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Second year - History of Art

Renaissance Art in Italy and the Netherlands 1400-1460

This module examines Renaissance art in Italy and the Netherlands over the period c. 1400-60. It will look at developments especially in Florence by Italian 'founders' of the Renaissance, Donatello, Ghiberti and Masaccio, as well as considering comparable innovations that occurred at the same time in the Netherlands in the works of their Northern contemporaries Van Eyck and Rogier van der Weyden, and it will compare their achievements.

In addition to analysing many individual works in detail, the module will also be exploring the specific connections between Northern and Italian art, as well as the varying conceptions of nature and realism, and of Renaissance and revival; it will also consider the ranges of styles on offer and the most characteristic forms of art works, such as altarpieces and portraits, as well as their differing religious and secular functions and the differing systems of patronage which led to their creation.

Art, Architecture and Design in Fin de Siècle Vienna

This module will examine art, architecture and design produced in fin-de-Siècle Vienna. It will focus on Secessionist artists such as Gustav Klimt, Egon Schiele and Koloman Moser, and will explore their work in relation to a series of social, cultural, psychological and literary issues using the work of writers such as Arthur Schnitzler and Stefan Zweig, and the sexologists Richard Krafft-Ebing and Otto Weininger. It will provide a deeper understanding of 'modern' Vienna with regards to the changing conditions of the Austro-Hungarian Empire at beginning of the twentieth century.

The impact of design projects by Adolf Loos, Otto Wagner and the Wiener Werkstätte will also be investigated in the context of modernist architecture and design, and with particular reference to the notion of Gesamtkunstwerk. It will critically engage with the concept of 'fin-de-siècle' and ask how this 'phenomenon' may, or may not have, influenced an intense period of artistic production in Vienna and the rest of Europe. Although the course will primarily focus on art, architecture and design, it will also incorporate extracts and discussions on film, music and theatre where relevant.

Real and Ideal: Art and Society in Mid Nineteenth-Century France

This module considers images by leading artists of the period such as Ingres, Bonheur, Courbet, Millet, Gérôme and Manet and analyses key aesthetic and critical categories and genres, including Neo-Classicism, Realism, Orientalism, and the male and female nude, and links art to a broader visual culture, including photography. It also considers the institutional structure of the French art world, focusing on the École des Beaux-Arts, the Salon and debates about Realism and the Academic Ideal. Finally, by analysing visual representation in relation to the key themes of class, gender and ethnicity, the module locates artistic practice within the socio-political terrain of the period.

Prague, Budapest, Cracow

Prague, Budapest, Cracow. Art, Architecture and Politics in Central Europe 1867 - 1918

The module examines art and architecture during the final 60 years of the existence of Austria-Hungary, from 1867 up to its demise in 1918 as a result of the First World War. Complementing the module on fin-de-siècle Vienna, this module looks away from the imperial capital and focuses on the cities of Prague, Cracow and Budapest, the major Czech, Polish and Hungarian artistic centres of the late nineteenth century.

It considers art and architecture against the background of the cultural politics of this period, specifically, the rise of nationalist sentiment in the cities and the attempts to produce visual cultures that would express their ideas of national identity.

The module analyses the following topics: the 'national awakening' and the invention of national traditions; art and national conflict between the minorities of the Empire; myths and historical legends in art; folk art and the influence of the arts and crafts movement; museums and exhibitions as visual showcases of national identities; gender in central European art; the avant-garde and cosmopolitanism.

Power, Society, Politics: Religious art in Northern Europe

This module explores the different social and political functions of religious art produced in Northern Europe (France, Germany, England, Low Countries) from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. It focuses in particular on how artists and patrons responded to the changing religious climate at this time, and how religious works of art like altarpieces, reliquaries, and manuscripts were used as means of enforcing of power, promoting politics and creating social identity in times of instability.

Case studies will analyse themes such as: the power and performative nature of images; religious allegory and secular rulers; religion and social identity; and Northern responses to the Council of Trent and the Counter Reformation. Students will be encouraged to draw on the University's collections through seminars that look at paintings and manuscripts in the Barber Institute and Research and Cultural Collections. By spanning the shift between the late medieval and early modern periods, students will also be encouraged to examine and problematise broader questions pertaining to the study of periods and categories such as 'medieval' and 'Renaissance', 'North' and 'South', and 'public' and 'private'.

Inside the Gallery

Inside the Gallery. Histories, Theories and Practices of Museums and Galleries

This module is designed to introduce you to art galleries in the West in a historical, conceptual and practical sense. The first part concentrates on museums' history; you will be introduced to stories and places of exhibiting art works historically from the foundation of museums up to the present day. It will also discuss conceptual issues and explore the limits of this module, i.e. exhibiting Western art in the West. A second part provides an insight into museum departments and their work other than curatorial; those of the Barber Institute of Fine Arts will be taken as an example to explore display, publicity, marketing and education. Workshops in between the latter sessions will help you to apply gained knowledge to the various aspects involved in organising an exhibition.

