

Art History

Overview

Welcome to the History of Art Department at UC Berkeley. We are a vibrant learning community of researchers committed to advancing the study of visual arts, material culture, and built environment through interdisciplinary scholarship, teaching, and public engagement.

Our internationally recognized faculty and lecturers, outstanding graduate students, talented undergraduate students, and exceptional group of department staff all contribute to making us one of the world's leading art history departments. Our teaching encompasses a broad range of questions and specializations, spanning the globe and traversing cross-regional zones of contact. Employing diverse methodologies, including formal analysis, social and cultural history, gender and sexuality studies, critical race theory, eco art history, and digital humanities, our faculty and students investigate the production, circulation, reception, and meaning of visual forms across different media, genres, geographies, and regimes of perception. We seek to cultivate critical thinking, visual literacy, and cultural awareness in our teaching and to promote diverse perspectives, inclusivity, and social justice in our scholarship and pedagogy.

Program Overview

The UC Berkeley Department of History of Art offers undergraduate and graduate programs that explore the history, theory, and practice of the visual arts in their cultural and historical contexts.

Undergraduate majors and minors develop programs of study that combine foundational skills related to the study of visual-material cultures with focused inquiry in particular areas. We encourage students to shape their programs in ways that prepare them to respond to the intensified visual turn in our society and to develop careers in scholarship, teaching, curation, arts management, and non-profit and community-based work. Department majors are recognized and supported through the student-organized undergraduate association, H.Art.

Our PhD program prepares students for academic and curatorial careers as well as leadership in a broad array of professional, critical, and creative communities and contexts. We emphasize interdisciplinary training, professional development, and pedagogical skills. Our students benefit from close mentorship and collaboration with faculty within the department and across the campus as they research and write dissertations involving deep object, site, archive, and community-based research.

In addition to our academic programs, the Department of History of Art sponsors lectures, symposia, and exhibitions that bring together scholars, artists, and the public to engage with critical issues and debates in our fields.

We are located in Doe Library with the administrative office, faculty offices, and seminar rooms on the 4th floor and the department's Visualization Lab for Digital Art History and event and seminar rooms on the 3rd.

For information regarding Department events, see the Events page on the department website (<https://arthistory.berkeley.edu/events-category/departmental-events/>).

For information regarding Faculty books, see the Books by Faculty section on the department website (<https://arthistory.berkeley.edu/about/books/>).

Other Department Resources

Art History/Classics Library (<http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/ARTH/>), located on the fourth floor of Doe Library
 Berkeley Art Museum (<http://www.bampfa.berkeley.edu/>)
 Phoebe A. Hearst Museum (<http://hearstmuseum.berkeley.edu/>)

Undergraduate Programs

History of Art (<http://guide.berkeley.edu/undergraduate/degree-programs/art-history/>): BA, Minor

Graduate Program

History of Art (<http://guide.berkeley.edu/graduate/degree-programs/art-history/>): PhD

Art History

Expand all course descriptions [+] Collapse all course descriptions [-]

HISTART 200 Graduate Proseminar in the Interpretation of Art Historical Materials 2 or 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2024, Fall 2023, Fall 2022

An introduction to the fundamentals of art history, including traditional and innovative perspectives designed for candidates for higher degrees. Offerings vary from year to year. Students should consult the department's "Announcement of Classes" for offerings before the beginning of the semester.

Graduate Proseminar in the Interpretation of Art Historical Materials:
 Read More [+]

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Graduate standing and consent of instructor

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3-3 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: History of Art/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

Graduate Proseminar in the Interpretation of Art Historical Materials:
 Read Less [-]

HISTART 203 Seminar in Material Culture: The Interpretation of Objects 2 or 4 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2018, Fall 2014, Spring 2012

This seminar looks at both material culture theory and the practice of interpreting objects in the West and in Asia. It draws on the practices and inquiries of multiple disciplines including archaeology, anthropology, cultural geography, and art history. We will consider the variety of ways and contexts in which objects have been understood to "speak" as aesthetic vehicles and as cultural texts. Taught by two faculty members who have extensive experience as museum curators--one of American Art, the other of Asian Art, this class will combine theory with hands-on learning.

