

FALL SEMESTER 2009

■ **ARHS 500: Methods and Approaches to Art History**

Victoria Young and Heather Shirey, team teaching, with Mark Stansbury-O'Donnell
Wednesdays, 5:30 – 8:30 p.m.

This class will examine how we research, analyze, and interpret art. Beginning with more traditional approaches grounded in formal analysis and iconography, the class will then consider more recent theories and perspectives such as semiotics, structural analysis, poststructuralism, Marxism (socio-economic and political analysis), ritual theory and anthropology, psychoanalysis, feminism, and post-colonialism. The class will seek to balance theory and practice through a series of short and medium-length papers and class presentations, resulting in a final portfolio.

The class will begin with a consideration of the beginnings and definition of art history and then move on to a survey of different methods or approaches, considering a new method each week beginning with stylistic/formal analysis and moving on to methods that consider meaning and context. Common readings will consist of historiographic overviews, theoretical explanations, and practical applications of each method; students will present summaries and critiques on selected additional readings for class discussion. Students will be asked to write a synopsis of each method defining its goal, basic process, terminology, and evidence. In addition, they will write short essays that will apply some of the methods in assigned projects drawing from a range of historical and geographic periods. Unlike other graduate seminars that produce an in-depth research paper, this class will produce a portfolio of shorter writings that focus on processes. The course will also be held jointly with ARTH 211.

This course fulfills the Theory and Methodology core requirement.

Background Reading (one of the following is sufficient):

D'Alleva, Anne. *Look! Again*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: 2005.

Adams, Laurie Schneider. *The Methodologies of Art: An Introduction*. New York: 1996.

Minor, Vernon Hyde. *Art History's History*, 2d ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: 2001.