

# ART HISTORY

arthistory.northwestern.edu

Art history explores the world's art and architecture from antiquity to the present, considering the transformation of artistic styles, techniques, and movements while tracing their influences and impact on societies over time and across geographies. This involves studying objects and practices from various perspectives, including their material form, sensory experience, and historical, ideological, and social contexts. Art history is alert to the ways in which artworks and other artifacts are tied to near and distant cultures and locations by performance, religion, and ritual, in addition to relations of exchange, encounter, coalition, competition, domination and resistance.

At Northwestern, we emphasize object-based study, critical analysis, and advanced written and oral expression. Through coursework, undergraduates are introduced to methods of interpretation and expression that support a wide range of career paths, including museums and art galleries, academia and law, science and technology, journalism and critical writing, as well as medicine and political organizing. Students pursuing art history are part of a vibrant community in which undergraduates, graduate students, faculty, and guest visitors regularly interact to present ideas, exchange insights, and engage in spirited dialogue. Undergraduates routinely pursue their interests in art history beyond coursework by participating in the student-led Northwestern Art Review and the Block Museum of Art Student Associates program. The curriculum is also enhanced by the Warnock Lecture Series, which brings a preeminent art historian, artist, and/or critic to campus each quarter to deliver a lecture for an undergraduate audience.

Undergraduates at Northwestern can pursue a major or minor in art history. Majors and minors meet with the Director of Undergraduate Studies (DUS) at the beginning of the academic year to plan their courses. For majors, the curriculum includes a methods seminar taken in junior year that fosters a sense of common purpose and helps a student decide whether they might pursue writing a senior thesis. The DUS handles all official processes, such as the petition to graduate, study abroad approval, and honors thesis procedures.

## Programs of Study

- Art History Major (<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/undergraduate/arts-sciences/art-history/art-history-major/>)
- Art History Minor (<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/undergraduate/arts-sciences/art-history/art-history-minor/>)

**ART\_HIST 101-7 College Seminar (1 Unit)** Small, writing and discussion-oriented course exploring a specific topic or theme, and introducing skills necessary to thriving at Northwestern. Not eligible to be applied towards a WCAS major or minor except where specifically indicated.

**ART\_HIST 101-8 First-Year Writing Seminar (1 Unit)** Small, writing and discussion-oriented course exploring a specific topic or theme, and focused on the fundamentals of effective, college-level written communication. Not eligible to be applied towards a WCAS major or minor except where specifically indicated.

**ART\_HIST 220-0 Introduction to African Art (1 Unit)** Introduction to art making in Africa; historical periods and regions of focus may vary depending on instructor. *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 222-0 Black Art in the TransAtlantic World (1 Unit)**

Introduction to the visual arts and art history of the African diaspora, including the Caribbean, Brazil, and the United States, from the 19th century to present day. *Global Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity Historical Studies Distro Area Historical Studies Foundational Discipline Interdisciplinary Distro* - See Rules (<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/undergraduate/arts-sciences/#schoolrequirementstext>) *Literature Fine Arts Distro Area Literature and Arts Foundational Discipline*

**ART\_HIST 224-0 Introduction to Ancient Art (1 Unit)** Introduction to the art and architecture of the ancient Near Eastern, Egyptian, Aegean, Greek, and Roman worlds. *Historical Studies Distro Area Historical Studies Foundational Discipline Interdisciplinary Distro* - See Rules (<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/undergraduate/arts-sciences/#schoolrequirementstext>) *Literature Fine Arts Distro Area Literature and Arts Foundational Discipline*

**ART\_HIST 225-0 Introduction to Medieval Art (1 Unit)** Introduction to the art and architecture of Europe and the Middle East from the third to fifteenth centuries CE. *Historical Studies Distro Area Historical Studies Foundational Discipline Interdisciplinary Distro* - See Rules (<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/undergraduate/arts-sciences/#schoolrequirementstext>) *Literature Fine Arts Distro Area Literature and Arts Foundational Discipline*

