

Open-enrolment Short Courses in the History of Art at Birkbeck.

All part of the Certificate of Higher Education in the History of Art.

2019-20

This page provides an over-view of the courses we are offering in 2019-20. Full syllabus information will be available in the coming months. Courses will open for enrolment in July. If you have any question, please email the Programme Director, Dr Charlotte Ashby, c.ashby@bbk.ac.uk

For more information on the overall Certificate Programme that these courses are part of, follow this link: [Cert HE in History of Art Programme](#)

Autumn Term – Commencing week of 30-Sept 2019

Art History: An Introduction (Formerly: Foundation in History of Art)

Taught by Daphne Hunter on **Mondays 18:00-20:00**, for two terms (30-Sept to 9-Dec for 11 weeks, followed by 13 Jan - 23 Mar 2020, for another 11 weeks.)

or

Taught by Rosanna Eckersley on **Wednesdays 11:00-13:00**, for two terms (02-Oct to 11-Dec for 11 weeks, followed by 15-Jan to 26-Mar 2020, for another 11 weeks.)

The module begins by focussing closely on a wide range of artworks, then moves to fostering skills in thinking, writing, and talking about what you see. Different ways of approaching art are explored, such as considering the status of the artist, the significance of patronage and the market, social and historical contexts for particular artworks, and the varied forms of art-historical writing.

The course is required for those wanting to complete the Certificate in Higher Education but is also recommended for those coming to art history for the first time. Additionally, it will be of interest to and valuable for those wishing to understand the issues and debates central to art history, both in the past and today.



Louise Bourgeois, *Arch of Hysteria*, fabric, 2004
© Louise Bourgeois Trust



Masters of Light: Rembrandt and Vermeer Reviewed

Taught by Clare Ford Wille on **Mondays 11:00-13:00**, for two terms. (30 Sept - 9 Dec 2019 for 11 weeks, followed by 13 Jan - 23 Mar 2020, for another 11 weeks.)

This module examines the work of Rembrandt and Vermeer in the light of recent research, such as that undertaken by the Rembrandt Research Project. This is an opportunity for a detailed reappraisal of the work of Rembrandt and Vermeer, two of the most important artists of the Dutch Golden Age. Their careers will be explored in the context of seventeenth-century Dutch culture as a whole. The course will include two gallery visits.

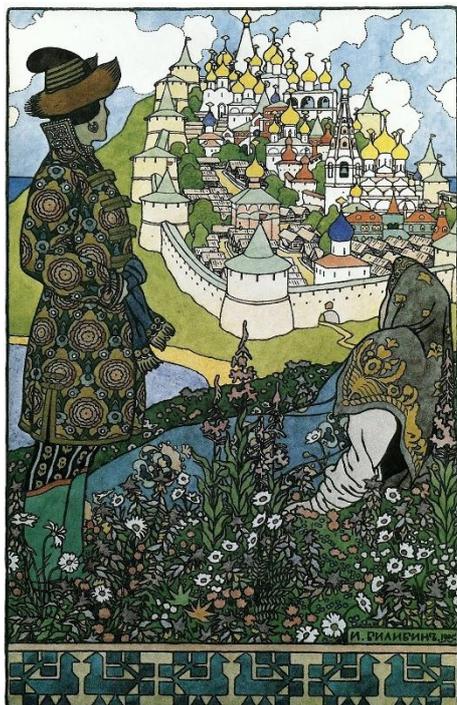
Johannes Vermeer, *Girl with a Pearl Earring*, c.1665.
© Mauritshuis, The Hague,

Art and Society in Nineteenth Century Britain

Taught by Prasannajit de Silva on **Tuesdays 18:00-20:00**, from 1 Oct - 10 Dec 2019 for 11 weeks.

The nineteenth century was marked by huge social, political and technological changes. This module will consider how artists engaged with key issues of the time such as urbanisation and industrialisation, nation and empire, gender and class, and modernity and tradition. It will encompass the study of a wide range of materials including paintings, photographs, printed material, and the applied arts.

