

The Graduate Center
City University of New York
Ph.D. Program in Art History

Spring 2020 Course Descriptions

all classes meet in room 3421, unless otherwise noted

ART 73000 *Icons in Byzantium*

GC: Tues. 2:00-4:00 pm, 3 credits, Prof. Jennifer Ball

A lecture class that looks at the origins of icons in Late Antiquity, stemming from Roman portraiture and also from panel paintings of the Roman pantheon. The course will look at icons up through the 15th century, when Greek icons are scooped up by Italians more as objects of art, rather than for devotional use. Icons will be considered as the Byzantines envisioned them: as portraits, devotional objects and sometimes as liturgical objects. This course examines the controversy surrounding icon use, presenting it as the crucial period in which the Byzantines cement their icon practice. After this time (723- 843), their widespread use develops, especially in relation to the cult of saints.

Auditors allowed with permission

ART 77400 *Surveying Latin American Art, 1800-1950*

GC: Wed. 11:45 am-1:45 pm, 3 credits, Prof. Katherine Manthorne

This lecture course analyzes key movements, figures and institutions that helped shape the artistic production of Latin America from the late Colonial era to 1950. Organized chronologically, lectures focus on Nation-building, Muralism, Modernismo, Surrealism and other themes and highlight different countries week by week. Exploring both figurative traditions and innovative explorations of abstraction, students familiarize themselves with easel painting and murals alongside prints and photography. Issues of race and gender thread their way through our investigations of Mexico, most of the South America countries, Cuba and Puerto Rico.

Course requirements include a midterm and final examination (both include slide identifications and an essay); two short (5 page) papers; and weekly readings to stimulate class discussions. We will take at least one field trip to view original artworks. This course provides strong preparation for the Oral examination in this field.

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ART 80010 *Curatorial Practicum*

GC: Thurs. 2:00-4:00 pm, 3 credits, Prof. Claire Bishop and Director Katherine Carl

This Mellon-funded seminar will train graduate students to devise and write a compelling exhibition proposal. It will also pay particular attention to the pitfalls and possibilities of curating

from postcolonial and decolonial frameworks. Classes will be structured around case studies by visiting speakers, who will be invited to discuss the relationship between art, institutions, race, and colonial violence, and how best to tackle these issues in exhibitions and programming. The seminar will include site visits to current exhibitions in New York and culminate in students writing their own exhibition proposal for the James Gallery.

ART 81000 *Love, Metaphor and the Image in Mughal India*
GC: Wed. 4:15-6:15 pm, 3 credits, Prof. Molly Aitken

This is a class about what images made possible for South Asia's polyglot, multiethnic, religiously diverse society under Mughal imperial rule (1556-1858). The pervasive theme of love in Mughal fine arts suspended cultural differences in poetics, intellectual play, and mysticism to result in a distinctive Indian aesthetics that emphasized emotional affect. We will follow the theme of love as it circulated through the closely interrelated mediums of painting, poetry and music. Gender and sexuality will be front and center of our discussions, along with self-fashioning and the homosocial bonds fostered through connoisseurship. We will look at the staging and restaging of desire, often through metaphor and beauty, as well as through fantasies about what images are and how powerful they can be. Throughout, we keep in view the fate of Mughal arts and aesthetics in the colonial period, and we revisit twentieth-century art histories for a deeper understanding of how the discipline has engaged with South Asia's non-western, premodern visual traditions. Class discussions and assignments encourage students to ask new questions and to explore new methods, especially with a view to globalizing the discipline.

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ART 86010 Mellon Seminar at MMA: *Cosmopolites: British Self-Fashioning in an Era of Global Exploits (1500-1900)*
GC: Mon. 10:00-12 noon, 3 credits, Prof. Judy Sund

This Mellon seminar is designed to complement the Metropolitan Museum's reconceived British Galleries, which will open to the public in early March 2020. In addition to three historic rooms, the galleries will house some 700 objects meant to tell a more inclusive story of Britain's transition from small island nation to global powerhouse. Preliminary class sessions at the GC will introduce students to people and events that shaped British culture in the Tudor, Stuart, Georgian and Victorian eras, with attention to global trade and entrepreneurship; colonialism, imperialism, and their attendant exoticisms; consumer culture and notions of luxury; innovation, industry and mass production; and Victorian aestheticism as backlash. We will consider the "material turn" in cultural studies as we examine modes of national and personal self-styling in an increasingly cosmopolitan Britain. Sessions held with MMA curators on site in the British Galleries will focus on particular media (metal- and woodwork, ceramics, glass, textiles) and individual objects as we consider the ways that institutional mission and curatorial intent shape selection and display. Students will make gallery presentations and write object-driven research

papers focused on the MMA's collection and informed by the methodologies of material culture studies.

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ART 86020: *Magic, Socialist, and other Realisms*

GC: Wed. 2:00-4:00 pm, 3 credits, Prof. Romy Golan

Figurative painting stood in a false position after abstraction and photomontage in the 1920s. But it registered like no other art form both the condition of painting as a medium, and its relation to the politics of its times. From the 1920s to the 1960s artists on opposite ends of the political spectrum recruited realism for their cause. A new reading of realism might, for instance, throw some light on an episode such as this: in 1930, the French Surrealist writer Louis Aragon penned the essay *In Defiance of Painting* to accompany a Parisian exhibition that revisited, radically, the entire history of the first three decades of the century via collage. Less than two years later Aragon was speaking in Moscow at a conference on Socialist Realism.

Primary sources will include texts by Franz Roh, Massimo Bontempelli, Louis Aragon, André Breton, Roger Caillois, Berthold Brecht, Andrei Zhdanov. Secondary literature will include Erich Auerbach, *Mimesis*; Helmut Lethen, *Cool Conduct*; Devin Fore, *Realism after Modernism*; Jacques Rancière, *The lost Thread*; and Frederic Jameson, *Antinomies of Realism*.

No auditors allowed

ART 89900 *Dissertation Workshop*

GC: Fri. 3:00-5:00 pm, 3 credits, Prof. Claire Bishop

For CUNY Level III students only, with permission

ART 89902 *Pedagogy for Art Historians*

GC: Thurs. 11:45 am-1:45 pm, 3 credits, Prof. Rachel Kousser

This semester long practicum will consist of weekly workshops on topics such as designing a syllabus, creating lesson plans, running discussion, formulating tests and paper assignments, and interacting with students; as well as observations and mentoring at the colleges; and an opportunity to do a practice class at one of the colleges, with feedback.

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