

Masaryk University
Faculty of Arts

Department of Art History
Spring Semester 2024

Image, Object, Text: Theories and Methods in Art History and Visual Studies

Code: Credits: 8

COURSE OUTLINE

SYNOPSIS

This course looks at the methods and theoretical underpinning of contemporary practices of art historical and visual cultural analysis. Based on examination of ideas and the close reading of key scholarly texts, the course will engage both with traditional art historical methods as well as more recent approaches to the study of art and visual culture.

The course will consider how conceptual frameworks inform the analysis of specific works of art and architecture. It also considers how they determine the kinds of questions that are asked of them. You will be asked to consider the relevance and application of these methods to a range of examples, including the potential topics your final thesis.

Practical Information

The course co-ordinator is Prof. Matthew Rampley.

All queries concerning the organization of the course are to be directed to me. I can be contacted either by email: rampley@muni.cz or directly at my office in L62 the Faculty of Arts Building (on Veveří 28).

The course will be taught in **English**.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

On successful completion of this module, you should be able to:

- Demonstrate a critical knowledge and understanding of historiographic methods relevant to the study of art history and visual culture
- Demonstrate a critical knowledge and understanding of the ideas of key historians and theorists of art, architecture and visual culture
- Identify, analysis and evaluate methods used in selected texts on the history of art and visual culture
- Apply a variety of relevant analytical methods to the interpretation of works of art and visual culture
- Exhibit advanced writing and oral skills

HOW THE COURSE WILL BE TAUGHT

In keeping with the University policy, the course will be taught **in-person**.

MODULE SCHEDULE

The course will be taught on the following days:

29 February

12.00 – 14.30 Observing art: facts, meaning, theory

7 March

12.00 – 13.50 Style and form

14 March

12.00 – 14.30 The social history of art

21 March

12.00 – 13.50 The idea of historical periods in art

4 April

12.00 – 13.50 Concepts of iconology

11 April

12.00 – 14.30 Canon wars: the values and objects of art history

25 April

12.00 – 14.30 Associative and horizontal art histories

2 May

12.00 – 13.50 The gaze: sexuality and the nude

9 May

12.00 – 14.30 Across cultures: world art history and the debate over decolonization

The sessions will take place in room **L21** in the **Faculty of Arts Building on Veveří 28**. Each session will consist of an informal **lecture / discussion**. In addition, all students will be required to give a short (15-minute) oral presentation on a topic.

You will receive informal written feedback on your presentation. This will **not** contribute towards the overall mark for this course. It is merely meant to help you to identify strengths and weaknesses you may need to address in preparation for the formal assessment.

ASSESSMENT AND ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

The course will be assessed on the basis of a **20-minute oral presentation**, followed by a 10-minute discussion, on a single artwork on display in the Moravian Gallery, the Dům umění or another gallery or museum in Brno. It may also be a significant work of architecture or of public art in Brno.

Your presentation should look at your chosen example in the light of one or more of the ideas, methods and theories you have studied during the course. You should be able to explain the reasons for your decision to use that particular method and explain how it shapes our understanding of the object in question. You will be expected to make relevant comparisons with other works of art and also to refer to relevant works of scholarship and critical commentary.

You will give your presentation *in front of the work* on display. At the end of your presentation, you will be asked to submit any notes you have been using. Your notes should include a bibliography of the research sources you have used for your presentation.

I shall also schedule a **1-to-1 consultation tutorial** with each of you to discuss your ideas for the presentation. The provisional timetable is set out as follows:

10 & 16 May	Consultation tutorials (time to be agreed)
30 & 31 May	Assessed presentations
6 June	Assessed presentations

The presentation will be assessed on the basis of the following criteria:

1. Research: is the presentation well researched and are its claims based on appropriate use of sources?
2. Understanding: does the presentation display a good level of understanding of the materials / ideas it discusses?
3. Analysis: does the presentation undertake an appropriate critical analysis of source material?
4. Argument: does the presentation present a clearly constructed argument, with a conclusion?
5. Relevance: are the material and the arguments used relevant to the work in question?
6. Language: is the presentation in clear and correct English?

GENERAL READING

The following reading list includes books and articles that will be discussed in the individual sessions as well as general, background, reading. The reading for each session includes **key reading** that you will be expected to have prepared *before* the session. You are *not* expected to have read all the items listed for each session. Equally, it is expected that for your assessed essay, you will undertake your own research and reading beyond what is listed in this bibliography.

Please note: as far as is practical, all items will be available on the Learning Materials folder of the Faculty intranet.

You can find the link here.

GENERAL READING

You should find the following general books useful as an introduction to the topic. There are copies in the library.

