ART (Div I)

GRAD ART

Co-Chairs: Professors Elizabeth McGowan and Amy Podmore


On leave Fall/Spring: Professors: P. Low, S. Solum.
On leave Spring only: Professor C. Chavoya, Senior Lecturer H. Edwards.

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 (normally in January) (ARTH 51) and preparation of a Draft Qualifying Paper in the second (ARTH 52). Students must also demonstrate reading proficiency in two foreign languages, one of them German (for more specific information on the language requirements, see below, after the listing for ARTH 597/598). At the end of the second year, all students present a shortened version of the Qualifying Paper in the annual Graduate Symposium.

At least eight of the twelve courses must be graduate seminars. Included among them are four required of all students: ARTH 504, “Methods of Art History,” to be taken during the first semester; ARTH 506, “Graduate Art History Writing Workshop” and ARTH 507, “Object Workshop,” to be taken in the second; and ARTH 509, “Graduate Student Symposium,” to be taken in the fourth.

Students must also fulfill a distribution requirement by undertaking coursework in three of six areas:

- East Asian, Indian, Islamic art
- Ancient Near Eastern, Egyptian, Greek, and Roman art
- Early Christian, Byzantine, and Western Medieval art to 1400
- Western art, 1400 to 1780
- Western art, 1780 to present
- Arts of Africa, Oceania, and the Americas (Pre-Hispanic or Native American cultures)

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

Undergraduate Courses and Private Tutorials

With permission from the Director and the individual instructors, students may take up to four 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 up to two private tutorials (ARTH 595/596) by submitting petitions to the Director describing the substance of their projects, including bibliography, and the nature of the work they will submit for evaluation. The petitions must be co-signed in advance by both the students and their faculty supervisors.

Of the minimum requirement of twelve courses, the combined number of private tutorials and undergraduate courses applied to the degree may not exceed four.

The Qualifying Paper

The Qualifying Paper is normally a revision of a seminar or private tutorial paper produced 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 to the Director 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.

On the first Friday of their fourth semester, students submit drafts of their Qualifying Paper, including illustrations, to three faculty readers.
generally the original faculty supervisor, the Director, and the Post-Doctoral Teaching Fellow). Although a draft, this version of the paper should be brought to a high level of completion.

Early in the fourth semester, students and their readers meet together to discuss the drafts. Within six weeks of these discussions (at a date determined by the Director), students submit their Qualifying Papers. Qualifying Papers should not exceed 8,000 words, including footnotes and bibliography.

**The Graduate Symposium**

All second-year students speak in the Symposium, presenting 20-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, but are not limited to, the 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.

**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)

Courses in which students receive a grade below B- do not receive graduate credit.

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. Grades in language courses are converted to Pass/Fail on the Williams transcript and are not calculated in the GPA. The Director reviews students’ records at the end of the first year; those with GPAs of 3.00 or lower may be asked to resign from the Program.

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 resign 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.

**Language Courses**

The Graduate Program’s degree requirements include reading competence in two languages (other than English) of scholarly and academic relevance to the history of art. One of the two languages must be German. Many students select French as the second although, with permission of the Director, other languages may serve. The Program offers dedicated courses in reading French and German for art history. Other language classes at Williams are listed in the course catalog, although the coordination of undergraduate and graduate schedules can be challenging.

Incoming students’ language preparation is assessed through exams administered at the outset of the semester. In French and German, scores attained on SAT II reading examinations determine placement within the two-semester language course sequence.

**French:** If students attain a minimum score of 700 on the French placement exam, they are exempted from further coursework in that language. With a score between 500 and 700, they are placed into the graduate course of readings in art history, French 512. With a score below 500, they enroll in the introductory course, French 511. In the case of a second language other than French, arrangements will be made on an individual basis.

