

The Graduate Center  
City University of New York  
PhD Program in Art History

**Fall 2017 Course Descriptions**

\*all classes meet in room 3421, unless otherwise noted

**ART 70000**

Methods: Readings in the History of Art

Tuesday, 2:00-4:00 pm

Prof. Siona Wilson

[siona.wilson@csi.cuny.edu](mailto:siona.wilson@csi.cuny.edu)

A critical analysis of some of the most significant art historical methods from the invention of the discipline in the Nineteenth Century to recent scholarship. What social, political and ethical factors have defined the role of the art historian at different historical moments? What are some of the most illuminating conflicts that have arisen? How have other scholarly disciplines influenced our methods? Not only a historiographic survey, this course will provide you with the tools to critically examine your own habits of thinking and research. Moreover, a reflection on art history's intellectual values will invariably include consideration of the significance of art history in the academy and in society today.

Attendance at the Rewald seminar, a series of occasional lectures by visiting scholars (Tuesday, 5:30-7:30pm), is expected and will figure in our in-class discussion.

Preparatory reading TBA.

**Accepts maximum 2 auditors with permission; students should make request in writing**

**ART 72000**

Hellenistic and Roman Painting

Thursday, 11:45-1:45 pm

Prof. Rachel Kousser

[rkousser@gc.cuny.edu](mailto:rkousser@gc.cuny.edu)

Monumental wall paintings — brilliantly colored, with bravura brushstrokes and complex, often illusionistic, iconography — are among the most spectacular and influential works of art preserved to us from classical antiquity. They have also inspired key texts in the field of art history, from Pliny and Vitruvius to Alois Riegel's Late Roman Art Industry and Erwin Panofsky's Perspective as Symbolic Form. This course examines the development of monumental painting from the age of Alexander the Great through that of Constantine. It analyzes canonical works such as the Vergina tombs and the houses of Pompeii as well as less familiar yet significant images from Turkey, Spain, and North Africa along with the catacombs of Late Antique Rome. Major topics include the representation of space; trompe l'oeil; the materiality of ancient painting; patrons (from the emperor in Rome to high-ranking aristocrats around the Bay of Naples, provincial elites, and freed slaves); gendered spaces and their decoration; the connections between painting and architecture (above all, Roman villa

architecture); and the historiography of ancient painting from Pliny to Panofsky and beyond. Course requirements include weekly readings, class participation, a short oral report/ paper, and a final exam.

**PhDs and consortium students only**

**ART 76010**

Big Picture: 19th Century European Art and Issues

Wednesday, 4:15-6:15 pm

Prof. Judy Sund

[jsund@gc.cuny.edu](mailto:jsund@gc.cuny.edu)

The course will take as its focus a select group of canonical paintings (i.e., "big pictures"), chosen for their capacity to generate discussion of overarching (i.e., "big-picture") issues and trends in European arts production in the long 19th century — from Neoclassicism and Romanticism to Symbolism.

**Auditors accepted**

**ART 77200**

Circles of Collaboration in US Art: from Ashcan School to Black Mountain

Monday, 4:15-6:15 pm

Prof. Katherine Manthorne

[kmanthorne@gc.cuny.edu](mailto:kmanthorne@gc.cuny.edu)

Myths of genius and individualism still cast a shadow over the study of modern art, but in reality many artists do their most creative work within a collaborative circle of like-minded associates. They experimented together, challenged one another and join in rebellion against established traditions. Drawing upon the sociology of art, this course explores the “lives” of a series of circles that help to define the course of modern art in the US. Class meetings cover: Ashcan School (The 8), Stieglitz Circle, Dadaists/Arensberg Circle, Katherine Dreier and Soci  t   Anonyme, Harlem Renaissance, WPA/FSA, Mexican Muralists, American Abstract Artists & concluding with Black Mt. College. We investigate each circle via its contributors, particular works that bear traces of collaboration, exhibition strategies & the nature of gender dynamics. Several museum visits are included. This course provides good orals preparation. Requirements include a midterm, final, short (10 page) research paper & weekly reading assignments.