Seminar in Material Culture: The Interpretation of Objects: Read More [+]

Rules & Requirements

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: History of Art/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

Instructors: Berger, Lovell

Seminar in Material Culture: The Interpretation of Objects: Read Less [-]

HISTART C204 Proseminar in Classical Archaeology and Ancient Art 2 or 4 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2019, Fall 2015, Spring 2012

This seminar is intended to introduce graduate students--both archaeologists and non-archaeologists--to the discipline of classical archaeology, history, and evolution, and its research tools and bibliography. Since it is both impossible and undesirable to attempt to cover the entire discipline in one semester, after two introductory lectures on the history of the field, we will address a selection of topics that seems representative of its concerns.

Proseminar in Classical Archaeology and Ancient Art: Read More [+]

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Working knowledge of Latin, Greek, and German or French or Italian

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: History of Art/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

Instructors: Hallett, Stewart

Also listed as: CLASSIC C204

Proseminar in Classical Archaeology and Ancient Art: Read Less [-]

HISTART C220 Seminar in Middle Eastern Art 2 or 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2012

Seminar on critical aspects of Middle Eastern art requiring intensive study and presentation of a research paper. Topics vary from semester to semester.

Seminar in Middle Eastern Art: Read More [+]

Rules & Requirements

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3-3 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: History of Art/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

Formerly known as: Near Eastern Studies C220/History of Art C220

Also listed as: MELC C220

Seminar in Middle Eastern Art: Read Less [-]

HISTART 230 Seminar in Chinese Art 2 or 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2020, Spring 2017, Spring 2015

Seminar in Chinese Art: Read More [+]

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Graduate standing and consent of instructor

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: History of Art/Graduate

Grading: The grading option will be decided by the instructor when the class is offered.

Seminar in Chinese Art: Read Less [-]

HISTART 234 Seminar in Japanese Art 2 or 4 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2019, Fall 2016, Fall 2015

Seminar in Japanese Art: [Read More](#) [+]

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Graduate standing and consent of instructor

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: History of Art/Graduate

Grading: The grading option will be decided by the instructor when the class is offered.

Seminar in Japanese Art: [Read Less](#) [-]

HISTART 236 Seminar in the Art of India 2 or 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2019, Spring 2018, Fall 2015

Seminar in the Art of India: [Read More](#) [+]

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Graduate standing and consent of instructor

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: History of Art/Graduate

Grading: The grading option will be decided by the instructor when the class is offered.

Seminar in the Art of India: [Read Less](#) [-]

HISTART 240 Seminar in Greek Art 2 or 4 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2017, Fall 2011, Fall 2010

Seminar in Greek Art: [Read More](#) [+]

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Graduate standing and consent of instructor

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: History of Art/Graduate

Grading: The grading option will be decided by the instructor when the class is offered.

Seminar in Greek Art: [Read Less](#) [-]

HISTART 258 Seminar in Late Medieval Art in Northern Europe 2 or 4 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2013, Spring 2010, Spring 2007

Seminar in Late Medieval Art in Northern Europe: [Read More](#) [+]

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Graduate standing and consent of instructor

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: History of Art/Graduate

Grading: The grading option will be decided by the instructor when the class is offered.

Seminar in Late Medieval Art in Northern Europe: [Read Less](#) [-]

HISTART 260 Seminar in Italian Renaissance Art 2 or 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2019, Fall 2016, Spring 2013
Seminar in Italian Renaissance Art: Read More [+]

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Graduate standing and consent of instructor

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: History of Art/Graduate

Grading: The grading option will be decided by the instructor when the class is offered.

Seminar in Italian Renaissance Art: Read Less [-]

HISTART 262 Seminar in European Art 2 or 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2015, Fall 2013, Spring 2012
Seminar in European Art: Read More [+]

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Graduate standing and consent of instructor

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: History of Art/Graduate

Grading: The grading option will be decided by the instructor when the class is offered.

Seminar in European Art: Read Less [-]

HISTART 263 Seminar in European Art: Mimesis 2 or 4 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2024, Spring 2014

Mimesis, Greek for "imitation" is a key term in recent debates in a number of disciplines. However, what is at its core is often astonishingly undefined, open and ambivalent. Starting with antique and medieval works addressing key moments of mimesis we will also explore modern theories of mimesis. Crossing the threshold between pre-modern and modern examples will help us to understand the premises for the visual culture involving the rise of naturalism, and more generally the nature of representation in medieval and early modern culture.