**German:** With a score below 450, students enroll in the introductory course, German 515. Students who score between 450 and 500 are placed into German 516. With scores between 500 and 700, students enroll in the advanced reading course, German 513. Students attaining a minimum score of 700 on the German placement exam are exempted from further coursework in that language.
ARTH 500 (F) Clark Visiting Professor Seminar: Handicraft and Contemporary Art

Crosslistings: ARTH400 / ARTH500

Primary Crosslisting

This seminar examines the resurgence of craft within contemporary art and theory. In a time when much art is outsourced–or fabricated by large stables of assistants–what does it mean when artists return to traditional, and traditionally laborious, methods of handiwork such as knitting, jewelry making, or woodworking? Though our emphasis will be on recent art (including the feminist reclamation of quilts, an artist who makes pornographic embroidery, a transvestite potter, queer fiber collectives, do-it-yourself environmental interventions, and anti-war craftivism), we will also examine important historical precedents. We will read formative theoretical texts regarding questions of process, materiality, skill, bodily effort, domestic labor, and alternative economies of production. Throughout, we will think through how craft is in dialogue with questions of nation-building, gendered work, and mass manufacturing. The seminar is centered around student-led discussion of our critical readings and culminates with final research projects.

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: research paper, presentation

Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 16

Enrollment Preferences: places for 8 undergraduates and 8 graduate students assured

Expected Class Size: 12

Distributions: (D1)

Fall 2018

SEM Section: 01  R 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm  Julia Bryan-Wilson

ARTH 500 (S) Clark Visiting Professor Seminar: Ethics of Abstraction

Crosslistings: ARTH500 / ARTH400

Primary Crosslisting

The course will interrogate abstraction as a strategy in 20th and 21st century art around the globe, and its manifold implications for political projects of being, seeing, and knowing together. We will look at how various artists turn to non-representation as a means for thinking differently about issues as divergent as flatness, vision, progress, decay, identity, violence, solidarity, negation, and protest. How might we read acts of judgment performed by abstract artists, i.e., separating what is alien from that which is intrinsic, as ethically activated? How do we account for the ways abstraction has figured centrally not only in modernist art histories, but also in economic and political theories (as in the abstraction of use into exchange value)? How, too, have representation and figuration (as ostensible opposites of abstraction) been positioned as ethical tactics? We will take an object-oriented approach that foregrounds the complexity of movement between “thing” and abstract “effect,” examining divergent valences from postwar abstract painting up to contemporary abstraction as it supports coded meanings, eccentricities, and alternative (feminist, queer, marginal, racialized) formations.

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: research paper, class presentations

Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 16

Enrollment Preferences: second-year graduate students, then first-year graduate students, then advanced undergraduate students; places for 8 undergraduates and 8 graduate students assured

Expected Class Size: 12

Distributions: (D1)

Spring 2019
ARTh 501 (s) Museums: History and Practice

Crosslistings: ARTH303 / LEAD301 / ARTH501

Primary Crosslisting

Art museums not only express the political, economic and cultural values of their period of formation, but the evolution of those values that result in the institutions of our time. The seminar will examine museums past, present and future looking at governance and administration practices, architecture and installation, accessioning/deaccessioning policies, and cultural property issues. It will also consider current trends in exhibition, public education and other programming in both "encyclopedic" and contemporary arts institutions. Class discussions will have a special focus on how museums strive to balance their scholarly and artistic roles with their civic and social responsibilities while maintaining financial stability in the increasingly market-driven, metric-conscious, not-for-profit environment of our time.

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: evaluation will be based on oral presentations as well as two research papers

Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis

Enrollment Limit: 14

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

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

Distributions: (D1)

Distribution Notes: meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under ARTH; meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under LEAD

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

Spring 2019

ARTh 502 (s) History, Theory, and Techniques of Printmaking

This course will consider the history of prints in Europe and America from the fifteenth century through the 1920s. Focusing primarily on the holdings of the Clark, classes will be held in the new Manton Study Center for Works on Paper where students will view original works of art. Equal emphasis will be placed on primary literature, theoretical texts, and a careful understanding of printmaking processes. Media to be investigated include, among others, 15th-century woodcuts by Albrecht Dürer, drypoints by Rembrandt van Rijn, engravings by Philibert-Louis Debucourt, aquatints by Francesco Goya, lithographs by Édouard Manet, etchings by James McNeill Whistler, photo-mechanical processes like photogravure by artist Alfred Stieglitz, and color woodcuts by the German Expressionists. The rise and fall of various processes and practitioners will be explored from a socio-historical perspective, considering market, taste, and changing exhibition strategies. Additionally, consideration will be given to the status of the printmaker over the centuries as their roles shifted from professional to amateur and back again.

