

**HUNTER COLLEGE FALL 2023
UNDERGRADUATE ART HISTORY
COURSE DESCRIPTIONS**

EARLY MEDIEVAL ART

Prof. Hahn

Art H 220 Sec 001

T 4:00PM-6:45PM

This course will introduce you to problems and topics in early medieval art across Europe from 300 to 1150 ACE. We will discuss, for example, the beginnings of Christian art; the art of the ‘barbarian’ invaders; Insular art works, especially manuscripts such as the Book of Kells; the art of the first medieval empire—that is the Carolingian; and the art of the pilgrimage road, especially in France and Spain. Architectural discussions will include both churches and castles. Discussions of objects will consider techniques and materials, and we will discuss a treatise on art making. Of special interest will be the consideration of the importance of medieval art to those who produced it and its ability to communicate ideas about power and identity.

We will make at least one museum visit. There will be weekly readings, focusing on topics rather than a survey text, and class discussion. Two exams consisting of essay questions (that will also involve identification of art works) and three short papers will be required.

HIGH RENAISSANCE & LATE 16TH-CENTURY ITALY

Art H 230 Sec 01

Prof. Rocco

W 10:00AM-12:45PM

[Description Forthcoming]

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY ART

Art H 243 Sec 01

Prof. De Beaumont

TH 10:00AM-12:45PM

This survey of European art from around 1700 to around 1780 will focus primarily on Italian, French, and British art, stressing the interplay of distinctive national developments and major international trends. We will pay special attention to the role of the Enlightenment and other complex political, literary, and cultural forces in transforming life and thought in Europe throughout the period. The “hierarchy of genres” imposed by artistic academies will be considered in relation to the increasing pluralism of artistic activity among celebrated artists—including Giovanni Battista Tiepolo (1696-1770) in Italy; Antoine Watteau (1684-1721), François Boucher (1703-1770), Jean-Siméon Chardin (1699-1779), and Jean-Honoré Fragonard (1732-1806) in France; and William Hogarth (1697-1764) and Thomas Gainsborough (1727-1788) in England—as well as many lesser-known figures. It was in mid-eighteenth-century Paris and London that the art world as we know it today began to emerge, with its focus on art exhibitions and auction houses, published art criticism and appreciation for art among a growing middle-class public. Outstanding achievements in sculpture and architecture, as well as the decorative arts and book illustration, will be addressed.

Course requirements include assigned scholarly readings, mid-term and final examinations in essay format, and a 4- to 6-page term paper on a work of eighteenth-century art in the collection of a New York museum. The class will visit the Metropolitan Museum class hours, so that students may select their term paper topics.

Twentieth-Century Art I

Art H 249 Sec 01

Prof. HuberM 10:00AM-12:45PM

This course will primarily focus on major art historical movements in Europe and North America in the first half of the twentieth century. Primary source texts will provide the foundation for a greater understanding of the social, political, and aesthetic concerns driving these movements. Beginning with turn-of-the century developments, this course will survey the evolution of modernism during this period, culminating with the emergence of the New York School in the 1940s. Emphasis will be placed on contextualizing each movement in its respective artistic center and time period, while examining exchange across international boundaries.

Art of East Asia: Ritual & Rel

Art H 262 Sec 01

Prof. ChouTH 1:00PM-3:45PM

This course is the first part of a two-semester sequence on art of East Asia. It explores the visual and material culture from 4th century BCE to 10th century CE with an emphasis on art of ancestral worship, funerary spaces and objects, and the transmission of religions on the Silk Road. The first five weeks will be devoted to the study of ritual vessels of Shang and Zhou dynasties (ca. 1600–256 BCE.) and the funerary arts--painting, sculpture, and grave goods--of the Qin and Han (221 BCE-220 CE) in China, Prehistoric Period (11th Mil. BCE-6th c. CE) in Japan, and of the Three Kingdoms period (57 BCE-668 CE) in Korea. The remaining ten weeks of the course will trace the spread of Buddhism from Northern India to China, Korea, Japan, and the Himalayas from the 3rd to the 10th century CE by examining religious art and practice in rock-cut cave temples, mural paintings, and temple complexes.

