ARTh 008 Contemporary Museum Practice
This course introduces students to key issues in art museum practice. Students will meet with active and innovative members of the contemporary art world, at the Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia, and off-campus.
Taught by: Shaw
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
0.5 Course Units

ARTh 100 Freshman Seminar
Topic varies. Fall 2018: As life in the nineteenth century sped up, so did the century's art. Painting in "fifteen minutes," as the critic Jules Laforgue described Impressionism in 1883, characterized a novel kind of picture built of hectic, freewheeling signs. Impressionism thus chronicled the profound cultural shifts of its era; its blurs and unfinished appearance made movement and a particularly modern sense of time and vision its chief subjects. This seminar seeks to understand these developments by establishing an account of Impressionism that fits our current global, multimedia and multidisciplinary forms of humanistic thought. To this end, we will read those recent scholars who place Impressionism within new contexts that include the history of science and technology (visual perception, psychology, evolution, chemistry), political history and theory (republicanism, revolution, empire, nationalism), and consumer culture (fashion, capitalism), among others. This course will of course also survey the movement's major contexts and proponents-Manet, Monet, Degas, Morisot, Cezanne, Gauguin, Van Gogh, Rodin-from its origins in the 1860s to its demise in the 1890s, as well as its subsequent adaptations throughout the world until World War I.
One-term course offered either term
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit
Notes: For Freshmen Only

ARTh 101 Prehistory to Renaissance: Introduction to Western Art from its Beginning to 1400
This is a double introduction: to looking at the visual arts; and, to the ancient and medieval cities and empires of three continents - ancient Egypt, the Middle East and Iran, the Minoan and Mycenaean Bronze Age, the Greek and Roman Mediterranean, and the early Islamic, early Byzantine and western Medieval world. Using images, contemporary texts, and art in our city, we examine the changing forms of art, architecture and landscape architecture, and the roles of visual culture for political, social and religious activity.
For BA Students: Arts and Letters Sector
Course usually offered in fall term
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit

ARTh 102 Renaissance to Contemporary: Introduction to Western Art, 1400 to the Present
This course is an introduction to the visual arts including painting, sculpture, print culture, and new media such as photography, film, performance and installation art in Europe and the United States from 1400 to the present. It offers a broad historical overview of the key movements and artists of the period, as well as an investigation into the crucial themes and contexts that mark visual art production after the middle ages. Such themes include the secularization of art; the (gendered) role of the artist in society; the sites of art production and consumption such as the artist's studio, the royal courts and the art exhibition; the materials of art; the import of technology and science to art's making, content and distribution; the rise of art criticism; and the socio-political contexts of patronage and audience; among others.
For BA Students: Arts and Letters Sector
Taught by: Dombrowski, Kim, Shaw
Course usually offered in spring term
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit
Notes: Fulfills Cross-Cultural Analysis Requirement; Fulfills Sector III, Arts and Letters Requirement

ARTh 103 Art and Civilization in East Asia
Introduction to major artistic traditions of China and Japan and to the methodological practices of art history. Attention given to key cultural concepts and ways of looking, in such topics as: concepts of the afterlife and its representation; Buddhist arts and iconography; painting styles and subjects; and more broadly at the transmission of styles and cultural practices across East Asia. Serves as an introduction to upper level lecture courses in East Asian art history cultures. If size of class permits, certain sessions will be held in the Penn Museum or the Philadelphia Museum of Art.
For BA Students: Arts and Letters Sector
Taught by: Davis, Steinhardt
Course not offered every year
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit

ARTh 104 Introduction to Art in South Asia
This course is a survey of sculpture, painting and architecture in the Indian sub-continent from 2300 B.C., touching on the present. It attempts to explore the role of tradition in the broader history of art in India, but not to see India as 'traditional' or unchanging. The Indian sub-continent is the source for multi-cultural civilizations that have lasted and evolved for several thousand years. Its art is as rich and complex as that of Europe and diverse. This course introduces the full range of artistic production in India in relation to the multiple strands that have made the cultural fabric of the sub-continent so rich and long lasting.
For BA Students: Arts and Letters Sector
Course not offered every year
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit
ARTH 106 Architect and History
Human experience is shaped by the built environment. This course introduces students to the interrelated fields of architecture, art history, and engineering and explores great architectural monuments from the ancient to the modern period, from India across the Mediterranean and Europe to the US. The focus will be on understanding these works in their structure and function, both as products of individual ingenuity and reflections of Zeitgeist. Questioning these monuments from a present-day perspective across the cultures will be an important ingredient, as will be podium discussions, guest lectures, excursions, and all kinds of visualizations, from digital walk-throughs to practical design exercises. Regularly taught in fall term, this course fulfills Sector IV, Humanities and Social Science, and it satisfies History of Art 100-level course requirements.
For BA Students: Humanities and Social Science S
Taught by: Zarmakoupi
Course usually offered in fall term
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit

ARTH 216 Architect and History
Human experience is shaped by the built environment. This course introduces students to the interrelated fields of architecture, art history, and engineering and explores great architectural monuments from the ancient to the modern period, from India across the Mediterranean and Europe to the US. The focus will be on understanding these works in their structure and function, both as products of individual ingenuity and reflections of Zeitgeist. Questioning these monuments from a present-day perspective across the cultures will be an important ingredient, as will be podium discussions, guest lectures, excursions, and all kinds of visualizations, from digital walk-throughs to practical design exercises. Regularly taught in fall term, this course fulfills Sector IV, Humanities and Social Science, and it satisfies History of Art 100-level course requirements.
For BA Students: Humanities and Social Science S
Taught by: Zarmakoupi
Course usually offered in fall term
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit

ARTH 213 Arts of Japan
This course introduces the major artistic traditions of Japan, from the Neolithic period to the present, and teaches the fundamental methods of the discipline of art history. Special attention will be given to the places of Shinto, the impact of Buddhism; and their related architectures and sculptures; the principles of narrative illustration; the changing roles of aristocratic, monastic, shogunal and merchant patronage; the formation of the concept of the artist over time; and the transformation of tradition in the modern age.
Taught by: Davis
Course not offered every year
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit

ARTH 214 Arts of China
The goals of this course are to introduce the major artistic traditions of China, from the Neolithic period to the present and to teach the fundamental methods of the discipline of art history. Our approaches will be chronological, considering how the arts developed in and through history, and thematic, discussing how art and architecture were used for philosophical, religious and material ends. Topics of study will include: Shang bronzes: Han concepts of the afterlife; the impact of Buddhism; patronage and painting; the landscape tradition; the concept of the literatu: architecture and garden design; the "modern" and 20th-century artistic practices; among others.
Taught by: Steinhardt, Davis
Course not offered every year
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit

ARTH 217 Chinese Painting
Study of Chinese painting and practice from the earliest pictorial representation through the late twentieth century. Painting style forms the basis of analysis, and themes such as landscape and narrative are considered with regard to larger social and cultural issues. The class pays particular attention to the construction of the concepts of the "artist" and "art criticism" and their impact on the field into the present. Visits to look at paintings at the University of Pennsylvania Museum, PMA and/or local collections.
Taught by: Steinhardt
Course not offered every year
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit
Notes: Also fulfills General Requirement in History Tradition for Class of 2009 and prior

ARTH 222 Art of Ancient Iran
This course offers a survey of ancient Iranian art and culture from the painted pottery cultures of the Neolithic era to the monuments of the Persian Empire. Particular emphasis is placed on the Early Bronze Age.
Taught by: Pittman
Course not offered every year
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit

ARTH 224 Art of Mesopotamia
A survey of the art of Mesopotamia from 4000 B.C. through the conquest of Alexander the Great.
Taught by: Pittman
Course not offered every year
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit

ARTH 225 Greek Art and Artifact
This course surveys Greek art and artifacts from Sicily to the Black Sea from the 10th century BCE to the 2nd century BCE, including the age of Alexander and the Hellenistic Kingdoms. Public sculpture and painting on and around grand buildings and gardens, domestic luxury arts of jewelry, cups and vases, mosaic floors, and cult artefacts are discussed. Also considered are the ways in which heroic epic, religious and political themes are used to engaged viewer's emotions and served both domestic and the public aims. We discuss how art and space was considered, along with ideas of invention and progress, the role of monuments, makers and patrons in Greek society.
Taught by: Kuttners
Course not offered every year
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit

ARTH 226 Hellenistic and Roman Art and Artifacts
This course surveys the political, religious and domestic arts, patronage and display in Rome's Mediterranean, from the 2nd c. BCE to Constantine's 4th-c. Christianized empire. Our subjects are images and decorated objects in their cultural, political and socio-economic contexts (painting, mosaic, sculpture, luxury and mass-produced arts in many media). We start with the Hellenistic cosmopolitan culture of the Greek kingdoms and their neighbors, and late Etruscan and Republican Italy; next we map Imperial Roman art as developed around the capital city Rome, as well as in the provinces of the vast empire.
Taught by: Kuttners
Course not offered every year
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit
ARTH 232 Byzantine Art and Architecture
This course offers a wide-ranging introduction to the art, architecture, and material culture of Byzantium—a Christian, predominantly Greek-speaking civilization that flourished in the Eastern Mediterranean for over a thousand years. Positioned between the Muslim East and the Latin West, Antiquity and the Early Modern era, Byzantium nurtured a vibrant and highly sophisticated artistic culture. With emphasis placed upon paradigmatic objects and monuments, we will examine an array of artistic media, from mosaic and panel painting to metalwork, ivory carving, book illumination, and embroidery. We will consider the making, consumption, and reception of Byzantine art in a variety of contexts: political, devotional, ritual, and domestic. Topics include the idea of empire and its visual articulation; court culture; the veneration of images and relics; patronage, piety, and self-representation; authorship and artistic agency; materiality and the sensory experience of art; the reception of the pagan Greco-Roman past; and the changing nature of Byzantium's interactions with neighboring cultures.
Taught by: Drpic
One-term course offered either term
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit

ARTH 233 Eastern Medieval Architecture
This lecture course examines major architectural developments in the eastern Mediterranean between the 4th and 14th centuries CE. The focus is on the Byzantine Empire, with its capital at Constantinople. Lectures also devoted to related developments in the Caucasus (Armenia and Georgia), early Russia, the Balkans (Bulgaria and Serbia), Sicily and under the Normans, the Crusader states. Parallel developments in early Islamic architecture are used for comparative purposes. The course examines evidence for religious and secular buildings, as well as urbanism and settlement patterns.
Taught by: Ousterhout
Course not offered every year
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit

ARTH 235 Introduction to Visual Culture of the Islamic World
A one-semester survey of Islamic art and architecture which examines visual culture as it functions within the larger sphere of Islamic culture in general. Particular attention will be given to relationships between visual culture and literature, using specific case studies, sites or objects which may be related to various branches of Islamic literature, including historical, didactic, philosophical writings, poetry and religious texts. All primary sources are available in English translation.
For BA Students: Humanities and Social Science S
Taught by: Holod
Course not offered every year
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit

ARTH 240 Medieval Art
An introductory survey, this course investigates architecture, painting, sculpture, and the "minor arts" of the Middle Ages. Students become familiar with selected major monuments of the Romanesque and Gothic periods, primarily in Western Europe as well as relevant sites around the Mediterranean. Analysis of works emphasizes the cultural context, the thematic content, and the function of objects and monuments. Discussions focus especially on several key themes: the role of luxury in the medieval west; the theological role of images; the revival of classical models and visual modes; social rituals such as pilgrimage and crusading; the cult of the Virgin and the status of women in art; and, more generally, the ideology of visual culture across the political and urban landscapes.
Taught by: Guerin
Course not offered every year
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit

ARTH 245 Gothic Architecture: Gold and Stone
Key monuments of the Middle Ages, the Gothic cathedrals of Western Europe present a synthesis of the theological, economic, and social developments of the twelfth through fourteenth centuries. A harmonious marriage between technology and aesthetics, of political power and imagination, these immense and ingenious structures are as famous for their sculptural programs as they are for the liturgies that animated their spaces. Students will also be introduced to local uses of Gothic in Philadelphia architecture to better understand the lived experiences of these built manifestations of transcendence.
Taught by: Guerin
Course not offered every year
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit

ARTH 250 Michelangelo and the Art of the Italian Renaissance
An introduction to the work of the Renaissance artist Michelangelo (1475-1564)—his sculptures, paintings, architecture, poetry, and artistic theory in relation to his patrons, predecessors, and contemporaries, above all Leonardo and Raphael. Topics include artistic creativity and license, religious devotion, the revival of antiquity, observation of nature, art as problem-solving, the public reception and function of artworks, debates about style, artistic rivalry, and traveling artists. Rather than taking the form of a survey, this course selects works as paradigmatic case studies, and will analyze contemporary attitudes toward art of this period through study of primary sources.
Taught by: Kim
Course not offered every year
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit

ARTH 254 Global Renaissance and Baroque
An introduction to transcultural encounters within and beyond early modern Europe, 1450-1600. Topics include: the theory and historiography of global art; artistic relations between Venice, the Byzantine and Ottoman Empires, and islands in the Eastern Mediterranean; Portugal's overseas mercantile network in Africa and Asia; and the Baroque in Latin America, with emphasis upon Brazil. Our discussions focus on these paradigmatic case studies so as to question the language and terms we use to characterize confrontations between native and foreign, the self and the other.
Taught by: Kim
Course not offered every year
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit
ARTH 258 Early Modern Japanese Art and the City of Edo
Study of the major art forms and architecture of Tokugawa (or Edo) period (1603-1868). In this course, we will consider how the arts of this era occur within an increasingly urban and modern culture, particularly with regard to the city of Edo. Issues of the articulation of authority in the built environment, the reinvention of classical styles, and patronage will be raised. May include some visits to PMA, Penn Museum, or other local collections.
Taught by: Davis
Course not offered every year
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit

ARTH 261 Northern Renaissance Art
Survey of the principal developments in Northern Europe during the "early modern" period, i.e. the transition from medieval to modern art-making during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Principal attention to painting and graphics with additional consideration of developments in sculpture, particularly in the regions of the Netherlands and German-speaking Europe. Attention focused on the works of the following artists: Van Eyck, Bosch, Durer, Holbein, Bruegel, and on topics such as the rise of pictorial genres, urban art markets, Reformation art and art for the dynastic courts of emerging nation-states.
Course not offered every year
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit

ARTH 262 Netherlandish Art
Dutch and Flemish painting in the 15th and 16th centuries with special emphasis on the contributions of Robert Campin, Jan van Eyck and Roger van der Weyden, Bosch, and Bruegel. Also included are topics on the development of prints as well as the dialogue with Italian art.
Course not offered every year
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit

ARTH 267 Latin American Art
The numerous traditions of Latin American art have been formed from the historical confluence of Indigenous, European, African, and Asian cultural traditions, each one impacting the others. This course serves as an introduction to these hybrid New World art forms and movements by both providing a large chronological sweep (1492-present) and focusing on several specific countries, including Brazil, Mexico, Cuba, Peru, and Argentina.
Taught by: Shaw, Kim
Course not offered every year
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit

ARTH 270 The Modern City
A study of the European and American city in the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries. Emphasis is placed on the history of architecture and urban design; political, sociological, and economic factors also receive attention. The class considers the development of London, St. Petersburg, Washington, Boston, Paris, Vienna and Philadelphia.
Taught by: Brownlee, D.
Course not offered every year
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit

ARTH 271 Modern Architecture, 1700-1900
The history of western architecture, ca. 1700-1900, when architecture was transformed to serve a world that had been reshaped by political and industrial revolutions. Topics to be considered include the Rococo, the English Garden, Palladianism, Romanticism, neo-classicism, the picturesque, the Greek and Gothic Revivals, and the search for a new style.
Taught by: Brownlee, D.
One-term course offered either term
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit

ARTH 274 Facing America
This course explores the visual history of race in the United States as both self-fashioning and cultural mythology by examining the ways that conceptions of Native American, Latino, and Asian identity, alongside ideas of Blackness and Whiteness, have combined to create the various cultural ideologies of class, gender, and sexuality that remain evident in historical visual and material culture. We also investigate the ways that these creations have subsequently helped to launch new visual entertainments, including museum spectacles, blackface minstrelsy, and early film, from the colonial period through the 1940s.
Taught by: Shaw
Course not offered every year
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit
Notes: Satisfies Cultural Diversity in the U.S. requirement.

ARTH 276 Impressionism
Impressionism opened the pictorial field to light, perception, science, modernity, bourgeois leisure and famously the material qualities of paint itself. This course will survey the movement's major contexts and proponents–Manet, Monet, Morisot, Cezanne, Gauguin, Van Gogh, Rodin–from its origins in the 1860's to its demise in the 1890's, as well as its subsequent adaptions throughout the world until World War I. Particular attention is paid to the artists' critical reception and the historical conditions which allowed one nation, France, to claim the emergence of early Modernism so firmly for itself. The course also analyzes the effects of the rapidly changing social and cultural fabric of Paris, and its affects on artistic developments. We also look outside of France's borders to Germany and Britain.
Taught by: Dombrowski
One-term course offered either term
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit
ARTH 277 The Rise of Modernity: Arts of the 19th Century
The nineteenth century is often considered as fast-paced, politically volatile and new-media obsessed as our own age. This course explores the nineteenth century’s claim to have produced the first truly modern culture, focusing on the visual arts and metropolitan spaces of Europe and North America in their intellectual and social contexts. Stretching from the American and French Revolutions to the eve of World War I, topics to be covered include: the rise of capitalist and industrialist culture, art and revolutionary upheaval, globalization and empire, the origins of modernist art and architecture, and new media such as stereoscopes, iron and glass construction, and photography. Major artistic personalities of the age, from Jacques-Louis David and Gustave Courbet to Claude Monet and Vincent Van Gogh, and from Friedrich Schinkel and, Baron Haussmann to Frank Furness and Frank Lloyd Wright, are discussed. Each lecture will be followed by a brief period of discussion, and regular field trips take students to examine art and architecture first hand, in the museums and on the streets of Philadelphia.
Taught by: Brownlee, Dombrowski
Course not offered every year
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit

ARTH 278 American Art
This course surveys the most important and interesting art produced in the United States (or by American artists living abroad) up through the 1950s. This period encompasses the history of both early and modern art in the U.S., from its first appearances to its rise to prominence and institutionalization. While tracking this history, the course examines art's relation to historical processes of modernization (industrialization, the development of transportation and communications, the spread of corporate organization in business, urbanization, technological development, the rise of mass media and mass markets, etc.) and to the economic polarization, social fragmentation, political conflict, and the cultural changes these developments entailed. In these circumstances, art is drawn simultaneously toward truth and fraud, realism and artifice, science and spirituality, commodification and ephemerality, nationalism and cosmopolitanism, individualism and collectivity, the past and the future, professionalism and popularity, celebrating modern life and criticizing it.
Taught by: Leja, Shaw
One-term course offered either term
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit
Notes: Satisfies Cultural Diversity in the U.S. requirement.

