University of St. Thomas
MA Program in Art History
2015-16 Graduate Seminars

Fall 2015
ARHS 540, *Contemporary Architecture*, Dr. Victoria Young, Mondays (5:30-8:30 p.m.)
ARHS 500, *Methods and Approaches to Art History*, Dr. Heather Shirey, Tuesdays (5:30-8:30 p.m.)
ARHS 570, *Museum History and Theory*, Dr. Jayme Yahr, Wednesdays (5:30-8:30 p.m.)
ARHS 530, *Picturing Identity in China*, Dr. Elizabeth Kindall, Thursdays (5:30-8:30 p.m.)

Spring 2016
ARHS 550, *The Art of Clothing/Clothing in Art: How Dress Fosters Body Ideal in Painting, Sculptures and Photography of the West*, Dr. Michelle Nordtorp-Madson, Tuesdays (5:30-8:30 p.m.)
ARHS 520, *Design Across Cultures*, Dr. Craig Eliason, Wednesdays (5:30-8:30 p.m.)
ARHS 535, *The Asmat of New Guinea: Art, Context, and Exhibition*, Dr. Eric Kjellgren, Thursdays (5:30-8:30 p.m.)
ARHS 597-01, *Sacred Architecture*, Dr. Victoria Young, Tuesdays and Thursdays (9:55-11:35 a.m.)
ARHS 597-02, *Chinese Painting*, Dr. Elizabeth Kindall, Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays (10:55 a.m.-Noon)
ARHS 540: Contemporary Architecture
Dr. Victoria Young
Fall 2015
Mondays, 5:30 – 8:30 p.m.

In our role as architectural historians, is it acceptable to focus on architecture of the last twenty-five years as a subject of history?

This course considers the way in which we can approach architecture of the very recent past and ground it in historical developments, while at the same time contemplating its place in the architectural path toward the future. We will discuss the key writings of architectural theory and their ability to shape architectural debate and practice. We will reflect on the role of the architectural critic and their ability to impact design. Key ideas such as sustainability, digital design, globalization vs. regionalism, materials, museology, city planning, the role of culture in architecture and more will be evaluated in their role as shapers of architectural form. And the work of architects and firms including Bart Voorsanger, Frank Gehry, Zaha Hadid, Grafton Associates, HGA, Heurzog and de Meuron, Jeanne Gang, and more, will be studied as we attempt to seek out trends in the projects of last quarter century. Primary sources readings will be supplemented with critical analysis of key trends in current design. Special attention will be paid to architecture in our immediate area with the likelihood of several field trips to study it first hand.

Background Reading: Understand the architecture of the twentieth century prior to arriving in class. Works you might use to do this include:

This course fulfills the Western/European requirement for those beginning in fall 2009 and beyond.
This course fulfills the Modern core requirement for those who entered the program prior to fall 2009.
ARHS 500: Methods and Approaches to Art History
Dr. Heather Shirey
Fall 2015
Tuesdays, 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).

Background Reading (one of the following is sufficient):

This course fulfills the Theory and Methodology core requirement and is required for all newly admitted students.
Why do museums matter in the 21st century? This course provides students with the framework to investigate the critical issues facing museums today. Students will explore the practical skills necessary for successful careers in museums and consider the ways in which new audiences, technology, and innovative programming shape the museum field. This course will include opportunities for dialogue with museum professionals, hands-on projects, and field trips to apply museum studies theory to the visitor experience. Course readings, discussions and projects will address the ways in which museums have changed over time and how these changes have led to reinterpreted core values of museums in the present day. Museum missions, practices, and resources will be interwoven with a discussion of audience, social objects, and blockbuster exhibitions.

Required Texts:

Additional readings will be assigned and available either online or on Blackboard, including chapters of Nina Simon’s book, *The Participatory Museum* (2010): http://www.participatorymuseum.org/read/.
“Expressing oneself is like a drug. I’m so addicted to it.” Ai Weiwei

What identities did individuals and social groups develop, discuss, and promote pictorially in late imperial China? Why? This seminar will survey a variety of traditional Chinese pictorial subject matter and styles identified as representative of the identity or ‘selfhood’ of individuals and social classes, including both renderings of the exterior, physical characteristics of a specific person in the form of portraits and figural representations, as well as narratives and metaphorical landscapes, fauna, and flora that communicate the intangible aspects of the individuated self. We will examine how these individuated forms of self were stylistically and compositionally constructed and read. We will also consider how the pictorial identities represented by specific works functioned in a variety of familial, social, religious, and political spheres. We will examine expressions of the culturally normative, orthodox Confucian identities—emperor, official, father, son, wife—that prioritized state and family according to the “five cardinal human relationships” (wulun 五倫). We will also explore collectively accepted identities practiced outside this system—such as nuns and monks working in Buddhist and Daoist networks; eunuchs and artists maneuvering the national bureaucracy and the imperial city; and family concubines, landed gentry, merchant elite, and resident artists networking locally. Finally, we will examine how traditional notions of identity inform contemporary dialogues in the Chinese and international art communities. Students may choose objects and topics from the dynastic period for their research projects, but they are also encouraged to work on Chinese issues of identity in contemporary art.

