

ART HISTORY

Degree Types: PhD

The Department of Art History (<https://arthistory.northwestern.edu/>) offers a full-time doctoral program that is designed to prepare our graduates for professional lives as art historians and theorists of visual and spatial cultures. Course offerings are designed for those with grounding in the field and its related disciplines. The PhD curriculum moves from a general introduction to the methods and philosophies of the discipline to a more specific exploration of the student's chosen field. Graduates are trained for careers in teaching and many alumni have had considerable success in the museum field, while students from other fields often take our classes to deepen their own disciplinary engagements with visual and spatial culture.

The faculty is renowned for its forward-looking, often transregional scholarship, with particular strengths in Black Visual Culture in the United States and African Diaspora; Modern and Contemporary art and architecture across the globe; and transregional Medieval and Early Modern art and architecture. Offerings from other fields of study are also readily available.

The department's comparative and transdisciplinary orientation offers ample opportunity for innovative research, which is amplified by programs and clusters across the Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences and within The Graduate School (TGS). Students in this program are encouraged to participate in TGS's Interdisciplinary Cluster Initiative program (<https://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/admission/academic-programs/clusters-and-certificates/>).

Additional resources:

- Department website (<https://www.arthistory.northwestern.edu/>)
- Program handbook(s)

Degrees Offered

- Art History PhD (<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/tgs/art-history/art-history-phd/>)

Global Perspectives

Developing depth and breadth in the history of art objects and practices across geographic locations and time, alert to the ways in which artworks and other artifacts are tied to near and distant cultures and locations by relations of exchange, encounter, coalition, competition, domination, performance, religion, ritual or resistance. Our department's comparative and cross-disciplinary orientation trains our students for scholarly and museum positions increasingly focused on more global perspectives in the discipline. These approaches place our program at the forefront of current debates within art history.

Criteria for Evaluation: Evaluation of seminar papers in a range of courses including the summer seminar abroad, development of exam lists and qualifying exams, dissertation prospectus and a successful dissertation based on extensive research in pertinent archives and in accordance with disciplinary standards of excellence.

Diverse Methodological Expertise

Developing depth and breadth of methodological expertise. Northwestern's art history program has long been a leader in methodological debates within the discipline. Our students learn to

identify and deploy a diverse range of methods, including critical race theory, postcolonial approaches, studies of empire, ecocriticism, visual culture methodology, sound study, ethnography, literary and discursive analysis, social history, Marxism, and other related fields of critical theory and analysis.

Criteria for Evaluation: Evaluation of the first year AH 401: Proseminar, seminar papers in a range of courses, summer seminar abroad, development of and passing of the "concentration" exam list for the qualifying exams.

Object-Based Study

Developing expertise in object-based study. Our program places particular emphasis on this aspect of art history, because it is our belief that the careful scrutiny of forms, objects, and practices is not only integral to the historical analysis of particular cultural imaginaries, but also offers vital lessons for students about the reigning logics of visual production in the present and means of critiquing them.

Criteria for Evaluation: Participation in graduate courses that frequently include museum and exhibition components, including AH 401: Proseminar, AH 403: COSI Objects and Materials, and AH 405: Summer Seminar Abroad, evaluation of seminar papers in these and other courses, the prospectus, and dissertation.

Archive and Object-Based Research

Designing, carrying out, and revising original archive and object-based research; conveying new interpretations resulting from research with clarity both orally and in writing; and articulating the broader impacts of research to a wider community of scholars.

Criteria for Evaluation: Evaluation of seminar papers, assessment of extensive research in pertinent archives/locations in the dissertation.

Art History Courses

ART_HIST 320-2 Medieval Art: Early Medieval (1 Unit)

Art and architecture of the Europe from late antiquity to the twelfth century.

Literature Fine Arts Distro Area

ART_HIST 329-0 Special Topics in Medieval Art (1 Unit)

Content varies depending on the expertise of the instructor and may engage with exhibitions and museums in Chicago and beyond. Past topics have included the early Christian church; history of illuminated manuscripts; pilgrimage and saints' cults; the cathedral; Spain; art and crusade.

