

Major's Handbook



Tufts University
Department of Art & Art History

The Art History Major's Handbook

Welcome to the Department of Art & Art History! This Handbook is designed to answer some questions you may have about the undergraduate programs we offer here in the Art History Department, and as a quick reference to faculty, curriculum and policies regarding our programs.

For more information please visit Tufts' Web sites at:

<http://ase.tufts.edu/art>

<http://ase.tufts.edu/faculty-guide/>

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What is Art History?

Every human culture has produced art, and the study of visual imagery affords unique insights into our own culture and those of other nations which make up our "global village."

The history of art is the study of form and meaning in the visual arts from their beginnings to the present. The wide range of courses offered by the department aims to familiarize students with important artists, traditions, and themes in world art and visual culture. Some courses will focus on individual achievements, great artists and schools, while others will explore significant periods, such as the Renaissance or the 1960s, or themes that cut across time and cultures, for example, the treatment of nature or the fear and destruction of images (Iconoclasm and Iconophobia).

As a humanistic discipline, the history of art emphasizes scholarly investigation and critical analysis over technical training. However, majors are encouraged to take studio courses as part of their program and to take advantage of Tufts affiliation with the School of the Museum of Fine Arts.

Significant portions of the western visual tradition are covered by our courses, on the introductory and advanced level, as are the arts of Africa, Armenia, Asia, Islam and the Middle East. In recent years the discipline of art history has been shifting away from the study of great artists and their works toward a more contextual appreciation of how works of art function and are valued in society.

In addition to courses on individual figures, you will find courses offered on a range of thematic, often interdisciplinary subjects, such as iconoclasm, mentioned above, or colonialism, gender, monuments, museums, pop culture, and the role of art critics. We also offer regular courses on film and film history.

FACULTY in the Department of Art and Art History

Daniel Abramson, Associate Professor, Department Chair and Director of Architectural Studies

Architecture From Renaissance - Contemporary, Architectural Theory, and Architecture and Urbanism of Boston

Cristelle Baskins, Associate Professor

Italian Renaissance Art, Secular Painting and Narrative, and Gender and Women's Studies

Eva Hoffman, Assistant Professor

Islamic Art, Portable Arts, and Theories and Methods

Ikumi Kaminishi, Associate Professor

Asian Art and Architecture, Buddhist Art, and Narrative Studies

Christina Maranci, Arthur H. Dadian and Ara Oztemel Associate Professor and Director of Graduate Studies

Armenian Art and Architecture, the Art and Architecture of the Transcaucasus (principally Armenia); Byzantine Art and Architecture; Cultural Interaction; Historiography; the Vienna School

Andrew McClellan, Professor and Dean of Academic Affairs

Baroque-Rococo Art, History of Museums, and Sculpture

Monica McTighe, Assistant Professor

Art since 1960, including the History of Installation and Site-Specific Art, Photography, Film and Video

Karen Overbey, Assistant Professor

Medieval Art and Architecture, Relics and Reliquaries, Early Irish Art

Peter Probst, Professor

Contemporary African Art, Critical Theory, Visual Culture, Globalization

Eric Rosenberg, Associate Professor

American Art, Modern and Contemporary Art, and Theories and Methods

Adriana Zavala, Associate Professor

Modern and Contemporary Latin American Art, Art of Mexico, and Gender and Women's Studies

Affiliates

Patrick Carter, School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Studio Art Coordinator and Studio Art Transfer of Credit Representative

Amy Ingrid Schlegel, Director Tufts University Art Gallery, Curatorial Studies

Staff

Amy West, Department Administrator

Christine Cavalier, Visual Resources Manager

Rosalie Bruno, Department Assistant

Whom To Ask?

You should feel free to ask your advisor anything about your course of study at Tufts, but certain members of the faculty may have more complete answers to specific questions. If you have a question pertaining to one of the areas listed below, it may save time to go straight to the source.