William Holman Hunt, *The Awakening Conscience*, 1853
© Tate Britain



Art of Imperial Russia

Taught by Kasia Murawska-Muthesius on **Thursdays 14:00-16:00**, from 3 Oct - 12 Dec 2019 for 11 weeks.

The westernising reforms of Tsar Peter the Great radically transformed visual arts in Russia, displacing native traditions of icon painting and wooden architecture by western art forms. St Petersburg was raised as a modern metropolis, and its Imperial Academy, established by Catherine the Great, continued to disseminate the western canon. By the end of the nineteenth century, however, the Slavic Revival reversed the trajectory of Russian art again. The module explores the explosive dynamics of cultural suppression and resistance between 1700 and 1910. The tensions surrounding Russian cultural identity, split between east and west, paved the way for the groundbreaking aesthetics Russian avant-garde.

Ivan Bilbin, *Fairy Tales of the Tsar Saltan*, 1905

Art History: A Survey (BA)

This survey module will introduce you to key periods, themes and movements in Western art from antiquity through to the late twentieth century. The module begins by exploring the foundations of European art, before moving on to the art and architecture of the medieval, Renaissance and Baroque periods. A session on the eighteenth century is followed by a series of classes which follow the European avant-gardes through late-nineteenth- and twentieth-century modernism, concluding with the period of intense artistic activity from Pop Art to Conceptualism.

This is a lecture series, taught by a range of different tutors as part of the BA first-year programme. Classes run on Mondays 18:00-19:30 from 30-Sep to 9-Dec and 13-Jan to 23-Mar for 22 weeks. Please note that the duration of each class is shorter than other Cert HE courses. There is a break in week 6 in both terms, making it a 20-week course. The course is assessed by essays and an unseen examination in the summer. This course is particularly recommended for people who are thinking of progressing on from the Cert HE onto the BA History of Art, BA History of Art with Curating or BA History of Art with Film.

Material and Process in Art (BA)

Why do art materials matter? The aim of this Short Course is to make you aware of the ways in which different materials have been used at different periods and how different media have historically acquired specific meanings and connotations. Starting in the medieval period and working through to the present day, the module will address the use and valuation of materials including stone, wood, glass, metal, textiles paint, print, found objects, the artists' body, and digital media. It will involve visits to museums, galleries, and places of art production.

This is a lecture series, taught by a range of different tutors as part of the BA first-year programme. Classes run on Wednesday 18:00-19:30 from 02-Oct to 11-Dec for 11 weeks, followed by 15-Jan to 26-Mar 2020, for another 11 weeks. Please note that the duration of each class is shorter than other Cert HE courses. There is a break in week 6 in both terms, making it a 20-week course. The course is assessed by essays only. This course is particularly recommended for people who are thinking of progressing on from the Cert HE onto the BA History of Art, BA History of Art with Curating or BA History of Art with Film.

Spring Term – Commencing week of 13-Jan 2020



Central European Modernism: Berlin to Belgrade

Taught by Kasia Murawska-Muthesius on **Tuesdays 14:00-16:00**, from 14 Jan - 24 Mar 2020 for 11 weeks.

The First World War shook the political and cultural maps of Europe. The new sovereign states, created in the centre of the continent, embraced modernity as their template. This module examines the diverse ways of engaging art in building the new worlds across the territory of the 'New Europe', in dialogue with both West and East. Topics include: the new 'isms' - Hungarian Activism, Czech Poetism, Polish Formism, Yugoslavian Zenitism; new towns; avant-garde periodicals; photography and the café as the site of cultural exchange. Each class will focus on the booming art scene of one Central European city, to include Prague, Budapest, Warsaw, Łódź, Bucharest, and Belgrade.

Karel Teige, *Greetings from a Journey*, 1924

Giotto and Italy in the 14th Century

Taught by Christopher Mook on **Wednesdays 18:00-20:00**, from 15 Jan - 25 Mar 2020 for 11 weeks.

