



**THEORIES AND METHODS OF ART
HISTORY**

AHST 6301

FALL 2025

PROF. MARK ROSEN

Course Information

AHST 6301 Section: 001
Fall 2025
Monday 1–3:45 pm

Professor Contact Information

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Office hours: Tues. 1–2 or by appointment

Course Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, and/or Other Restrictions

Should have previously taken an art history course; graduate standing and/or permission of the instructor.

Course Description

This course covers the first five hundred years of art history as an area of study (and about a century and a half as an academic discipline), introducing students to research methods in the field. In order to grasp how to understand, research, and write about works of art, we will look at the circumstances that surround the history of the object itself (in its context and time period) as

well as that of the historian (the writer's own circumstances and audience). In addition to covering major authors, the class also discusses how to think through methodological approaches and the sorts of projects that can be undertaken in art history and its related disciplines. Students will take turns presenting on the authors we read as well as choosing a recent notable book to write about for their final project.

Student Learning Objectives

- Students will acquire and practice skills of textual and visual analysis of artworks.
 - Students will identify and evaluate worthwhile research and historiographical material and use that material effectively within their own thesis-driven essays.
 - Students will immerse in the history of a discipline and develop an understanding of its contours as well as its overlap with neighboring disciplines.
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Textbooks and Materials

Required books:

- Ernst Kris and Otto Kurz, *Legend, Myth, and Magic in the Image of the Artist* (originally published 1934; English translation, Yale University Press, 1979)
- Christopher S. Wood, *A History of Art History* (Princeton, 2019)—the entire text of this is available as a PDF through JSTOR on the university library website

Optional book:

- Leo Steinberg, *The Sexuality of Christ in Renaissance Art and Modern Oblivion* (2d. ed., University of Chicago Press, 1996). You don't necessarily have to buy this since the article version of this is freely available on JSTOR, but I'd recommend you find a cheap used copy on Amazon or another reseller, since it's good to have the images alongside the text when we read it.

Other **required** readings will be available online through electronic course reserves.

Readings should be done **before** each class meeting. Readings will be discussed during the lecture and it is expected that students will be prepared to participate in the discussion.

Papers and Assignments

You will have writing due most weeks, almost always regarding the week's reading, since this class really depends on familiarizing yourself with writers of the past (as opposed to objects). You will usually receive prompts to give you a sense of what to look for in the readings. You will also lead discussion on a reading (and an author's work) one time over the semester, as well as present on a recent work of scholarship as part of your final project. Details will be given out during the semester.

For information regarding plagiarism and other issues of academic integrity, see the university's website: <http://www.utdallas.edu/conduct/integrity/>. Let me confirm that plagiarism is a very

serious offense and will not be tolerated. It will result in your being forced to rewrite a paper or accept a failing grade for the assignment. Your own intellectual honesty is of the greatest importance in this class.

Assignments & Academic Calendar		
Class	Topic	Reading
25 Aug.	Introduction	
1 Sept.	Labor Day	No class
8 Sept.	Renaissance and Romantics	<p>Wood, 1–175.</p> <p>Giorgio Vasari, “Preface to the <i>Lives</i>,” “Preface to Part Two,” “Preface to Part Three” (1568), in <i>Lives of the Artists</i>, trans. J.C. and Peter Bondanella (Oxford, 1991), 3–6, 47–58, and 277–283 http://archive.eclass.uth.gr/eclass/modules/document/file.php/MHXD102/Vasari%20Giorgio_The_Lives_of_the_Artists_Oxford.pdf.</p> <p>Alex Potts, “Inventing a History of Art,” in <i>Flesh and the Ideal: Winckelmann and the Origins of Art History</i> (New Haven, 1994), 11–46.</p> <p>Erwin Panofsky, “The History of Art as a Humanistic Discipline” (1940) in <i>Meaning in the Visual Arts</i> (Chicago, 1955), 1–25.</p>
15 Sept.	Talking about Style	<p>Wood, 176–281.</p> <p>Heinrich Wölfflin, “Introduction: The Double Root of Style” and “The Most General Representational Forms,” “Multiplicity and Unity,” and “Conclusion” (1915), in <i>Principles of Art History: The Problem of the Development of Style in Later Art</i> (Dover, 1950), 1–17, 155–167, and 226–237.</p> <p>Meyer Schapiro, “Style,” in A. L. Kroeber, ed., <i>Anthropology Today: Selections</i> (Chicago, 1953), 278–303.</p> <p>Ernst Gombrich, “Psychology and the Riddle of Style,” in <i>Art and Illusion: A Study in the Psychology of Pictorial Representation</i> (Princeton, 1960), 2–30.</p> <p>Svetlana Alpers, “Style is What You Make It: The Visual Arts Once Again,” in Berel Lang, ed., <i>The Concept of Style</i> (Philadelphia, 1979), 137–142.</p>

