

Seminars 2016-17

Graduate Program in Art History

ARHS 537

What is Native American Art?

Dr. Jill Ahlberg Yohe

Summer I (May 25–July 7, 2016)

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 5:30–9:00 pm

In this seminar course, we will explore the range of Native artistic practices of the past and present. Through important readings, discussions, visiting museums, and conducting independent research, we focus on learning about the art of major culture areas of North America. At the same time, we will discuss important themes and topics in the study of Native art, including the role of culture and the individual artist, the history of collecting Native art, issues of museums and representation, and contemporary aesthetic practices. In order to do this, we first explore and become grounded in the historical development and the art of each culture area to illuminate some of the central questions in the study of Native American art today.

This course meets the Non-Western/Non-European requirement.
This course meets the Museum Studies requirement.

Recommended background reading:

Janet C. Berlo and Ruth Phillips *Native North American Art*, 2014 edition Oxford University Press

Karen Kramer *Shapeshifting: Transformations in Native American Art*, 2012, Peabody Essex



Innu (Naskapi) Hunting Coat, 18th Century

George Morrison
Collage IX: Landscape
1974



ARHS 500
Methods and Approaches to Art History

Dr. Victoria Young

Dr. Andy Barnes

Fall 2016

Mondays, 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, post-structuralism, 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 historiographical 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. We will also spend several nights discussing the role of ethics in art history. 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 (undergraduate majors and minors).

This course fulfills the Theory and Methodology core requirement and is required for all newly admitted students.

Background Reading (one of the following is sufficient):

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

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

ARHS 510
Medieval Sacred Space: Limits and Liminality
Hallowed Ground in the Middle Ages

Dr. Shelly Nordtorp-Madson

Fall 2016

Wednesdays, 5:30–8:30 p.m.

“...take off your sandals, for you are standing on holy ground” is an admonition from both the Old and New Testaments, and attests to the importance of distinguishing sacred from secular space. While the removal of footwear is no longer practiced in Judaism or Christianity, Islam retains the practice, and there are numerous other ways of demarcating the hallowed from the profane. The concept that some spaces are more spiritual than others, and how these lines are drawn, are part of most religions and cultures, and these sanctified locales are often areas of significant embellishment.



Gislebertus, *Last Judgment*,
Abbey Church of St. Lazare, Autun, France

In this course we will explore the general concept of sacred spaces and how they were used, primarily in Early Christian and Medieval Europe. We will look at location-specific terraforming, liminality, materials, and the use of images to define what is sacred. Geographically and historically-based case studies of holy areas (including open spaces dedicated to religion) will follow a more chronological introduction of the art of the Christian faith as it moves from its Mediterranean home to the north and west.

This course meets the European/American/Pre-Modern requirement.

Preliminary Readings:

Texts on Medieval art, dealing with architecture, sculpture, painting, and the so-called decorative arts are helpful in understanding the general technical and stylistic developments of the long Middle Ages (ca. 315 – 1600 CE) in Europe.

Stokstad: *Medieval Art*; Snyder: *Medieval Art*; Kessler: *Seeing Medieval Art*; Krüger: *Monasteries and Monastic Orders: 2000 Years of Christian Art and Culture*

Books and articles on specific media, such as mosaic, sculpture, metalwork, and painting are readily available.

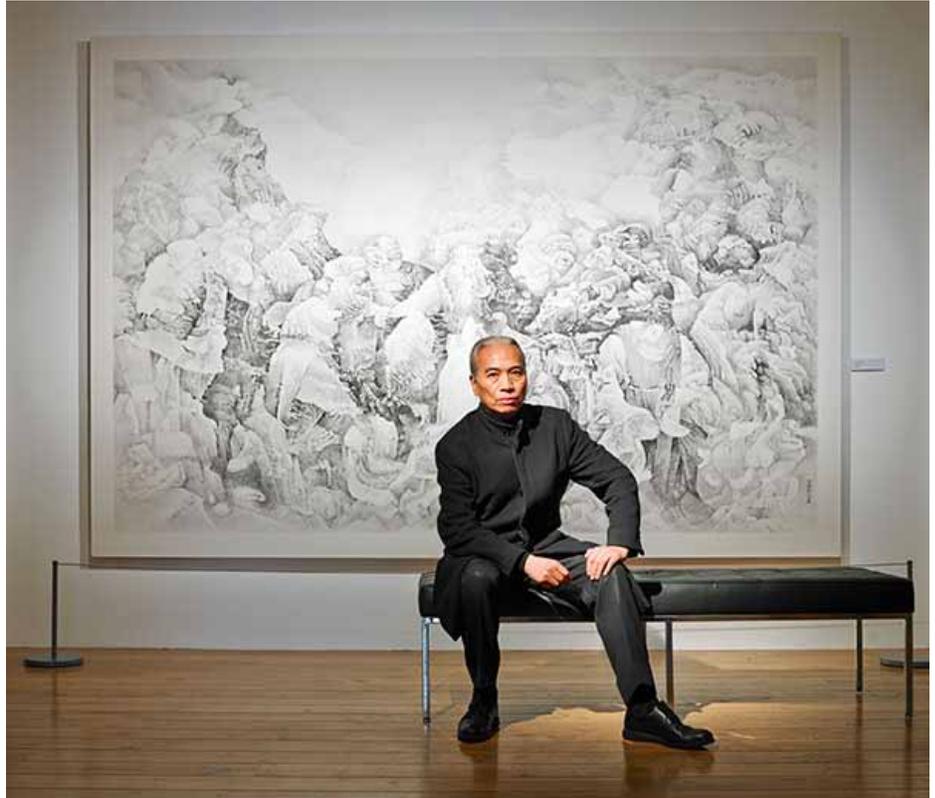
Books and articles on pilgrimage and the conversion process will also be helpful.

