

International Master Program in Art History

Course code: KV 5001, Autumn 2017

Doing Art History

7.5 ECTS credits

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Course guidelines and readings

Aim

The aim of this course is to provide entry points to the field of art history within and outside academia. Through seminars and field studies in collections and archives, students will be able to examine critically and work independently with different categories of materials and research practices relating to art history. The focus is on the ability to identify and define the material and the object of study, as well as to formulate relevant research questions to the selected material. Through practical exercises, students will develop their knowledge and skills relating to various forms of communication in art history, such as academic articles, oral conference presentations and exhibitions. The main emphasis of the course is on the “doing” of art history, but there are opportunities for specialisation and in-depth study of selected empirical data or a category of materials.

Learning outcomes

In order to pass the course, students are expected to be able to:

- identify and define materials relating to art history, as well as to understand and describe the difference between the material and the object of study;
- define a relevant research problem based on the selected material and object of study;
- understand and critically reflect on various forms of communication in art history, such as articles, conference presentations and exhibitions;
- demonstrate, through practical exercises, the ability to produce and communicate knowledge of art history in a given form.

Department of Culture and Aesthetics

Teaching and learning activities

The course is structured around three seminar series, each focusing on a published article written by one of the teachers. Participants will be solicited to read the text critically in an on-going dialogue with its author and eventually unfold the mechanisms (more often the twists and turns) of research. During the first meeting of each seminar series (2h), the course leader will present premises, research questions, and expected findings of his enquiry. Students will be asked to identify and group the different range of sources discussed in the text (written and visual, manuscript, print or digital, primary and secondary, etc.), find out their current location and accessibility. Through the following two on-site seminars in archives, libraries and museums of the Stockholm region, participants will be expected to trace and examine in the original some of the sources discussed in the paper and to identify similar relevant sources and collections. The final class (3h) will first be devoted to the students' own reports about the field-work, then to a discussion about possibilities, limits and pitfalls of the research presented in the given article and finally to a reflection on possible alternative routes between sources, methodological approaches and interpretations. Attendance at all teaching sessions is mandatory. The language of instruction is English.

Assessment

The course is assessed through: student oral presentation at one final seminar; a written individual take-home exam (*Afterword*); a written group task (*Interview*).

The oral presentation and the group task are graded *pass* or *fail*, while the individual take-home exam is graded on a criterion-referenced seven-grade scale. In order to obtain the final grade for the course, the assignments have to be completed with a pass, a minimum of grade *E*, as well as the criteria of mandatory attendance.

Individual take-home exam

The individual take-home exam consists in an *Afterword* (that is a comment on and possibly continuation of) to one of the three research articles discussed in the course, of no less than 5 pages (12.500 characters). The paper should include a review of the article, that is a description of the premises, sources, and research strategies of the author (how the article came into being), a critical evaluation of the outcomes, and an enriching comment where possible alternative research paths,

additional source materials or methodological approaches to develop the topic are suggested. A complete text (in Word format) should be handed in by **Friday 20 October**, at 18.00 (Mondo/assignments). After the teachers have provided an individual feed-back, a final version of the exam has to be handed in by **Friday 27 October**, at 18.00 (Mondo/assignments and Mondo/Forum).

Group task

Students will have to plan and execute an interview with an art historian following the model of the texts published in *The Art Bulletin* (see course literature). The interview should be conceived as an instrument of meta-reflection on the relationship between research and researcher and have to demonstrate a good knowledge of the research activities and publications of the given scholar. Group exams should be handed in by **Wednesday 25 October**, at 18.00 (Mondo/Forum).

Plagiarism

As a student you will be writing and handing in different types of written tasks. It is therefore fundamental that you know that all kinds of plagiarism are strictly forbidden. Plagiarism consists of:

- Students copying from each other's work;
- Students copying from internet, books, articles or any other source without a clear reference;
- Students passing a work or a citation as their own when it is not.

Any incident of this kind will be reported to the Disciplinary committee of Stockholm University. In case you are found guilty you might be suspended from the University for a period of time.

In order to avoid plagiarism you need to:

- Precise your sources by referring to the author, the book and the page in question;
- Indicate that you are using someone else's words by marking the passage with quotation marks;
- Precise whose thoughts you are presenting if they are not your own;
- Not pass your work to others.

Grading criteria

Assessment is based on a criterion-referenced scale, ranging from A (Excellent) to F (Fail). A, B, C, D and E are approved grades. Fx and F are failed grades. In order to obtain final approval, the course requires a minimum grade of E for the take-home exam and that all course requirements are met. If you have received a passing grade (A-E) you are not allowed to resit the examination in order to receive a higher grade.

A = Excellent

- The participant identifies and defines different categories of source material for art history as well as explains the relationship between sources and objects of study from a *comprehensive and critically reflective perspective*;
- *independently* formulates a *relevant* and *original* research question departing from a *broad selection* of source material and an object of study;
- demonstrates a *broad and deep comprehension* of different forms of communication in art history, such as articles, conference papers and exhibitions; - Shows the capacity to structure and communicate art historical knowledge in a pre-given form. The text is perfectly coherent and well argued, flawless, and of high precision.