**ART\_HIST 230-0 Introduction to Art of the United States (1 Unit)** Survey of the art and architecture of the United States in its cultural context, from the art of conquest to contemporary production. *Literature Fine Arts Distro Area*

**ART\_HIST 232-0 Introduction to the History of Architecture: 1400 to Present (1 Unit)** The theory and history of architecture in relation to cities and landscape; historical periods and regions of focus may vary depending on the instructor. *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 235-0 Introduction to Latin American Art (1 Unit)** Survey of the work of artists and groups from throughout the various countries of Central and South America from colonial times to the present. *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 240-0 Introduction to Asian Art (1 Unit)** Introduction to the art and architecture of Asia from ancient cultures to contemporary developments, including religious, court, and popular genres. Depending on the instructor, this course covers South/Southeast Asia or East Asia. *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 250-0 Introduction to Early Modern European Art (1 Unit)** Leading centers and artists of Europe from the later Middle Ages to the 19th century, with attention to their global context. Architecture, sculpture, painting, and graphic arts in relation to their social and cultural settings. *Historical Studies Distro Area Historical Studies Foundational Discipline Interdisciplinary Distro* - See Rules (<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/undergraduate/arts-sciences/#schoolrequirementstext>) *Literature Fine Arts Distro Area Literature and Arts Foundational Discipline*

**ART\_HIST 255-0 Introduction to Modernism (1 Unit)** Conceptual introduction to modernism, covering art and visual culture from the late-19th century to the mid-20th century, with a focus on Europe and the United States. *Global Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity*

*Historical Studies Distro Area Historical Studies Foundational Discipline Interdisciplinary Distro* - See Rules (<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/undergraduate/arts-sciences/#schoolrequirementstext>) *Literature Fine Arts Distro Area Literature and Arts Foundational Discipline*

**ART\_HIST 260-0 Introduction to Contemporary Art (1 Unit)** Conceptual and thematic introduction to art since the 1960s, with attention to the impact of new technologies, social and political change, globalization, and the ongoing transformation of artistic production and distribution. *Historical Studies Distro Area Historical Studies Foundational Discipline Literature Fine Arts Distro Area Literature and Arts Foundational Discipline*

**ART\_HIST 318-0 Exhibiting Antiquity: The Culture and Politics of Display (1 Unit)** Examination of the construction of Mediterranean antiquity through modes of reception since 1750. Analysis of programs of collecting and display and the intersection of institutional and scholarly agendas. ART\_HIST 318-0, CLASSICS 397-0 and HUM 397-0 taught together; may receive credit for only 1 of these courses. *Historical Studies Distro Area Interdisciplinary Distro* - See Rules (<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/undergraduate/arts-sciences/#schoolrequirementstext>) *Literature Fine Arts Distro Area*

**ART\_HIST 319-0 Special Topics in Ancient 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 monsters and civilization; monument and commemoration in antiquity; narrative in ancient art; and the Roman provinces.

**ART\_HIST 320-1 Medieval Art: Byzantine (1 Unit)** Art and architecture of the Byzantine (Eastern Roman) empire in its larger Mediterranean, Middle Eastern and Eastern European context from the fourth to fifteenth century. *Historical Studies Distro Area Historical Studies Foundational Discipline Interdisciplinary Distro* - See Rules (<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/undergraduate/arts-sciences/#schoolrequirementstext>) *Literature Fine Arts Distro Area Literature and Arts Foundational Discipline*

**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 320-3 Medieval Art: Late Medieval (1 Unit)** Art and architecture of Europe from the twelfth to fifteenth centuries. *Historical Studies Distro Area Historical Studies Foundational Discipline Interdisciplinary Distro* - See Rules (<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/undergraduate/arts-sciences/#schoolrequirementstext>) *Literature Fine Arts Distro Area Literature and Arts Foundational Discipline*

