

# ARTH 401

## ART HISTORY METHODOLOGY: READINGS IN ART HISTORY

Course outline



George Deem, *School of Caravaggio*, 1984. Oil on canvas (Private Collection)

## ART HISTORY

School of Art History, Classics and Religious Studies  
Victoria University of Wellington

2008  
trimesters 1 and 2



## *Course description*

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<b>Course co-ordinator:</b>	<b>Dr Peter Brunt, OK 310 Tel. 463 5805 or ext 5805 Email: <a href="mailto:Peter.Brunt@vuw.ac.nz">Peter.Brunt@vuw.ac.nz</a> Office hours: Tuesday 1.00pm-3.00pm</b>
<b>Where:</b>	<b>All seminars are in Old Kirk (OK) 312 in trimester 1 and OK 301 in trimester 2</b>
<b>When:</b>	<b>Tuesday 11.00am-1.00pm weekly</b>
<b>Information:</b>	<b>Additional course information will be emailed or deposited in student pigeonholes (adjacent to photocopier)</b>

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ARTH 401 investigates the approaches art historians have developed from art history's beginnings as a recognised academic discipline to the present.

It is organised around topics encapsulating key foci for art historical thinking, research and writing. Within these fields of inquiry, the work of art historians and other thinkers who have been instrumental in the development and application of art history methodology is introduced and assessed.

Each session is structured around the discussion of a group of readings. These include key texts by art historians and theorists, as well as critical commentaries on their writings and methods. Students will be invited to lead some of these discussions. Your general contribution is crucial to the success of the course.

This course is not a comprehensive survey, but rather an intensive and critical examination of key approaches within the field of art history, which will give students a solid understanding of their discipline and a greater self-consciousness about its application.

In line with Art History's teaching objectives, ARTH 401:

- **encourages you to apply your skills of analysis to critically examine visual and textual material**
- **develops your capacity for independent work, including the formulation, analysis and refinement of topics**
- **ensures the consistent application of the conventions of academic writing and art historical research**
- **ensures the full use of library resources**
- **refines your skills in seminar presentation and oral debate**
- **prepares you for post-graduate research in art history**
- **introduces you to the standards required of scholarly articles and papers.**

## ***Seminar programme***

*Seminars occur weekly in OK 312 (trimester 1) and OK 301 (trimester 2) on Tuesdays from 11am to 1pm (with some exceptions – see below). The readings listed below are either in your textbook (Donald Preziosi, The art of art history) or the ARTH 401 Handbook.*

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### **4 March**

- 1 Introduction**  
**'The art of art history'**

### **11 March**

- 2 Art and History I**

### **18 March**

- 3 Art and History II**  
**Humanism and historical consciousness**

### **25 March**

- 4 NO CLASS/UNIVERSITY HOLIDAY**

### **1 April**

- 5 Artist as subject I**  
**What is an author?**

### **8 April**

- 6 Artist as subject II**  
**Art history and psychoanalysis**
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**Mid-trimester break: Seminars resume 29 April**

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### **29 April**

- 7 Style I**  
**Art history as the history of style**

### **6 May**

- 8 Style II**  
**Style as 'will to form': the meaning of style**

### **13 May**

- 9 Meaning I**  
**Iconography: Panofsky and his critics**

20 May

10    **Meaning II**  
      **Semiology and art history**

27 May

11    **Meaning III**  
      **Deconstruction and the limits of interpretation**

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**Mid-year break: Seminars resume 8 July**

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8 July

12    **Visual theory I**  
      **Representation**

15 July

13    **Visual theory II**

22 July

14    **Visual theory III**  
      **Art history or visual culture?**

29 July

15    **Context I**  
      **The social history of art**

5 August

16    **Context II**  
      **Discourse: Gender, race and colonialism**  
      Mitchell, Timothy. 'Orientalism and the exhibitionary order', in

12 August

17    **Context III**  
      **Discourse: Art and postcolonialism**

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**Mid-term break**  
**Final seminar convenes 2 September**

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2 September

18    **Epilogue: Art history after the end of art**

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**End of seminar sessions**

## Assessment

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ARTH 401 is assessed by means of one seminar presentation and essay write-up (30%), one 4,000-word essay (40%), and a three-hour examination (30%).

**Seminars** involve giving a twenty to thirty-minute presentation on the seminar readings assigned for a particular session and writing a **critical essay** (2500 words maximum) on those readings. The seminar essay must be submitted within two weeks of your presentation. Seminar presentations are occasions for you to develop your critical reading skills and to demonstrate your ability to present an argument. (For more information on seminars, see p. 13)

**The essay** is due on **Tuesday 8 July** for those doing seminars presentations in the second trimester and on **Friday, 3 October** for those doing seminar presentations in the first trimester. The essay should be thought of as a major piece of writing providing an opportunity for you to canvas the literature on a given topic and to construct and sustain an argument.

The programme has a policy that **no extensions will be granted**. If you have medical or other problems preventing you from meeting a deadline, you must contact your course co-ordinator at the earliest opportunity. Without arrangements having been agreed to, late essays will be penalised by the deduction of two percentage points for each day beyond the due date. If you are in any doubt about your ability to meet essay and seminar deadlines you must see the course co-ordinator immediately.

**The exam** will be held at the end of the year **on a specified day between 13 October and 8 November (exact date to be announced)**. The exam is three hours in duration and you will be required to answer two questions based on topics covered during the year. The examination is a further opportunity for you to demonstrate your critical and analytical grasp of topics covered throughout the course.