B = Very Good

- The participant identifies and defines different categories of source material for art history as well as explains the relationship between sources and objects of study from a *comprehensive and partly critically reflective perspective*;
- *independently* formulates a *relevant* research question departing from a *relatively broad selection* of source material and an object of study;
- demonstrates a *broad and deep comprehension* of different forms of communication in art history, such as articles, conference papers and exhibitions; - Shows the capacity to structure and communicate art historical knowledge in a pre-given form. The text is coherent and well argued, of high quality and of high precision.

C = Good

- The participant identifies and defines different categories of source material for art history as well as explains the relationship between sources and objects of study from several, often well developed but *mainly independent perspectives*;
- with a *certain degree of independence* formulates a *relevant* research question departing from a *satisfactory* selection of source material and an object of study;
- demonstrates a *good comprehension* of different forms of communication in art history, such as articles, conference papers and exhibitions; - Shows the capacity to structure and communicate art historical knowledge in a pre-given form. The text is well argued, of high quality and of high

precision.

D = Satisfactory

- The participant identifies and defines different categories of source material for art history as well as explains the relationship between sources and objects of study in a way that, albeit in- depth and elaborate, is decidedly *one-dimensional*;
- with a *certain degree of independence* formulates an *appropriate* research question departing from a *satisfactory* selection of source material and an object of study;
- demonstrates a *good comprehension* of different forms of communication in art history, such as articles, conference papers and exhibitions; - Shows the capacity to structure and communicate art historical knowledge in a pre-given form. The text is well argued and correct.

E = Adequate

- The participant identifies and defines different categories of source material for art history as well as explains the relationship between sources and objects of study in a way that is decidedly *one-dimensional*;
- formulates an *appropriates* research questions departing from a *satisfactory* selection of source material and an object of study;
- demonstrates a *sufficient comprehension* of different forms of communication in art history, such as articles, conference papers and exhibitions; - Shows the capacity to structure and communicate art historical knowledge in a pre-given form. The text is correct.

Fx = Insufficient

The participant's knowledge, skills and abilities display minor flaws, overall or in significant parts, but is given the opportunity to, within one week after instructions from examiner, issue a supplement to a maximum grade C.

F = Fail

The participant's knowledge, skills and abilities display major flaws, overall or in significant parts.

Students with grade F are entitled to take two further examinations to achieve at least grade E. A participant who receives grade Fx or F twice by the same examiner, has the right to request to its text evaluated by another examiner. The request hereof should be made to the Director of Studies

(Studierektor). Students may request the test to be offered up to three semesters after it was last offered.

READING LIST:

Seminar series 1:

Anna Bortolozzi, "Two Oxenstierna in Rome. Sightseeing, public performances and artistic education", in S. Norlander Eliasson, S. Fogelberg Rota (eds), *The City of the Soul. The literary making of Rome*, Proceedings of the International Conference (Swedish Institute of Classical Studies 9 -10 September 2010), *Suecoromana* 8, Stockholm 2015, pp. 31-41. [Mondo site]

Carlo Ginzburg, "Witches and Shamans", in Id., *Threads and Traces. True False Fictive*, University of California Press 2012, pp. 215-227 (310-312). [free download at SUB]

Seminar series 2:

Anna Dahlgren, "The Art of Display", *Konsthistorisk tidskrift/Journal of Art History*, vol. 79, no. 3, 2010, pp. 160-173. [Mondo site]

Charlotte Klonk, "Patterns of Attention: From Shop Windows to Gallery Rooms in Early Twentieth-Century Berlin", *Art History*, Vol. 28, No. 4 (2005), pp. 468-496. [free download at SUB]

Seminar series 3:

Magdalena Holdar, "Doing Things Together: Objectives and Effects of Harald Szeemann's Happening & Fluxus, 1970", *Journal of Curatorial Studies*, Apr. 2017, Vol. 6, Issue 1, pp. 90-114. [free download at SUB]

Roger Rothman, "Fluxus, or the Work of Art in the Age of Information", *symploke*, Vol 23, Numbers 1-2, 2015, pp. 309-325. [free download at SUB]

Inteview task:

Christopher S. Wood and Horst Bredekamp, "Iconoclasts and Iconophiles: Horst Bredekamp in Conversation with Christopher S. Wood", *The Art Bulletin*, Vol. 94, No. 4. (December 2012), pp. 515-527. [free download at SUB]

Cammy Brothers and James Ackerman "'A Way Must Be Found to Broaden Our Perspective": James Ackerman in Conversation with Cammy Brothers", *The Art Bulletin*, Vol. 94, No. 3 (September 2012), pp. 362-367. [free download at SUB]

Linda Nochlin and Dan Karlholm, "Misery, Beauty, and Other Issues: Linda Nochlin in

Conversation with Dan Karlholm”, *The Art Bulletin*, Vol. 94, No. 2 (June 2012), pp. 187-198. [free download at SUB]

Stephen Melville and Svetlana Alpers, ”Sites That Have Mattered: Svetlana Alpers in Conversation with Stephen Melville”, *The Art Bulletin*, Vol. 95, No. 1 (March 2013), pp. 38-52. [free download at SUB] free download at SUB

Karen Lang and Stephen Bann, “The Sense of the Past and the Writing of History: Stephen Bann in Conversation with Karen Lang”, *The Art Bulletin*, vol. 95, n. 4 (December 2013), pp. 544-556. [free download at SUB]