be driven by considerations of these themes in relation to student and workers movements of 1968, and contemporary forms of globalization and pluralist subjectivities. One related concern will be the consideration of intersubjective relations--professional and personal partnerships, friendships, and networks--which not only influence the trajectory of one's life, but also the research one chooses to undertake. With the awareness that a range of drives and investments inhabit one's production, participants will be asked to reflect upon their own working practices as a means of critically engaging the affective relations governing artistic and intellectual labor. There will be an emphasis on cross-disciplinary ideas and influences--ranging from art history, film and media studies, the history of science, literature, and political history as a means of integrating theoretical approaches with a range of materials, including photography, cinema, illustrated magazines, advertisements, archives, world exhibitions, and product showrooms.

Requirements/Evaluation:  Active discussion participation; rough draft (mid semester) and final research paper (20-25 pages)
Prerequisites:  none
Enrollment Limit:  12
Enrollment Preferences:  MA students, then art history majors
Expected Class Size:  12
Grading:
Distributions:  (D1)

Not offered current academic year

ARTH 582 (F)  On Race, Art, and Property
In her seminal article "Whiteness as Property," critical race theorist and professor Cheryl Harris contends that the legal system in the United States "has come to embody and legitimize benefits that accrue to citizens who are white." The legacy of our legal system, which has dehumanized people by rendering them as property and legalized the theft of land by colonizers from Native Americans, is not confined to the past, but has shaped our world
and thrives within our present moment. How has this legacy and Harris' theory been explored in contemporary art? How might it allow us to revisit artworks and practices by canonical artists from alternative perspectives? This course aims to study aspects of this complicated history through a broad range of texts from legal and literary theory to art history to Black and Native American studies to more immediately authored texts published on social media platforms. Students are encouraged to think dexterously as we study works by Gordon Matta-Clark, Michael Heizer, Sondra Perry, Cameron Rowland, and Cauleen Smith—among others.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** presentations, writing assignments

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 12

**Enrollment Preferences:** If over-enrolled, by application

**Expected Class Size:** 12

**Grading:** no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D1)

Not offered current academic year

**ARTH 583  (F)  Graphic Content: Typography and the Book between Art and Design**

This seminar considers the entangled histories of fine art and graphic design by focusing on creative practices surrounding the letterform and the book form from 1900 to the present. We will study historical avant-garde movements active in publishing and making-public; the development of the graphic design discipline, in print and on screen; and logocentric artistic tendencies from concrete poetry and pop art to conceptualism and artists' books. We will also consider diverse literary practices, graphic visualization, and political agitation. The seminar will make use of the Clark library's outstanding collection of artists' books and the holdings of the Chapin library at Williams. We will welcome several guests, including art historians, artist-designers, designer-artists, editors, publishers, and bookmakers.

**Class Format:** in person seminar with remote option, remote learning after thanksgiving

**Requirements/Evaluation:** class participation, class presentation, research paper/project

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 10

**Enrollment Preferences:** Art History MA students, then advanced undergraduates. Course will be by application if overenrolled.

**Expected Class Size:** 10

**Grading:** pass/fail option only

**Distributions:** (D1)

**Attributes:** ARTH post-1800 Courses

Not offered current academic year

**ARTH 586  (F)  Japanese Popular Visual Culture**

**Cross-listings:** COMP 186  ARTH 586  ASIA 186  ARTH 286

**Secondary Cross-listing**

The phrase "Japanese popular culture" often calls to mind comics and animation, but Japan's earliest visual pop culture dates back to the 17th century and the development of arts like kabuki theater and woodblock prints that could be produced for a mass audience. This course traces Japanese popular culture through a range of visual media: kabuki and puppet theater, premodern and postmodern visual art (ukiyo-e, Superflat), classic film (Ozu, Mizoguchi, Kurosawa), manga/comics (Tezuka, Otomo, Hagio), and animation (Oshii, Miyazaki, Kon). The class will also study material examples of Japanese popular culture on display in the Repro Japan exhibition at the Williams College Museum of Art. We will develop visual reading skills to come up with original interpretations of these works, and compare different media to make them shed light on one another.