ARHS 530
Contemporary Chinese Art

Dr. Elizabeth Kindall
Fall 2016
Tuesdays, 5:30–8:30 p.m.

“Ink chose me...You cannot impose your will on these materials. It is a negotiation.”
Liu Dan

This seminar will examine contemporary Chinese art in correlation with the October 2016 residency of internationally acclaimed Chinese artist Liu Dan in the Twin Cities. Students will participate in the symposium and exhibition events scheduled around Liu Dan’s visit. Course readings and projects will focus on the contemporary art, architecture, and exhibition spaces of mainland China. Lectures will introduce elements of traditional Chinese art utilized in and adapted to the contemporary art scene. Topics will include traditional Chinese systems of belief; traditional Chinese art practice and formats; Chinese modernity; Scar art; poster art; the China avant-garde; unofficial art groups and exhibitions; Art New Wave; globalization; photography and video art; art “celebrities” such as Ai Weiwei and Cai Guo-Qiang; and contemporary Chinese museum types and exhibition spaces.



Liu Dan photographed by Victoria Birkinshaw at Eskenazi gallery, 2015,
in front of his work *Redefining Pleats of Matter*

Students are not expected to have a background in Chinese studies. All readings will be in English.

This course meets the Non-Western/Non-European requirement.
This course meets the Museum Studies requirement.

Recommended Background Readings:

Wasserstrom, Jeffrey N. *China in the 21st Century: What Everyone Needs to Know*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2013.

Yu Hua. *China in Ten Words*. New York: First Anchor Books, 2012.

ARHS 570
Museum Studies: Collections, Curation, and Controversy

Dr. Jayme Yahr

Fall 2016

Thursdays, 5:30–8:30 p.m.

How do collections define museums? This course provides students with the tools to investigate the role of museums in creating national identity and cultural constructions. Students will explore the work of curators, registrars, conservationists, collections managers, and visual resource managers in the museum world. Additionally, the practical knowledge gained in the course will be interwoven with discussions of collecting theory and museum controversies. From ethics, looting, and contested provenance to NAGPRA, institutional critique, and social experiments gone wrong, this course will critique the “museum as temple” through the lens of collections. Museum Studies: Collections, Curation and Controversy will include opportunities for dialogue with museum professionals, hands-on projects, and field trips to apply museum studies theory to the visitor experience.



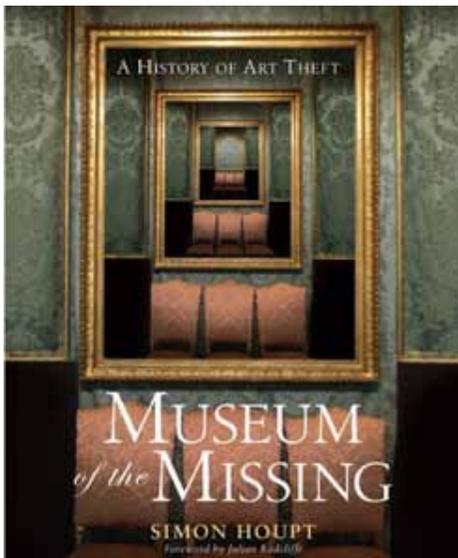
This course meets the Museum Studies requirement.

Background reading:

Nicholas, Lynn H. *The Rape of Europa: The Fate of Europe's Treasures in the Third Reich and the Second World War*. Vintage: 1995.

Wallach, Alan. *Exhibiting Contradiction: Essays on the Art Museum in the United States*. University of Massachusetts Press, 1998.

Waxman, Sharon. *Loot: The Battle Over the Stolen Treasures of the Ancient World*. New York: Times Books 2008.



Top: Henry Luce Foundation Open Storage, New York Historical Society, photo: Richard Patterson for The New York Times. Left: Houpt, Simon. *Museum of the Missing: A History of Art Theft*. Sterling: 2006. Right: Fossil Collection, American Museum of Natural History, New York

ARHS 535
Photography in Africa and the African Diaspora

Dr. Heather Shirey

Spring 2017

Thursdays, 5:30–8:30 p.m.