- Questions about the Art History major and internships:
Monica McTighe x75384 or Monica.mctighe@tufts.edu
- Questions about the minor in Art History
Monica McTighe x5384 or monica.mctighe@tufts.edu
- Questions about the Studio Art minor, Museum School courses and studio art transfer of credit:
Patrick Carter x72014 or p.carter@tufts.edu
- Questions about the major and minor in Architectural Studies:
Daniel Abramson x72939 or Daniel.abramson@tufts.edu
- Art History transfer of credit and programs abroad:
Karen Overbey x72597 or karen.overbey@tufts.edu
- Graduate Study:
Christina Maranci x75288 or Christina.maranci@tufts.edu
- Technology/Computer applications:
Christine Cavalier x75083 or christine.cavalier@tufts.edu
- Asian studies:
Ikumi Kaminishi x72424 or ikumi.kaminishi@tufts.edu
- Women's studies:
Cristelle Baskins x72716 or cristelle.baskins@tufts.edu
- Medieval studies:
Karen Overbey x72597 or karen.overbey@tufts.edu
- Other:
Daniel Abramson Department Chair x72015 or
Daniel.Abramson@tufts.edu

Choosing an Advisor

To ensure a smooth course of study and the best use of your time, it is strongly recommended that you choose an advisor early on and consult with her/him on a regular basis. Many choose an advisor based on word of mouth or on the experience of a class, often the Introductory survey, FAH 1 or 2. Any faculty member will be happy to be your advisor; all you have to do is ask. Choosing an advisor early and allowing a relationship to develop over two or three years not only aids the advising process but is also rewarding to both the student and faculty. The better a member of the faculty knows a student, the easier it is for her/him to write letters of recommendation and render helpful advice.

Requirements for the Major

For the bachelor of arts degree in art history, ten courses are required for the major: Art History 1, 2 and 100; two courses pre-1700; two courses post -1700; and three electives, one of which may be an approved course in a related field (e.g. history, literature, studio art). At least one of the courses in the major must be taken as an upper-level seminar (Art History 200-290)

Art History 1 Art History to 1700
Art History 2 Art History from 1700 to the Present
Art History 100 Theories and Methods of Art History
Two courses pre 1700
Two courses post 1700
Three electives (one may be approved related courses)

We believe in the value of exposure to the full breadth of artistic achievement across time and cultures and therefore require all majors to take the two introductory courses, FAH 1 Art History to 1700 and FAH 2 Art History from 1700 to the Present, offered in the fall and spring of each year. We strongly recommend that students take these courses early in their course of study as they allow students to acquaint themselves with different fields and periods and with different faculty. The two surveys are designed as a spring-board to the more specialized upper level (two-and three-digit) courses.

Students often choose a major advisor based on their experience in the survey. As with all humanistic disciplines, art history is underpinned by certain theories and methods; these are at work in each and every course, but they are also the focus of FAH 100, Theories and Methods of Art History, also a required class for majors, normally taken in the senior year.

Course of Study

Most majors take more than the ten courses required for the major in order to explore the periods and fields that interest them most. By and large, students progress upwards from the single-digit surveys to the more demanding three-digit courses. Juniors and seniors are welcome to take seminars and are required to take at least one (200 level) seminar during their course of study. Selection should be determined in consultation with your advisor.

A pamphlet listing courses for the semester is available in the department office and also on our web site @ <http://ase.tufts.edu/art/courses>; in addition, your advisor may know what further courses will be offered in the near future. Most instructors try to offer their courses on a 2-3 year cycle.

School of the Museum of Fine Arts

Students may also take certain pre-approved art history courses down-town at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts; check with the Department for offerings. A shuttle bus runs regularly from the Tufts campus (from Aidekman Arts Center, across the street); times are available at <http://publicsafety.tufts.edu/adminsvc/?pid=54>

Experimental College Courses

Consult with your advisor before enrolling in an Ex-college course. Only department approved Ex-college courses will count towards an elective for the art history major.

Double Major in Art History

The Art History major has been designed to make it easy for students to double major. Art history complements other subjects in the humanities, such as languages, history, or English, but it also combines well with subjects as diverse as engineering, IR, and economics. Because it sharpens critical judgment and develops both visual and writing skills, art history offers a sound liberal arts training that future employers and graduate schools value in Tufts graduates. Because so many foreign programs offer courses in art history, students have little difficulty fitting in at least a semester abroad in their junior year, even as they complete the requirements for two majors.

Architectural Studies

The department of Art and Art History offers an interdisciplinary major and minor in architectural studies for students in the College of Liberal Arts who are interested in the study of architecture's history, theory, and social practice. The majors core curriculum provides a foundation in art and architectural history and theory, in engineering and design, and in the humanistic and social science aspects of architecture. Architectural studies majors design their own elective program of upper-level study from designated courses in architectural history, studio art, civil engineering, the humanities, and the social sciences. In spring of the senior year, all majors complete an integrative project, either as individual or honors study, or through an internship. The architectural studies major totals twelve courses (equaling 11.5 credits). The major consists of seven required core courses (including one half-credit engineering course) and five multi-disciplinary electives. For the minor in architectural studies, students take five designated courses from the major's core curriculum, which provide a basic foundation to architectures interdisciplinary aspects. For more information on the Architectural Studies Program contact **Daniel.Abramson@tufts.edu**

Art & Technology

Many of the Department's courses use Artifact.. Artifact is an interactive study tool and digital image archive. There are currently over 30,000 images available in a format suitable for teaching and studying digitally. For more information on Artifact please contact: **Christine.Cavalier@tufts.edu**

Visual Resource Manager.