22 Sept.	Freud and Leonardo	<p>Wood, 282–317.</p> <p>Sigmund Freud, <i>Leonardo da Vinci and a Memory of his Childhood</i> (1910; Routledge, 1957).</p> <p>Meyer Schapiro, “Leonardo and Freud: An Art-Historical Study,” in <i>Renaissance Essays</i>, ed. P.O. Kristeller and P. Weiner (Rochester, 1968), 303–336.</p> <p>A. Richard Turner, <i>Inventing Leonardo</i> (NY, 1993), 132–149.</p>
29 Sept.	Jungian Art History Discussion of final papers and presentations	<p>Wood, 318–346.</p> <p>Kris and Kurz (whole book).</p> <p>Evonne Levy, “Ernst Kris, <i>The Legend of the Artist</i> (1934), and <i>Mein Kampf</i>,” <i>Oxford Art Journal</i> 36 (2013): 207–229.</p>
3 Oct. (Friday)	MEET AT DMA	<p>We will meet this week with curators Emily Friedman and Anabelle Gambert-Jouan at 3 pm in the EODIAH seminar room at the DMA. There is also an optional 1 pm lecture at the DMA by Violaine Mwez, EODIAH provenance researcher at the DMA.</p>
6 Oct.	No class this week because of Friday museum visit	
13 Oct.	Iconography, Iconology, and Semiotics	<p>Erwin Panofsky, “Iconography and Iconology: An Introduction to the Study of Renaissance Art” (1939) in <i>Meaning in the Visual Arts</i> (Chicago, 1955), 26–54.</p> <p>Christine Hasenmueller, “Panofsky, Iconography, and Semiotics,” <i>The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism</i> 36 (1978): 289-301.</p> <p>Roland Barthes, “Rhetoric of the Image” (1964), in <i>Image Music Text</i> (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977), 32-43.</p> <p>Mieke Bal and Norman Bryson, “Semiotics and Art History,” <i>The Art Bulletin</i> 73 (1991): 174-208.</p>

20 Oct.	Modernity	<p>Wood, 347–377.</p> <p>Walter Benjamin, “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction,” (1936), in <i>Illuminations</i>, ed. H. Arendt, trans. H. Zohn (New York: Schocken, 1968), 217–251.</p> <p>Clement Greenberg, “Avant-Garde and Kitsch” (1939), in <i>Art and Culture: Critical Essays</i> (Boston: Beacon Press, 1961), 3-21.</p> <p>Meyer Schapiro, “The Nature of Abstract Art” (1937) (online at https://www.on-curating.org/issue-20-reader/nature-of-abstract-art.html?file=files/oc/dateverwaltung/issue-20/PDF_to_Download/Issue20_USLetter_NatureofAbstractArt.pdf).</p>
27 Oct.	Interpretation	<p>Leo Steinberg, <i>The Sexuality of Christ in Renaissance Art and Modern Oblivion</i> [either buy the book or read through JSTOR—it was published as a full issue of <i>October</i> 25 [1983] and published as a book by University of Chicago Press in 1983 and 1996 [2d ed.].</p> <p>Leo Steinberg, “Reintroduction,” <i>Sexuality of Christ</i>, 2d ed. (1996), 219–229.</p>
3 Nov.	Feminist Theory	<p>Linda Nochlin, “Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?” <i>Art News</i>, Vol. 69, No. 9 (1971): 22-39, 67-71.</p> <p>Paris A. Spies-Gans, “Why Do We Think There Have Been No Great Women Artists? Revisiting Linda Nochlin and the Archive,” <i>The Art Bulletin</i> 104, no. 4 (2022): 70–94.</p> <p>Griselda Pollock, “Women, Art and Ideology: Questions for Feminist Art Historians,” <i>Women’s Studies Quarterly</i> 15, nos. 1-2 (1987): 2–9.</p> <p>Judith Butler, <i>Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Troubling of Identity</i> (New York, 1991), 1–78.</p>
10 Nov.	Presentations 1	
17 Nov.	Presentations 2	
24 Nov.	Thanksgiving Holiday	

1 Dec.	Global Thinking	<p>Alessandra Russo, "Introduction," in <i>A New Antiquity: Art and Humanity as Universal, 1400–1600</i> (University Park, 2024), 1–24.</p> <p>Suzanne Preston Blier, "Imaging Otherness in Ivory: African Portrayals of the Portuguese ca. 1492," <i>The Art Bulletin</i> 75 (1993): 375–396.</p> <p>Cécile Fromont, "Under the Sign of the Cross in the Kingdom of Kongo: Religious Conversion and Visual Correlation in Early Modern Central Africa," <i>RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics</i> 59/60 (2011): 109–123.</p> <p>Melissa R. Kerin and Andrea Lepage, "De-Centering 'The' Survey: The Value of Multiple Introductory Surveys to Art History," <i>Art History Pedagogy & Practice</i> 1 (2016), 2–15: https://www.academia.edu/30498930/De_Centering_The_Survey_The_Value_of_Multiple_Introductory_Surveys_to_Art_History.</p>
8 Dec.	Papers due	Celebration!

Course Requirements

1. **Regular Short Reading Responses**—You will write responses (around 500 words) to the weekly readings. You only have to do it for 6 of the weeks; you choose which weeks work best for you (you don't turn one in the week you lead discussion)
2. **Essay on Steinberg's *Sexuality of Christ*** (due Oct. 27)—900–1000 words
3. **Leading class in discussion** of readings (your slot will be determined in the third class meeting). You'll circulate via email an outline of questions or topics you'd like to discuss **the day prior** to our meeting. You should make use of the instructor's office hours to help you outline this.
4. **In-class presentation on a work of a recent piece of scholarship** (Nov. 10 or 17).
5. **Final Essay**—This will be an extended review and analysis of a recent (last 10 years) scholarly book that engages in some interesting or challenging methodological question; 12 pages long (due Dec. 8).

Grading Policy

The final grade will be broken down approximately like this:

Steinberg essay: 10%
 Regular short reading responses (you will turn in six of these): 30%
 Final essay: 30%
 Leading class discussion (circulating questions plus leading part of class): 10%
 In-class presentation: 10%
 Participation: 10%

Note: the final grades will use minuses and plusses, if necessary—that is, it is possible to get an A- or B+ (etc.) for the course.

Course & Instructor Policies

- Office hours are meant for the benefit of you students, so use them! They can be used to discuss class materials, assignments, and questions arising from the readings, or other issues you'd like to ask about. If you can't come to the scheduled hours, you can make an appointment with me at some other time.
- I can be reached by email and will make efforts to respond in a timely manner, but I'm not on call at all hours; use email sparingly, please.
- Please send emails from your UTD accounts. Even if I receive email from some other account of yours, I reply to the official university account, so check that one regularly.
- All major assignments must be completed to successfully pass the class (you can't skip the first paper and still expect to get a B+).
- Late assignments will be marked down substantially.
- If you must come in late, try to be as quiet as possible.
- The campus carry policy of UTD is defined in detail on the university website: <https://www.utdallas.edu/campuscarry/>.

These descriptions and timelines are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.