**Class Format:** discussion

**Requirements/Evaluation:** attendance, participation, two 5-page papers, final exam

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 35

**Enrollment Preferences:** students majoring or considering a major in a related discipline
Expected Class Size: 20
Grading: no pass/fail option, yes fifth course option
Distributions: (D1)

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:
COMP 186 (D1) ARTH 586 (D1) ASIA 186 (D1) ARTH 286 (D1)

Fall 2021
LEC Section: 01 TR 11:20 am - 12:35 pm Christopher A. Bolton

ARTH 587 (S) Crash! The Car Accident as Myth and Metaphor in American Art and Visual Culture
A year after MoMA elevated machinery to high art in 1934, Grant Wood painted Death on The Ridge Road (Williams College Museum of Art), a depiction of the deadly side of the streamlined modern machines that Alfred Barr might have presented at MoMA. A generation later, Andy Warhol's Death and Disasters series multiplied gruesome images of crushed cars and bodies to numbing effect. During the ensuing years, both Jackson Pollock and David Smith (among others) became traffic fatalities. Roughly bookended by the Great Depression and the 1960s, but also considering works of art and visual materials before and after those parameters, this seminar will explore the stakes of car crash imagery for American artists and culture. Readings may include topics in trauma studies, automotive technology, physics, posthumanism, law, and object oriented ontology as well as grounding participants in American art and history of the middle third of the twentieth century. Participants in the course will also have the opportunity to help shape the content, themes, and narrative of an exhibition on car accidents in American art being organized by WCMA.

Requirements/Evaluation: oral presentations and written assignments
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 16
Enrollment Preferences: graduate students, then advanced undergraduate Art History majors
Expected Class Size: 12
Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option
Distributions: (D1)
Not offered current academic year

ARTH 590 (S) Guillaume Lethière (1760-1832) and Caribbean Networks in France during the 18th and 19th centuries
Born in the colony of Guadeloupe to a French father and a formerly enslaved woman, Guillaume Lethière (1760-1832) would become a key figure in the Neoclassical movement, a well-respected pedagogue with a sizeable workshop populated by notable students, an ambitious collector, director of the Académie de France in Rome from 1807 to 1816, a favorite artist of Lucien Bonaparte, and a member of the Institut de France. Despite his many accomplishments and sizeable corpus of paintings and drawings, Lethière has notably disappeared from the "canon" of art history. Such a lacunae begs many questions about the circles of sociability in which he traveled, the reception of Caribbean artists in France in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and the lack of widespread knowledge on these topics today. This seminar will be timed with the planning of a major monographic exhibition to take place at the Clark Art Institute in the summer of 2024, and students will work alongside the curators on various aspects of the exhibition's organization. The course will also provide an opportunity for close examination of objects in the Clark's permanent collection, including Lethière masterpiece Brutus condemning his sons to death (1788), as well an album of approximately one hundred drawings by the artist.

Requirements/Evaluation: class participation, presentations, research paper (approximately 20 pages)
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 16
Enrollment Preferences: MA students, then art history major undergrads
Expected Class Size: 12
Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option
Distributions: (D1)
Attributes: ARTH pre-1800 Courses

Spring 2022
The idea of the work of art has a long history in Western philosophy and religious thought as the model for the idea of intentionality at the broadest scale; the relation of the artist to their artifact mirrored, in microcosm, the relation of an “intelligent designer” to a designed universe. The collapse of such models for thinking about both art and the natural and social world are characterized, typically, as intrinsic to the epoch of modernity. Within art history of the past half century, a significant amount of attention has been devoted to theorizing how many now-canonical artists (eg. the proto-conceptual artist Marcel Duchamp, the composer John Cage and choreographer Merce Cunningham) harnessed chance procedures with the aim of vacating their agency from the process of creation and with the “purpose to remove purposes.” This course attempts to look before and beyond these well-trodden histories. Probing the visual dimension inherent in the concept of design and its absence (a visuality epitomized by blindfolded allegorical figure of Fortuna), we will seek to trace a more capacious genealogy for the efflorescence of chance, accident, and randomness as aestheticized objects of fascination in the twentieth century. We will trace the prehistory of these concepts in relation to both the abstraction of numbers and the concreteness of organisms, situating ideas of chance in relation to both the rise of a globalization and racial capitalism grounded in risk, financial speculation, and probability, as well as the eventual emergence in the nineteenth century, of an evolutionary theory capable of producing statements such as, “what a chance it has been... that has made a man,” and recognizing “blind chance” as the originary driver of change in the organic world. The class will include presentations by invited guest scholars and focus on a number of case studies spanning the early modern period through the late nineteenth century, including topics such as: the concept of disegno and art as a model of intentionality, the iconography of fortune, gambling, and accidents, the association of chance and seafaring, the iconography of falling and gravity, the incorporation of chance into the material processes of image-making (for instance, in the invention of photography), and the visual culture and visual metaphors of Darwin's evolution. In association with our historical inquiries, the course will also meditate methodologically upon models of causality in art-historical explanation, as well on broader questions of how chance and ideas of chance and causality mediated modern Europe’s relation to other parts of the world.