*Historical Studies Distro Area Historical Studies Foundational Discipline
Literature Fine Arts Distro Area Literature and Arts Foundational Discipline*

ART_HIST 330-1 Early Modern European Art 1400–1500 (1 Unit)

Painting, sculpture, architecture, and the graphic arts in Europe from 1400–1500.

*Historical Studies Distro Area Historical Studies Foundational Discipline
Literature Fine Arts Distro Area Literature and Arts Foundational Discipline*

ART_HIST 330-2 Early Modern European Art 1500–1600 (1 Unit)

Painting, sculpture, architecture, and the graphic arts in Europe from 1500–1600.

Literature Fine Arts Distro Area

ART_HIST 339-0 Special Topics in Early Modern Art (1 Unit)

Content varies depending on the expertise of the instructor and may engage with exhibitions and museums in Chicago and beyond. Past

topics have included cartography, colonial Mexico, and European court cultures.

ART_HIST 349-0 Special Topics in 17th & 18th-Century Art (1 Unit)

Content varies depending on the expertise of the instructor and may engage with exhibitions and museums in Chicago and beyond. Past topics have included the art of Diego Velázquez, marble sculpture, and the transatlantic Dutch world.

*Historical Studies Distro Area Historical Studies Foundational Discipline
Literature Fine Arts Distro Area Literature and Arts Foundational Discipline*

ART_HIST 350-1 19th-Century Art 1: 1789–1848 (1 Unit)

Survey of European painting, sculpture, photography, and/or architecture from 1789 to 1848.

Global Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity Historical Studies Distro Area Historical Studies Foundational Discipline Literature Fine Arts Distro Area Literature and Arts Foundational Discipline

ART_HIST 350-2 19th-Century Art 2: 1848–1914 (1 Unit)

Survey of European painting, sculpture, photography, and/or architecture from 1848 to 1914.

Global Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity Historical Studies Distro Area Historical Studies Foundational Discipline Literature Fine Arts Distro Area Literature and Arts Foundational Discipline

ART_HIST 359-0 Special Topics in 19th-Century Art (1 Unit)

Content varies depending on the expertise of the instructor and may engage with exhibitions and museums in Chicago and beyond. Past topics have included European colonialism in Egypt, Haussmann's Paris, and Mary Cassatt.

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Literature Fine Arts Distro Area Literature and Arts Foundational Discipline*

ART_HIST 367-0 Special Topics in Art of the Americas (1 Unit)

Content varies depending on the expertise of the instructor and may engage with exhibitions and museums in Chicago and beyond. Past topics have included nationalism and internationalism in US art; the myth of the US; the artist in society; elite and popular visual traditions.

ART_HIST 369-0 Special Topics in Contemporary Art (1 Unit)

Content varies and may coincide with local exhibitions- for example, art and activism; utopia and dystopia in recent practice; participatory art; video art; art criticism; globalization; visual cultural studies; photography in/as art; installation art; truth and fiction in recent practice.

ART_HIST 370-1 Architecture & Landscapes, 1750–1890 (1 Unit)

The history and theory of architecture, especially in relation to cities and landscape, from 1750 to 1890.

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ART_HIST 370-2 Architecture & Landscapes, 1890 to Present (1 Unit)

The history and theory of architecture, especially in relation to cities and landscape, after 1890.

Literature Fine Arts Distro Area

ART_HIST 378-0 The Global City (1 Unit)

A critical examination of the city as a socioeconomic system; period and regions of focus vary.

*Historical Studies Distro Area Historical Studies Foundational Discipline
Literature Fine Arts Distro Area Literature and Arts Foundational Discipline*

ART_HIST 379-0 Special Topics in Architectural History (1 Unit)

Content varies depending on the expertise of the instructor and may engage with exhibitions and museums in Chicago and beyond. Past topics have included the Burnham plan of Chicago, World's Fairs, and architectural exchanges in the Global South.

