Art History and Criticism

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Degrees Awarded
M.A. in Art History and Criticism; Ph.D. in Art History and Criticism

Website
http://art.stonybrook.edu

Art History and Criticism Department

The Department of Art’s master's and doctoral program in art history and criticism occupy a unique position among graduate programs in art studies. The department’s programs have been built with a strong emphasis on modern art and contemporary visual culture, comprising a range of critical, theoretical, and interdisciplinary interests. Rather than being isolated at a special or autonomous art institute or school, these programs have all the advantages associated with the intellectual environment of a major research university. Students have the opportunity to explore other fields in addition to art history and criticism, and may elect to complete one or more advanced graduate certificate programs in Cultural Studies, Women’s Studies, and Art and Philosophy among others.

Because of the Art Department’s extensive undergraduate programs, Stony Brook is the only major university in the New York metropolitan area to offer teaching experience to first- and/or second-year graduate students. Such experience is an invaluable asset in today’s job market.

Graduate studies are facilitated by Stony Brook’s ideal location half-way between the art centers of New York City and the Hamptons, along the beautifully wooded North Shore of Long Island. Classes, lectures, and conferences are also offered at the newly-opened Stony Brook Manhattan facility, at the Pollock-Krasner House in East Hampton, administered under the auspices of the Art Department and the Stony Brook Foundation, and at the Pollock-Krasner Study Center at Stony Brook Southampton. All curricula are designed to take advantage of the full range of museums, galleries and libraries of the metropolitan region as well as the facilities of a major research university campus. Thanks to the well-established ties of Stony Brook faculty to the professional art world, our students are regularly placed in internship and apprenticeship programs with artists, galleries, museums, arts agencies and other cultural institutions throughout the metropolitan area.

Degree Programs

M.A. in Art History and Criticism

The M.A. in Art History and Criticism is a two year 36-credit degree program that offers an integrated curriculum of art history, criticism, and theory with a particular focus on modern and contemporary art and visual culture. It presents the graduate student a unique opportunity for innovative study in art criticism and theory, as well as traditional study in art history. The goals of the program include the development of the critic or historian who can combine the various fields of art historical study with a critical consciousness and awareness of larger intellectual issues involved in such work. For example, seminars are offered on the history of art criticism; the development of alternative perspectives on art; the development of practicing art critics; and the interdisciplinary study of modern and contemporary art, among others. The program culminates in the preparation of a written thesis. Part-time study is allowed in this degree program. The M.A. in Art History and Criticism can be considered appropriate preparation for Ph.D. degrees in art history or other fields. Students also move on to careers in arts education, or gallery and museum work.

Ph.D. in Art History and Criticism

Stony Brook’s Ph.D. program in art history and criticism is designed to encourage students to apply what they have learned at the master’s level towards more intense and individual research. It is organized to allow students to further their areas of study by concentrating on major and minor fields that are a function of the individual interests of the student and the strengths of our faculty. The emphasis of the program is on integrating research and analysis into a single curriculum with a particular focus on art criticism and theory and an interdisciplinary approach to modern and contemporary art and visual culture. The program culminates in the oral defense of a substantial written dissertation on an original topic. Students are not accepted into the Ph.D. program on a part-time basis. This degree is considered essential for those intending to engage in advanced academic research, teaching, and publishing in the field of art history and criticism, and may provide a significant advantage to those entering the professional art world of museums and galleries.

Advanced Graduate Certificate (AGC) in Art and Philosophy (ArtPHIL)

For information about this advanced certificate program, please go to http://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/philosophy/docs/artscert.html.

Admission to the M.A. and Ph.D. Programs in Art History and Criticism

In addition to the requirements of the Graduate School, the following information and prerequisites should be noted:
Admission for full- and part-time study is for the Fall semester. Part-time study is permissible for qualified M.A. candidates only. Admission into the M.A. and Ph.D. programs is at the discretion of the art history and criticism faculty with the final approval of the Graduate School. Admission to the program assumes a minimum of a B average in undergraduate work, meeting the standards of admission to the Graduate School, and taking the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) General Test, as required for all applicants to the Graduate School. The minimum TOEFL score for admission is 550 (paper), or 213 (computer), or 90 (internet-based test); OR an IELTS total score of 6.5. In order to teach, any graduate student whose native language is not English must score 55 or above on the TSE or SPEAK test OR obtain a score of 7.0 or better in the speaking component of the IELTS test. The website for ETS (TOEFL & GRE) is www.ets.org.