**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 340-1 Baroque Art: Italy & Spain 1600–1800 (1 Unit)** Painting and sculpture in Italy, Spain, and Latin America from 1600–1800. *Global Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity Historical Studies Distro Area Historical Studies Foundational Discipline Interdisciplinary Distro* - See Rules (<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/undergraduate/arts-sciences/#schoolrequirementstext>) *Literature Fine Arts Distro Area Literature and Arts Foundational Discipline*

**ART\_HIST 342-0 Eighteenth-Century European Art (1 Unit)** Survey of European art, architecture, decorative arts, and material culture of the “long eighteenth century” (ca. 1670 to ca. 1815 CE) with a specific attention paid to Europe's colonial and imperial legacy during the period. *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 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. *Historical Studies Distro Area Historical Studies Foundational Discipline Literature Fine Arts Distro Area Literature and Arts Foundational Discipline*

**ART\_HIST 360-0 20th Century Art (1 Unit)** Painting, sculpture, architecture, design, and visual culture of the 20th century. *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 365-0 Art of the United States (1 Unit)** Survey of the arts and visual culture in the United States, encompassing architecture, painting, sculpture, photography, prints, film, and popular culture. *Literature Fine Arts Distro Area*

**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 368-0 Special Topics in Modern Art (1 Unit)** Content varies-for example, art of the Russian Revolution; the avant-garde; totalitarian art; art during war; modernism and its discontents; art and decolonization; medium specificity. *Historical Studies Distro Area Historical Studies Foundational Discipline Literature Fine Arts Distro Area Literature and Arts Foundational Discipline*

**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. *Literature Fine Arts Distro Area*

**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 375-0 Media Theory (1 Unit)** Comprehensive introduction from a humanistic perspective to theories about the nature of media and the role of technology in modern culture. *Literature Fine Arts Distro Area Literature and Arts Foundational Discipline*

**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 385-0 Black Visual Culture: Race and Representation (1 Unit)** Examination of how visual representations and technologies of vision have been used to create, transform, or destabilize the idea of race as it pertains to people in Africa and/or the African diaspora at specific historical moments. *Literature Fine Arts Distro Area*

**ART\_HIST 386-0 Art of Africa (1 Unit)** Thematic and historical examination of the art and visual culture of Africa in selected periods and regions. *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 389-0 Special Topics: Arts of Asia and the Middle East (1 Unit)** Content varies-for example, aspects of painting in the Indian subcontinent: Mughal and Rajput; issues of gender and sexuality in Japan and China from the 18th through 20th century; art in/about the Middle East.

**ART\_HIST 390-0 Undergraduate Seminar (1 Unit)** Intended for advanced research and writing in art history. Past topics have included

art and ecology, Japanese prints, and Ottoman architecture in Egypt. Prerequisite: 300-level art history course.

**ART\_HIST 391-0 Art Historical Methods Seminar (1 Unit)** Introduction to the historiography of art history and to the different methodological approaches to the study of art and visual culture. Prerequisite: 300-level art history course. *Advanced Expression*

**ART\_HIST 395-0 Museums (1 Unit)** Museum studies seminars. Content varies-for example, the history of museums, their ethical basis, community responsibilities, educational prerogatives, and future directions. Prerequisite: 300-level art history course. *Literature Fine Arts Distro Area*

**ART\_HIST 396-0 Internship in the Arts (1 Unit)** Direct participation, with oversight by the director of undergraduate studies, in the curatorial/ educational activities of an established arts organization. By petition, on a limited basis; may be taken only once. Prerequisite: 300-level art history course or consent of instructor.

**ART\_HIST 399-0 Independent Study (1 Unit)** Special projects involving reading and conferences with a supervising professor. Arranged in exceptional circumstances. Two quarters required for students writing a senior thesis in art history. Prerequisite: 300-level art history course.