

UCD School of Art History & Cultural Policy

Scoil Stair na hEalaíne agus an Pholasaí Chultúrtha UCD

Information for Stage 3 and 4 Art History Students

2025/26

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The information presented here outlines the modules available to Stage 3 Joint Major Art History students (DN520), Stage 4 BA International students, and those on the four-year BA Humanities Classics, Art History & Archaeology programme (Stage 3 & 4), and students who are taking Art History as a Minor.

Joint Major Art History students must take the core module, **AH30010** *Writings on Art*. Students on this programme also register to **two** 10 credit seminar modules (one in each of the Autumn and Spring trimesters) in order to achieve the minimum 25 credits required for a Joint Major in Art History at this stage. Students may also use their elective options to take the Stage 3 Art History option modules, AH30690 and AH30540.

The aim of Stage 3 modules is to further deepen and enrich students’ art historical knowledge, allowing them to delve into complex issues of art historiography. Students will benefit from more challenging modules on specialised subjects with a greater emphasis on small-group learning and seminar work. Field trips and site visits are also a prominent feature of many modules and a very high level of participation and engagement is expected.

Stage 3 Coordinator: With regard to general problems concerning written work and specific course material, students should consult the relevant module coordinator. However, the **Stage 3 coordinator** Assoc. Prof. John Loughman (Office J011) is a point of contact for students experiencing more serious difficulties impacting their overall studies.

AUTUMN TRIMESTER

AH30010 *Writings on Art* (5 credit core: Stage 3 Art History Joint Majors & Stage 4 Classics, Art History, Archaeology students)

AH30680 *Visualising Modern Ireland* (10 credit seminar)

AH30630 *Genre in the Age of Vermeer* (10 credit seminar)

SPRING TRIMESTER

AH3060 *From Constantinople to Istanbul: Art, Faith, Politics* (10 credit seminar)

AH30700 *Art in the Digital Age* (10 credit seminar)

AH30690 *Art History Dissertation* (10 credit option)

AH30540 *Georgian Dublin* (5 credit option)

AH30010 <i>Writings on Art</i> (5 credit core)	Dr Aleksandra Gajowy
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This module provides an overview of some of the principal trends in writing on art from the pre-modern to the present day. It thus builds upon the thematic modules undertaken in Levels 1 and 2, enabling students to place their cumulative experience in a methodological framework. The course develops students’ understanding of art history as a discipline while importantly positioning it in dialogue with diverse approaches and methods to underscore the interdisciplinary nature of the field. Topics include formalism, connoisseurship, feminism, queer theory, and decoloniality. The module aims to provide students with a theoretical and critical context for their final-year study of art history and to aid them in identifying the ideas that inform their own approaches to the subject. It attunes students to current and emerging approaches to art history.

AH30680 <i>Visualising Modern Ireland</i> (10 credit seminar)	Assoc. Prof. Róisín Kennedy
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From 1891 there was a movement in Irish art and visual culture to express a unique Irish Identity. This began in a concerted fashion with the Cultural Revival and the establishment of the Irish Arts and Crafts Society. From 1922 with the foundation of the Irish Free State visual culture took on a particular Importance in expressing the values of the nation. Emerging in the era of modernism and produced within the contexts of censorship and conservative views, artists and designers managed to make beautiful and critical

works of art that expressed key visions of the new nation, both supportive and questioning. The module explores the role of art and visual culture in Ireland in the period 1891- 1949 and seeks to analyse what contribution it made to the wider public's sense of a separate Irish Identity.

AH30630 Genre in the Age of Vermeer (10 credit seminar)

Assoc. Prof. John Loughman

Johannes Vermeer has become a pivotal figure in the Western European art tradition. This is largely due to the hushed solitude and enigmatic themes of his paintings, which seem to give a glimpse of social practices and material culture in the Dutch "Golden Age". This module seeks to interrogate some of our preconceptions of Vermeer and his work and to situate him fully within the branch of painting that became his speciality - genre art. Despite its low ranking in the academic hierarchy of subject matter, these scenes of everyday life were painted in abundant numbers and widely appreciated. While we might regard genre paintings today as realistic and comprehensive in their scope, artists manipulated reality and depicted rather a restricted range of characters and situations. Lectures will focus on key practitioners, groups of related artists such as the Leiden "fine painters" and the Utrecht Caravaggisti, as well as socio-economic and contextual themes. Issues to be explored include contemporary reception and interpretation, the role of the art market in the production of paintings, and the extent to which these engaging, quotidian images are reflective of actual domestic practices in the Dutch Republic of the seventeenth century. We will also make extensive use of the National Gallery of Ireland's exemplary collection of Netherlandish art.