It is recognized that M.A. and Ph.D. applicants may come from a wide variety of backgrounds that will require individual structuring of their programs to suit their needs. Applicants will ordinarily have a bachelor’s degree with an art history major or minor; however, this requirement may be waived at the discretion of the Graduate School. Those without a demonstrated background in art history may be advised to take the two-part undergraduate art history survey, plus at least four upper-division undergraduate courses in art history (with at least two of those being in art history post 1800), prior to admission to the program. Undergraduate courses will not count toward your graduate degree. All applicants are encouraged to submit a sample of written work with their application.

Facilities of Art History and Criticism Department

Since 1976, the Department of Art has enjoyed the resources of the Staller Center for the Arts. This 226,026-square-foot building includes the Departments of Art, Music, and Theatre and is a vibrant hub of lectures, concerts, performances, and other cultural activities. The complex includes faculty and staff offices, art history classrooms, and a graduate lounge. The first floor of the Art wing features a magnificent art gallery space devoted primarily to exhibitions of contemporary art, including the annual M.F.A. show. In addition, the department has substantial graduate studio space available at other locations on campus. Studio facilities in the Staller Center include full foundry, metals, and wood shops; a ceramics and ceramic sculpture studio; spacious painting, drawing, and studio classrooms; printmaking studios with etching, stone lithography and photo plate making and screen printing facilities; extensive digital facilities; and a shooting studio with gang and individual darkrooms. Art history classrooms are equipped with slide projectors and data projectors. The main library houses extensive collections of scholarship on the arts, including recent exhibition catalogues and the most important art history and criticism journals. Proximity to New York City makes available the numerous libraries, museums, galleries, ateliers, and publishing institutions of the greater metropolitan area. Classes, lectures, and conferences are also now offered at Stony Brook’s Manhattan facility, conveniently located at 28th Street and Park Avenue South, and easy to reach by bus, train, and subway. Finally, the Pollock-Krasner House and the Pollock-Krasner Study Center, in East Hampton and Southampton, Long Island, are affiliated with the University. Once the home and studio of Jackson Pollock and Lee Krasner, the Pollock-Krasner House is now a landmark museum and forum for lectures, seminars, and other academic activities. The Study Center comprises extensive reference materials and archives, including books, photographs, oral histories, and journals available for research.

Requirements for the M.A. Degree in Art History and Criticism

A. Course Requirements

The student will be required to complete successfully 36 credits of graduate work, as outlined in the list of courses below. A student must achieve a 3.0 overall grade point average to receive a degree from Stony Brook.

1. Required Courses (6 credits)

ARH 540 Methodologies of Art History (3 credits)
ARH 592 Teaching Practicum (3 credits)

2. Art History and Criticism Electives (15-21 credits)

ARH 501 Theory and Criticism: From Antiquity through the Renaissance (3 credits)
ARH 502 History of 19th Century Art Criticism and Theory (3 credits)
ARH 503 History of 20th Century Art Criticism and Theory (3 credits)
ARH 541 Topics in Ancient Art (3 credits)
ARH 542 Topics in Medieval Art (3 credits)
ARH 543 Topics in Renaissance Art (3 credits)
ARH 544 Topics in Early Modern Art (3 credits)
ARH 545 Topics in 19th-Century Art (3 credits)
ARH 546 Topics in 20th-Century Art (3 credits)
ARH 547 Topics in Global, Colonial and Diasporic Art (3 credits)
ARH 548 Museum Studies Seminar (3 credits)
ARH 549 Topics in American Visual Culture (3 credits)
ARH 550 Inquiries into Art Criticism and Theory (3 credits)
ARH 551 Topics in Performance (3 credits)
ARH 552 Topics in Contemporary Art (3 credits)
ARH 554 Topics in Visual Culture (3 credits)
ARH 570 Issues in Architectural History and Criticism (3 credits)

3. Humanities and Social Sciences Electives (3-9 credits)
One to three courses in the humanities and/or social sciences, to be chosen in consultation with a faculty advisor and with the approval of the M.A./Ph.D. Graduate Director. These may be in relevant aspects of literary studies or criticism, history, musicology, philosophy, dramaturgy, sociology, anthropology, etc., but cannot be in studio art.

4. Other (0-12 credits)
ARH 580 Art Criticism or Gallery Internship (0-3 credits)
ARS 580 Visual Arts seminar or other studio class (0-3 credits)
ARH 591 Practicum in the Writing of Art Criticism (0-3 credits)
ARH 595 Directed Readings (0-3 credits)
ARH 598 Thesis (0-6 credits).