- Michael Hatt and Charlotte Klonk, *Art history: a critical introduction to its methods* (Manchester, 2006)
- Robert S. Nelson and Richard Shiff, eds., *Critical terms for art history* (Chicago, 2003).
- Laurie Schneider Adams, *The Methodologies of Art* (London, 2018)

READING FOR INDIVIDUAL SESSIONS

1. OBSERVING ART: FACTS, MEANING, THEORY

Key Reading

- Paul Barolsky, 'Art History as Fiction,' *Artibus et Historiae* 17.34 (1996) pp. 9-17.

Recommended Reading

- Paul Barolsky, 'Art History and Positivism,' *Source: Notes in the History of Art* 18.1 (1998) pp. 27-30.
- James Elkins, 'On Monstrously Ambiguous Paintings,' *History and Theory* 32.3 (1993) pp. 227-47.
- David Freedberg et al, 'The Object of Art History,' *Art Bulletin* 76.3 (1994) pp. 394-410.
- Clifford Geertz, 'Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture' in Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York, 1973) pp. 3-32.
- Barbara Larson, 'Positivism and the Early Chairs of Art History in Europe, 1860-1880,' in *Victorian Culture and the Origin of Disciplines* (London, 2019) pp. 71-89.
- Sam Rose, 'Close Looking and Conviction,' *Art History* 40.1 (2016) pp. 156-77.
- Moriz Thausing, 'The Status of Art History as an Academic Discipline' in *Journal of Art Historiography* 1 (2009). You should also read the introduction by Karl Johns.

2. STYLE AND FORMAL ANALYSIS

Key Reading

- Schneider Adams, Laurie, 'Formalism and Style' in Schneider Adams, *The Methodologies of Art* (London, 2009) pp. 21-42.
- Andrea Pinotti, 'Formalism and the History of Style' in M. Rampley et al, eds., *Art History and Visual Studies in Europe* (Leiden, 2012) pp. 75-90.

Recommended Reading

- Robert Bagley, 'Style,' in *Max Loehr and the Study of Chinese Bronzes* (Ithaca, 2008) pp. 121-29.

- Noel Carroll, 'Art and Form' in *Philosophy of Art: A Contemporary Introduction* (London, 1999) pp. 107-54.
- Alois Riegl, 'Late Roman Art Industry' in Eric Fernie, ed., *Art History and its Methods* (London, 1995) pp. 116-126. Available online [here](#).
- Meyer Schapiro, 'Style' in Alfred Kroeber, ed., *Anthropology Today* (Chicago, 1953) pp. 287-311.
- Heinrich Wölfflin, 'Introduction' to Wölfflin, *The Principles of Art History*, trans. M. D. Hottinger (New York, 1950) pp. 1-17. Available online [here](#).
- Heinrich Wölfflin, 'The New Pictorial Form' in Wölfflin, *Classic Art*, trans. Peter & Linda Murray (London, 1980) pp. 251-286. Available online [here](#).

3. THE SOCIAL HISTORY OF ART

Key Reading

- Janet Wolff, *The Social Production of Art* (London, 1993). See especially 'Social Structure and Artistic Creativity' (pp. 9-25) and 'The Social Production of Art' (pp. 26-48)

Recommended Reading

- Frederick Antal, 'Introduction' in Antal, *Florentine Painting and its Social Background* (London, 1947) pp. 1-9.
- T. J. Clark, 'On the Social History of Art,' in *Image of the People: Gustave Courbet and the 1848 Revolution* (London, 1973) pp. 9-20.
- Craig Clunas, 'The Social History of Art,' in Robert Nelson and Richard Schiff, eds, *Critical Terms for Art History* (Chicago 2003) pp. 465-78.
- Jürgen Habermas, 'Art Criticism and the Institutions of the Public Sphere' in Jeremy Tanner, ed., *The Sociology of Art* (London, 2003) pp. 157-163.

Case Studies

- Michael Baxandall, 'The Period Eye,' in Baxandall, *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth-century Italy : a Primer in the Social History of Pictorial Style* (Oxford, 1988) pp. 29-57.
- Thomas Crow, 'Modernism and Mass Culture in the Visual Arts' in Crow, *Modern Art in the Common Culture* (London, 1996) pp. 3-38.
- Erika Szivos, 'Fin-de-Siècle Budapest as a Centre of Art,' *East Central Europe* 33.1-2 (2006) pp. 141-169.
- Robert Witkin, 'Van Eyck through the Looking Glass' in Jeremy Tanner, ed., *The Sociology of Art* (London, 2003) pp. 221-232.

4. TIME & CHANGE: HISTORICAL PERIODS IN ART

Key Reading

- Lisa A. Reilly, 'Change over Time: Neatline and the Study of Architectural History,' *Art@s Bulletin* 4.1 (2015) pp. 7-19.