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: evaluation will be based on involved class participation, several short presentations, one short paper, and a final paper of approx. 20 pages

Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis

Enrollment Limit: 14

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

Expected Class Size: 14

Distributions: (D1)

Not offered current academic year

ARTh 504 (F) Methods of Art History and Criticism

This seminar concentrates on critical approaches to art, culture, and history. Our focus will be on various writings that have engaged theories of representation, vision, objecthood and materiality for more than five centuries.
Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: each student will write one short midterm paper and a longer concluding essay, as well as present a couple of the readings to the class.

Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option.

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 14

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

Distributions: (D1)

Fall 2018

SEM Section: 01    T 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm     Marc Gotlieb

ARTH 505 (F) Shadows of Plato's Cave: Image, Screen, and Spectacle

Crosslistings: COMP374 / ARTH505 / PSCI374

Secondary Crosslisting

In Book VII of the Republic, Socrates famously asks his interlocutors to picture people living in a cave, bound in chains and able to see only shadows on the wall. Thus begins the presentation of perhaps the most influential metaphor in the history of philosophy. One might even claim that when Plato deployed the metaphor in an extended allegory, he constituted the fields of both philosophy and political theory. In repeatedly examining the allegory over the centuries, later thinkers have elaborated their approaches not only to Plato but also to the nature of politics and the tasks of thinking. This class begins with the Republic’s cave and other key Platonic discussions of appearances, visual representation, and (literal and metaphoric) seeing, asking how Plato’s approaches to image, politics, and theory/philosophy shape each other. Building on those inquiries, we next take up important twentieth and twenty-first century returns to the cave, engaging such figures as Heidegger, Strauss, Arendt, Derrida, Irigaray, Rancière, and Badiou. Finally, we examine recent theories of screen and spectacle—read both for their resonances with and departures from debates over the Platonic legacy—and case studies in the politics of both military and racial spectacles in the U.S. The question of what is an image and what images do will run from the beginning of course to the end. Beyond the authors mentioned, readings may include such authors as Allen, Bruno, Clark, Debord, Friedberg, Goldsby, Joselit, Mitchell, Nightingale, Rodowick, Rojin, Silverman, and Virilio. Insofar as it fits student interest, we will also explore the cave’s considerable presence in visual culture, ranging from Renaissance painting through such recent and contemporary artists as Kelley, Demand, Hirschhorn, Kapoor, Sugimoto, and Walker, to films such as The Matrix.

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: regular blog posts and three 7- to 8-page essays or one 20-page final paper

Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option.

Prerequisites: one prior course in political theory, art history, cultural/literary theory, or philosophy or permission of the instructor.

Enrollment Limit: 19

Enrollment Preferences: majors in political science, comparative literature, and art history, as well as students (up to 4) in the graduate program in art history.

Expected Class Size: 12

Distributions: (D2)

Distribution Notes: meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under PSCI; meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under COMP or ARTH.

Attributes: PSCI Political Theory Courses

Not offered current academic year.

ARTH 506 (S) An Expository Writing Workshop

A common and depressing consequence of too much education is how our writing tends to devolve, as the task of saying what we mean is complicated by new anxieties: trying to impress our potential employers, intimidate our competition, claim our place in an intellectual community, and generally avoid looking like fools. In many professions, bad prose tends to proliferate like some disgusting disease, as scholars, trying above all to avoid mistakes, become tentative, obscurantist, addicted to jargon, and desperate to imitate other bad writers. In this course we will try to relearn the basic skills of effective communication and adapt them to new and complicated purposes. In class we will go over weekly or bi-weekly writing
assignments, but we will also look at the essays you are writing for your other courses, to give them an outward form that will best display their inner braininess. Among other things, I am a fiction writer, and part of my intention is to borrow the techniques of storytelling to dramatize your ideas successfully.