The module is largely based on group work, which is also dealt with as a topic in the course itself.

Behind the Camera: women's film-making from the 1950s to the present

With the exception of pioneer directors like Surrealist Germaine Dulac and Dorothy Arzner in Hollywood, women have not often been 'behind the camera'. This module will introduce 'women's cinema' (films directed by women) from the 1950s to the present day, focusing on directors from France, Britain and the US such as Agnes Varda, Sally Potter and Kathryn Bigelow. Issues to be considered will include authorship – how does women's film-making challenge the concept of the 'auteur' dominant in thinking about cinematic authorship? -, genre (how have films such as Bigelow's adapted and blended genres like the vampire movie and science-fiction?) and the topic of feminist film-making. What is the legacy of the experimental and often avant-garde feminist cinema of the 1970s, and what are the future prospects for women working in the film industries of the developed world today?

Research Techniques in the History of Art

The aim of this module is to enable students to define and pursue the sustained programmes of research required for Level 2 essays, presentations and undergraduate dissertations.

Continuing the study skills introduced in classes in the first year, this module puts particular emphasis on critical thinking and evaluation, and will examine topics such as: defining and crafting a research topic; writing a literature review; identifying, analysing and evaluating relevant textual and visual source materials; use of the internet as a research source. The module will also examine how to cite written and visual material accurately, as well as crafting an argument.

Students are assessed on the basis of a literature review relating to a chosen research topic which would normally be related to the study trip undertaken in the second semester.

A Century of Change: British Art and Design, 1840-1940

This module examines British art and design from 1840 to 1940; a period of great social and political change. Focusing on the work of artists and designers, including Rossetti, Morris, Whistler, Beardsley, Mackintosh, Wyndham Lewis, Gill and Hepworth, the module will investigate how the production and reception (including patronage and exhibiting cultures) of art and design was informed by, and helped to shape, changed social values, such as altered concepts of gender, class and ethnic identity, resulting from the impact of increasing industrialisation, advances in science, imperial expansion and world war. To this end, the module will analyse key modes of artistic practice, including Pre-Raphaelitism, Naturalism, Symbolism and Modernism, alongside prevailing political, aesthetic and philosophical debates. A variety of cultural forms will also be considered, including paintings, prints, ceramics, stained glass and photography. Exploring the diversity of art and design within the framework of the cultural and political environment of the period of study, this module will provide an understanding of how artists and designers instigated change, not only through innovation within their own disciplines, but also by creating works which, intentionally or not, constructed meanings and values promoting the revision of traditional social stratification.

American Art in the 1960s

This module consists of an analysis of art practices in America in the 1960s. It examines a range of practices, ranging from the post-painterly abstraction to pop art, minimalism and post-minimalism, conceptual art, performance art and land art. Covering a crucial decade in art, where traditional modernist definitions of art were overturned, the module considers not only art practices and their socio-political contexts, but also the critical aesthetic and philosophical debates that accompanied them.

Impressionism and after: Art and society in late Nineteenth-Century France

This module will consider images, techniques and practices by leading innovative artists of the period such as Cassatt, Morisot, Manet, Degas, Seurat, Gauguin, Van Gogh and Cézanne. It will analyse key critical categories (including Impressionism, Neo-Impressionism and Symbolism) and key genres (including landscape painting, the painting of modern life, the nude) whilst linking art and the making of art to a broader visual and institutional culture. Finally, by analysing representation in relation to the key themes of gender, class and ethnicity the module will locate artistic practice within the socio-political terrain of the period.

Art and the Industrial Revolution

This module provides students with a general introduction to the production and reception of images (prints, paintings, ceramics, coins, medals and tokens) in Britain during the period of the eighteenth century and early nineteenth century that became known as the Industrial Revolution. It explores how artists represented, or chose to avoid representing, industrialisation, and how patronage, artistic institutions, and reception were affected by widespread social and economic change. The relationships between science, industry and art will also be explored.

Art History in the Field: Study Trip Abroad

An essential component of art historical enquiry is the study of works of art and architecture *in situ*. This provides experience of images, artefacts and buildings that reproductions cannot convey, such as scale, size, texture, context, interrelationship of parts, lighting and environment. Accordingly, this module consists of a study trip to a designated location of major art historical importance. Destinations are usually in mainland Europe, and have in recent years included: Rome, Paris, Berlin, Brussels, Bruges, and Vienna.

Prior to the trip, students identify a work of art or architecture in the chosen city that will be their focus of study. Whilst there, they have the opportunity to examine the object *in situ* and to visit comparable works of art and relevant collections. Students are then assessed by a 20-minute presentation on their chosen object during the exam period. The module also includes visits to major architectural projects art collections in the specified location. These will be viewed according to a programme devised and organised by staff. Works of art and architecture are studied at first-hand in staff-led tours as well as prescribed independent visits.

Video transcript (/accessibility/transcripts/artsandlaw/historyart/rome-study-trip.aspx)

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