**Mandatory course requirements** are defined in the University Calendar. You are expected to come to **all** seminar sessions and you should notify the course coordinator if you cannot attend (due to illness or other pressing reasons). You will have fulfilled the requirements of the course by:

- Attending all the seminar sessions.
- Completing one oral seminar and written essay (handed in no later than two weeks after your presentation).
- Writing one essay (due either 8 July or 3 October) and;
- Completing one end-of-year exam. Aegrotat passes can only be considered on the provision of a medical certificate.

**Marking:** The course co-ordinator is responsible for marking assignments. You may request a second opinion of the assessment of any piece of written work, from another lecturer in Art History. An outside assessor will review coursework and the exam in order to ensure that academic standards at honours level are met. Your final grade for the course may be adjusted both to reflect your overall contribution to and achievement in the course and in response to the feedback from the external assessor.

**Workload:** The university recommends that approximately 12 hours per paper per week, inclusive of lectures and seminars, be given to a full-year, 4-paper graduate programme in order to maintain satisfactory progress. (As the seminar component of ARTH 401 is concentrated in the first three quarters of the year, it is recommended that approximately 15 hours per week be given to this paper).

## *Academic integrity and plagiarism*

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Academic integrity is about honesty – put simply it means *no cheating*. All members of the University community are responsible for upholding academic integrity, which means staff and students are expected to behave honestly, fairly and with respect for others at all times.

Plagiarism is a form of cheating which undermines academic integrity. The University defines plagiarism as follows:

*The presentation of the work of another person or other persons as if it were one's own, whether intended or not. This includes published or unpublished work, material on the Internet and the work of other students or staff.*

It is still plagiarism even if you re-structure the material or present it in your own style or words.

*Note: It is however, perfectly acceptable to include the work of others as long as that is acknowledged by appropriate referencing.*

Plagiarism is prohibited at Victoria and is not worth the risk. Any enrolled student found guilty of plagiarism will be subject to disciplinary procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct and may be penalized severely. Consequences of being found guilty of plagiarism can include:

- an oral or written warning
- cancellation of your mark for an assessment or a fail grade for the course
- suspension from the course or the University.

Find out more about plagiarism, and how to avoid it, on the University's website:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx>



## *Essay*

**Due: Tuesday 8 July** (if your seminar presentation is in the second trimester)

**Friday 3 October** (if your seminar presentation is in the first trimester)

**4,000 words (max)**

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The essay is worth 40% of your final grade and should be considered a major piece of work. The purpose of this essay is to enable students to develop their knowledge and understanding of a particular art historian or critic in depth. It also serves to familiarise you with the literature of art history and to enable you to develop a critical approach to the subject.

### **Criteria for assessment:**

- **understanding and definition of question**
- **formulation and development of argument**
- **use of visual and written resources**
- **originality and independence of thought**
- **quality and accuracy of referencing**
- **style and mechanics (legibility, presentation, grammar, spelling)**

## *Seminar presentation/essay*

**Due: two weeks from date of presentation**

**2,500 words (max)**

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Seminar topics must be chosen by the second seminar session (11 March). Seminar presentations involve a twenty to thirty-minute presentation on one of the set readings, leading discussion, and writing a critical essay (2500 words maximum) on the readings (due no later than two weeks after the oral presentation). The seminar is worth 30% of your final grade.

The aim of seminar presentations is to encourage students' critical response to the set readings and coherent presentation of ideas. It is not enough, or even necessary, to précis the readings; it is more important to offer your own insights, questions and responses based on your comprehension. You are also responsible for leading ensuing discussion. A good discussion will help you write your seminar essay, which you will be expected to hand in within two weeks of your oral presentation.

In preparation for your presentation you should carefully read the assigned texts, considering them in light of each other. You can also refer to your general reading list (at the end of this outline) for background and critical material related to the assigned readings. You should then develop an argument or perspective you wish to bring to bear on the topic. Remember, the aim is not just to précis the readings but to offer a critical response to them.

### **Criteria for assessment of seminar essays:**

- **understanding and comprehension of reading**
  - **formulation and development of a critical argument**
  - **use of written and visual resources**
  - **originality and independence of thought**
  - **ability to draw conclusions from the discussion**
  - **style and mechanics (legibility, presentation, grammar, spelling)**
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## *General information*

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### **General University Statutes and Policies**

Students should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly the Assessment Statute, the Personal Courses of Study Statute, the Statute on Student Conduct and any statutes relating to the particular qualifications being studied; see the *Victoria University Calendar* available in hardcopy or under "about Victoria" on the Victoria homepage at:

[http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about\\_victoria/calendar\\_intro.html](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/calendar_intro.html)

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/newspubs/universitypubs.aspx#general>

Information on the following topics is available electronically under "Course Outline General Information" at:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/newspubs/universitypubs.aspx#general>

- Academic Grievances
- Academic Integrity and Plagiarism
- Student and Staff Conduct
- Meeting the Needs of Students with Impairments
- Student Support

### **Taping of Lectures**

All students in the School of Art History, Classics and Religious Studies are welcome to use their own audio-tapes to record lectures. If you want to do this, please see your lecturer, tutor or the relevant programme administrator and complete a disclaimer form, which advises of copyright and other relevant issues.

### **Academic integrity and plagiarism**

(See p. 12)

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**GOOD LUCK AND ENJOY THE COURSE**