B. Comprehensive Examination
This test of basic competency, offered in early September of each academic year, is designed to assess the student’s knowledge of individual artists and works of art, and of particular periods and dates in the history of art. It will include slide identifications and definitions of terms relevant to the history of art and art criticism. Student must take this examination in their third semester of study in order to continue in the program. An extension will be permitted for part-time students.

C. Foreign Language
A reading knowledge of French or German must be acquired before graduation. Students planning to advance to doctoral work will be encouraged to master both of these languages.

D. Teaching Requirement
All graduate students will be expected to assist in teaching a minimum of one semester, usually during their second year of residency. The course in which the student will assist shall ordinarily be an upper-level undergraduate course, under the supervision of a professor. Competency in teaching will be judged on the basis of a guest lecture, class discussion sessions, and other classroom assignments observed by the course’s faculty supervisor, as well as on the basis of the assistant’s overall performance.

E. Thesis
At the beginning of the third semester at the latest, the student, together with the Director of Graduate Studies, will jointly agree on a thesis topic, based upon a paper that s/he has written for a seminar in fall or spring semester of the first year. The student will at that time submit a prospectus outlining the nature and aims of the thesis. Over the course of the third and fourth semesters, in light of recommendations provided by a faculty advisor, this paper will be reworked into a significant original work relevant to art history, criticism, and/or theory. The advisor will be selected by the student at the beginning of the third semester or before that, in consultation with the Director of Graduate Studies. A faculty reader, appointed by the Director of Graduate Studies early in the third semester, will also read the thesis. (The student may request a member of the affiliate faculty as his or her second reader, if said individual is willing to serve. Affiliated faculty may not serve as primary advisor, however.). The thesis is to be completed and approved by the end of the fourth semester.

Requirements for the Ph.D. Degree in Art History and Criticism

A. Course Requirements
The student will be required to complete successfully 60 credits of graduate work, as outlined in the list of categories and courses below. Credits for the Ph.D. will total 24 beyond the entering Master's degree or its equivalent, as determined by the Director of Graduate Studies, for a total of 60 credits. A student must achieve a 3.0 overall grade point average to receive a degree from Stony Brook.

Required Courses (6-9 credits)
ARH 540 Methodologies in Art History (3 credits)
ARH 602 Practicum in Teaching (3-6 credits)

2. Electives in Art History, Visual Culture, and Criticism (24-36 credits)
ARH 501 Criticism, Theory, Practice: From Artes Mechanicae to Artes Liberales (3 credits)
ARH 502 History of 19th Century Art Criticism and Theory (3 credits)
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ARH 503 History of 20th Century Art Criticism and Theory (3 credits)
ARH 541 Topics in Ancient Art (3 credits)
ARH 542 Topics in Medieval Art (3 credits)
ARH 543 Topics in Renaissance Art (3 credits)
ARH 544 Topics in Early Modern Art (3 credits)
ARH 545 Topics in 19th Century Art (3 credits)
ARH 546 Topics in 20th Century Art (3 credits)
ARH 547 Topics in Global, Colonial and Diasporic Art (3 credits)
ARH 548 Museum Studies (3 credits)
ARH 549 Topics in American Visual Culture (3 credits)
ARH 550 Inquiry in Art Criticism and Theory (3 credits)
ARH 551 Topics in Performance (3 credits)
ARH 552 Topics in Contemporary Art (3 credits)
ARH 553 Contemporary Art in New York (3 credits)
ARH 554 Topics in Visual Culture (3 credits)
ARH 570 Issues in Architectural History and Criticism (3 credits)

3. Humanities and Social Science Electives (6-12 credits)

4. Other electives
ARH 580 Art Criticism of Gallery Internship (0-3 credits)
ARS 580 Visual Arts Seminar (0-3 credits)
ARH 598 MA thesis (0-6 credits)
ARH 591 Practicum in the Writing of Art Criticism (0-3 credits)
ARH 690 Directed Readings (0-6 credits)

5. PhD Thesis Credits (after being advanced to doctoral candidacy and G5 status)
ARH 699 Dissertation Research on Campus
ARH 700 Dissertation Research off Campus - Domestic
ARH 701 Dissertation Research off Campus - International

Credits for thesis preparation and research may be used to complete the total of 60 credits for the Ph.D.