Other tools such as ArtStor and JSTOR are other digital study tools available to Tufts students through Tisch Library. For information on these, contact Chao Chen, Humanities Reference Librarian.

Film Studies

While students cannot study filmmaking here at Tufts, the study of film as an art form and cultural phenomenon and as a form of art history are possible in our department.

Senior Honors Thesis

Qualified seniors (those who have made the Dean's List at least once) may spend their final year writing an honors thesis. Working closely with a faculty advisor, the student must submit a thesis proposal on an approved topic, to include a bibliography, by the end of their **junior** year. Students studying abroad their junior year are advised to plan ahead to meet the honors submittal deadline. During the senior year the student pursues a course of independent research and writing under the supervision of the faculty advisor. Senior theses, due at the end of the spring semester, count for two art history credits and are eligible for separate honors. Senior theses are demanding but rewarding for both student and faculty. They require a good deal of discipline and focus on the student's part, but in return they can take you well beyond the classroom and can develop useful research, writing and organizational skills. Senior theses are taken into consideration when awarding academic honors or department prizes. For more Information on the Honors Thesis go to: <http://uss.tufts.edu/arc/writingresources/thesis.asp>

Art & Art History Prize

Each year the Department of Art and Art History awards a prize to a graduating senior who has demonstrated a combination of superior academic achievement in course work (and independent study) and commitment to the field through participation in relevant activities beyond the classroom, such as work, internships or exhibitions, study abroad, and involvement with professional groups. Attention is given to the number, range and level of classes taken in Art and Art History, performance in FAH 100 *Theory and Methods of Art History* (our capstone course), and to the quality of written work produced throughout. Selection is by faculty vote, and advisors are responsible for recommending candidates.

Architectural Studies Prize

The Architectural Studies Prize is awarded annually to a senior major in architectural studies who has demonstrated academic excellence and a commitment to the field of architectural studies. The prize is supported by the memorial fund for Margaret Henderson Floyd, professor of art and architectural history.

Madeline Harrison Caviness Prize

The Department of Art and Art History has established the Madeline Harrison Caviness Prize in honor of our esteemed senior colleague. This prize will be awarded annually to the undergraduate major whose senior honors thesis merits recognition for its intellectual rigor, creativity, and scholarly promise.

Summer Scholars

The Tufts Summer Scholars Program offers research apprenticeships with faculty mentors to motivated undergraduates. Each student will receive \$4,500 for full-time research. Past Art History Department summer scholars have researched areas in Architectural Studies, Italian Renaissance Art, Film studies and Museum Studies. Applicants must have a 3.0 GPA or greater at the time of application and must be a sophomore, junior, or senior. For more information and how to apply for the program please go to <http://summerscholars.programs.tufts.edu>

Opportunities Beyond The Classroom

Study Abroad

One of the good things about majoring in art history is that it is universally recognized. Virtually every study abroad program offers courses in art and or art history. Majors are encouraged to spend at least one semester abroad studying art in its original context. Students can usually satisfy at least one of their distribution requirements abroad, and what better place to do it than Paris, Madrid, or Florence? For course approval and program selection, check with your advisor or the transfer of credit person (see page 3).

Internships

Some years ago, Tufts stopped giving general credit for internships because in too many cases the experience was beneath the challenge of an academic course at Tufts. This does not mean that internships can't be worthwhile, however. Internships are often invaluable in allowing students to see how a museum or commercial gallery works from the inside; experience gained looks good on your resumé (students can arrange for internships to be listed on their transcripts) and may help landing a job in the future. Opportunities in the Boston area abound; of course, many employers are keen to take interns because they work for nothing, so try to avoid places where all you are asked to do is make coffee and stuff envelopes. With this proviso, we encourage interested students to pursue internships on their own time, on weekends, free afternoons, or in the summer.