Class Format: seminar

Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

Enrollment Limit: 14

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

Distributions: (D1)

Spring 2019

SEM Section: 01    M 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm     Paul C. Park

ARTH 507 (F) 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.

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: participation

Prerequisites: none

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

Distributions: (D1)

Fall 2018

SEM Section: 01      Cancelled

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

Enrollment Limit: 14

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

Distributions: (D1)

Attributes: EXPE Experiential Education Courses

Spring 2019

SEM Section: 01    MR 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm     Thomas J. Branchick

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

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

Distributions: (D1)

Spring 2019

SEM Section: 01    TBA    Marc Gotlieb

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.

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: evaluation will be based on involved class participation, several short presentations, one short paper, and a final paper approx. 20 pages

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 14

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

Expected Class Size: 8

Distributions: (D1)

Not offered current academic year

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

Crosslistings: AMST355 / ARTH515

Primary Crosslisting

"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—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-a-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.

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: research paper, presentations

Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 16

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

Expected Class Size: 12

Distributions: (D1)

Distribution Notes: meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under ARTH; meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under AMST

Fall 2018

SEM Section: 01    W 10:00 am - 1:00 pm     Horace Ballard

ARTH 524 (F)  The Watchful Object

What is implied by an object that "watches"? Is it sentient? Animale? 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.

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: in-class presentations, class discussion, and a final research project

Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 16

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

Expected Class Size: 12

Distributions: (D1)

Fall 2018

SEM Section: 01    M 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm     Michelle M. Apotsos

ARTH 527 (F)  Acquiring Art: Selecting and Purchasing Objects For WCMA

Crosslistings: ECON227 / ARTH527 / ARTH327

Secondary Crosslisting

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.

Class Format: seminar
**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

**Extra Info:** may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

**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

**Distributions:** (D1)

**Distribution Notes:** meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under ARTH; meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under ECON

Not offered current academic year

**ARTH 530 (S) Demigods: Nature, Social Theory, and Visual Imagination in Art and Literature, Ancient to Modern**

Crosslistings: ARTH530 / CLAS236

**Primary Crosslisting**

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, "Naïve and sentimental poetry;" Nietzsche, Birth of Tragedy, Mallermé, "L'Après midi d'une faune;" 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.

**Class Format:** seminar

**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

**Extra Info:** may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 16

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

**Expected Class Size:** 12

**Department Notes:** pre-1600 undergraduate requirement

**Distributions:** (D1)

**Attributes:** ARTH pre-1600 Courses;

Spring 2019

SEM Section: 01  R 10:00 am - 1:00 pm  Guy M. Hedreen

**ARTH 533 (S) Michelangelo: Biography, Mythology, and the History of Art**

Crosslistings: ARTH433 / ARTH533

**Secondary Crosslisting**

One might argue that Michelangelo's enduring fame, and his preeminence in the European art historical canon, is as much a product of his artistic persona as his artistic achievement. Indeed, the classic image of the artist as a brooding, tortured genius of unstoppable creative force finds its roots in
the Italian Renaissance, and specifically in the fascinating biography--and mythology--of Michelangelo. With a life and career more fully documented than those of any western artist to precede him, Michelangelo provides the foundations for a triangulation of person-persona-artistic production that has a modern . But what are the limits of our knowledge, or the boundaries of interpretation? How might we approach the study of an artistic self when that self is, also, a work of art? In this course, students will become well-acquainted with the life and work of Michelangelo, giving critical attention to the connection between the man and his work. We will investigate, in particular, the practice of interpreting his work according to his philosophical outlook, political convictions, religious beliefs, sexual desire, and more. While this course will bring us deep into the life and work of a single artist, one of its goals is to generate ideas about the very act of biographically-based art historical interpretation. How can thinking carefully about Michelangelo reshape our own thinking about art historical practice?