Seminar in European Art: Mimesis: Read More [+]

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Graduate standing and consent of instructor

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3-3 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: History of Art/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

Instructor: Fricke

Seminar in European Art: Mimesis: Read Less [-]

HISTART 270 Seminar in Baroque Art 2 or 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2021, Spring 2017, Spring 2016
Seminar in Baroque Art: Read More [+]

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Graduate standing and consent of instructor

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: History of Art/Graduate

Grading: The grading option will be decided by the instructor when the class is offered.

Seminar in Baroque Art: Read Less [-]

HISTART 281 Seminar in 19th-Century Art 2 or 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2017, Spring 2016, Fall 2013

Seminar in 19th-Century Art: [Read More](#) [+]

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Graduate standing and consent of instructor

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: History of Art/Graduate

Grading: The grading option will be decided by the instructor when the class is offered.

Seminar in 19th-Century Art: [Read Less](#) [-]

HISTART 285 Seminar in 20th-Century Art 2 or 4 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2023, Spring 2021, Fall 2020

Seminar in 20th-Century Art: [Read More](#) [+]

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Graduate standing and consent of instructor

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: History of Art/Graduate

Grading: The grading option will be decided by the instructor when the class is offered.

Seminar in 20th-Century Art: [Read Less](#) [-]

HISTART 286 Seminar in 20th-Century Painting and Sculpture 2 or 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2009, Fall 2008, Fall 2007

Seminar in 20th-Century Painting and Sculpture: [Read More](#) [+]

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Graduate standing and consent of instructor

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: History of Art/Graduate

Grading: The grading option will be decided by the instructor when the class is offered.

Seminar in 20th-Century Painting and Sculpture: [Read Less](#) [-]

HISTART C288 The Arts of Migration, Vernacular Arts 2 or 4 Units

Terms offered: Prior to 2007

This seminar focuses on artworks made by migrating peoples chronicling their journeys (Hmong storycloths, Aztec codices), and artworks made by others who made migration a major theme (Dorothea Lange photographer of dustbowl migrants to California, Jacob Lawrence chronicler of the migration north of African Americans). Also, we focus on the arts of traditional communities that base their artifact production on longstanding, ecologically localized and distinctive practices. Issues include nostalgia, memory, trauma; cultural heritage the selection of what is to be seen, remembered, recoiled from, embraced, what is to be taught to future generations/outsideers concerning fear, courage, pride, self-definitions, accusations, and authenticity.

The Arts of Migration, Vernacular Arts: [Read More](#) [+]

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3-3 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: History of Art/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

Also listed as: FOLKLOR C288

The Arts of Migration, Vernacular Arts: [Read Less](#) [-]

HISTART 289 Seminar in American Art 2 or 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2024, Spring 2020, Fall 2018

Seminar in American Art: Read More [+]

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Graduate standing and consent of instructor

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: History of Art/Graduate

Grading: The grading option will be decided by the instructor when the class is offered.

Seminar in American Art: Read Less [-]

HISTART 290 Special Topics in Fields of Art History 2 or 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2024, Spring 2024, Fall 2023

Topics explore themes and problems, often reflect current research interests of the instructor, and supplement regular curricular offerings. Detailed descriptions of current and future offerings available in 416 Doe Library.

Special Topics in Fields of Art History: Read More [+]

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Graduate standing and consent of instructor

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: History of Art/Graduate

Grading: The grading option will be decided by the instructor when the class is offered.

Special Topics in Fields of Art History: Read Less [-]

HISTART 291 Judith Stronach Graduate Travel Seminar in Art History 4 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2024, Spring 2023, Spring 2019

This course explores site-specific themes, topics, and problems, reflects current research interests of the instructor(s), and supplements regular curricular offerings. Detailed descriptions of current and (where known) future offerings available in 416 Doe Library.

Judith Stronach Graduate Travel Seminar in Art History: Read More [+]

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Graduate standing and consent of instructor

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: History of Art/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

Judith Stronach Graduate Travel Seminar in Art History: Read Less [-]

HISTART 296 Directed Dissertation Research 3 - 12 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2018, Fall 2017, Spring 2017

Independent study open to qualified students directly engaged upon the doctoral dissertation.