Occasionally students will find internships and an academic project to go with it that merits credit toward the major. In such cases, the student is responsible for finding a suitable site and supervisor, for conceptualizing a project equivalent to a term paper, and finding an academic supervisor in the Department of Art & Art History who agrees to meet with you regularly, supervise and then grade your final project. For more Information on internships contact **Eva.Hoffman@tufts.edu**

The Art History Society

The society was granted official status as a Tufts Student Association in the spring of 2007. Initiatives in programming include field trips to local museums, speakers, career events, and planning for the future of the society.

Museums, etc.: Beyond course work at Tufts, art history majors have access to and are encouraged to visit the rich artistic resources of the Boston area, including the Museum of Fine Arts, the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, the Institute of Contemporary Art, the commercial galleries on Newbury Street and the art museums at Harvard, Wellesley and Brandeis, etc. Special rates at these institutions are often offered for students. When at the Museum of Fine Arts, you should feel free to wander into the Museum School across the street to get a taste of What's happening NOW. It's amazing how much you can teach yourself by visiting museums and galleries on your own.

Field trips, Activities: In addition to regular class visits to local museums, the Department offers occasional field trips to cities and sites of artistic and architectural interest. In recent years, trips have been made to Newport, RI, Portland, ME, and New York City. The Architectural Society also plans regular meetings, events, and separate outings.

Guest Lectures: Thanks to the generosity of former student, Hope Barkan, and the Margaret Henderson Floyd Memorial fund, The Tomasso Family Fund and The Klebbsattle Memorial Fund, the Department is able to host a number of guest lectures each year by distinguished speakers. Please check the Art History web site @ <http://ase.tufts.edu/art> for upcoming lectures. Majors are encouraged to attend these events.

Is There a Future in Art History?

Many students aren't even aware that there is such a thing as Art History before coming to college. Because of its age-old associations with luxury and wealth, art and the history of art have certain unavoidable elite connotations. The art world is glamorous and populated by the rich, to be sure; but it is also full of people who are fascinated by images and who pursue deeply rewarding careers in museums, teaching, and conservation. The art world encompasses many different but related professional activities, all of which can begin with a B.A. in Art History.

If you are interested in a career in **museums**, you are likely to need a further degree. Most curators and directors at the big museums in America have Ph.D.s, and many other positions in museums increasingly expect a Master's in Art History. As an undergraduate, you can get a taste of museum work and build up your resumé by doing an internship or two in your spare time. Most museums are glad to have the help.

Jobs in an **auction house** (such as Sotheby's or Christie's) or at a **commercial gallery** are possible with a BA, but here persistence and good connections are important. A number of recent graduates are currently employed in the commercial art world, while others have found work in diverse art-related businesses, such as PR for museums, publishing, and international art transportation. Our Master's students can be a good source of information about job possibilities and would be happy to share what they know with you.

A career in **teaching** at the superior college level (e.g., Tufts) also requires a Ph.D., but positions at smaller colleges and prep schools may be had with the M.A.

Other Art History Career Options

Conservation (painting restoration, etc.) is another career possibility, but students thinking about this should be warned that to prepare for graduate programs they need to take four courses of chemistry and another four in studio, in addition to majoring in Art History and gaining relevant internships. There are only a few legitimate graduate programs in conservation in the country, and they are all highly selective.

If you think you might be interested in pursuing **an advanced degree in art history**, you should talk about it with your advisor and other faculty. As a start, here are some general points. Good graduate programs in Art History have become highly selective in recent years (like all graduate programs). The top schools are looking for motivated students who have done well in their majors at college and who have a clear sense of purpose. In addition to a broad selection of courses in art history, preferably at the advanced level, students should take **language** classes. All graduate programs in art history demand proficiency in one or two foreign languages (usually German, French or Italian), and you might as well get a head start here at Tufts. Languages are also needed for archaeology (Latin and Greek in addition to the above). It may seem daunting, but many stimulating professions require study beyond the BA, and we are talking about careers that pay dividends over a lifetime. Long term job satisfaction in the arts is very high. Most majors at Tufts find that Art History provides an excellent foundation for a general liberal arts education. Like other subjects in the humanities, **Art History fosters critical thinking and judgment, as well as writing and presentation skills. What it provides in addition is mastery of the realm of visual images and signs, an increasingly valuable commodity in our increasingly visual world.**

Recent majors have gone on to successful careers in all sorts of professions, including law, medicine, architecture, business, publishing, advertising, marketing, and diplomacy. In other words, art history has proven to be a good foundation for just about anything you want to do. What it also gives you, of course, is a lifelong interest in something refreshing and sustaining. No matter where you go, on business or vacation, there will always be art, museums to visit and buildings to see. Majoring will give you the key to appreciating and enjoying that art for the rest of your life.