B. Teaching Requirement
All doctoral students will be expected to assist in teaching a minimum of one year regardless of previous experience. Students without Teaching Assistantships will either teach stand-alone sections of the introductory undergraduate courses in the history of art; or assist in upper-division (300 level) undergraduate courses, taught by a supervising faculty member. During their first and third years of study, students with Teaching Assistantships will assist in upper-division (300 level) undergraduate courses, taught by the supervising faculty member. During the student with Teaching Assistantship’s second and fourth year (if supported), s/he will teach a stand-alone section of the introductory undergraduate course in the history of art. Some may also assist in or teach an undergraduate course at the 300 level. Competence in teaching will be judged through teacher evaluation questionnaires, by classroom or lecture hall visits by the course's faculty supervisor, and by faculty supervisor assessments of the Teaching Assistant's overall performance.

C. Comprehensive Examination
Information about the required comprehensive examination is found above under degree requirements for the M.A. Degree in Art History and Criticism. All Ph.D. students who enter the program without a master’s degree in art history must take this examination before the end of the third semester of study in order to continue in the program. Ph.D. students who enter the program with an M.A. degree in art history will be exempted from taking the comprehensive examination.

D. M.A. Thesis
At the beginning of the third semester at the latest, the student, together with the Director of Graduate Studies, will jointly agree on a thesis topic, based upon a paper that s/he has written for a seminar in fall or spring semester of the first year. The student will at that time submit a prospectus outlining the nature and aims of the thesis. Over the course of the third and fourth semesters, in light of recommendations provided by a faculty advisor, this paper will be reworked into a significant original work relevant to art history, criticism, and/or theory. The advisor will be selected by the student at the beginning of the third semester or before that, in consultation with the Director of Graduate Studies. A faculty reader, appointed by the Director of Graduate Studies early in the third semester, will also read the thesis. (The student may request a member of the affiliate faculty as his or her second reader, if said individual is willing to serve. Affiliated faculty may not serve as primary advisor, however.)

The thesis is to be completed and approved by the end of the fourth semester.

E. Foreign Language Requirement
A reading knowledge of German and French is required for advancement to candidacy. In consultation with the candidate’s advisor, the student may petition the Director of Graduate Studies to replace one of these two languages with a different language more suitable for the student’s projected area of research. Mastery of a third language may also be recommended if it is deemed necessary for the student’s research.

F. Qualifying (Preliminary) Examination
The Qualifying Examination will be administered on or about March 1st of each year to PhD students in their third year of coursework (second year for those entering with a prior master’s degree), prior to the beginning of dissertation research. It will be a written exam covering a major and minor, chosen from the following fields:

- Contemporary Art and Criticism
- Photography and the Moving Image
- Modern European Art and Criticism
- American Art and Material Culture
- Early Modern Art and Visual Culture
- Global, Colonial and Diasporic Art
- Medieval and Renaissance Art
- Ancient Civilizations

The content of the exam will vary according to the student’s interests and their choice of major and minor fields, but exam preparation should ideally begin during the student’s second year of coursework. The student will be expected to select two faculty members to serve as major and minor advisors, and to seek guidance from them on appropriate focus and bibliography in preparation for the exams. The Qualifying Exam committee consists of three members of the department faculty (including major and minor advisors), and is appointed upon the recommendation of the M.A./Ph.D. Graduate Director, in consultation with the student. The format of the exam will be five questions for the major, from which the student shall choose three; and three questions for the minor, from which the student shall choose two to answer. Responses are in essay form.

G. Advancement to Candidacy
To be advanced to Ph.D. candidacy, the student must have:

1. Completed at least 54 graduate credits and all other degree requirements (see A-F listed above), other than the dissertation and dissertation research credits.

2. Submitted and defended a proposal outlining the nature and aims of the dissertation. The proposal must be approved by a faculty dissertation committee and by the Director of Graduate Studies (see below). When all of these requirements have been completed satisfactorily, the Director of Graduate Studies will submit a request to the Dean of the Graduate School to advance the candidate to candidacy.

H. Dissertation
No later than eight weeks before the beginning of the seventh semester, (fifth semester for those entering with a prior master’s degree), but preferably by the end of the sixth semester, the student will prepare a written prospectus, outlining the scope, method, and aims of the dissertation. The student will submit the proposal to the dissertation advisor and two other members of the faculty who will serve as readers, as members of the departmental dissertation committee; one of those readers (but not the advisor), a member of the art history faculty, will serve as Chair of the dissertation defense. After the student’s advisor has conferred with the other departmental committee members and the departmental committee has approved the proposal, the advisor will submit the proposal and names of the committee members to the Director of Graduate Studies for approval. (The student may be advanced to candidacy at this point.) The student will then give a digital and hard copy of the proposal and the approval sheet to the Graduate Coordinator. At least six months before the dissertation defense, the Graduate Studies Director, in consultation with student and the student’s dissertation committee, will name a reader from outside the department who has specialized in related areas. The Graduate Director must then request approval of the Dissertation Examining Committee by the Graduate School.