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: an oral presentation, a research paper, short response papers, and critical commentary on work of peers

Prerequisites: ARTH 301 or permission of instructor (prerequisite for 400-level)

Enrollment Limit: 18

Enrollment Preferences: equally given to senior Art majors and graduate students in the history of art

Distributions: (D1)

Attributes: ARTH pre-1600 Courses;

Not offered current academic year

ARTh 534 (S) Renaissance Time

"Once upon a time," noted the historian Randolph Starn, "the Renaissance set its clocks and calendars to keep modern time." We think of the changing perception of time during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries—a mounting awareness of the place of the present moment in the larger arc of history—as a defining feature of the Renaissance. Yet, while this new temporal self-consciousness underpins our own understanding of the Renaissance as the emergence of modernity, this is only a thread of the larger and more complex fabric of Renaissance time. In this course we will explore the multifaceted dynamism of the Renaissance relationship to time. We will study the broad shifts in beliefs about time during the Renaissance, then, but we will also move beyond this in order to examine the ways in which concepts of temporality were theorized and functioned in Renaissance visual representation. We will pay close attention to the temporal as a site of innovation in Renaissance art, while focusing a historiographic lens onto the varied art historical interpretations of temporality and the imagery of time. Finally, we will consider our own temporal position as it relates to our experience of images from the past. Authors studied will include Leonard Barkan, Simona Cohen, Georges Didi-Huberman, Anthony Grafton, Michael Ann Holly, George Kubler, Keith Moxey, Alexander Nagel, Erwin Panofsky, Marvin Trachtenberg, Aby Warburg, and Chris Wood.

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: collaborative class discussion and focused peer critique, short ungraded response essays, oral seminar report, 15- to 20-page research paper

Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 12

Enrollment Preferences: Art History graduate students, undergraduate Art majors

Department Notes: Western Art 1400-1780 (for graduate students); ARTH pre-1600 Courses (for undergraduate students)

Distributions: (D1)

Attributes: ARTH pre-1600 Courses;

Not offered current academic year

ARTh 535 (F) The Medieval Object

Crosslistings: ARTH535 / ARTH435

Secondary Crosslisting

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:** seminar; three hours per week

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

**Extra Info:** may not be taken on a pass/fail basis

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 16

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

**Expected Class Size:** 14

**Distributions:** (D1)

**Attributes:** ARTH pre-1600 Courses;

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**ARTH 537 (F) Renaissance Matter**

The imagined cleave between "scientific" and "theoretica" art history has never seemed plausible to even the most extreme of art historians. In late medieval and Renaissance North Europe, artworks incorporated materials from all over the human and natural world -- azurite, gold, paper, blood, ivory, ash, bone. This "stuff"-- rather than any forms it might be fashioned into -- held its own auratic charge. How are we to think about these various species of matter, about their various processes of transformation? How did changing philosophies and concepts of matter alter the concept of the artwork, particularly in globally-connected North Europe? What role (if any) was played by rediscovered antique texts about matter (Lucretius, etc.?)

This seminar pivots on two questions: first, how did Renaissance artists and audiences understand the material constituents of their craft? And second, can we imagine an art-history of material today outside a rubric of blunt materialism? Material art history shouldn't mean shucking hermeneutics or criticality. After all, going back to Heraclitus, what could be more "philosophical" than matter itself? At the same time, the "scientific" scrutiny of artworks -- using X-rays, infrared scanning, radiographic photography, chemical analyses, and dendrochronology -- has long been a particular fetish of the study of Northern Renaissance art. The insights onto the artistic process these methods offer are indisputable. Yet aside from verifying (or undermining) claims to age, authorship, or condition of old artworks, it remains extremely unclear to many scholars what motives scientific examination -- in many respects a solution without a clear problem -- are addressing. Worse, such investigations often seem like advocacy for inferences of artistic intention -- a concept viewed with skepticism by many historians today. Theory's "return to the object" turn in art history (a maneuver, since the 1980s, often rooted in Northern artworks) has showed possibilities, but also limitations. Durability -- the reigning dictate of many early objects -- poses specific challenges to narratives privileging stories of rupture. Topics include: alchemy, the studio, early atomistic theories, restoration, animation, authenticity, faktura, and "science."