**Auditors by permission of the instructor only, maximum of five (5).**

**ART 86010**

Afterlife of the 19th century: Art in Europe 1900-1925

Thursday, 2:00-4:00 pm

Prof. Romy Golan

[rgolan@gc.cuny.edu](mailto:rgolan@gc.cuny.edu)

This seminar will examine the footprint of the 19<sup>th</sup> century on the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. We will touch on questions such as: the Belle Epoque as the subject of media theory; Art Nouveau/Jugendstil/Stile Liberty/Arte Joven and the animation of the inorganic; Futurism as a post-Symbolist style; the history of artificial darkness as a modern form; the Bauhaus as the end of empathy theory; the Call to Order as return of the non-same; Surrealism and the outmoded;

Aby Warburg as art historical model; the exhibition as palimpsest; the heyday international fairs in Paris and elsewhere. Historiographically we will pay attention to two different narratives: that of European scholars and curators for whom modernity is rooted in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and the American approach which tends to be predicated on radical rupture. One example: *Aux origines de l'abstraction 1800-1914* at the Musée d'Orsay (2004) vs. *Inventing Abstraction 1910-1925* at MoMA (2013).

**Auditors by permission of the instructor only**

**ART 86020**

Modern Painting

Wednesday, 2:00-4:00 pm

Prof. David Joselit

[djoseleit@gc.cuny.edu](mailto:djoselit@gc.cuny.edu)

This course will focus on important formal and theoretical issues in painting of the 20th and 21<sup>st</sup> century. While not a survey, it is designed to give an historical account of modern painting, through issues such as "non-objectivity;" painting and mechanical reproduction, and gesturalism. Coursework will include close readings of canonical art-historical texts, and intense exercises in close looking and formal analysis.

**No auditors**

**ART 86040**

Art History and the Subject of Biography

Wednesday, 9:30-11:30 am

Prof. Michael Lobel

[M1245@hunter.cuny.edu](mailto:M1245@hunter.cuny.edu)

Biography is a fraught topic in current art historical practice. It is simultaneously everywhere—in artist monographs, exhibition catalogue essays, and interviews—and nowhere, in that it is routinely dismissed in wide swaths of the discipline. In addition, it has often been deemed crucial to the recuperation of certain categories of artistic practice, including the careers of women artists and those from historically underrepresented or marginalized groups.

In this course we will tackle this problem head-on. We will read major critical texts on the subject—by such figures as Sigmund Freud, Roland Barthes, and Rosalind Krauss—in order to better understand the stakes of the discussion. We will also consider case studies in which biography offers a useful yet conflicted approach, as in feminist and queer interventions in the field, which often posit a stable artistic subject while simultaneously challenging that very notion. We will consider these issues in both methodological and practical terms, as in those cases in which the artist's stated wishes—often categorized as "intention"—work against the interests of curators and art historians.

Questions to be addressed will include: Why is it that well-respected academic historians regularly write biographies, while the same isn't true in the field of art history? Is it a coincidence that biography became widely dismissed at roughly the same moment certain groups began to assert their agency in the art world? How do we weigh the narratives that artists create

about their lives against the scholarly commitment to provide an accurate account of the historical record? Our discussion of these questions will inform students' approaches to their own individual research projects.

**No auditors**

**ART 87400**

Latinx and Latin America Works on Paper @ El Museo del Barrio

Monday, 10:00 am – 12 noon

Prof. Anna Indyk-Lopez (and Rocio Aranda Alvarado)

[aindych@ccny.cuny.edu](mailto:aindych@ccny.cuny.edu)

Founded in 1969 by innovative destruction artist Raphael Montañez Ortiz in the midst of broader social justice and civil rights movements, El Museo del Barrio has been devoted to its mission to "present and preserve the art and culture of Puerto Ricans and all Latin Americans in the United States" largely ignored by mainstream art institutions. The modern/contemporary art portion of its varied collection has a rich repository of works on paper by Latinx and Latin American artists. Focusing on select examples of drawing, graphics, photography, and artists' publications, the seminar explores heterogeneous approaches to works on paper, including the pedagogical mission of the mid-century Puerto Rican estampas, varied forms of protest from the 1960s to the present, En Foco's documentary photography of the 1970s, poetic interventions, and conceptual and experimental practices. Each week's discussion will be based on a different work or group of works from El Museo's collection enabling us to investigate issues such as: social inequality, civil unrest, the African diaspora, cultural, class, racial, and ethnic identities, the reinvention of graphic traditions, documentary and alternative practices, as well as a consideration of works on paper as medium, objects, and discourse. The seminar will include visits to other NYC institutions and students will prepare an object(s)-centered research paper.

**No auditors**

**ART 90000**

Dissertation Workshop

Monday, 6:30-8:30 pm

Prof. Jennifer Ball

[jball@brooklyn.cuny.edu](mailto:jball@brooklyn.cuny.edu)

**Permission of instructor only**