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

Background Reading:


This course fulfills the Non-Western/Non-European requirement for those beginning in fall 2009 and beyond.

This course fulfills the Non-Western Art core requirement for those who began the program prior to fall 2009.
From many periods, the only evidence we have of clothing and bodies it covered is the artistic production of the time. Whether or not the artistic view is an accurate rendition of how people looked or if the body ideal depicted is a true representation of the people of that time is debatable. Disconnects between today’s fashion and body ideals suggests it does not. This course will present an introduction to clothing history, followed by 10 case studies focusing on different garments, classes, and works of art, as well as sources from important periods in western culture.

Suggested background readings:

Breward, Christopher: *The Culture of Fashion*

Gelba, Margarita, Cherine Munkholt, Marie-Louise Nosch, eds.: *Dressing the Past*

Hollander, Anne: *Seeing Through Clothes*

Mansell, Phillip: *Dressed to Rule: Royal and Court Costume from Louis XIV to Elizabeth II*

Ribeiro, Eileen: *The Art of Dress*

Rogers, Penelope Walton: *Cloth and Clothing in Early Anglo-Saxon Britain*
ARHS 535: The Asmat of New Guinea: Art, Context, and Exhibition
Dr. Eric Kjellgren
Spring 2016
Wednesdays, 5:30-8:30 p.m.

Working directly with the collections of UST’s American Museum of Asmat Art, this seminar will examine the context and art forms of the Asmat and other New Guinea peoples. Focusing on the arts of the Asmat and other Pacific Island cultures as case studies, it will explore the broader theoretical and ethical issues surrounding the collection and provenance of works by indigenous peoples and the representation of their arts and cultures in both Western and indigenous museums and cultural institutions. As part of the course requirements, students will collaborate in the research, development, and installation of an actual exhibition for the American Museum of Asmat Art, which will provide hands on experience with, and insights into, the intellectual and practical aspects of curating museum exhibitions.

Suggested background readings:


This seminar will investigate the history of modern design as it has crossed cultural borders. How have "other" cultures been represented in the design world? What happens when designs produced in one cultural context find reception by another? Do encounters with different communities expose cultural biases built into the structure, practices, and vocabulary of the design world? How has cultural insensitivity held design back, and how have cross-cultural exchanges enriched design?

The primary case studies for this exploration will come from the world of typography and type design. Since Gutenberg, the tools, procedures, and systems of typography—the apparatus by which letterforms are made into moveable type and printed—were developed almost exclusively with the Latin alphabet in mind (our familiar AaBbCc...). When this apparatus has confronted foreign writing systems, accommodation is required, whether of the apparatus or, often, of the alien scripts. Such cases attest not only to technical problem-solving, but also to the relationships to, and representations of, foreign cultures.

Though most of the examples we cover together in the seminar will focus on typography and type design, student research projects may venture into any other areas of modern and contemporary design. Such areas might include graphic design more broadly, industrial design, decorative arts, fashion, textile design, or architecture.

Suggested background readings:

- The Elements of Typographic Style (book by Robert Bringhurst)
- A View of Latin Typography in Relationship to the World (online article by Peter Bilak)
  https://www.typotheque.com/articles/a_view_of_latin_typography
- Climbing Everest (online article by Nadine Chahine)
  http://ilovetypography.com/2015/02/22/making-arabic-fonts-climbing-everest/)
ARHS 597 (ARTH 280): Sacred Architecture
Dr. Victoria Young
Spring 2016
Tuesday/Thursday, 9:55-11:35 a.m.

Through an examination of selected works from various regions, traditions, and cultures, this course will consider the manner in which users make space sacred. It will analyze not only religious architecture but also more secular places including landscapes, shopping centers, and memorials. We will examine these places from a variety of perspectives including materials and structure, ritual function and liturgy, decoration, symbolism, physical context, and social/religious context. Through this class I hope that students will gain an understanding of the many meanings of sacred in their environments and lives.

Our class will meet twice a week and will consist of lectures illustrated with images, video presentations, in class discussion of readings, and field trips. Students may be asked to communicate their architectural ideas through short written exercises and drawings/designs. The final project will give students the chance to research and analyze a sacred space of their choice, using themes and ideas developed in the classroom discussions and course readings. In addition to these requirements, graduate students will be asked to give short lectures on topics of their interest to the class throughout the semester.
ARHS 597 (ARTH 329): Chinese Painting
Spring 2016
Dr. Elizabeth Kindall
Monday/Wednesday/Friday 10:55 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Picture: Ten Illustrations for Poems from Shijing, detail, anonymous, handscroll, Southern Song dynasty, Palace Museum, Beijing

Course description: The goal of this course is to engage students in a comprehensive examination of the historical development of Chinese painting from the Paleolithic period to the 20th century. The issues to be addressed will include the stylistic development of figure and landscape painting; the major figures and the “monuments” of painting; the influence of format on Chinese painting; the classification of subject matter and favored themes of Chinese painters; the early emergence of art history in Chinese painting and its later effects; changes in the socio-political influences on painters and their work; and methodological differences between modern Chinese and Western art historians.