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** active participation, short presentations; final paper

**Enrollment Limit:** 14

**Expected Class Size:** 14

**Distributions:** (D1)

**Not offered current academic year**

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

Among all the portraits that European art has produced during the modern period, some have been painted or more recently photographed in prison. 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, at worst outrageous and provocative. But there is, indeed, 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 the political "debates." Prison became the arena for a new martyr, one that endures for ideas or simply to be
born. The portrait in prison was a way to commemorate not a disgrace or an infamy, but a glory and a moment of virtue. Within a few years, a terrifying series of portraits appeared. They would nurture Western political thought and visual culture until now. Portraits in prison are at a crossroad of politics, law, art and identity; they offer a great opportunity to think about art and society. This course will explore the topic throughout the modern period until the contemporary period.

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: oral and written assignments
Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 16
Enrollment Preferences: graduate students, then upper level undergraduate Art History majors
Expected Class Size: 12
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.
Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: seminar presentations, research paper
Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 16
Enrollment Preferences: graduate students, then advanced undergraduate students
Expected Class Size: 12
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.
Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: active participation and weekly assignments, leading class discussion, three short responses, and final research paper
Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option
**ARTh 543 (S)  Global Conceptualism, 1962-Now**

Since its emergence in the early 1960s, conceptual art has come to circumscribe a vital, ubiquitous, and widely adaptable category within contemporary art discourse, defining myriad artistic and curatorial practices as well as shaping art-historical inquiry. Naming one's practice as 'conceptual,' (if you are an artist), or doing the work of 'conceptualizing' art's place in the world (if you are a writer/curator/historian) became common parlance more than four decades ago, and is arguably still the most pervasive single term in use today across the many arms of the global contemporary art world. Conceptual art also encompasses an enormous diversity of materials and practices, spanning traditional media, time-based media, installation, performance, and hybrid combinations thereof. What is conceptual art? Is it art that appropriates the tools and systems of the administration of capital, or of kitsch and mass culture? Does it involve the aestheticization of labor? The dematerialization of the art object? Collaborative practice? Must it look a certain way to be conceptual art? Is needing to look a certain way precisely what conceptual art is not? As the category gains popularity and absorbs more and more possibilities into its ranks, the question quickly becomes, not what is conceptual art, but what isn’t it? This graduate seminar will study the means, methods, and assumptions of art historical inquiry toward the development and sustainability of the category 'conceptual art,' from 1962 (the agreed-upon birthdate of the movement, by the estimation of many critics) onward. We will explore global and transnational sites, histories, traditions, and geographic networks beyond the Euro-American canon of conceptualism in order to approach global contemporary art and politics with an expanded set of terms and references. Ultimately, we will seek to understand the challenges and possibilities of re- and de-narrating the histories of modern and contemporary culture from the perspective of "the concept," or "the idea," as opposed to the material, formal, and geographic categories that currently construct and demarcate the field.

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** oral presentations, research papers, short writing assignments

**Extra Info:** may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 16

**Enrollment Preferences:** Art history grads, then senior art history majors

**Expected Class Size:** 16

**Distributions:** (D1)

Not offered current academic year

**ARTh 544 (S)  Women Artists in Paris, 1850-1900  (WI)**

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.

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** seminar presentations and research paper

**Extra Info:** may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 14

**Enrollment Preferences:** preference given to graduate students and then to senior Art History majors

Not offered current academic year
**ARTH 547 (S) 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:** seminar

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

**Extra Info:** may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 16

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

**Expected Class Size:** 12

**Distributions:** (D1)

Spring 2019

SEM Section: 01    W 1:30 pm - 4:00 pm     Marc Gotlieb

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**ARTH 549 (S) Early Modern Transmissions**