ARTH 281 Modern Architecture, 1900-Present
The architecture of Europe and America from the late nineteenth century until the present is the central subject of this course, but some time is also devoted to Latin American and Asian architecture and to the important issues of modern city planning. Topics discussed include the Arts and Crafts movement, Art Nouveau, Expressionism, Art Deco, the International Style, and Post-modernism. The debate over the role of technology in modern life and art, the search for a universal language of architectural communication, and the insistant demand that architecture serve human society are themes that are traced throughout the course. Among the important figures to be considered are Frank Lloyd Wright, Walter Gropius, Le Corbusier, Louis Kahn, Robert Venturi, and Denise Scott Brown. The course includes weekly discussion sessions and several excursions to view architecture in Philadelphia.
Taught by: Brownlee
One-term course offered either term
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit
Notes: Fulfills Cross-Cultural Analysis Requirement

ARTH 286 Modern Art: Picasso to Pollock
Early twentieth-century art in Europe is marked by a number of exciting transformations. This period witnessed the rise of abstraction in painting and sculpture, as well as the inventions of collage, photomontage, constructed sculpture, the ready made and found object, and performance art. Encounters with the arts of Africa, Oceania and other traditions unfamiliar in the West spurred innovations in media, technique, and subject matter. Artists began to respond to the challenge of photography, to organize themselves into movements, and in some cases, to challenge the norms of art through “anti-art.” A new gallery system replaced traditional forms of exhibiting and selling art, and artists took on new roles as publicists, manifesto writers, and exhibition organizers. This course examines these developments, with attention to formal innovations as well as cultural and political contexts.
One-term course offered either term
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit

ARTH 290 Post War Japanese Cinema
Mizoguchi Kenji, Ozu Yasujirō, and Kurosawa Akira are recognized today as three of the most important and influential directors in Japanese cinema. In their films of the late 1940s and 1950s, these directors focused upon issues surrounding the human condition and the perception of truth, history, beauty, death, and other issues of the postwar period. This course places their films in period context, and pays particular attention to the connections to other visual media, and to how “art” and “history” are being defined in the cinematic context. How other directors also took up these issues, and referred to the “big three” is also be discussed.
Taught by: Davis
Course not offered every year
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit
ARTH 294 Art Now
One of the most striking features of today's art world is the conspicuous place occupied in it by the photographic image. Large-scale color photographs and time-based installations in projections are everywhere. Looking back, we can see that much of the art making of the past 60 years has also been defined by this medium, regardless of the form it takes. Photographic images have inspired countless paintings, appeared in combines and installations, morphed into sculptures, drawings and performances, and served both as the object and the vehicle of institutional critique. They are also an increasingly important exhibition site: where most of us go to see earthworks, happenings and body-art. This course is a three-part exploration of our photographic present.
Taught by: Silverman
Course usually offered in spring term
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit

ARTH 295 Cinema and Media
This course will provide an introduction to some of the most important film theory debates, and allow us to explore how writers and filmmakers from different countries and historical periods have attempted to make sense of the changing phenomenon known as “cinema,” to think cinematically. Topics under consideration may include: spectatorship, authorship, the apparatus, sound, editing, realism, race, gender and sexuality, stardom, the culture industry, the nation and decolonization, what counts as film theory and what counts as cinema, and the challenges of considering film theory in a global context, including the challenge of working across languages. There will be a weekly film screening for this course. No knowledge of film theory is presumed.
Course requirements: attendance at lecture and participation in lecture and section discussions; canvas postings; 1 in-class mid-term; 1 final project.
Taught by: Redrobe
Course not offered every year
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit

ARTH 296 Contemporary Art
Many people experience the art of our time as bewildering, shocking, too ordinary (my kid could do that), too intellectual (elitist), or simply not as art. Yet what makes this art engaging is that it raises the question of what art is or can be, employs a range of new materials and technologies, and addresses previously excluded audiences. It invades non-art spaces, blurs the boundaries between text and image, document and performance, asks questions about institutional frames (the museum, gallery, and art journal), and generates new forms of criticism. Much of the “canon” of what counts as important is still in flux, especially for the last twenty years. And the stage is no longer centered only on the United States and Europe, but is becoming increasingly global. The course will introduce students to the major movements and artists of the post-war period, with emphasis on social and historical context, critical debates, new media, and the changing role of the spectator/participant.
Course not offered every year
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit

ARTH 297 Digital/New Media
Documentary? Database management systems based on digital technologies have technologically transformed ways of classifying, storing, and aggregating data, but have they really changed our experiences of mediating with our past, present, and future? Issues of agency, memory, representation, performativity, interactivity, and posthumanism are entangled in discussions of databases and archives and our engagement with them. In this course we will relate and juxtapose readings connecting documents, documentaries, and archives. We will read media and cultural theorists such as Lisa Gitelman, Akira Lippit, and Wendy Chun alongside novelists like Franz Kafka and Ismail Kadare. Assignments include one assigned/selected report from field visits to libraries and museums, one reading presentation and blogging assignment, and a final paper or practice-based art project.
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

ARTH 300 Undergraduate Methods Seminar
This course introduces students to the history, theory and modern practice of museums. Using the resources of the Penn Museum, the course discusses curatorial practice, education, exhibition design and conservation, while exploring the theoretical and ethical issues confronted by museums. Particularly relevant for those interested in archaeology, anthropology, art history, cultural heritage and public education.
One-term course offered either term
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit
ARTH 305 Spiegel-Wilks Seminar
Fall 2018: Susan Sontag once remarked that “We no longer study the art of dying...but all eyes, at rest, contain that knowledge. The body knows. And the camera shows, inexorably” This Spiegel-Wilks Curatorial Seminar explores the invention of photography and the proliferation of techniques and processes of representing the body in the 1800s. Offered in collaboration with the Barnes Foundation, and co-taught with Executive Director and President Thom Collins, the course will pay particular attention to the relation between photography, science and medicine, and new modes of representing life and death. In addition to being introduced to the history of photography, students will learn about the curatorial process and contribute to a forthcoming exhibition at the Barnes Foundation, where the course will meet weekly. Students will have the opportunity to interact with curators and scholars at the museum, and also engage Penn Medicine faculty who are pioneering new ways of imaging the body. Our discussions will build upon seminal texts by Roland Barthes, Geoffrey Batchen, Jonathan Crary, Kaja Silverman, Susan Sontag, and others. As part of the course, students will also conduct research and contribute curatorial writing for the exhibition.

Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

ARTH 311 Topics in Indian Art
Topic varies.
Taught by: Meister
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

ARTH 313 Topics in East Asian Art
Topic varies.
Taught by: Davis
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

ARTH 315 Topics in Japanese Art
Spring 2018: This course will focus on Japanese woodblock prints, printed books, and paintings from the seventeenth through the mid-nineteenth century in the genre of ukiyo-e. Among questions we will consider are: How did Ukiyo-e or the pictures of the floating world emerge as a genre and what was at stake for its makers and consumers? What are new approaches that we can use for the field? Topics will include themes shown in prints (celebrity actors and courtesans, the landscape and others), specific artists and their works. We will study original works held in the Kislak Collection and the Philadelphia Museum of Art, as well as other local collections as available, and we will work with emerging digital humanities tools for individual and group projects.

Taught by: Davis
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

ARTH 318 Topics in African Art
Topic varies. Spring 2017: The dynamic, multi-media character of African art makes it particularly compelling as part of new art historical methodologies. Digital media—photographs, music, video, global mapping systems and 3-D printing—is reshaping understandings of African art history. This seminar critically explores how African art history has been taking shape through digital means, particularly online among professional arts institutions and as employed by contemporary African and African diasporic artists. As we consider how the digital world is shaping African art history we will encounter important issues in regards to ethics, cultural studies, performance theory, race, gender and global definitions of modernity. We will cover a very broad geography and time scale in this course in order to consider different movements of African art through the lens of the digital humanities. Students should bring a laptop to class as we work with WordPress to create web-based galleries, timelines and related critical writing.

Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

ARTH 325 Topics in Greco-Roman Art
Topic varies. Fall 2017: The dwelling place – house, apartment, villa, palace - was central to Roman understanding of self and society. The domus was a major site of artifice - architecture, landscape architecture, fine objects, statuary and paintings. The very structure was often decorated with wall-paintings, stuccowork, or mosaics, like those which survive from sites like Pompeii and Antioch. Even modest establishments might aim to impress with a mythological painting or two: opening house to visitors was fundamental to social structures, business and politics. This course looks at Roman dwellings in city and country, and explores their arts in cultural and socio-political contexts. Besides evidence of archaeology, we can use the wealth of Roman texts about the arts of living. Since the Renaissance, graphic media have responded to interest in Roman house sites and their art; we consider how new tools of virtual reconstruction affect understanding of the Roman domus and villa, and the roles museums (like our own), exhibitions and curated sites still play in that understanding.

Taught by: Kuttner
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

ARTH 332 Topics in Byzantine Art
Topic varies. Fall 2017: This undergraduate seminar explores the Byzantine icon and its legacy. Spanning nearly two millennia, from the emergence of Christian sacred portraiture to the reception of icon painting by the early twentieth-century Russian avant-garde, the seminar will introduce you to the history, historiography, and theories of the icon. While our focus will be on Byzantium and the wider world of Orthodox Christianity, especially in the Slavic Balkans and Eastern Europe, the seminar will also engage with fundamental questions concerning the nature, status, and agency of images across cultures. Topics to be addressed include iconoclasm and the problem of idolatry; the social and ritual lives of icons; authorship, originality, and replication; viewer response and the cultural construction of vision; the frontier between art and the sacred image; and the afterlife of the icon in modernity.

