

*University of St. Thomas*  
*Master of Arts in Art History*  
*Course Offerings*

2010 - 2011

**\*ATTENTION STUDENTS – Please note that we are including background readings for each course. These works will not be used as primary readings for the class and are intended for students without a strong background in the topic area. These works are suggested and not required.**

**FALL SEMESTER 2010**

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

Victoria Young and Heather Shirey, team teaching

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 postcolonialism.

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

**■ ARHS 530: Chinese Pictorial Narrative**

Elizabeth Kindall

Mondays, 5:30 – 8:30 p.m.

*Just ask the storytellers to demonstrate in public their art of description: they will gladden you, astonish you, move you to sad tears, rouse you to song and dance; they will prompt you to draw a sword, bow in reverence, cut off a head, or donate money. The faint-hearted will be made brave, the debauched chaste, the unkind compassionate, the obtuse ashamed...*

*Master of the Green Sky Studio, Stories Old and New*

This seminar will examine pictorial subject matter associated with Chinese narratives: mythological tales, secular and religious themes, and historicized and fictional stories created between the fourth and twentieth centuries. Stories about utopian communities and historical tales associated with landscapes, such as the *Peach Blossom Spring* and *Red Cliff*,

will be analyzed. The savior stories and multiple manifestations of Guanyin as well as the perils of the monk Dizang in hell will be considered in examinations of Buddhist and Daoist imagery. In figure painting and portraiture we will investigate the licentious and shocking *Night Revels of Han Xizai*, the imperial 'Plowing and Weaving Ceremonies,' and the nostalgic *Return of Lady Wenji* from the barbaric northern plateau to her homeland in 'central' China. Readings will introduce and then move beyond the subject matter of these artworks to examine how creators 'narrated' their chosen political, socio-economic, historical, and religious themes. Readings will introduce the subject matter; examine its art historical implications; consider its 'narrative' allusions and constraints; and examine how it 'narrates' the contemporary political, socio-economic, historical, and/or religious circumstances.

Topics will include the development and methodologies of narrative studies in the West; Asian and Western scholars' definitions and initial examinations of Chinese pictorial narrative; the stylistic development and subdivisions of Chinese pictorial narrative; the relationship of 'narrative' images and their respective texts; traditional Chinese conceptions of history versus narrative; the functions of Chinese pictorial narrative; and the reception of pictorial narrative. In addition to those mentioned above, themes to be examined will include: *The Qin Emperor Attempts to Retrieve the Tripod*; *The Attempted Assassination of the King of Qin*; *Two Peaches Kill Three Warriors*; *Admonitions of the Instructress*; *Nymph of the Luo River*; *The Orchid Pavilion Gathering*; *The Homecoming of Tao Qian*; *The Book of Odes*; *The Classic of Filial Piety*; *jataka* tales; The Ten Kings of Hell; Life of Sakyamuni; Demon Mother Hariti; and *Luohan* stories.

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

*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.*

Background reading:

Barnhart, Richard M., et al, *Three Thousand Years of Chinese Painting*. New Haven & London: Yale University Press; Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1997.

### ■ ARHS 535: The Painted Books of Ancient Mexico

William Barnes

Wednesdays, 5:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Leading up to the time of the Conquest, most people of ancient Mesoamerica relied upon painted documents to record and transmit information. These painted 'books', or codices as they are sometimes called, often took the form of long screenfold documents made of deerskin or native paper and large sheets of woven cloth referred to as *lienzos*. They were used for the practical purpose of noting historical events, recording tax and tribute information, proclaiming dynastic and genealogical descent, and mapping out the boundaries of polities. They were also quite important for setting down the intricate working of the Mesoamerican calendar that recorded astronomical cycles and served as the basis for divination, a key element of Mesoamerican civilization. Participants in this course will learn about the fundamentals of Mesoamerican manuscript painting, particularly the painted books of the Aztecs, Mixtecs, Maya, and their neighbors. Additionally we will look at the survival of the manuscript painting tradition in the Post-Conquest period, and investigate the surprisingly general use and acceptance of painted documents in Colonial culture.

*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 entered the program prior to fall 2009.*

Background reading:

Boone, Elizabeth H. "The Pictorial Codices of Ancient Mexico" in *The Ancient Americas: Art from Sacred Landscapes*, ed. Richard F. Townsend. Chicago: The Art Institute of Chicago (1992). pp. 196-210.  
Miller, Mary and Karl Taube. *An Illustrated Dictionary of the Gods and Symbols of Ancient Mexico and the Maya*. New York: Thames and Hudson (1993).

### ■ ARHS 550: All That Glitters: the Use and Meaning of Metal and Metallic Substances in the Medieval Period

Shelly Nordtorp-Madson

Thursdays, 5:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Historically, the early medieval period in Europe has been called the Dark Ages, but if this is true, why was this era also a high point for metalwork, often studded with shiny glass, enamel, crystal, or gems? And as the centuries progressed, this love of shiny, valuable materials could be seen, not only in jewelry, but mosaics, gold leaf in manuscripts, metallic thread in textiles, and even in the sacred light of stained glass. No culture or religion, regardless of prohibition, was immune to the power of gold – and silver, jewels, and glass – whether used for clothing, domestic arts, writing, or sacred objects; nor did distance or difficulty of acquisition decrease its desirability. This course will explore the use of the glimmering resources that made the medieval world – pagan, Latin Christian, Byzantine, Islamic, and even Asian – united in its hunger for all that glitters.

*This course fulfills the Western/European requirement for those beginning in fall 2009 and beyond. This course fulfills an elective for those who entered the program prior to fall 2009.*

Background Reading:

"The Byzantine Openwork Gold Plaque in the Walters Art Gallery," Author(s): Aimillia Yeroulanou; Source: *The Journal of the Walters Art Gallery*, Vol. 46 (1988), pp. 2-10; Published by: The Walters Art Museum. Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20169037>

"Gold," Author(s): Thomas Hoving and Carmen Gomez-Moreno; Source: *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, New Series, Vol. 31, No. 2, Gold (Winter, 1972-1973), pp. 72-120; Published by: The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3258582>

"Enhancing Luxury through Stained Glass, from Asia Minor to Italy," Author(s): Francesca Dell'Acqua; Source: *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, Vol. 59 (2005), pp. 193-211; Published by: Dumbarton Oaks, Trustees for Harvard University. Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4128757>

"Two Hispano-Islamic Silks," Author(s): Ernst J. Grube; Source: *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, New Series, Vol. 19, No. 3 (Nov., 1960), pp.77-86; Published by: The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3257876>

"Medieval Church Treasuries," Author(s): Margaret English Frazer; Source: *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, New Series, Vol. 43, No. 3, Medieval Church Treasuries (Winter, 1985-1986), pp. 1+8-56; Published by: The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3269069>

"Medieval," Author(s): Barbara Drake Boehm; Source: *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, New Series, Vol. 53, No. 3 (Winter, 1995-1996), pp. 12+35-44; Published by: The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3258789>

"Rhetoric or Reality: Mosaics as Expressions of a Metaphysical Idea," Author(s): Eve Borsook; Source: *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz*, 44. Bd., H. 1 (2000), pp. 2-18; Published by: Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz, Max-Planck-Institut. Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27654515>

## **SPRING SEMESTER 2011**

### **■ ARHS 520: Different Strokes: The Tools of Writing and the Design of Typefaces**

Craig Eliason

Thursdays, 5:30 – 8:30 p.m.

With font menus as part of many computer programs people use today, there is a growing awareness of differing styles of letters. Nonetheless, the design of type (the letterforms used in printing) remains an understudied component of visual culture. In this seminar, we will learn how to distinguish, identify, and analyze fonts from the history of printing since Gutenberg, and consider how their designs show the influence of the tools used in writing and typefounding.

Different kinds of strokes are made by different writing implements. For example, a broad-nibbed pen makes consistent thick or thin lines varying with the direction of the stroke. A split-nibbed pen, on the other hand, allows the stroke to get thicker or thinner within the same direction with changes in pressure. Paintbrushes, engraving burins, or carving chisels produce still other characteristic forms. All of these have been emulated by various type designers.

We will also look at the changing tools used in typefounding, from hand-casting to machine-casting to optical and then digital technology, and consider the impact of those tools on type design.

A better understanding of type design will be achieved not only through historical research, but also through hands-on experimentation with letter design and careful observation of letterforms in our present environment.

The course will focus on the letterforms of the Latin alphabet (i.e. the ABCs used in most European languages), but research on other writing systems is welcome as student interest and familiarity allows.

*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.*

Background Reading:

Robert Bringhurst, *The Elements of Typographic Style*

Ellen Lupton, *Thinking with Type*

"Face the Nation" <[www.stthomas.edu/facethenation](http://www.stthomas.edu/facethenation)>

### **■ ARHS 535.01: Asmat Art: Exploring the Challenges and Opportunities of the 20th and 21st Centuries**

Julie Risser

Mondays, 5:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Objects from the American Museum of Asmat Art at the University of St. Thomas (AMAA@UST) will function as the starting point for investigating political, social, economic, and environmental issues pertaining to Pacific cultures in general and Asmat society specifically. The influence of colonialism, market forces generated by tourism, and an expanding global economy, as well as the consequences of environmental changes brought about by global warming, logging, and development projects will be examined in order to understand how Asmat culture, traditionally a subsistence culture, is adapting to 21st century realities.

Although the Pacific occupies one third of the earth's surface, this area constitutes the last frontier of art historical exploration. Students will have direct access to works in the AMAA@UST, arguably the strongest collection of Asmat art in the United States, as they

research Asmat art and culture. Students will generate an individual display and they will work together as a team to create the first rotating exhibition for the proposed Asmat art gallery in the Anderson Student Center. In addition to researching the cultural meaning of works and developing ways to present them, students will learn about fundamental issues pertaining to the display of culturally and physically sensitive objects.

*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 entered the program prior to fall 2009.*

Background Reading:

Huber, Molly Hennen, *Time and Tide: the Changing Art of the Asmat of New Guinea from the Collection of the American Museum of Asmat Art at the University of St. Thomas*, 2009

Konrad, Gunter and Ursula, *Asmat: Myth and Ritual – the Inspiration of Art*, 1996

Konrad, Ursula, Alphonse Sowada, Gunter Konrad, *Asmat: Perception of Life in Art, The Collection of the Asmat Museum of Culture and Progress*, Asmat Museum of Culture and Progress, Agats, Pampus, Indonesia, 2002.

Stanley, Nick, *The Future of Indigenous Museums: Perspectives from the Southwest Pacific*, 2007

Van Arsdale, Peter, "Papua and the Issue of Enclave Development" *Forced to Flee*, 2006

### ■ ARHS 535.02: Colonial/Post-Colonial: Art and Power In and Out of Africa

Heather Shirey

Wednesdays, 5:30 – 8:30 p.m.

This course will explore issues of power, identity and representation in relation to Africa during the colonial and post-colonial moments. In addition to a focus on post-colonial theory and an investigation of its applicability to the study of African art, the course will explore topics such as the history of collecting and the colonial enterprise (from royal palaces to contemporary museums); colonial and post-colonial monuments in cities such as Bamako and Lagos; architecture and nation building; clothing, the body and identity in the colonial and post-colonial contexts; Africa in film and photography (missionary photography, tourist photography, self-representation through studio photography; the emergence of an African Cinema); and representations of Africa at World's Fairs (Chicago, Paris, St. Louis, etc.). In addition, a significant portion of the course will focus on contemporary post-colonial artists (Yinka Shonibare, El Anatsui, and more) in Africa and its diasporas.

*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 entered the program prior to fall 2009.*

Background Reading:

Janet Hess. *Art and Architecture in Post-Colonial Africa*, 2006.

Sydney Kasfir. *African Art and the Colonial Encounter: Inventing a Global Commodity*, 2007.

Paul S. Landau and Deborah D. Kaspin, eds. *Images and Empires: Visuality in Colonial and Postcolonial Africa*, 2002.