Recommended Reading

- Marshall Brown, 'Periods and Resistances,' *Modern Language Quarterly* 62.4 (2001) pp. 309-16
- Peter Burke, 'Western Historical Thinking in a Global Perspective – 10 Theses' in Jörn Rüsen, ed., *Western Historical Thinking: An Intercultural Debate* (New York, 2002) pp. 15-30.
- Dan Karlholm and Keith Moxey, eds, *Time in the History of Art* (London, 2018). Available [here](#).
- Eva Kemberauer, 'Art as Historiography' in Kemberauer, *Art, History and Anachronic Interventions since 1990* (London, 2022) pp. 27-49. Available online [here](#).
- Erwin Panofsky, Erwin, 'Reflections on Historical Time,' trans. Johanna Bauman. *Critical Inquiry* 30 no. 4 (2001) pp. 691-701
- Matthew Rampley, 'Linear, Entangled, Anachronic: Periodization and the Shapes of Time in Art History,' in Shona Kallestrup, Magdalena Kunińska, Mihnea Alexandru Mihail, Anna

Adashinskaya and Cosmin Minea, eds, *Periodization in the Art Historiographies of Central and Eastern Europe* (London, 2022) pp. 14-27. (Available online [here](#)).

5. CONCEPTS OF ICONOLOGY

Key Reading

- Erwin Panofsky, 'Iconography and Iconology: An Introduction to the Study of Renaissance Art,' in Panofsky, *Meaning in the Visual Arts* (Harmondsworth, 1955) pp. 51-81.

Case Studies

- Areti Adamopoulou, 'The Column and the Pediment: the Persistence of Values?' in *Artl@as Bulletin* 12.1 (2023) pp. 11-24.
- Dolores Mitchell, 'The Iconology of Smoking in Turn-of-the-Century Art,' *Source: Notes in the History of Art* 6.3 (1987) pp. 27-33.

Recommended Reading

- Peter Burke, 'Iconography,' in Burke, *The Italian Renaissance* (Oxford 2014) pp. 171-85.
- Georges Didi-Huberman, 'The art of not describing: Vermeer - the detail and the patch,' *History of the Human Sciences* 2.2 (1989) pp. 135-69.
- Creighton Gilbert, 'On Subject and Not-Subject in Italian Renaissance Pictures,' *Art Bulletin* 34.3 (1952) pp. 202-16.
- Keith Moxey, 'Panofsky's Concept of Iconology and the Problem of Interpretation in the History of Art,' *New Literary History* 17.2 (1986) pp. 265-74.
- Erwin Panofsky, 'Reality and Symbol in Early Flemish Painting,' in Panofsky, *Early Netherlandish Painting, its Origins and Character* (New York, 1966) pp. 131-48

6. CANON WARS: THE OBJECTS AND VALUES OF ART HISTORY

Key Reading

- Hubert Locher, 'The Idea of the Canon and Canon Formation in Art History' in M. Rampley, eds, *Art History and Visual Studies in Europe* (Leiden, 2012) pp. 29-40
- Linda Nochlin, 'Why have there been no great women artists?' in *Women, Art and Power* (London: 2018) pp. 145-78.

Recommended Reading

- Karen Edis Barzman, 'Beyond the Canon: Feminists, Postmodernism and the History of Art,' in *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 52.3 (1994) pp. 327-39.
- Whitney Chadwick, 'Art History and the Woman Artist,' in Chadwick, *Women, Art and Society* (London, 2020) pp. 19-44.
- Victor Ginsburgh and Sheila Weyers, 'On the Formation of Canons: The Dynamics of Narratives in Art History,' *Empirical Studies of the Arts* 28.1 (2010) pp. 37-72.
- Joseph Leo Koerner and Lisbet Rausing, 'Value,' in Robert Nelson and Richard Schiff, eds, *Critical Terms for Art History* (Chicago 2003) pp. 419-34.
- Griselda Pollock, 'Crafty Women and the Hierarchy of the Arts,' in *Old Mistresses: Women, Art and Ideology* (London, 2013) pp. 50-81.

7. HORIZONTAL AND ASSOCIATIVE ART HISTORIES

Key Reading

- Tomáš Pospiszyl, 'Eastern and Western Cubes: Minimalism in Dispute' in Pospiszyl, *An Associative Art History* (Prague, 2017) pp. 90-109.
- Piotr Piotrowski, 'Towards a Horizontal Art History of the European Avant-Garde' in Sascha Bru et al, eds, *Europa Europa: The Avant-Garde, Modernism and the Fate of a Continent* (Berlin, 2009) pp. 49-58.

Further Reading

- Enrico Castelnuovo, Carlo Ginzburg, 'Symbolic Domination and Artistic Geography in Italian Art History,' in *Art in Translation* 1.1 (2015) pp. 5-48.
- Béatrice Joyeux-Prunel, 'Peripheral Circulations, Transient Centralities: The International Geography of the Avant-Gardes in the Interwar Period (1918-1940)' *Visual Resources* 35 (2019) pp. 295-322.
- Thomas Dacosta Kaufmann, 'The Challenge of Central Europe to the Historiography of Art' in *Maske u. Kothurn* 48.1-4 (2002) pp. 19-28.
- Claudia Mattos, 'Whither Art History: Geography, Art Theory and New Perspectives for an Inclusive Art History,' *Art Bulletin* 96.3 (2014) pp. 259-64.
- Robert Nelson, 'The Map of Art History,' *Art Bulletin* 79.1 (1997) pp. 28-40
- Matthew Rampley, 'Networks, Horizons, Centres and Hierarchies: On the Challenges of Writing on Modernism in Central Europe,' *Umění* 69.2 (2021) pp. 145-62.
- Photeini Vlachou, 'Why Spatial? Time and the Periphery,' *Visual Resources* 32 (2016) pp. 9-24

8. THE GAZE, SEXUALITY AND THE NUDE

Key Reading

- Margaret Olin, 'Gaze,' in Robert Nelson and Richard Schiff, eds, *Critical Terms for Art History* (Chicago, 2003) pp. 318-29

Further Reading

- Sir Kenneth Clarke, 'The Naked and the Nude,' in *The Nude: A Study in Ideal Form* (Princeton, 1990) pp. 3-29.
- Thalia Gouma-Peterson and Patricia Matthews, 'The Feminist Critique of Art History,' *The Art Bulletin* 69.3 (1987) pp. 326-57
- Helen MacDonald, 'Feminism, Ambiguity and the Ideal,' *Erotic Ambiguities: the Female Nude in Art* (London, 2000) pp. 7-30.
- Lynda Nead, *The Female Nude: Art, Obscenity and Sexuality* (London, 1992).
- Griselda Pollock, 'Feminist Interventions in the Histories of Art,' in Pollock, *Vision and Difference: Feminism, Femininity and Histories of Art* (London, 2003) pp. 37-60.
- Tereza Balducci, 'Gazing Women,' in *Gender, Space and the Gaze in Post-Haussmann Visual Culture* (London, 2017) pp. 63-110.
- Laura Mulvey, 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema,' *Screen* 16.3 (1975) pp. 6-18.

9. ACROSS CULTURES: WORLD ART HISTORY AND THE DEBATE OVER DECOLONIZATION

Key Reading

- James Elkins, 'Non-European Stories,' in Elkins, *Stories of Art* (London, 2002) pp. 89-115.

Further Reading – Theories and Debates

- Denis Dutton, ' "But They Don't Have Our Concept of Art", ' in Noel Carroll, ed., *Theories of Art Today* (Madison, 2000) pp. 217-240.
- James Elkins, 'Canon and Globalization in Art History,' in Anna Brzyski, ed., *Partisan Canons* (Durham, NC, 2007) pp. 55-78.
- Ladislav Kesner, 'Is a Truly Global Art History Possible?' in James Elkins, ed., *Is Art History Global?* (London, 2006) pp. 81-111.
- Maria Lugones, 'Towards a Decolonial Feminism,' in *Hypatia* 25.4 (2010) pp. 742-59.
- Walter Mignolo, 'What Does it Mean to Decolonize?' and 'The Conceptual Triad' in Mignolo and Catherine Walsh, *On Decoloniality* Durham NC, 2018) pp. 105-34 and 135-76.

Further Reading – Case Studies

- Rowland Abiodun, 'Introduction: the Centrality of Africa in African Art Studies' and 'Yoruba Aesthetics' in Abiodun, *Yoruba Art and Language* (Cambridge, 2014) pp. 1-23 and 245-83.
- James Elkins, 'A Brace of Comparisons' in Elkins, *Chinese Landscape Painting as Western Art History* (Hong Kong, 2010) pp. 40-75.
- Partha Mitter, 'Decentering Modernism: Art History and Avant-Garde Art from the Periphery,' *Art Bulletin* 90.4 (2008) pp. 531-48
- Matthew Rampley, 'Decolonising Central Europe: Czech Art and the Question of Colonial Innocence,' in *Visual Resources* 37.1 (2021) pp. 1-30.
- Katrin Sieg, 'Encasing Colonialism and Cosmopolitan Citizenship at the German History Museum' in *Decolonizing German and European History at the Museum* (Ann Arbor, 2021) pp. 67-86