

HA1B5-15 History of Art and Interpretation

24/25

Department

SCAPVC - History of Art

Level

Undergraduate Level 1

Module leader

Sarah Walford

Credit value

15

Module duration

10 weeks

Assessment

100% coursework

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

This module is designed to foster awareness of the relationship between art and its physical and historical contexts, by introducing students to the methods of interpretation they will be required to undertake during the course of their honours degree. In particular, the module focuses on skills of formal analysis and historical contextualisation. 'History of Art and Interpretation' builds on the 'Study Skills' module from the Autumn term of first year, and serves as a springboard to the second year core modules studied in Venice, as well as the third-year core module 'Practices of Art History' and the dissertation.

Module aims

This core module will introduce students to the history of art as a practice of interpretation and it will initiate students into the kinds of interpretation they will be required to undertake during the course of the honour's degree. Students will consider works of art in context at Waddesdon Manor, learning how to look and how to interpret what they see.

Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

Introduction: What is Art History?

Approaches to the History of Art: Formal analysis

Trip to Waddesdon Manor--tour of collection with senior curator; introduction to the objects to be the focus of student work

Trip to Waddesdon Manor - Introduction to cataloguing and study of assigned objects

Viewing Experience and Historical Meaning

Writing Art History - what is effective writing in the history of art

Presentation of Object and its History

Final Presentation at Waddesdon Manor--with module tutors and senior curators.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate knowledge of the technical procedures and practices involved in the manufacture of art.
- Demonstrate theoretical knowledge of the key stylistic terms.
- Demonstrate understanding of the key works of art in the Waddesdon collection and the circumstances surrounding their commissioning, production and consumption
- Initiate and sustain group discussion through intelligent questioning and debate at an appropriate level
- Ability to undertake research and to write up the results in the form of a well-structured argument at an appropriate level
- Familiarity with essential ICT skills
- Ability to collaborate effectively with others
- Show understanding of diverse viewpoints and of interpretation in the history of art
- Ability to find, select, organize and synthesize evidence
- Ability to formulate a sustained argument
- Think conceptually and independently at an appropriate level
- Sophisticated visual analysis
- Bibliographical skills at an appropriate level
- Critical analysis of works of art in their context
- Interpretation of works of art at an appropriate level

Indicative reading list

The Waddesdon Companion Guide (The National Trust, 2017)

'Description', Notes from the Field, The Art Bulletin (December 2012)

'Tradition', Notes from the Field, The Art Bulletin (December 2013)

Critical Terms for Art History, eds. Robert Nelson and Richard Shiff (Chicago, 2003)

Art History, A Critical Introduction to its Methods, eds. Michael Hatt and Charlotte Klonk (Manchester, 2006)

Mark Roskill, What is Art History (Thames and Hudson, 1976)

Margaret Iverson and Stephen Melville, Writing Art History (Chicago, 2010)

Henry Sayre, Writing About Art (Prentice Hall, 2006)

Stephen Cheeke, Writing For Art. The Aesthetics of Ekphrasis (Manchester, 2008)

Michael Fried, 'Painter into Painting,' in his Courbet's Realism (Chicago, 1990)

Michael Hall, Waddesdon: The Biography of a Rothschild House (2012)

[View reading list on Talis Aspire](#)

Research element

Students work directly with objects and works of art and consult original documents to research paintings, tapestries, drawings and the decorative arts. Support is provided by the curatorial staff at Waddesdon and teaching staff at Warwick.

Subject specific skills

- Demonstrate knowledge of the technical procedures and practices involved in the manufacture of art.
- Demonstrate theoretical knowledge of the key stylistic terms.
- Demonstrate understanding of the key works of art in the Waddesdon collection and the circumstances surrounding their commissioning, production and consumption.
- show understanding of diverse viewpoints and of interpretation in the history of art
- sophisticated visual analysis
- critical analysis of works of art in their context
- interpretation of works of art at an appropriate level

Transferable skills

- initiate and sustain group discussion through intelligent questioning and debate at an appropriate level
- ability to undertake research and to write up the results in the form of a well-structured argument at an appropriate level
- familiarity with essential ICT skills
- ability to collaborate effectively with others
- ability to find, select, organize and synthesize evidence
- ability to formulate a sustained argument
- think conceptually and independently at an appropriate level
- bibliographical skills at an appropriate level

Study

Study time

Type	Required
Lectures	1 session of 1 hour (1%)
Total	150 hours

Type	Required
Seminars	4 sessions of 2 hours (5%)
Practical classes	1 session of 1 hour 30 minutes (1%)
External visits	4 sessions of 2 hours 30 minutes (7%)
Private study	129 hours 30 minutes (86%)
Total	150 hours

Private study description

Required and recommended reading for seminar preparation, research for written assessment.

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You must pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Assessment group A2

	Weighting	Study time
2000 word Essay	100%	
Assessed Essay		

Feedback on assessment

Written feedback and dedicated feedback tutorials

Availability

Courses

This module is Core for:

- Year 1 of UHAA-V401 Undergraduate History of Art
- Year 1 of UHAA-V3R3 Undergraduate History of Art with Italian

This module is Core optional for:

- Year 1 of UHAA-V41P Undergraduate History of Art