ART_HIST 384-0 African American Art (1 Unit)

Art of the African-descended cultures of North and South America, the Caribbean, or the wider globe.

Literature Fine Arts Distro Area

ART_HIST 389-0 Special Topics in the Arts of Asia (1 Unit)

Content varies depending on the expertise of the instructor and may engage with exhibitions and museums in Chicago and beyond. Past topics have included patronage and painting in South Asia; colonial representations of the Indian subcontinent; Japanese prints; portraiture in Himalayan Buddhist Art.

ART_HIST 401-1 Methods and Historiography of Art History (1 Unit)

Investigation of philosophical or methodological approaches of current interest in art history. Required introduction to approaches in the discipline of art history; for students in the fall quarter of the first year.

ART_HIST 403-0 Objects and Material Seminar (1 Unit)

Material-based, close engagement with art objects in Chicago collections and the methods such activity requires.

ART_HIST 405-0 Art Historical Research (1 Unit)

On-site summer course required of first year students and open to others across the Humanities. Introduces students to various tools necessary to conduct on-site research through focused study in sites relevant to faculty expertise, for example, e.g., Paris, London, Shanghai, Kingston, Moscow, Madrid, Cape Town, Beirut, etc.

ART_HIST 406-0 Dissertation Prospectus (1 Unit)

Required of (and limited to) students in the spring quarter of the 3rd year. Walks the student through the mechanics of a dissertation proposal and designing a dissertation.

ART_HIST 410-0 Studies in Ancient Art (1 Unit)

Content varies. Recent offerings include aniconism; ornament; and the reception of antiquity.

ART_HIST 420-0 Studies in Medieval Art (1 Unit)

Content varies. Recent offerings include the global turn; cultural exchange in Medieval Europe; and the patron's part.

ART_HIST 430-0 Studies in Early Modern Art (1 Unit)

Content varies. Recent offerings include art & technology; maps and the early modern transatlantic world; Aby Warburg/Atlas; thinking with stones in early modern Europe (at the Newberry Library).

ART_HIST 440-0 Studies in 17th & 18th-Century Art (1 Unit)

Content varies. Recent offerings include print revolutions; architecture and space in the Spanish Habsburg world; and art and science.

ART_HIST 450-0 Studies in 19th-Century Art (1 Unit)

Content varies. Recent offerings include world's fairs; William Morris: Art, Design, Politics, Ecology; William Blake and abolitionism; and art and technology.

ART_HIST 460-0 Studies in 20th & 21st-Century Art (1 Unit)

Content varies. Recent offerings include Picasso; shadow histories of photography; futures we will have loved; appropriation; aesthetics of socialist realism; black ontologies; speculation and the speculative; the Russian avant-garde, and art of the global 1960s.

ART_HIST 470-0 Studies in History of Architecture (1 Unit)

Content varies. Recent offerings include Louis Sullivan and Chicago architecture, architecture in America (1890-1930), the World City c. 1900, and French architecture (1830-1870).

ART_HIST 480-0 Studies in Asian Art (1 Unit)

Content varies. Offerings include: the role of sketching in the Chinese artists' practice, collecting Asian art under colonialism, Buddhist painting, and gender issues in East Asian prints.

ART_HIST 496-0 Internship in the Arts (1 Unit)

Direct participation in the regular activities of an established arts organization in the Evanston/Chicago area under the supervision of a faculty member. By petition to instructor, on a limited basis.

ART_HIST 498-0 Graduate Tutorial (1 Unit)

Supervised studies in the history of art. Content and course requirements vary. Pass/no-credit permitted at the discretion of the graduate advisor.

ART_HIST 499-0 Independent Study (1 Unit)

Permission of instructor and department required. May be repeated for credit.

ART_HIST 590-0 Research (1-3 Units)

Independent investigation of selected problems pertaining to thesis or dissertation. May be repeated for credit.