Taught by: Ousterhout, Drpic
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit
ARTH 340 Topics in Medieval Art
Topic varies.
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

ARTH 343 Topics in Medieval Renaissance Art
Fall 2018: This course is designed to introduce students of both the
digital humanities and manuscript studies to the concepts and realities
of working with medieval manuscripts in the twenty-first century.
Through the course, students and faculty will examine materials from
the collections of the Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books,
and Manuscripts, as well as digitized versions of those materials and
others. Students in the course will consider four issues relating to using
medieval manuscripts in a digital world. The first issue is theoretical,
considering the relationship between medieval manuscripts and their
digital counterparts, and questioning the notion of digital surrogacy. What
does digital surrogacy mean and how might it affect our consideration
of the physical objects represented through the surrogate? The second
issue is the practical one of imbuing best practices when creating digital
assets out of medieval manuscripts. If we are to digitize manuscripts,
how can we ensure that those digital versions are the best they can be?
And again: what does that mean? The third issue concerns the present
landscape for digital medieval manuscripts (and medieval studies more
generally), including current publication technologies and the place of
Open Data. The fourth issue is that of building resources with and for
digitized medieval manuscripts. What tools are available to enable us to
create something new?
Taught by: Herman, Noel, Porter
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

ARTH 351 Topics in Early Modern Art Theory
Topic varies. Spring 2016: What does it mean to write about art? What are
the historical origins of this undertaking? How does language mediate
the intellectual, somatic, and cultural rapport between the viewing self
and the physical object? As an initial response to these questions we
will examine the writings of the Tuscan artist and critic Giorgio Vasari
(1511-1574), the biographer of such renowned artists as Leonardo,
Raphael, Donatello, and Michelangelo. In addition to considering works
of art described in Vasari’s accounts, we will pay close attention to his
language and its relationship with other types of writing: saints lives,
chronicles, legends, guidebooks, anecdotes, jokes, gossip, and sermons.
Issues to be explored include: the process of craft and handwork, notions
of genius and inspiration, and the relationship between the visual arts
and natural environment.
Taught by: Kim
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

ARTH 362 Topics in Northern Baroque
Topic varies. Spring 2016: Undergraduate seminar focusing on all aspects
of the life and works of Rembrandt van Rijn (1606-1669). Students will
produce a research paper on any aspect of the artist’s life and times,
and course sessions will explore self-portraits, artistic development,
specific painting types (figure studies, landscapes, portraits), case study
individual works (the Paris Bathsheba and the Philadelphia Museum
Head of Christ), mythologies, religious works, and the etchings of
Rembrandt. Weekly discussions—one short analysis paper in addition to
the term research paper.
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

ARTH 375 Topics in 19th Century Art
Topic varies. Spring 2016: This seminar will place Edouard Manet’s
influential paintings within the context of modern Paris, the French
Empire and the city’s increasingly global reputation in the late 19th
century. We will study the most prominent Parisian sites associated
with the rise of modernity as well as the global reach of the "myth" of
modern Paris throughout the world, in Japan, the U.S., Latin America,
the Middle East, among other destinations. The Eiffel Tower, shopping
arcades, department stores (like the Bon Marche), boulevards, sewers,
catacombs and world’s fair grounds (including their artistic and popular
representations) will be analyzed, as well as their global reception. We
will study paintings by Manet, Monet and others, in order to get a better
understanding of why the city of Paris is often named the birthplace of
modernist art. Students are expected to have at least some background
in art history, visual studies and French.
Taught by: Dombrowski
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

ARTH 381 Topics in 20th Century Architecture
Topic varies.
Taught by: Brownlee, D.
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

ARTH 384 Cuban Visual Culture
This course will focus on the urban history and cultural politics of
contemporary Cuba with an emphasis on contemporary art and
contemporary developments in the city of Havana. Students will learn
about the Spanish influence on early colonial art, the development of
formal academic art training and the changes to art instruction and the
form and content of art created since the Revolution. The on-campus
dates are May 21-June 1 and June 18-27
Taught by: Shaw, Schmenner
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit
ARTH 386 Topics in 20th Century Art
Topic Varies. Spring 2018: In 1913, Marcel Duchamp posed a nebulous question central to much of the art of the twentieth century. As a young painter in Paris, he wrote in a private note: "Is it possible to make works that are not of art?" What are the possibilities of making in a modern world that has alienated labor from its products and commodified the work of art? What is the artist's role amidst forces of rapid industrialization, mechanization, and automation? Duchamp would continuously explore these questions in a career that stretched into the 1960s, pushing painting, sculpture, and film in new directions through the use of objects not traditionally associated with art - a porcelain urinal, a collection of settled dust, a tuft of human hair. This course examines issues of materiality and media in Duchamp's art and in modernism more broadly. Meetings will include visits to the Duchamp collection at the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Readings will draw from art history, literature, and social and political theory.
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

ARTH 388 Topics in Modern and Contemporary Art
Topic varies. Spring 2019: The end of the last century saw a shift in the way contemporary artistic practice was conceived. This class will consider the work and writings of key artists and thinkers of the last 50 years who have tackled issues of race, class, consumption, marginality, nationality, and modernism.
Taught by: Shaw
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

ARTH 389 Topics in Film Studies
This topic course explores aspects of Cinema Studies intensively. Specific course topics vary from year to year. See the Cinema Studies website at <http://cinemastudies.sas.upenn.edu/> for a description of the current offerings.
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

ARTH 391 Topics in Film History
Specific course topics vary from year to year. See the Cinema Studies website at <http://cinemastudies.sas.upenn.edu/> for a description of the current offerings.
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

ARTH 393 Topics in Film Studies
Topic varies. Spring 2017: This course will examine key moments in the history of civil rights through a cinematic lens. Over the course of the semester, we will explore how filmmakers have depicted the lives, aspirations, and strategies of those who have struggled for equal rights; how different struggles have intersected with each other; what aesthetic strategies have been adopted to represent freedom and the denial of it; and how effective cinematic efforts to contribute to increased freedom have been as well as what criteria we use to evaluate success or failure in the first place. Each week, we will watch a film and read a series of texts that will be drawn from a variety of arenas, including histories of civil rights; civil rights pamphlets and speeches; filmmaker interviews; film and media theory; memoirs; and theories of race, gender and sexuality. Course requirements: mutual respect; completion of all readings and screenings; participation in class discussion; weekly online responses; a final project that can be a research paper, film, art project, or community-based initiative.
Taught by: Redrobe
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

ARTH 398 Senior Thesis
Two terms. student must enter first term.
Prerequisites: Permission of instructor required.
Activity: Independent Study
1 Course Unit
Notes: See department for appropriate section numbers.

ARTH 399 Independent Study
One-term course offered either term
Activity: Independent Study
1 Course Unit
Notes: See department for appropriate section numbers

ARTH 426 Late Antique Roman Art
Taught by: Kuttner
Course not offered every year
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit

ARTH 427 Roman Sculpture
Survey of the Republican origins and Imperial development of Roman sculpture - free-standing, relief, and architectural - from ca. 150 BC to 350 AD. We concentrate on sculpture in the capital city and on court and state arts, emphasizing commemorative public sculpture and Roman habits of decorative display; genres examined include relief, portraits, sarcophagi, luxury and minor arts (gems, metalwork, coinage). We evaluate the choice and evolution of styles with reference to the functions of sculptural representation in Roman culture and society.
Taught by: Kuttner, Rose
Course not offered every year
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit
ARTH 428 Hellenistic Art and Spectacle
Hellenistic usually names art in the age of Mediterranean culture from the 4th century BCE and the rise of Alexander the Great’s Macedon, and the Greco-Macedonian conquest of the Persian Empire, to Cleopatra of Egypt’s defeat by Rome at the end of the Republic. Our course looks also at the age of Augustus and his successors, 1st century CE. While Greek and Macedonian practice in city-states and kingdoms is our launching point, this course also looks at international culture and cultural interaction among peoples from North Africa and Etrusco-Roman Italy, Egypt, Anatolia, the Mideast and Central Asia. We probe art, artifacts, and visual display from a range of settings, from sanctuary to house, palace and parade, and in all media, from marble monuments to pottery and jewelry. Our archaeology of Hellenistic visual culture also looks at the rich body of Hellenistic and Roman texts of art history, art criticism, and the description of objects and image, to better understand the Hellenistic maker, patron, and viewer. No prerequisites.
Taught by: Kuttner
Course not offered every year
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit

ARTH 435 Medieval Islamic Art & Architecture
An introduction to the major architectural monuments and trends, as well as to the best-known objects of the medieval (seventh-to fourteenth-century) Islamic world. Attention is paid to such themes as the continuity of late antique themes, architecture as symbol of community and power, the importance of textiles and primacy of writing. Suitable for students of literature, history, anthropology as well as art history.
Taught by: Holod
Course not offered every year
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit

ARTH 436 Later Islamic Art and Architecture
Istanbul, Samarkand, Isfahan, Cairo and Delhi as major centers of art production in the fourteenth to seventeenth centuries. Attention is given to urban and architectural achievement as well as to the key monuments of painting and metalwork. The visual environment of the "gunpowder empires" is discussed.
Taught by: Holod
Course not offered every year
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit

ARTH 501 Curatorial Seminar
Curatorial seminars expose students to the complexity of studying and working with objects in the context of public display. With the guidance of faculty and museum professionals, students learn what it means to curate an exhibition, create catalogues and gallery text, and/or develop programming for exhibitions of art and visual/material culture. Fall 2018: In 1964, "Soy Cuba," a collaboration between Cuban and Soviet filmmakers was released. Now considered a masterpiece of avant garde art, the film uses the backdrop of the island's agrarian landscape, urban slums, Spanish colonial architecture, and modern highrises to dramatize the dire social and economic conditions that led up to the Cuban Revolution of the 1950s. Using the film as an anchor, we will study the artistic depiction of Cuba since the 1750s, while organizing an exhibition of contemporary Cuban landscape painting for the Arthur Ross Gallery. Permission of instructor required.
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

ARTH 505 Masters in Liberal Arts Proseminar
Topic varies. Fall 2017: This course examines way that issues of universal, global, and national identity have been negotiated and challenged in art and visual culture. It also aims to give students an introduction to the various theories and methodological practices that have been used to critique and explain these images and objects since the end of WWII.
Course not offered every year
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit

ARTH 511 Topics in Indian Art
Topic varies. Fall 2016: Important as texts have been to South Asia's history, perceptions of the physical world dominate experience within South Asian cultures. Seeing and being seen, vocalizing and hearing, contribute to the construction of meaning. This pro-seminar will approach South Asia's perceptual world as expressed and tested by art, and methods to frame art as a source of knowledge.
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