Situated within the broader historical and theoretical frameworks of photography and race, this seminar focuses on photographic work produced in African and the African Diaspora, both historical and contemporary. Key themes explored are: Photography and colonialism/post-colonialism; The role of the photographic image in constructing and deconstructing race and racial stereotypes; The use of photography in the anti-slavery movement; Photography in the context of key historical moments such as the Harlem Renaissance, the Civil Rights Movement, and Black Lives Matter; Photography and film, ethnography and documentary; Studio photography in African and its Diasporas; Photography in the Museum. The course will also examine the work of a wide range of contemporary photographers working with relevant ideas in Africa and the African Diaspora, with a particular focus on race and ethnicity as an exploratory framework for photographic practice. Students in this course will develop an understanding of the history of photography and of critical theories surrounding the representation of race and ethnicity.



This course meets the Non-Western/Non-European requirement.
This course meets the Museum Studies requirement.

Suggested background readings:

Deborah Willis, *Reflections in Black: A History of Black Photographers 1840 to the Present*, 2002.

Amos Morris-Reich. *Race and Photography: Racial Photography as Scientific Evidence, 1876-1980*, 2016.



Seydou Keita (top), Carrie Mae Weems (left) and Pierre Verger (right)

ARHS 537
City and Ideology in the Ancient Americas

Dr. Andy Barnes
Spring 2017
Tuesdays, 5:30–8:30 p.m.

The city plays a central role in the complex civilizations of the ancient Americas. From the enigmatic expanse of Teotihuacan's concrete apartment compounds in Mexico to the cyclopean walls of Cuzco in Peru, guiding ideologies played a central role in these cities' construction. Indeed, there was not a city in the ancient Americas that was not a sacred city, and at times, it seems, living in the city was seen as an act of religious devotion. These cities' connections with the divine was made evident in the cosmologically ordained layout of their thoroughfares, temples, and shrines. Even humble hearthstones were arranged to recall the stories of cosmic creation. This seminar will address the guiding ideologies that led people like the Maya, the Aztecs, and the Inca to build the most unnatural of things — the city — and, yet, endeavor to cast them as things in harmony with nature and the cosmos.



Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, Chiapas, Mexico.

This course meets the Non-Western/Non-European requirement.

Recommended background readings:

Miller, Mary. *Art of Mesoamerica: From Olmec to Aztec*. 5th ed. Thames & Hudson, 2012.
Stone, Rebecca. *Art of the Andes: From Chavín to Inca*. 3rd ed. Thames & Hudson, 2012.

ARHS 540
Architecture and War

Dr. Victoria Young
Spring 2017
Mondays, 5:30–8:30 p.m.

This seminar seeks to uncover the ways in which war has impacted our built environment. How and what do we build to sustain the war effort, both in the battle zones and on the home front? What happens when key cultural icons are destroyed? How do museums and memorials communicate and commemorate through their architectural forms and exhibits? Students will read broadly from the disciplines of memory, history, sociology, museology and art/architectural history throughout this course. Fictional and personal accounts of battle will supplement the academic literature.

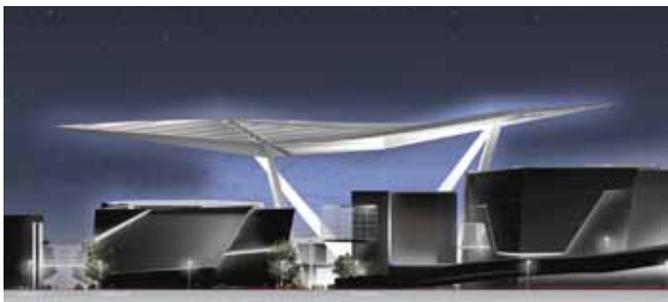


Focus will be on World War II and those items directly related to this conflict, including the National World War II Museum in New Orleans, under design by Voorsanger Architects of New York City since 2003. We will also consider other important events such as WWI, the 9/11 attacks and the recent destruction in Syria by ISIS and ISIL. We will also consider topics such as art and war, groups like the Ghost Army creating fake war landscapes, and cities such as London and the impact of the Blitz on its architectural and psychological makeup.

This class fulfills the museum studies certificate requirements by analyzing the exhibition approaches used to portray war at several museums, including the Imperial War Museum in London and Manchester, the National WWII Museum in New Orleans, the Canadian War Museum in Ottawa, and the Museum of the Second World War in Gdansk, Poland. We will think about why museums present what they do as they attempt to legitimize a certain interpretation of history, and commemorate the efforts of those who served in battle zones. We will also consider the different types of museums that discuss war, from local venues to national ones.

Students may conduct their semester research on topics from any time frame.

This course meets the European/American/modern requirement.
This course meets the Museum Studies requirement.



St. Paul's during the Blitz (top), National World War II Museum (bottom)

Background Reading:

A history of WWII – see Stokesbury and others. Understand the architecture of the twentieth century prior to arriving in class. Works you might use to do this include:

- Curtis, William J. R. 1996. *Modern Architecture Since 1900*. 3rd ed. NY: Phaidon.
Doordan, Dennis P. 2001. *Twentieth-Century Architecture*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
Frampton, Kenneth. 1980. *Modern Architecture: A Critical History*. London: Thames and Hudson.