History of Photography

Art H 280 Sec 01

Prof. PelizzariT 10:00AM-12:45PM

Photography, a form of image making that we practice in everyday life, is intertwined with a range of creative expressions, technical challenges, and social expectations. The course explores the multiple strands and interpretations that have impacted the history of the medium since the announcement of the invention, officially set in 1839. The lectures survey the technologies of photography in the nineteenth-century, as they became progressively more accessible to a large public and introduced new aesthetics in portraiture, landscape, and the illustration of distant geographies, often marked by imperialistic design and "Manifest Destiny." This history evolves into the twentieth-century, revealing the medium's increasing experimentation and artistic autonomy. The dialogue between contemporary art and photography is brought to our present, exploring the

strategies by which digital image making challenges the notion of photography as a truthful representation, often expanding into conceptual venues. The goal of these lectures and class discussions is to become literate about photography as a visual language that represents a uniquely reflection of culture and politics from the early technical experimentations to the current circulation of images and news on social media.

AFRICAN AMERICAN ART

EARLY AFRICAN AMERICAN ART: 1619-1899

Art H 299.67 Sec 01

Prof. Itam

M 1:00PM-3:45PM

This undergraduate course will survey visual art of the United States from the seventeenth to the turn of the twentieth century with a particular focus on art and objects created by people of African descent. Inspired by journalist Nikole Hannah-Jones’s “The 1619 Project,” this course aims to reframe the field by placing the consequences of slavery and the contributions of Black Americans at the center of the national canon of art history. The course is organized chronologically starting with the arrival of enslaved Africans in the English colony of Virginia and ending at the end of the nineteenth century. Along the way, students will consider intersecting issues of identity, citizenship, migration, representation, and aesthetics amidst the creation of the plantation, development of photography, promotion of manifest destiny, Civil War and Reconstruction, and advent of Pan-Africanism. The semester is divided in half: a survey of art and objects followed by a series of artist case-studies. We will take advantage of The Metropolitan Museum of Art for object-based study of decorative art, paintings, photography, and sculpture.

RESEARCH METHODS

Art H 300 Sec 01

Prof. Singerman

T 1:00PM-3:45PM

[Description Forthcoming]

RESEARCH METHODS

Art H 300 Sec 02

Prof. Avcioglu

W 4:00PM-6:45PM

This Research Methods Seminar is an introduction to ‘Islamic Art’ in museums. Since the early 19th century museums in Europe and America have been acquiring objects, paintings and works of diverse nature from all over the geographical area ruled by Muslim polity since the birth of Islam in the Arabian Peninsula in the 7th century. The collection and display of these works in turn gave rise to Islamic Art History as a discipline. It is this epistemic genealogy that this seminar will explore: how museums shaped the category of Islamic Art and its history, and how contacts (diplomatic, economic, etc.) between east and west formed a specific form of representation. We will examine works *in situ* and focus on various thematic issues such as provenance, materiality, techniques as well as patronage, preservation, conservation and retribution.

In the wake of the acclaimed *Vermeer* exhibition held at the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam from February through June 2023, there can be no more exciting time to study the artist justifiably described as the “Sphinx of Delft” by the nineteenth-century art critic Théophile Thoré.

Johannes Vermeer (also called Jan; Delft 1632-1675 Delft), today revered for his calm and meditative representations of figures in contemporary interior spaces, is known to have produced only about two paintings per year, about 36 of which survive today. His oeuvre stands apart from those of numerous more prolific contemporary Dutch artists who specialized in scenes of everyday life. In this course we will consider the evolution of Vermeer’s art—from early biblical subjects, to such iconic works as *The Milkmaid* (c. 1657-58; Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam), *Girl with a Pearl Earring* (c. 1665; Mauritshuis, The Hague), and the *Art of Painting* (c. 1666-67; Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum), to later more overtly symbolic subjects such as the *Allegory of the Catholic Faith* (c. 1670-1672; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York)—within the larger context of 17th-century Dutch “genre painting” (although no such global term was used at the time). The achievements of key figures such as Judith Leyster (Haarlem 1609-1669 Heemstede), Gerard ter Borch (Zwolle 1617-1681 Deventer), Gerrit Dou (Leiden 1613-1675 Leiden), Gabriel Metsu (Leiden 1629-1667 Amsterdam), Pieter de Hooch (Rotterdam 1629-1684 Amsterdam), Nicolaes Maes (Dordrecht 1634-1693 Amsterdam), and Jan Steen (Leiden 1629-1679 Leiden) will be assessed individually and in relation to Dutch life and culture of the period.