ARTH 513 Ukiyo-e: Japanese Prints and Paintings
Topic varies. Spring 2017: In this seminar, led by Hiromi Kinoshita, the Hannah L. and J. Welles Henderson Associate Curator of Chinese Art, Philadelphia Museum of Art, students will learn about the considerations of a gallery reinstallation relating to the presentation of the Chinese collections at the Philadelphia Museum of Art. With more than 7,000 objects spanning from the Neolithic to the present, the reinstallation aims to display highlights and strengths of the collection that include early ceramics, porcelains, sculpture, furniture and architectural interiors with paintings and textiles. Students will study original objects of different media from the collection and learn about curatorial practices that include examination and analysis, connoisseurship, exhibition layout and label writing. Previous knowledge of Chinese art history and culture would be advantageous.
Taught by: Davis, Steinhardt
One-term course offered either term
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

ARTH 515 Topics in Japanese Art
Topic varies. Fall 2018: This course will consider Japanese woodblock prints, illustrated books, and paintings from the seventeenth through the twentieth century. Topics include: the formation of "ukiyo-e" or "the pictures of the floating world" as a genre; the development of the publishing system and its audience; specific artists and their works; the reception of Japanese prints in Europe and America; the modern reinvention of the woodblock print; and others. We will also make extensive use of the collections held in the Kislak Center, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and in other local collections. Assignments may include: close study of a single work; web page development; research paper; regular participation in discussions.
Taught by: Davis
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit
ARTH 517 History of the Book in East Asia
Spring 2018: From handscrolls to manga, books play a vital role in East Asian societies. In this course we will introduce the spread of book cultures across East Asia and reconsider the role and impact of material texts on societies in China, Korea, and Japan. Among the questions we will engage are: What is a book, an author, or an edition? How do readers affect books? How do publishers decide when to use illustrations, woodblock printing, or movable type? How has the history of books differed in China, Japan, and Korea from the history of the book in the West? We will consider various media (bamboo, paper, silk, and the digital), formats (scrolls, folded books, bound books, small to oversize), and the tensions between handwritten manuscript and printed pages. Hands-on sessions may include paper-making, bookbinding, and printing. This is an Objects-Based Learning course, using materials from the Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts, and the Penn Museum, with visits to the Philadelphia Museum of Art and the Free Library of Philadelphia. Requires no knowledge of any Asian language.
Taught by: Davis, Chance
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

ARTH 520 Topics in Aegean Bronze Age
Topic varies. Fall 2016: Minoan and Cycladic Wall Paintings are considered a hallmark of the Aegean Bronze Age Civilization. Often, these paintings are discussed in terms of their iconography but in isolation of their archaeological contexts. In this class, we will examine both with the goal of determining what types of paintings are used in houses, palaces, defensive structures, and buildings of undetermined function, as well as examining their pictorial programs and iconographic interpretations. With the recent study of Minoan-style wall paintings in Egypt and the Ancient Near East, the question of the spread of Minoan and Cycladic techniques and motifs must also be considered, along with the archaeological contexts at these non-Aegean sites. We will have class discussions of assigned readings.
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

ARTH 521 Topics in Ancient Mediterranean Art
Topic varies. Fall 2017: Painted vases constitute the most important and comprehensive collection of visual evidence that survives from ancient Greece. In this course, we will examine the development of Greek painted vases, with particular emphasis on the pottery of Corinth and Athens in the late 7th and 6th centuries BC. The extensive collection of Greek vases in the University of Pennsylvania Museum will be an important resource for this course.
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

ARTH 522 Topics in Ancient Iranian Art
Topic varies. Spring 2018: This seminar will focus on the environmental, archaeological and textual record for settlement in the Persian/Arabian Gulf region from the Neolithic to the pre-Islamic Late Antique. Emphasis will be on the settlement history and material culture. Special attention will be paid to the close interaction of the local communities on the Arabian side of the Gulf with those on the Iranian/Indus valley side. The patterns of sea faring trade and interaction from Mesopotamia, Iran, Indus Valley and beyond will be considered. It is possible that this class will take a site trip to the UAE during the spring break, if the logistics can be arranged. Instructors: Professors Holly Pittman (Penn), Peter Magee (Bryn Mawr College).
Taught by: Pittman
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

ARTH 525 Topics in Greek and Roman Art
Topics Varies. Fall 2018: "Roman Provincial Art" is a very active scholarly category: we test how it might be productive, sampling visual culture outside the empire’s Italian heartland from the Late Republic into Late Antiquity. Rome’s arts were always in dialogue with those of neighboring cultures; imperialist expansion into the Mediterranean world and beyond meant that cultural relations across many boundaries—social, ethnic, territorial—potentially became cultural politics. Of related interest are relationships between visual and material culture within the Roman world’s formal boundaries, in proto-global and imperial contexts, and those of peoples along and beyond those frontiers. (In Late Antiquity some of them took up rule within the old imperial boundaries, and came to cultural terms with their new lands.) "Style” is a fraught issue: what does attributed crudeness in regional practice add up to, and what were the aims of apparently trans-Mediterranean forms of display? Do “arts” engage identity formation, enforced or discrepant viewing?
Taught by: Kuttner
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

ARTH 529 Topics in Roman Architecture
Topic varies. Spring 2018: This seminar offers a critical assessment of digital Roman architecture studies. What has been accomplished and learned over the last generation since the Digital Turn, and where is the field of Roman architecture being taken? Points of focus include several landmark case studies, such as digital reconstructions of the city of ancient Rome, and threatened cultural heritage sites in Syria. The course will involve readings of significant texts, in class discussions and presentations lead by the seminar’s participants, and testing and critiquing of a limited set of digital tools.
Taught by: Stinson
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

ARTH 532 Topics in Byzantine Art
Topic varies.
Taught by: Drpic
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit
ARTh 537 Topics in the Art of Iran
Topic varies. Spring 2018: The pro-seminar will examine aspects of continuity and rupture in the visual culture(s) of the Iranian world. This is an opportunity for students whose preparations may be centered on other contiguous periods or regions to consider the manner in which Middle Asia and its rich visual cultures contributed to the forging of Late Antique and medieval/ Islamic visual expressions of kingship, territory, and religion. The seminar will consider a range of materials from archaeological sites, rock reliefs and wall paintings to textiles, silver vessels, coins and ceramics, with special attention to materials excavated or otherwise held by the Penn Museum.
Taught by: Holod, Kuttner
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

ARTh 540 Topics in Medieval Art
Topic varies. Spring 2018: The craft of ivory carving around the Mediterranean is contingent upon the availability of imported elephant tusks, from either South East Asia or, more frequently, from the African continent. The shifting winds of trade routes offer an interpretive paradigm with which to analyze ivory objects from a variety of different cultural groups: the lack or abundance of ivory and the resulting desire for or surfeit of the material shapes its meaning and use around the Mediterranean basin. The study of ivory objects as they migrate around the Mediterranean allows us to investigate the rich intercultural interactions between Eastern and Western Christians, and both of these with the Islamic world. This course focuses on an object oriented knowledge of ivory artefacts, with a strong emphasis on the collections at the Penn Museum, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and other area collections.
Taught by: Guerin
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

ARTh 550 Topics in Southern Renaissance Art
Topic Varies. Spring 2019: What made Renaissance Venice remarkable? Why was this city-state a driving force in early modern art and architecture? Why is the Venice of the Renaissance different from other centers such as Florence and Rome? How might we understand the importance of Titian, Palladio and Bellini to their peers and for future generations? Many of these questions are connected to the myth of Venice and the calculated construction of a history of the city and its idiosyncratic place in the political and social landscape as a hinge between west and east. In this seminar we will examine how artists and patrons used art and architecture to transform the capital city of an early modern empire into a powerful vehicle for the transmission of venetian-ness.
Taught by: Kim, Staff
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

ARTh 551 Topics in Northern Renaissance
Topic varies. Spring 2017: This seminar will focus on the history and interpretation of Dutch and Flemish painting, particularly the seeming "realism" of landscape, still-life, and genre scenes as well as some of the major figures of the period for their distinctive contributions (including Rubens and Rembrandt, but not dominated by them): Jan Brueghel, Frans Hals, Jan Steen, Jacob van Ruisdael, David Teniers, Jan Vermeer, and others. Who were the consumers of such works? How did the burgeoning market for inexpensive art in the form of paintings on canvas and prints affect production and types of art? How can we understand these works in their original urban, middle-class setting?
Course not offered every year
Prerequisite: ARTh 102
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

ARTh 553 Topics in German Art
Topic varies
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

ARTh 555 Topics in Northern Baroque Art
Topic varies. Fall 2015: Built around an exhibition at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, focused on the "Prometheus" by Peter Paul Rubens, this seminar will investigate the range of painted and sculpted works on Greco-Roman myths in European art and will also investigate the career of Peter Paul Rubens, particularly concerning myths.
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

ARTh 557 Modern Architectural Theory
A survey of architectural theory from the mid-eighteenth century to the present. The discussion of original writings will be emphasized.
Taught by: Brownlee
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

ARTh 559 Topics in American Art
Topic varies. Fall 2017: In this seminar, led by Kathleen A. Foster, the Robert L. McNeil, Jr., Senior Curator of American Art, students will be immersed in the planning process for the reinstallation of the American galleries at the PMA. Topics will include the history of the American collection and an analysis of its strengths, a critique of its current installation (designed in 1975-1976), and introduction to planning for a new layout and narrative of the early American galleries, set to open in 2020. Students will learn methods of object examination, research, and cataloguing using paintings of their choice from the collection from the 18th to the 20th centuries, with special attention to recent gifts from the bequest of Daniel W. Dietrich. Different types of interpretation, from the gallery label and the digital interactive to the traditional scholarly catalogue entry or the newer on-line publication format will be studied, along with theories and methods of display appropriate to these strategies, using the students' chosen objects.
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit
ARTH 581 Topics in 20th Century Architecture
Topic varies.
Taught by: Brownlee
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