Through analyses of networked objects and people in what has come to be seen as an increasingly globalized early modern world, we have become more cognizant of the ways in which compositions and subject matter of paintings circulated through the medium of reproductive print; manuals meant to be followed to the letter were adapted for foreign audiences; and ideas were disseminated in book form, either through the open market or in banned publications. But is it enough to track the movement of people, ideas, and objects? And what did it mean to transmit information—whether it be visual, material, or theoretical—across media, languages, continents, or religions in the early modern period? Our goal will not be to map the physical movements of (art) objects or individuals, but rather to query what is gained, lost, or altered beyond recognition when things are transmitted over time and space. The scope of this seminar will span roughly the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries—from the systematization of academic and artistic training and the Scientific Revolution, to the Enlightenment and, consequently, accelerated imperial expansion. Our discussions will center on readings and case studies drawn from the visual arts (such as the reproduction of Albrecht Dürer's woodblock prints on Italian maiolica); mechanical arts (the European mechanization of ancient Chinese timekeeping technology); natural philosophy (the continental reception of Isaac Newton's Opticks); and intellectual history more generally (for instance, the project of translating and adapting William Chambers' Cyclopaedia for a French audience) and the terrain covered will include European encounters with the Americas, the Ottoman Empire, and Asia.

**Class Format:** seminar

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

**Extra Info:** may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 16

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

**Expected Class Size:** 12

**Distributions:** (D1)

Spring 2019

SEM Section: 01    F 10:00 am - 12:50 pm     Lauren R. Cannady
ARTh 551 (S) Winslow Homer
In this seminar we will explore the life and art of Winslow Homer (1836-1910). Paintings, prints, watercolors, and photographs in the collection of the Clark and the Williams College Museum of Art will focus our discussions and provide the basis for understanding Homer's art-making and his place within the art-culture of his day. A consideration of his subjects will necessarily intersect with many of the nation's most pressing issues during his era: the Civil War and Reconstruction; the rise of middleclass leisure; the relation of man to the environment.

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: class discussion, weekly précis of the readings, two short papers, an oral presentation (and response to someone else's), and a final research paper (20-25 pages)
Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option
Enrollment Limit: 14
Enrollment Preferences: Graduate Program students and then to senior Art History majors
Expected Class Size: 8-12
Department Notes: satisfies the seminar requirement for the undergraduate Art History major
Distributions: (D1)
Not offered current academic year

ARTh 554 (S) The Matrix and the Market: Printmaking and Photography in the Nineteenth Century
During the last half of the 19th century, technical, commercial, and aesthetic approaches to printmaking and photography experienced dramatic paradigm shifts. Etching, for example, simultaneously functioned as a reproductive medium and one that carried experimental, vanguard associations. Practitioners of lithography strove to distance themselves from denigrating commercialism and raise the medium's status to a respected art form. Photography, in turn, negotiated the boundaries between "documentary" and "artistic." This seminar will address the complex issues that swirled around printmaking and photographic matrices, critical responses to the various processes, artist-driven initiatives, and the formative role of the art market and book trade in shaping popular opinion. We will consider these topics across political and geographic borders from Europe to the United States, reading both primary and secondary sources. The class will be held in the new Manton Study Center for Works on paper with visits to Chapin library and the Williams College Museum of Art likely.

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: students will be responsible for readings and involved class discussion; several short and one long presentation; and a final paper (20-25 pages)
Enrollment Limit: 12
Enrollment Preferences: Graduate Program students and then to senior Art History majors
Distributions: (D1)
Not offered current academic year

ARTh 562 (F) Art of California: Pacific Standard Time (WI)
Crosslistings: LATS462 / AMST462 / ARTH462 / ARTH562
Secondary Crosslisting
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. In fall 2017, a new Getty PST initiative focused on Latin American and Latino art will commence and this class will consider these exhibitions as well.

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: evaluation will be based on several short writing and research assignments, oral presentations, class participation, and a
**Extra Info:** may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

**Prerequisites:** ARTH 102

**Enrollment Limit:** 15

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

**Expected Class Size:** 15

**Distributions:** (D1) (WI)

**Distribution Notes:** meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under ARTH; meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under AMST or LATS

**Attributes:** AMST Arts in Context Electives; AMST Space and Place Electives; ARTH post-1600 Courses; LATS Comparative Race + Ethnic Studies Electives;