Our goal throughout the course will be to define the distinguishing qualities of Vermeer’s contribution, and to consider the ways in which his works elude the traditional designation of “genre painting” that has so often been applied to them.

Requirements for the course will include weekly assigned readings, occasional brief writing assignments, regular attendance and active participation in class discussions, a mid-term quiz in essay format, and a term project involving both a research paper and an oral presentation to the class.

Beginning in the late nineteenth century, many artists, architects, and designers began crossing international borders--or entire oceans--to launch, bolster, inspire, or save their careers. In this course, we will investigate how lengthy sojourns, and sometimes permanent migrations, affected the output and identities of many creative minds. Similarly, we will consider how transplanted trailblazers have acted as significant conduits for cultural exchange, thus creating resilient transnational networks. Moving in a roughly chronological manner, we will focus on four paradigms of border crossing: 1) Individuals moving within Europe for inspiration and career advancement before World War I; 2) North and South Americans migrating to European capitals for training; 3) European innovators fleeing to the Americas during and following the Second World War; and 4) contemporary artists who are simultaneously based in multiple countries, thus illustrating the permeability of geographic boundaries today. Throughout this course, our overarching questions

will be: How does place and geography shape artistic development, and how has its role changed over time?

This course will incorporate close reading of primary source documents as well as relevant secondary literature. Museum and gallery visits will allow students to experience works by key figures firsthand, and students will be asked to review at least one ongoing exhibition. Finally, students will research, present, and write about a figure who exemplifies one of the central currents we've examined during the semester.

MODERN SEMINAR: Art in Revolution: Russia/USSR 1915-1953

Art H 450.24 Sec 01

Prof. Golan

TH 1:00PM-3:45PM

From the Last Futurist Exhibition of Paintings 0,10 to the death of Stalin, art was asked to model a radically new society. In the contexts of the 1917 October Revolution and the Civil War this entailed a degree of aesthetic and institutional violence. From Kasimir Malevich signaling with his Suprematist paintings the "year zero" of art, through Constructivism, Productivism, and Socialist Realism, the seminar tracks the debates that surrounded this relentless sequence of -isms: the concepts of faktura versus tektonika, the end of painting in favor of agitational propaganda in the form of photomontage, theatre, cinema, and the socialist object; gender equality in the avant-garde; new pedagogy in the laboratory schools of Vkhutemas; the exhibition as medium (as Vladimir Tatlin's Tower for the Third International and El Lissitzky's Prouns were turned into gallery installations); Socialist Realist painting as a form of totalitarian art and, in a more positive guise, an international style embraced after WWII by new nations seeking form.

Artists will include Malevich, Lissitzky, Tatlin, Varvara Stepanova, Alexandr Rodchenko, Gustav Klutssis, Alexandr Deineka, Andrzej Wroblewsky, etc. Contemporary writers-theorists: Anatol Lunacharsky, Boris Arvatov, Nikolai Tarabukin, Ossip Brik, Walter Benjamin, Alexei Gan, Sergei TretYakov, and Andrei Zhdanov. Secondary readings by Camilla Gray, Christina Lodder; John Bowlt, Yve-Alain Bois, B.Buchloh, T.J. Clark, Boris Groys, Maria Gough, Christiana Kaier, Devin Fore, Masha Chlenova, Tom McDonough, and Jérôme Bazin.

Although this course will not focus on cinema, we will be looking at a few key films by Sergei Eisenstein and Dziga Vertov.