On this module we explore the development of fourteenth-century painting in Italy, starting with artistic innovations in Rome and Assisi. According to Vasari, painters of this period like Cimabue “broke decisively with the dead tradition of the Greeks” and paved the way for the Renaissance. We will focus on the paintings of the leading artists: Giotto, Duccio and their contemporaries and followers in Siena, Florence, and Padua. Key topics include new sources of stylistic change, technical innovation in the production of art and the relationship of art to changing political and ideological thinking, both religious and secular. A gallery visit to the National Gallery is included.

Giotto, Nativity, from the Scrovegni Chapel/Arena Chapel, Padua, 1303-05



Summer Term – Commencing week of 27-Apr 2020



Art at the Court of Madrid 1500-1700

Taught by Christopher Mook on **Tuesdays 14:00-16:00**, from 28-Apr - 7 Jul 2020 for 11 weeks.

This module focusses on the role of art at the courts of Philip II and Philip IV and the religious and political background to this art. We will explore the idea of the “court” (as a social and a physical entity) in relation to the city and external locations, such as religious foundations and a hunting lodge. Focussing on artists like Titian, El Greco and Velázquez, we will consider the role of painters in shaping the court art of Madrid. We will also study the place of “lesser” genres like still life, and religious sculpture as well as other sites with court connections across Madrid.

Diego Velázquez, *Las Meninas* (detail), 1656. © Prado

Modernism in Africa: Art and Power

Taught by Charlotte Ashby on **Wednesdays 18:00-20:00**, from 29-Apr - 8-Jul 2020 for 11 weeks.

This module offers an introduction to twentieth century art and architecture across the continent of Africa. Colonialism and later national independence and pan-Africanism are explored as the political contexts shaping local cultures. We will look at the use of art and architecture by colonial powers to exert control. Other topics include re-engagement with traditional arts and crafts among African artists; the development of national institutions of art and design and the symbolic buildings of new African nation states in the 1950s and 60s. The impetus to create modern art and architecture across Africa will be explored in relations to ideas of national, regional and international identities.



Ibrahim El-Salahi, *Vision of the Tomb*, 1965. © The Africa Center, New York

Study Week: What Was the “High Renaissance”?

Taught by Michael Douglas Scott over the week 18-22 May 2020.

This one-week course consists of expert lectures and guided visits around key London museums and galleries to explore the question: what was the “High Renaissance”? The “High Renaissance” as a term dates from the nineteenth century but the concept goes back to the sixteenth. It was then claimed that the thirty years around 1500 had witnessed a pinnacle of artistic achievement in Italy represented by Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo and Raphael. This achievement has never been placed in doubt but its relationship to the rest of the “Renaissance” has. Was it the culmination of fifteenth-century artistic developments and how does subsequent “Mannerism” link to it? How “Classical” was it? Is it a coherent style category? These and other questions will be asked in this course by testing the concept against concrete historical examples both in lecture/discussion sessions and in visits to London museums and galleries.

Michelangelo, *David*, marble, 1501-04.
© Galleria dell'Accademia, Florence



Study Trip: Budapest

Taught in Budapest by Kasia Murawska Muthesius over the week 11-15 May 2020, with a pre-session meeting on 25-April.

This visit will focus on Budapest as the thriving fin-de-siècle metropolis, rivalling Vienna and Paris. The city’s early history was far from straightforward. Once the capital of the medieval Hungarian Kingdom, the town was incorporated into the Ottoman Empire, and later the Habsburg Empire. A real impetus for the city’s immense growth came with the Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867, which meant virtual self-rule for Hungary. We will study the landmarks of the city’s rapid development into the modern capital: the Parliament building on the Danube river, Parisian-like avenues, the enormous museum complex of the 1896 Millennial Exhibition, with the Vajdahunyad Castle and Museum of Fine Arts, the first electrified underground in Europe (1896), thermal baths in Hotel Gellért, and the city’s famous cafés. A special attention will be paid to the Hungarian avant-garde including works by Lajos Kassák, László Moholy-Nagy, Brassai and Ódon Lechner.

Please note that the fee covers tuition only, and that you are expected to make your own travel and accommodation arrangements.



Imre Steindl, Hungarian Parliament, Budapest, 1885-1896.