*Not offered current academic year*

**ARTH 563 (F) 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; graded on a pass/fail basis

**Prerequisites:** graduate art students

**Enrollment Limit:** 25

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

**Distributions:** (D1)

Fall 2018

SEM Section: 01 TBA Victoria Brooks

Spring 2019

SEM Section: 01 TBA Victoria Brooks

**ARTH 567 (F) What is Art Criticism? Current Debates, Past Precedents**

Taking as its point of departure recent debates concerning a purported “crisis” of art-criticism, this seminar considers traditions of writing about the work of living artists in modernity. We will begin with current literature and then pivot back to the eighteenth century, tracing a sequence of episodes in art criticism’s evolution as a genre by looking at key works of art as mediated by their first critics. Emphasis will be placed on close readings of primary historical texts as prompts for thinking through the following broad questions, among others: What is critique, and what is art criticism? Is the art critic a judge, a historian, a partisan, a participant, or an artist in her own right? How do forms of distribution impact the content of art criticism, and how does art criticism impact the form and content of art? What is the relationship, if any, between taste, assessment of value, and interpretation of meaning?

Artists considered include, among others, Boucher, Friedrich, Whistler, Seurat, Pollock, Piper.

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** two short writing assignments, twenty page final paper

**Extra Info:** may not be taken on a pass/fail basis

**Distributions:** (D1)

*Not offered current academic year*

**ARTH 573 (S) Modern and Contemporary Art from the Middle East and North Africa**

This is an exciting time for art from the Middle East and North Africa. Contemporary artists are exhibiting in international shows and biennales, and the global art market has responded to collector interest and crowned its favorites. The visibility and celebration of these artists, however, does not take into account the larger historical arena of cultural production and artistic practice from which they emerge. In terms of the discipline of art history, the field of modern painting and contemporary visual practice in the region is in its first generation of formation and definition. Drawing on very recent
scholarship in art history and visual anthropology, we will explore the "history" of modern and contemporary art in the Middle East and North Africa (from the 1920s-the present). We will pay particular attention to how key terms and categories such as: modern, contemporary, Islamic, and Arab, have been constructed, deployed and debated by artists, institutions and scholars in the field. We will explore the role of museums, art schools, archives and biennales in the region, the creation of art publics and communities, and how the international market has responded to contemporary production. And perhaps most importantly, we will study work by artists that identify with the region and engage and complicate constructions of race, gender, religion, environment, autonomy and community.

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: short response essays and a culminating research paper
Enrollment Preferences: graduate program students and then senior Art History and Arabic Studies majors
Distributions: (D1)

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.

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: seminar presentations, research paper
Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 16
Enrollment Preferences: graduate students, then advanced undergraduate students
Expected Class Size: 12
Distributions: (D1)

Fall 2018
SEM Section: 01  T 10:00 am - 1:00 pm   Emmelyn Butterfield-Rosen

ARTH 586 (F) Japanese Popular Visual Culture
Crosslistings: COMP186 / ARTH586 / ARTH286 / ASST186
Secondary Crosslisting
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, Superflat), classic film (Ozu, Mizoguchi, Kurosawa), manga/comics (Tezuka, Otomo, Okazaki), and animation (Oshii, Miyazaki, Kon). We will focus on developing visual reading skills to come up with original interpretations of these works, and on comparing different media to make them shed light on one another.

Class Format: lecture/discussion
Requirements/Evaluation: attendance, participation, two 5-page papers, final exam
Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 35
Enrollment Preferences: students majoring or considering a major in a related discipline

Expected Class Size: 15

Distributions: (D1)

Distribution Notes: meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under ASST

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.

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: oral presentations and written assignments

Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 16

Enrollment Preferences: grad students, then advanced undergrad art history majors

Expected Class Size: 12

Distributions: (D1)

Spring 2019

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.

Class Format: tutorial

Distributions: (D1)

Fall 2018

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.

Class Format: tutorial

Distributions: (D1)

Spring 2019
ARTH 597 (F) Undergraduate Lecture Course Taken for Graduate Credit
Undergraduate Lecture Course Taken for Graduate Credit

Class Format: independent study
Distributions: (D1)

Fall 2018
IND Section: 01    TBA    Marc Gotlieb
IND Section: 06    Cancelled

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

Class Format: independent study
Distributions: (D1)

Not offered current academic year