Directed Dissertation Research: Read More [+]

Rules & Requirements

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 0 hours of independent study per week

Summer:

6 weeks - 1-5 hours of independent study per week

8 weeks - 1-4 hours of independent study per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: History of Art/Graduate

Grading: Offered for satisfactory/unsatisfactory grade only.

Directed Dissertation Research: Read Less [-]

HISTART 298 Group Study for Graduate Students in the History of Art 1 - 4 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2022, Spring 2021, Spring 2020

Directed group discussion for graduate students, focused on selected books, articles, problems, primary sources, and/or works of art. Usually but not necessarily offered as preparation for a travel seminar or other supervised fieldwork.

Group Study for Graduate Students in the History of Art: Read More [+]

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Graduate standing and consent of instructor, and possibly courses in the history of art

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 1-4 hours of directed group study per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: History of Art/Graduate

Grading: Offered for satisfactory/unsatisfactory grade only.

Group Study for Graduate Students in the History of Art: Read Less [-]

HISTART 299 Special Study for Graduate Students in the History of Art 1 - 12 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2023, Fall 2019, Fall 2018

Special Study for Graduate Students in the History of Art: Read More [+]

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Graduate standing and consent of instructor

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 0 hours of independent study per week

Summer:

6 weeks - 1-5 hours of independent study per week

8 weeks - 2-7.5 hours of independent study per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: History of Art/Graduate

Grading: Offered for satisfactory/unsatisfactory grade only.

Special Study for Graduate Students in the History of Art: Read Less [-]

HISTART 300 Supervised Teaching of History of Art 1 - 5 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2024, Fall 2023, Spring 2023

Weekly meetings with the instructor to discuss the methods and aims of the course, to plan the content and presentation of the material for the discussion sections, and to set standards and criteria for grading and commenting upon papers and exams. In addition, after visiting sections early in the semester, the instructor will discuss with each GSI individually his or her performance and make any necessary recommendations for improvement.

Supervised Teaching of History of Art: Read More [+]

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Graduate standing and concurrent appointment as a graduate student instructor

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 0-0 hours of independent study per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: History of Art/Professional course for teachers or prospective teachers

Grading: Offered for satisfactory/unsatisfactory grade only.

Supervised Teaching of History of Art: Read Less [-]

HISTART 375 Seminar in History of Art Teaching 2 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2024, Fall 2023, Fall 2021

This pedagogical seminar introduces graduate students to methods and theories of teaching history of art. The course has two primary goals: (1) to train new graduate student instructors to assist in teaching History of Art classes at UCB; and (2) to introduce students to techniques of designing and teaching their own classes. The seminar may be taken concurrently with the first teaching assignment or in the semester before beginning teaching.

Seminar in History of Art Teaching: Read More [+]

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Graduate standing and consent of instructor

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 2 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: History of Art/Professional course for teachers or prospective teachers

Grading: Offered for satisfactory/unsatisfactory grade only.

Seminar in History of Art Teaching: Read Less [-]

HISTART 601 Individual Study for Master's Students in the History of Art 1 - 12 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2024, Fall 2023, Spring 2023

Individual study in consultation with the graduate adviser.

Individual Study for Master's Students in the History of Art: Read More [+]

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: For candidates for master's degree

Credit Restrictions: Course does not satisfy unit or residence requirements for master's degree.

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 0 hours of independent study per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: History of Art/Graduate examination preparation

Grading: Offered for satisfactory/unsatisfactory grade only.

Individual Study for Master's Students in the History of Art: Read Less [-]

HISTART 602 Individual Study for Doctoral Students in the History of Art 1 - 12 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2024, Fall 2023, Fall 2022

Individual study, in consultation with the graduate adviser, intended to provide an opportunity for qualified students to prepare themselves for the various examinations required of candidates for the Ph.D. degree.

Individual Study for Doctoral Students in the History of Art: Read More [+]

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: For candidates for doctoral degree

Credit Restrictions: Course does not satisfy unit or residence requirements for doctoral degree.

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 0 hours of independent study per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: History of Art/Graduate examination preparation

Grading: Offered for satisfactory/unsatisfactory grade only.

Individual Study for Doctoral Students in the History of Art: Read Less [-]