Requirements/Evaluation: class presentation, research paper of approximately 20 pages

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 16

Enrollment Preferences: grad students, then art history major undergrads

Expected Class Size: 10

Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

Distributions: (D1)

Fall 2021

SEM Section: 01  T 10:00 am - 12:50 pm  Emmelyn Butterfield-Rosen

This seminar serves as an introduction and deep dive into issues of sound in the visual arts. While we will examine modern and contemporary examples of sound art and multimedia work, this course considers sound, the aural imagination, and practices of listening much more expansively to probe the theoretical, conceptual, as well as technological, aesthetic, and reception issues surrounding sound in visual art. Course readings will combine art historical accounts with texts from philosophy and sound studies. We will read Michael Gaudio on representations of "the New World" in colonial America, consider recent attention paid to sound and the infiltration of sound recording media in nineteenth- and early-twentieth century America (by Rachel DeLue, Leo Mazow, and Asma Naeem), delve into the politics and poetics of European avant-garde performance, the cross-pollination of musical and artistic experimentation in 1960s New York and elsewhere (John Cage and Pauline Oliveros in connection with the worlds of dance, performance, and Black Mountain College), and consider more contemporary practices, particularly by artists working in Asia, Brazil, and artists engaging in Deaf studies and critique of ableist hearing ideologies (such as Christine Sun Kim). We will also draw heavily on writings on sound, sensation, art (and film) by twentieth-century continental philosophy (Roland Barthes, Jean-Luc Nancy, Gilles Deleuze) as well as recent work by contemporary theorists probing the intersections of the sonic with race, gender, and politics (among them Salomé Voegelin and Robin James), as well as other topics from sound studies such as the mediation of technology, social and historical frameworks (such as Alain Corbin's study of the culture of the senses in the 19th-century French countryside), and the "ontological" view of materiality (Christoph Cox, Steve Goodman).

Requirements/Evaluation: Students will each be responsible for introducing key themes or questions from the readings in one class session. They will also complete a short paper focused on experimenting with sound/image ekphrasis (how do we write histories of sound?). The final project will be a research paper (approximately 20 pages), on which they will give a presentation in class near the end of term while the project is in its development.
ARTh 594  (S)  Traveling Seminar: Slavery and the Dutch Golden Age

This course takes as its starting point the exhibition at the Rijksmuseum opening in September 2019: Slavery, an exhibition. With this installation, the curators of the Rijksmuseum seek to correct dominant narratives of seventeenth and eighteenth-century Dutch history, which have absented the role of slavery in determining the economic, social, and visual history of the Netherlands. With a Travel Grant awarded by the College Art Association, the students in this seminar will travel to the Netherlands to visit this exhibition and other relevant cultural institutions in order to examine the possibilities and limits for 'decolonizing' the museum. This course will study how slavery is imbricated within the mythic construction of a 'Dutch Golden Age' while also examining what happens when the history of enslaved peoples becomes translated into the space of a museum and exhibition. We will consider a revisionist history of Dutch artistic production, accounting for slavery in determining the Dutch economy and visual production while also asking what happens when slavery becomes narrated in the space of one of the nation's history museums. We will read contemporary black feminist theory such as Sylvia Wynter, Saidiya Hartman, Hortense Spillers, and Christina Sharpe as a means to struggle with how the space of the exhibition chooses to activate and write those missing histories, and we will examine if it is even possible to responsibly tell the story of slavery over two centuries when the majority of the subjects have been completely defaced, removed, and excised from the historical record, and their voices are often the ones still absent. In the words of Saidiya Hartman, we will ask: "Is it possible to construct a story from the 'locus of impossible speech' or resurrect lives from the ruins?"

Requirements/Evaluation: participation in class travel, class participation and presentation, research paper

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 12

Enrollment Preferences: MA art history students, by application if overenrolled

Expected Class Size: 12

Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

Distributions: (D1)

Attributes: ARTH pre-1800 Courses

Not offered current academic year

ARTh 595  (F)  Private Tutorial

Students may petition to take a private tutorial by arrangement with the instructor and with permission of the Graduate Program Director.

Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

Distributions: (D1)

Fall 2021

IND Section: 01   TBA   Guy M. Hedreen

ARTh 596  (S)  Private Tutorial

Students may petition to take a private tutorial by arrangement with the instructor and with permission of the Graduate Program Director.

Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option
**Distributions:** (D1)

*Not offered current academic year*

**ARTH 597 (F) Undergraduate Lecture Course Taken for Graduate Credit**

Undergraduate Lecture Course Taken for Graduate Credit

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D1)

*Not offered current academic year*

**ARTH 598 (S) Undergraduate Lecture Course Taken for Graduate Credit**

Undergraduate Lecture Course Taken for Graduate Credit

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D1)

*Not offered current academic year*