AH30600 From Constantinople to Istanbul: Art, Faith, Politics (10 credit seminar)

Dr Sean Leatherbury

From its ancient beginnings as the town of Byzantium, the city now known as Istanbul has captured the collective imagination of many over the centuries. This module examines the art and the built environment of the city, from its expansion in the Roman period, to its re-foundation as the Byzantine capital Constantinople, to its Ottoman transformation into modern Istanbul. As different groups—Byzantines, Crusaders, Ottomans—took control of the city, they shaped its architecture to proclaim the power and grandeur of their cultures and religions, commissioning magnificent monuments such as the church of Hagia Sophia, the Süleymaniye Mosque, and Topkapi Palace, as well as icon paintings, reliquaries, and manuscripts. The module will allow students to engage with archaeological and literary evidence, bringing to life lost buildings such as the Great Palace and the Church of the Holy Apostles. When possible, class field trips to local collections will allow students to see firsthand objects associated with the city.

AH30700 Art in the Digital Age (10 credit seminar)

Rhona Henderson

The emergence of digital art in the 1960s had, and continues to have, a significant impact on late 20th and early 21st century art. Digital art refers to art produced, distributed and exhibited using digital technologies. Examples of digital art might include art that utilises computers, robotics, artificial intelligence, digital video, digital animation, video game engines, virtual reality, the internet and the blockchain in its production, distribution and exhibition. The module Art in the Digital Age will introduce students to digital art by following its evolution from the 1960s to the present day. The module will also explore the influence of digital technologies on the art world, specifically the curating, collecting and marketing of digital art. Weekly lectures will introduce students to histories, theories and practices of digital art. Students will be introduced to concepts such as medium specificity, the post-medium condition, post-media, post-digital, post-internet and the new aesthetic, and to themes such as identity, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, racism, platform capitalism, surveillance capitalism, neoliberalism, right-wing politics and climate change. Weekly seminars will give students opportunities to participate in class discussions of assigned readings expanding on concepts and themes introduced in lectures. The module will also include class screenings of selected moving image artworks.

AH30690 Art History Dissertation (10 credit option)

Prof. Lynda Mulvin

This module is intended for advanced final-year Art History students. Before registering, please contact the module co-ordinator, Prof. Lynda Mulvin by email: lmulvin@ucd.ie, to ascertain your eligibility. AH30690 involves researching and writing a dissertation of 4,000-6,000 words under the supervision of one of the teaching staff. There will be a small number of introductory classes. The topic of the dissertation will be agreed between the student and the supervisor, and should be constructed around an argument and be realisable with the limited timeframe of the trimester. Unlike other undergraduate modules, students taking AH30690 are expected to work for the most part independently and to demonstrate initiative in developing their topic. The dissertation is an exercise which will help to develop essential skills, including the study of written and visual sources, and the ability to present arguments cogently and to summarise findings in a coherent manner.

AH30540 Georgian Dublin (5 credit option)

Assoc. Prof. Conor Lucey

The Georgian era, the period between 1714 and 1830, is arguably the golden age of architecture in Dublin. Following the turbulent decades of the seventeenth century, the political stability of the eighteenth century, coupled with a burgeoning economy and a rising population, fostered a renaissance in the cultural life of the city: by 1800, it was the eighth largest city in Europe and, after London, the second largest city in the British Atlantic world. Focusing on the key public buildings that loudly announced the new Protestant Ascendancy (including the Parliament House and Trinity College), on the design and construction of the city's terraced houses and formal garden squares (from St Stephen's Green to Fitzwilliam Square), and on the celebrated and unparalleled richness of the city's domestic interiors (specifically plasterwork decoration), this course will consider how the shape of the modern city was created in response to both private and public interests.