ARTH 585 Topics in 19th Century Art
Topic Varies. Spring 2015: Birthplace of the nation, industrial metropolis-Philadelphia is the definitive American "place." This seminar will explore the visual history of the city as a symbolic site described and defined by painters, printmakers and photographers as well as politicians and capitalists and most importantly, its residents. How and why were certain sites selected and exploited within an evolving civic iconography? How did Philadelphia's visual culture influence approaches to placemaking? And how did artists navigate the increasingly complex political and social as well as aesthetic conflicts between myth and reality?
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

ARTH 586 Topics in 20th Century Art
Topic varies.
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

ARTH 588 Topics in 20th Century American Art
Topic varies.
Taught by: Shaw
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

ARTH 593 Topics in Cinema and Media
Spring 2016: Taking its title from a recent special issue in the journal Framework, this seminar will engage the where of film and media theory. At a moment when this discourse, often presumed to have roots in Anglo and Western European traditions, is purportedly undergoing a global turn, we will consider how some of film and media theory's key terms and preoccupations including realism, documentary, genre, identity, sound, spectatorship, nation, auteur, and screens are being inflected by expanded geographic, linguistic, aesthetic and cultural frames. We will grapple with some of the logistical challenges, motivations, resistances, and questions that scholars encounter as they attempt to shift film and media theory's borders; compare contemporary efforts to broaden the discourse's geographic horizon with earlier efforts to do the same; and consider what happens to the viewer's sense of space and place in different media environments. Course requirements: full participation in readings, screenings, discussion, and class presentations; 20-25 page research paper + annotated bibliography. Permission of instructor required for advanced undergraduates.
Taught by: Redrobe
Course not offered every year
Prerequisites: Permission of Instructor for Undergraduates.
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

ARTH 596 Topics in Contemporary Art
Topic varies. Spring 2018: An experimental class for artists and scholars. Organized around a series of case studies of artists, collectives, infrastructures, and curatorial projects, the course includes: in-class discussion and viewing; workshops with class visitors; site visits; participation in small reading groups. In the first half of the class, students will complete some short assignments. In addition, students will complete a final project that is intentionally open in terms of form. The project, which can be collective or individual in nature, will enable an in-depth material investigation of one of the threads of the class.?
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

ARTH 612 Cities and Temples in Ancient India
The wooden architecture of ancient India's cities is represented in relief carvings from Buddhist religious monuments of the early centuries A.D. and replicated in remarkable excavated cave cathedrals. This course will trace that architectural tradition, its transformation into a symbolic vocabulary for a new structure, the Hindu temple, and the development of the temple in India from ca. 500-1500 A.D.
Taught by: Meister
Course not offered every year
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit

ARTH 613 Arts of Japan
This course introduces the major artistic traditions of Japan, from the Neolithic period to the present, and teaches the fundamental methods of the discipline of art history. Special attention will be given to the places of Shinto, the impact of Buddhism, and their related architectures and sculptures; the principles of narrative illustration; the changing roles of aristocratic, monastic, shogunal and merchant patronage; the formation of the concept of the artist over time; and the transformation of tradition in the modern age.
Taught by Davis
Course not offered every year
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit

ARTH 614 Arts of China
The goals of this course are to introduce the major artistic traditions of China, from the Neolithic period to the present and to teach the fundamental methods of the discipline of art history. Our approaches will be chronological, considering how the arts developed in and through history, and thematic, discussing how art and architecture were used for philosophical, religious and material ends. Topics of study will include: Shang bronzes: Han concepts of the afterlife; the impact of Buddhism; patronage and painting; the landscape tradition; the concept of the literatus; architecture and garden design; the "modern" and 20th-century artistic practices; among others.
Taught by Steinhardt, Davis
Course not offered every year
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit
ARTH 617 Chinese Painting
Study of Chinese painting and practice from the earliest pictorial representation through the late twentieth century. Painting style forms the basis of analysis, and themes such as landscape and narrative are considered with regard to larger social and cultural issues. The class pays particular attention to the construction of the concepts of the "artist" and "art criticism" and their impact on the field into the present. Visits to look at paintings at the University of Pennsylvania Museum, PMA and/or local collections.
Taught by: Steinhardt
Course not offered every year
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit

ARTH 622 Art of Ancient Iran
This course offers a survey of ancient Iranian art and culture from the painted pottery cultures of the Neolithic era to the monuments of the Persian Empire. Particular emphasis is placed on the Early Bronze Age.
Taught by: Pittman
Course not offered every year
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit

ARTH 624 Art of Mesopotamia
A survey of the art of Mesopotamia from 4000 B.C. through the conquest of Alexander the Great.
Taught by: Pittman
Course not offered every year
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit

ARTH 625 Greek Art and Artifact
This course surveys Greek art and artifacts from Sicily to the Black Sea from the 10th century BCE to the 2nd century BCE, including the age of Alexander and the Hellenistic Kingdoms. Public sculpture and painting on and around grand buildings and gardens, domestic luxury arts of jewelry, cups and vases, mosaic floors, and cult artefacts are discussed. Also considered are the ways in which heroic epic, religious and political themes are used to engaged viewer's emotions and served both domestic and the public aims. We discuss how art and space was considered, along with ideas of invention and progress, the role of monuments, makers and patrons in Greek society.
Taught by: Kuttner
Course not offered every year
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit

ARTH 626 Hellenistic and Roman Art and Artifacts
This course surveys the political, religious and domestic arts, patronage and display in Rome's Mediterranean, from the 2nd c. BCE to Constantine's 4th-c. Christianized empire. Our subjects are images and decorated objects in their cultural, political and socio-economic contexts (painting, mosaic, sculpture, luxury and mass-produced arts in many media). We start with the Hellenistic cosmopolitan culture of the Greek kingdoms and their neighbors, and late Etruscan and Republican Italy; next we map Imperial Roman art as developed around the capital city Rome, as well as in the provinces of the vast empire.
Taught by: Kuttner
Course not offered every year
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit

ARTH 627 Byzantine Art and Architecture
This course offers a wide-ranging introduction to the art, architecture, and material culture of Byzantium a Christian, predominantly Greek-speaking civilization that flourished in the Eastern Mediterranean for over a thousand years. Positioned between the Muslim East and the Latin West, Antiquity and the Early Modern era, Byzantium nurtured a vibrant and highly sophisticated artistic culture. With emphasis placed upon paradigmatic objects and monuments, we will examine an array of artistic media, from mosaic and panel painting to metalwork, ivory carving, book illumination, and embroidery. We will consider the making, consumption, and reception of Byzantine art in a variety of contexts political, devotional, ritual, and domestic. Topics include the idea of empire and its visual articulation; court culture, the veneration of images and relics; patronage, piety, and self-representation; authorship and artistic agency; materiality and the sensory experience of art; the reception of the pagan Greco-Roman past; and the changing nature of Byzantium's interactions with neighboring cultures.
Taught by: Drpic
One-term course offered either term
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit

ARTH 628 Introduction to Visual Culture of the Islamic World
A one-semester survey of Islamic art and architecture which examines visual culture as it functions within the larger sphere of Islamic culture in general. Particular attention will be given to relationships between visual culture and literature, using specific case studies, sites or objects which may be related to various branches of Islamic literature, including historical, didactic, philosophical writings, poetry and religious texts. All primary sources are available in English translation.
Taught by: Holod
Course not offered every year
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit
ARTH 640 Medieval Art
An introductory survey, this course investigates painting, sculpture, and the "minor arts" of the Middle Ages. Students become familiar with selected major monuments of the Late Antique, Byzantine, Carolingian, Romanesque, and Gothic periods, as well as primary textual sources. Analysis of works emphasizes the cultural context, the thematic content, and the function of objects. Discussions focus especially on several key themes: the aesthetic status of art and the theological role of images; the revival of classical models and visual modes; social rituals such as pilgrimage and crusading; the cult of the Virgin and the status of women in art; and, more generally, the ideology of visual culture across the political and urban landscapes.
Taught by: Guerin
Course not offered every year
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit

ARTH 650 Michelangelo and the Art of the Italian Renaissance
An introduction to the work of the Renaissance artist Michelangelo (1475-1564)—his sculptures, paintings, architecture, poetry, and artistic theory—in relation to his patrons, predecessors, and contemporaries, above all Leonardo and Raphael. Topics include artistic creativity and license, religious devotion, the revival of antiquity, observation of nature, art as problem-solving, the public reception and function of artworks, debates about style, artistic rivalry, and traveling artists. Rather than taking the form of a survey, this course selects works as paradigmatic case studies, and will analyze contemporary attitudes toward art of this period through study of primary sources.
Taught by: Kim
Course not offered every year
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit

ARTH 654 Global Renaissance and Baroque
An introduction to transcultural encounters within and beyond early modern Europe, 1450-1600. Topics include: the theory and historiography of global art; artistic relations between Venice, the Byzantine and Ottoman Empires, and islands in the Eastern Mediterranean; Portugal's overseas mercantile network in Africa and Asia; and the Baroque in Latin America, with emphasis upon Brazil. Our discussions focus on several specific countries, including Brazil, Mexico, Cuba, Peru, and Argentina.
Taught by: Shaw, Kim
Course not offered every year
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit

ARTH 655 Medieval Art
Survey of the principal developments in Northern Europe during the "early modern" period, i.e. the transition from medieval to modern art-making during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Principal attention to painting and graphics with additional consideration of developments in sculpture, particularly in the regions of the Netherlands and German-speaking Europe. Attention focused on the works of the following artists: Van Eyck, Bosch, Durer, Holbein, Bruegel, and on topics such as the rise of pictorial genres, urban art markets, Reformation art and art for the dynastic courts of emerging nation-states.
Course not offered every year
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit

ARTH 670 The Modern City
A study of the European and American city in the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries. Emphasis is placed on the history of architecture and urban design; political, sociological, and economic factors also receive attention. The class considers the development of London, St. Petersburg, Washington, Boston, Paris, Vienna and Philadelphia.
Taught by: Brownlee, D.
Course not offered every year
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit

ARTH 671 Modern Architecture, 1700-1900
The history of western architecture, ca. 1700-1900, when architecture was transformed to serve a world that had been reshaped by political and industrial revolutions. Topics to be considered include the Rococo, the English Garden, Palladianism, Romanticism, neo-classicism, the picturesque, the Greek and Gothic Revivals, and the search for a new style.
Taught by: Brownlee
One-term course offered either term
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit
ARTH 674 Facing America
This course explores the visual history of race in the United States as both self-fashioning and cultural mythology by examining the ways that conceptions of Native American, Latino, and Asian identity, alongside ideas of Blackness and Whiteness, have combined to create the various cultural ideologies of class, gender, and sexuality that remain evident in historical visual and material culture. We also investigate the ways that these creations have subsequently helped to launch new visual entertainments, including museum spectacles, blackface minstrelsy, and early film, from the colonial period through the 1940s.
Taught by: Shaw
Course not offered every year
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit

ARTH 676 Impressionism
Impressionism opened the pictorial field to light, perception, science, modernity, bourgeois leisure and famously the material qualities of paint itself. This course will survey the movement's major contexts and proponents—Manet, Monet, Morisot, Cezanne, Gauguin, Van Gogh, Rodin—from its origins in the 1860's to its demise in the 1890's, as well as its subsequent adaptations throughout the world until World War I. Particular attention is paid to the artists' critical reception and the historical conditions which allowed one nation, France, to claim the emergence of early Modernism so firmly for itself. The course also analyzes the effects of the rapidly changing social and cultural fabric of Paris, and its affects on artistic developments. We also look outside of France's borders to Germany and Britain.
Taught by: Dombrowski
One-term course offered either term
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit

ARTH 677 The Rise of Modernity: Arts of the 19th Century
The nineteenth century is often considered as fast-paced, politically volatile and new-media obsessed as our own age. This course explores the nineteenth century's claim to have produced the first truly modern culture, focusing on the visual arts and metropolitan spaces of Europe and North America in their intellectual and social contexts. Stretching from the American and French Revolutions to the eve of World War I, topics to be covered include: the rise of capitalist and industrialist culture, art and revolutionary upheaval, global travel and empire, the origins of modernist art and architecture, and new media such as stereoscopes, iron and glass construction, and photography. Major artistic personalities of the age, from Jacques-Louis David and Gustave Courbet to Claude Monet and Vincent Van Gogh, and from Friedrich Schinkel and, Baron Haussmann to Frank Furness and Frank Lloyd Wright, are discussed. Each lecture will be followed by a brief period of discussion, and regular field trips take students to examine art and architecture first hand, in the museums and on the streets of Philadelphia.
Taught by: Brownlee, Dombrowski
Course not offered every year
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit

ARTH 678 American Art
This course surveys the most important and interesting art produced in the United States (or by American artists living abroad) up through the 1950s. This period encompasses the history of both early and modern art in the U.S., from its first appearances to its rise to prominence and institutionalization. While tracking this history, the course examines art's relation to historical processes of modernization (industrialization, the development of transportation and communications, the spread of corporate organization in business, urbanization, technological development, the rise of mass media and mass markets, etc.) and to the economic polarization, social fragmentation, political conflict, and the cultural changes these developments entailed. In these circumstancs, art is drawn simultaneously toward truth and fraud, realism and artifice, science and spirituality, commodification and ephemerality, nationalism and cosmopolitanism, individualism and collectivity, the past and the future, professionalization and popularity, celebrating modern life and criticizing it.
Taught by: Leja, Shaw
One-term course offered either term
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit

ARTH 681 Modern Architecture, 1900-Present
The architecture of Europe and America from the late nineteenth century until the present is the central subject of this course, but some time is also devoted to Latin American and Asian architecture and to the important issues of modern city planning. Topics discussed include the Arts and Crafts movement, Art Nouveau, Expressionism, Art Deco, the International Style, and Post-modernism. The debate over the role of technology in modern life and art, the search for a universal language of architectural communication, and the insistent demand that architecture serve human society are themes that are traced throughout the course.
Among the important figures to be considered are Frank Lloyd Wright, Walter Gropius, Le Corbusier, Louis Kahn, Robert Venturi, and Denise Scott Brown. The course includes weekly discussion sessions and several excursions to view architecture in Philadelphia.
Taught by: Brownlee
One-term course offered either term
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit

ARTH 686 Modern Art: Picasso to Pollock
Early twentieth-century art in Europe is marked by a number of exciting transformations. This period witnessed the rise of abstraction in painting and sculpture, as well as the inventions of collage, photomontage, constructed sculpture, the ready made and found object, and performance art. Encounters with the arts of Africa, Oceania and other traditions unfamiliar in the West spurred innovations in media, technique, and subject matter. Artists began to respond to the challenge of photography, to organize themselves into movements, and in some cases, to challenge the norms of art through "anti-art." A new gallery system replaced traditional forms of exhibiting and selling art, and artists took on new roles as publicists, manifesto writers, and exhibition organizers. This course examines these developments, with attention to formal innovations as well as cultural and political contexts. This course requires permission from the instructor.
One-term course offered either term
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit
**ARTH 690 Post War Japanese Cinema**
Mizoguchi Kenji, Ozu Yasujiro, and Kurosawa Akira are recognized today as three of the most important and influential directors in Japanese cinema. In their films of the late 1940s and 1950s, these directors focused upon issues surrounding the human condition and the perception of truth, history, beauty, death, and other issues of the postwar period. This course places their films in period context, and pays particular attention to the connections with other visual media, and to how "art" and "history" are being defined in the cinematic context. How other directors also took up these issues, and referred to the "big three" is also be discussed.
Taught by: Davis
Course not offered every year
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit

**ARTH 694 Art Now**
One of the most striking features of today's art world is the conspicuous place occupied in it by the photographic image. Large-scale color photographs and time-based installations in projections are everywhere. Looking back, we can see that much of the art making of the past 60 years has also been defined by this medium, regardless of the form it takes. Photographic images have inspired countless paintings, appeared in combines and installations, morphed into sculptures, drawings and performances, and served both as the object and the vehicle of institutional critique. They are also an increasingly important exhibition site: where most of us go to see earthworks, happenings and body-art. This course is a three-part exploration of our photographic present.
Taught by: Silverman
Course usually offered in spring term
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit

**ARTH 695 Cinema and Media**
This course will provide an introduction to some of the most important film theory debates, and allow us to explore how writers and filmmakers from different countries and historical periods have attempted to make sense of the changing phenomenon known as "cinema," to think cinematically. Topics under consideration may include: spectatorship, authorship, the apparatus, sound, editing, realism, race, gender and sexuality, stardom, the culture industry, the nation and decolonization, what counts as film theory and what counts as cinema, and the challenges of considering film theory in a global context, including the challenge of working across languages. There will be no screenings for this course. No knowledge of film theory is presumed. Course requirements: attendance at lecture and participation in lecture and section discussions; canvas postings; 1 in-class midterm; 1 take-home final.
Taught by: Redrobe
Course not offered every year
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit

**ARTH 696 Contemporary Art**
Many people experience the art of our time as bewildering, shocking, too ordinary (my kid could do that), too intellectual (elitist), or simply not as art. Yet what makes this art engaging is that it raises the question of what art is or can be, employs a range of new materials and technologies, and addresses previously excluded audiences. It invades non-art spaces, blurs the boundaries between text and image, document and performance, asks questions about institutional frames (the museum, gallery, and art journal), and generates new forms of criticism. Much of the "canon" of what counts as important is still in flux, especially for the last twenty years. And the stage is no longer centered only on the United States and Europe, but is becoming increasingly global. The course will introduce students to the major movements and artists of the post-war period, with emphasis on social and historical context, critical debates, new media, and the changing role of the spectator/participant.
Course not offered every year
Activity: Lecture
1 Course Unit

**ARTH 701 Proseminar in Methods in the History of Art**
The meanings we ascribe to art works of any culture or time period are a direct result of our own preoccupations and methods. This colloquium will give both a broad overview of contemporary debates in the history of art-including such issues as technologies of vision, feminism, gender and sexuality studies, globalization, the pictorial turn or material/vision culture-and locate these methods within art history's own intellectual history, as well as the history of aesthetics. The course will consist of wide-ranging weekly readings and discussion, and also clarify such key terms as iconography, formalism, connoisseurship, and the Frankfurt and Vienna Schools.
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

**ARTH 711 Topics in Indian Art**
Topic varies. Fall 2017: We will examine the practice and symbolism of South Asian Architecture with case studies of how to build and how to make buildings meaningful.
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