At least ten to twelve weeks before the Graduate School’s deadline for submitting the completed dissertation, the student will submit to the Dissertation Examining Committee what is intended to be the final draft of the dissertation. No more than four weeks after that, if the readers have agreed that the dissertation is ready to be defended, the dissertation committee chairperson will schedule the defense, an oral examination open to interested faculty and graduate students. The date of the defense must be approved by the Graduate School. All four readers on the dissertation committee must recommend acceptance of the dissertation before it can be approved by the Graduate School.

I. Time Limit
All requirements for the Ph.D. degree must be completed within seven years after completing 24 hours of graduate courses in the department. In rare instances, the dean of the Graduate School will entertain a petition to extend this time limit, provided it bears the endorsement of the department chairperson.

Faculty of Art History and Criticism Department

The faculty of the Art Department consists of artists and scholars of national and international reputation who are actively involved in the practice of art, art criticism, or art historical research. Artists on the faculty are represented in major galleries, museums, and exhibitions; critics and historians on the faculty have published numerous books and articles in major scholarly journals or presses.

Professors

Bogart, Michele H., Ph.D., 1979, University of Chicago: American art and visual culture.
Buonagurio, Toby, M.A., 1971, City College of New York: Ceramics; ceramic sculpture; drawing.
Kuspit, Donald B., Emeritus. Ph.D., 1971, University of Michigan; D.Phil., 1960, University of Frankfurt, Germany: Art criticism; aesthetics; 20th-century and Northern Renaissance art.
Levine, Martin, M.F.A., 1972, California College of Arts and Crafts: Printmaking.
Rubin, James H., Ph.D., 1972, Harvard University: 18th- and 19th-century art; art and politics.
Uroskie, Andrew, Ph.D., 2005, University of California, Berkeley: History and criticism of late modernism, film and photography in the art of 1960s and 1970s.

Associate Professors

Frank, Barbara E., Ph.D., 1988, Indiana University: African, Mesoamerican and African Diaspora art history.

Assistant Professors

Ide, Takafumi, Instructional Support Specialist, Photography and Digital Arts. M.F.A, 2007, Stony Brook University

Technicians, and Professional Staff

Harrison, Helen, Lecturer and Director of the Pollock-Krasner House and Study Center. M.A., 1975, Case Western Reserve University: American art.

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Part-Time Faculty

Brooks, Perry, Adjunct Lecturer, Ph.D., Columbia University, 1990.

Calvanico, Jessica, Adjunct Lecturer, M.A., University of Chicago, 2009.

Esser, Joseph, Adjunct Lecturer, M.F.A. Stony Brook University: Digital Arts.

Fasanella, Marc, Visiting Professor, Ph.D., New York University.

Goodrich, Alan, Adjunct Lecturer, M.F.A., Stony Brook University 2009: Video Art, Mixed Media.


Wiener, Ellen, Visiting Artist, M.F.A. Queens College, 1985, Painting and Drawing.

Affiliated Faculty

Craig, Megan, Assistant Professor of Philosophy. Ph.D., 2006, New School: Levinas and aesthetics; phenomenology; painting.

Guins, Raiford, Associate Professor, Comparative Literary and Cultural Studies; Core faculty for the Consortium for Digital Arts, Culture, and Technology; Editor of the Journal of Visual Culture. Ph.D., 2000, Leeds, UK: Visual and digital culture; games; politics; play.

Kaplan, Elizabeth Ann, Distinguished Professor of English and Comparative Literary and Cultural Studies; Director, Humanities Institute at Stony Brook. Ph.D., 1970, Rutgers University: Film and cultural studies; women's studies; psychoanalysis.

Munich, Adrienne, Professor of English. Ph.D., 1976, City University of New York: Victorian literature and culture; feminist theory; material culture; fashion theory.

Schedel, Margaret, Assistant Professor of Composition and Computer Music, D.M.A., University of Cincinnati College.

Jeanette Oi-Suk Yew, Lecturer, Theatre Arts, M.F.A. in Design, California Institute of the Arts: Lighting Design and Technology

Number of teaching, graduate, and research assistants, Fall 2013: 20

NOTE: The course descriptions for this program can be found in the corresponding program PDF or at COURSE SEARCH.