Art History

Art History is the study of visual cultural production, and seeks to combine both visual and verbal experience. Beginning with a visual object and its historical context, Art History is an inherently interdisciplinary field that also draws on the rich intellectual traditions of anthropology, literary theory, philosophy, linguistics, psychology, and history for interpretation. Art history was established as an academic discipline in Europe and the U.S. in the nineteenth century. Art historians work in both universities and museums and typically study art in its broader cultural and intellectual context.

Faculty members in art history teach a wide range of broadly defined lecture courses and more specialized seminars in their areas of research. Subjects regularly taught by the full-time faculty in art history include Pre-Columbian Art; Latin American Art; Medieval Art; Northern Renaissance and Baroque Art; Twentieth Century American and European Art; Contemporary Arts; and the History of Photography. Affiliate instructors enrich these offering with additional courses, including Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century European Art, and Twentieth Century Design.

careers: An undergraduate major in art history develops special skills in writing, critical thinking and analysis of visual and cultural information that can provide the basis for a variety of professional careers. The two main career paths for those who wish to continue working directly in the arts are: curatorial and education positions in art museums and galleries, and teaching and research in universities. Such careers usually require further graduate study in art history in terminal M.A. or Ph.D programs. Art history majors have also gone on to graduate study in Law, Architecture, Library Science, Arts Leadership, Creative Writing and many other fields.

12 required courses in art history *

3 mandated art history courses

ARTH 1380 Art & Society: Prehistoric to Gothic
Introductory survey of the history of art from the ancient world through the gothic period, which may include written assignments on works of art from Houston area museums.

ARTH 1381 Art & Society: Renaissance to Modern
Introductory survey of the history of art from the Renaissance to the present, which may include written assignments on works of art from Houston area museums.

ARTH 4388 Methods of Art History
Study of methodological approaches to art history, including connoisseurship, formalism, iconography, social history, collecting and museology, feminism and gender issues, and post structuralism. Class is conducted as a discussion group.

plus 9 additional art history courses, including at least 1 course from each of the following 4 categories:

1. Ancient and Medieval
2. Renaissance, Baroque and 18th Century
3. 19th and 20th Centuries and Contemporary
4. Asia, Africa, Oceania and the Americas

*Note: At least 6 courses in Art History must be advanced level (3000 or 4000-level).

3 required courses outside of art history

3 courses in any combination of humanities and social sciences, which may include History 2000-level and above (not used for American History core), anthropology, or other courses within the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences that have been approved by a full time Art History faculty member to support the student’s field of art historical interest.
internships. Art history majors with an art history GPA of 3.0 or higher are eligible for internships. Interns learn about the operation of for-profit and non-profit institutions by working as gallery assistants, curatorial and research assistants, and in educational programming and preparations departments, including: the Blaffer Gallery of the University of Houston; the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; The Menil Collection; Lawndale Art Center; Diverseworks; the Museum of Natural Science; the Holocaust Museum; the Museum of Printing History and the Houston Center for Contemporary Craft. Specific information regarding eligibility, requirements and opportunities is available from the faculty and from an undergraduate advisor. Students may develop proposals for academic credit connected with an internship in consultation with art history faculty.

admission information. The School of Art follows the standard UH admission requirements and procedures for freshman, transfer and post baccalaureate students, which are available at www.uh.edu/admissions. There are no separate admissions requirements for the School of Art bachelor degree programs.

scholarships. The College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences is fortunate to have a pool of scholarship funds donated by several individual and business contributors. The amount of award varies according to the particular scholarship, but amounts have been in the range of $500-$2000 per year. Students may apply for these scholarships in the spring semester, and applications are available online at http://www.uh.edu/class/students/undergraduate/financial-support/index.php.

The art history area awards Peter W. Guenther Scholarships for tuition or art-history related travel each year. Application criteria and guidelines are posted each spring semester. The amount and number of awards vary each year; however, 2 - 3 awards of $500 to $2,000 each have generally been given each year.

student organizations. As an integral part of their educational experience, students are encouraged to become involved in student organizations. Organizations assist in stimulating intellectual growth and achievement, as well as provide an opportunity for building a network of professional relationships. Art history majors may enjoy participation in the following related organizations:

Art History Student Association. A forum is provided for art history majors, in consultation with the art history faculty, which offers networking and information sharing opportunities for art historians in the Houston area.

CAA. College Art Association. This national association is for both art historians and artists alike. It holds an annual scholarly conference and offers a forum for job applications and interviews. The CAA also publishes a comprehensive listing of graduate programs in art history.

graduate school. Students interested in pursuing graduate studies in art history should consult with the art history faculty, who can help them tailor their course of study at UH, both in terms of the art history curriculum itself and other coursework that will strengthen their background for graduate school (such as foreign languages).

general information. To receive more information or to schedule an appointment, contact:

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www.uh.edu/class/art