**ARTH 714 Topics in East Asian Art**
Curatorial Seminar Spring 2015: This course will be offered in association with the exhibition, Representing Place: Landscape and Imagination in Modern Japanese Prints, to be held at the Arthur Ross Gallery in spring 2015. The seminar proposes to expand our discussion of landscape as a larger theme in the visual arts, with examples drawn from Europe, America, East Asia, and other locations. We will further consider how some sites became known as famous places, and how that act is tied up to issues of local, regional and national identity and often implicated in the promotion of specific places. This course will feature the opportunity to study works in the PMA collection, travel to "famous sites" around Philadelphia, and participate in the final preparations and installation of the exhibition.
Taught by: Davis
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit
ARTH 720 Topics in Aegean Art
Topic varies. Fall 2018: The choices made by groups of people with regard to the treatment of their dead can be reflective of a society’s beliefs and social structure. In this course, we will examine the burial traditions of the people of the Prehistoric Aegean from the Neolithic through the end of the Bronze Age, circa 7,000-1,100 BCE. We will focus on burial architecture, grave goods, burial rituals, mortuary variability, and the symbolic meaning of death and burial in Prehistoric Greece. Particular attention will be paid to recent discoveries on Crete, the Mainland, and the Cycladic islands. Students will write two papers, and these papers will be presented to the class. The first paper will be circa 15 pages long with footnotes, bibliography, and images (presented via powerpoint) and the second will be a 20-25 page paper with footnotes, bibliography, and images presented via powerpoint.
Taught by: Shank
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit
ARTH 722 Topics in the Art of Ancient Iran
Topic varies.
Taught by: Pittman
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit
ARTH 723 Topics in the Ancient Near East
Topic varies. Spring 2015: This team taught class will extend from the lead up to the Neo Sumerian Empire through the Empire and its collapse and reorganization of the political landscape of greater Mesopotamia. It will consider the imperial period internally and from the perspective of the northern and eastern neighbors. This class is an upper level graduate research seminar that will include art historical, anthropological and historical approaches. Class participation and a major research paper are required.
Taught by: Pittman
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit
ARTH 725 Topics in Greek and Roman Art
Topic varies.
Taught by: Kuttner
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit
ARTH 727 Topics in Byzantine Art and Architecture
Topic varies. Spring 2018: The recent return to the object across the humanities and social sciences has brought to the fore concerns with the nature of material things, their operation in the world, and their entanglement with humans. This seminar will introduce you to some of the key theoretical writings on the object and material culture and will ask you to interrogate their relevance for the discipline of art history. Our focus will be on the Middle Ages, but depending on the specific interests of the seminar’s participants, we may venture into other historical periods and cultural domains. Topics to be addressed include the social life of things; agency; materiality; the relic; the gift; the miniature; and the question of the human/nonhuman divide.
Taught by: Drpic
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit
ARTH 732 Topics in Byzantine Art and Architecture
Topic varies.
Taught by: Drpic
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit
ARTH 735 Topics in Islamic Art
Topic varies.
Taught by: Holod
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit
ARTH 738 Topics in Islamic Archaeology
Topic varies. Spring 2017: This seminar will trace the development of the field from one that was centered largely on the recovery of major monuments to one in which issues of daily life, demography, chronology and the study of settlement patterns have come to play a major role. The seminar will review work in the major zones of the Islamic world: Central Asia, Iran, Iraq, Anatolia, Syria, Palestine, Egypt, North Africa I (Libya-Tunisia), North Africa II (Algeria-Morocco), Spain. Of special interest this semester will be the study of landscape archaeology and settlement patterns. The seminar will discuss changes in patterns of settlement, trade and material culture 650 - 1300 CE in different areas of the Islamic world, concentrating on sites in Iran, Syria and North Africa.
Taught by: Holod
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit
ARTH 740 Topics in Medieval Art
Topic varies. Fall 2018: This seminar will examine the intersection between technique, medium and desire in the Middle Ages. The questions of what spurs or instigates technical change, what means an artist/artisan deploys to achieve the longed-for result, and what happens in the face of failure will organize our discussions. In order to interrogate these topics, we will read rather broadly across the history of art and the history of science, touching on periods adjacent to the Middle Ages. The course will incorporate selective hands-on learning experiences to enrich our inquiry.
Taught by: Guerin
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit
ARTH 750 Topics in Southern Renaissance Art
Topic varies. Fall 2018: This innovative course will explore the cross-fertilization between manuscript illumination and other media such as wall-painting, panel painting, architecture, sculpture, and stained glass across the early modern world, 1300-1600. We will consider such topics as: intermediality, artistic transfer, miniature vs. monumental, workshop practice, patronage, and the nascent art market. Students will have the rare opportunity to see and handle manuscripts held in area collections such as the Kislak Center and the Free Library of Philadelphia. This course is open to all students who are interested in artistic practice, science, touching on periods adjacent to the Middle Ages. The course will incorporate selective hands-on learning experiences to enrich our inquiry.
Taught by: Kim
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit
ARTH 752 Topics in Renaissance to Contemporary
Topic varies. Spring 2018: Does money have a period-specific and thus historically variable look? Can we speak of a visual system of money or an imagination of money? How do we address questions of status and class, poverty and wealth, in 21st-century art history, and how do we read Marx (among others) art historically these days? How do we analyze art that’s responsive to market fluctuations or extreme financial expansions and recessions? The seminar will engage directly with depictions of money from the Renaissance to the 19th century: the design of bills, coins, insurance policies, bond or stock certificates; the material changes to the face of money under regime-change; and representations of transactions in pawn shops, casinos, stock exchanges, and other market places. But we will also take money less literally and think anew about the value of materials, artists pay, patron’s funds, and more broadly the costs associated with the making and consumption of art.
Taught by: Dombrowski, Kim
One-term course offered either term
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

ARTH 761 Topics in Northern Renaissance Art
Topic varies. Spring 2016: Curatorial emphasis for graduate students about the rich collections of the Johnson Collection in the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Students will work together with the Johnson Collection curator, Christopher Atkins, researching all aspects of selected works: painting history, condition, bibliography, theme, and significance for sample catalogue entries. Some of these works will eventually go on display a year later in a Johnson Collection Centennial exhibition at the PMA, so the possibility of a publication may accrue to invaluable "insider" museum experience.
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

ARTH 762 Topics in Baroque Art
Topic varies.
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

ARTH 765 Topics in Northern Baroque Art
Topic varies. This seminar will consider major themes in Northern art of the 16th and 17th centuries, essentially from Bruegel to Vermeer. The premise is that the Reformation altered certainties in knowledge and even in perception, especially in the wake of wars, newly discovered lands, changing science and collecting of Wonders. Among new imagery topics would include: melancholy, vanitas, witchcraft, travel images, and the status of the emblem as well as allegory. Students will select a topic for semester-long investigation and co-present a class with the instructor. No prerequisites; graduate students only.
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

ARTH 767 Topics in 19th Century Architecture
Topic varies. Fall 2017: This seminar will explore the exhilarating architectural environment of the period ca. 1750-1900, when a ferocious appetite for artistic invention was let loose in kitchen filled with new knowledge about the entire history of human architecture. Focusing on French, German, and English architecture, the seminar will examine major texts and study important monuments, all considered in their cultural and political contexts.?
Taught by: Brownlee
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

ARTH 775 Topics in 19th Century European Art
Topic varies. Spring 2015: Despite the fact that one exhibition on Impressionism chases the next these days, the academic study of this crucial early modernist movement has slowed since the 1970s and 1980s, when new art historical paradigms (like feminism and the social history of art) were tested on Manet, Monet and their followers. This seminar seeks to understand this development but also countermand it by establishing an account of Impressionism that fits our current global, multimedia and multidisciplinary forms of humanistic thought. To this end, we will read those recent scholars who place Impressionism within new contexts that include the history of science and technology (visual perception, psychology, evolution, chemistry), political history and theory (republicanism, revolution, empire, nationalism), and consumer culture (fashion, capitalism). We will also go back to the movement’s early critics (like Laforgue and Geoffroy), in order to appreciate their strange metaphorical languages (which saw in Impressionism, for instance, the seeds of social upheaval or the most advanced eye in human evolution) and make them newly useful for a 21st-century interpretation of Impressionism’s true intellectual heft and radical aesthetics.
Taught by: Dombrowski
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

ARTH 781 Topics in 20th Century Architecture
Topic varies.
Taught by: Brownlee
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit
ARTH 783 Topics in Comparative Literature and Theory
This course has valuable content, addressing specific topics of broad, interdisciplinary concern in an innovative, multi-instructor format. The goal is to bring Penn students and faculty from a wide range of topics together around the study of theories, methods, periods and other common areas of interest in a shared intellectual space. Past topics have been "Modernism Across Borders," "Collective Violence, Trauma and Representation," and "Global Cultural Formations." The experimental seminar format devotes the first two hours of each three-hour class to discussion of readings selected in consultation with guest instructors from a range of Penn departments and programs, as well as nearby campuses. The third hour is devoted to a presentation and discussion of a work in progress, a project either of a member of the course, or of a guest. Guest instructors may appear for one or a few meetings. The course is coordinated by the convener(s) who are present for all the class meetings along with the guests. Students are encouraged to bring work in progress, either on the basis of past seminars or independent projects, to form the basis for their projects in the seminar.
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

ARTH 786 Topics in 20th Century Art
Topic varies.
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

ARTH 788 Topics in 20th Century American Art
Topic varies.
Taught by: Leja, Shaw
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

ARTH 793 Topics in Cinema and Media
Topic varies
Taught by: Beckman
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

ARTH 794 Topics in Contemporary Art
Topic varies. Fall 2018: Since it was not translated into English until the mid 1960s, Walter Benjamin’s Work of Art essay was slow to arrive in the English-speaking world, and when it did, it seemed part of the same zeitgeist as Guy Debord’s The Society of the Spectacle, Roland Barthes The Rhetoric of the Image, and Louis Althusser’s Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses. This zeitgeist was deeply suspicious of popular images, and this suspicion was soon fortified from a feminist direction by Laura Mulvey’s Visual pleasure and Narrative Cinema, and a postcolonial one by Frantz Fanon’s Black Skin, White Masks. Benjamin’s essay extended it to the kinds of images we generally find in museums, i.e., to what I will be calling pictures. This made the museum the primary target of institutional critique, and gave rise to what Hal Foster called the anti-aesthetic. It was against this backdrop that the so-called Pictures Generation emerged. This category was helpful at first, since it allowed us to look at things that would otherwise have been forbidden. It was based, however, on a misapprehension: the misapprehension that a picture means the same thing for Jeff Wall as it does for Cindy Sherman.
Taught by: Silverman
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit