



Bowdoin College Art History

Course Offerings Spring 2022

ARTH 1300/LACL 1300 Introduction to Art History: Introduction to the Art of Ancient Mexico and Peru

Professor Susan Wegner

Course Description

A chronological survey of the arts created by major cultures of ancient Mexico and Peru.

Mesoamerican cultures studied include the Olmec, Teotihuacan, the Maya, and the Aztec up through the arrival of the Europeans. South American cultures such as Chavín, Nasca, and Inca are examined. Painting, sculpture, and architecture are considered in the context of religion and society. Readings in translation include Mayan myth and chronicles of the conquest.

No prerequisite.

ARTH 1400/ASNS 1605 Introduction to Art History: Art and Architecture of South Asia

Professor Bronwen Gulkis

Course Description

This course provides an introduction to the art and architectural traditions of South Asia. Students in this course will acquire a broad base of knowledge in the artistic movements, materials, and techniques of the region in their cultural and political contexts. Topics covered include Hindu, Buddhist, Jain, and Islamic devotional art, as well as luxury objects, artistic commodities, and folk and regional artistic practice. Students will also gain an understanding of South Asia's role in the art of global exchange, including the connected histories of the Indian Ocean world, Colonialism, and modern national identities. Note: This course is part of the following field(s) of study: South Asia.

No prerequisite.

ARTH 1700 Barbarians, Crusaders, Mongols, and More: Artistic Exchange in the Ancient and Medieval World

Professor Kate Gerry

Course Description

People around the globe have been traveling and exchanging ideas throughout history. The visual arts have been one of the most effective ways to share ideas, and they also serve as profound markers of the ongoing interchange of ideas between cultures and across time. Students in this course use visual art and architecture to investigate the ways in which people and ideas have moved and developed across cultures, and explore at an introductory level some of the core skills of the discipline of art history. Subject matter centers on specific moments of cultural interchange in the ancient and medieval period (up to c. 1500), across a diverse range of geographic areas. This course offers a starting point for anyone interested in art history.

No Prerequisite.

ARTH 2126/ASNS 2755/MENA 2126 Arts of the Islamic Book**Professor Bronwen Gulkis****Course Description**

Books are a way of containing and circulating knowledge, but are also objects to be studied in their own right. The richly illuminated manuscripts produced throughout the Islamic world offer an opportunity to study calligraphy, painting, and ornament in their artistic and cultural contexts. Focusing on the collections of the Bowdoin College Museum of Art, this course presents an in-depth examination of the diverse visual traditions and techniques developed over from the 9th to the 19th centuries in the Middle East, North Africa, Central Asia, and the Indian subcontinent. Students in this hybrid lecture/seminar will acquire a broad base of knowledge, while exploring material and thematic topics more deeply through readings, discussions, and hands-on workshops. No foreign language knowledge is necessary, but at least one previous class in Art History, Asian Studies, or Middle East/North African Studies is required.

Prerequisite: ARTH 1000 - 2969 or ARTH 3000 or higher or ASNS 1000 - 2969 or ASNS 3000 or higher or MENA 1000 - 2969 or MENA 3000 or higher.

ARTH 2140 The Gothic World**Professor Kate Gerry****Course Description**

Introduces students to art produced in Europe and the Mediterranean from the twelfth through the early fifteenth century. Following a general chronological sequence, investigates the key artistic monuments of this period in a variety of media, including architecture, painting, manuscript illumination, stained glass, sculpture, and the decorative arts. Explores a particular theme in each class meeting through the close analysis of a single monument or closely related set of monuments, as well as those that students may encounter in future studies.

No prerequisite.

ARTH 2240 Monstrosity and Elegance: Mannerism in European Court Art, 1500-1600**Professor Susan Wegner****Course Description**

Wealthy rulers vied with one another to collect the rarities being discovered across the world. They collected wonders such as "dragons" and exotic beasts such as giraffes, recording these precious beings in art. They even brought to their courts representatives from the peoples of the Americas, whom they deemed as marvels. At the same time, European culture stressed refinement, cool elegance, and graceful body types in both living humans and art. The resulting artworks show strange, disturbing and intriguing images, all gathered under the term "Mannerism." Using paintings, drawings, prints and medals from the Bowdoin College Museum of Art, this class studies artists such as Michelangelo, Pontormo, and El Greco in the courts in Austria, France, Spain and Italy. Readings in translation of scientific writings, formulas for ideal beauty and the grotesque, and handbooks for court life and manners. No previous work in art history required.

No prerequisite.

ARTH 2440 Shoot, Snap, Instagram: A History of Photography in America**Professor Dana Byrd****Course Description**

A survey of photography made and experienced in the United States from the age of daguerreotypes until the era of digital image processing. Addresses the key photographic movements, works, practitioners, and technological and aesthetic developments while also considering the social, political,

cultural, and economic contexts for individual photographs. Photographers studied include Watkins, Bourke-White, Weegee, and Weems. Readings of primary sources by photographers and critics such as Stieglitz, Sontag, Abbott, and Benjamin bolster close readings of photographs. Builds skills of discussing, writing, and seeing American photography. Incorporates study of photography collections across the Bowdoin College campus.

ARTH 3800 The Thing

Professor Dana Byrd

Course Description

The study of things, or material culture, has emerged as a multidisciplinary umbrella for the understanding of everyday life. Material culture encompasses everything made or done -- clothes worn, houses occupied, art hung on walls, even the way bodies are modified. Exploration of object-based approaches to American culture proceeds through hands-on study of things such as grave markers, great chairs, and girandoles in the Bowdoin College Museum of Art and the historic house museums of Brunswick. Readings include primary sources and scholarly analyses of objects. Assignments enable students to hone descriptive, analytical, and interpretive writing skills.