

Art History, Part I - Course Schedule

Week 1. Introduction

Aims, objectives and outcomes. We will cover an overview of the classes, and introduce some of the main questions.

Week 2. Visual analysis 1: say what you see

This class will focus on critical visual analysis skills, formal qualities of artworks and building individual vocabularies.

Week 3. Visual analysis 2: say what you think

Applying the skills learned from last week's class, we will continue to practice visual analysis on increasingly diverse artworks, including examples of students' own selections.

Week 4. Painting bodies I

We will explore how the human body has been portrayed in painting, from the Ancient Egyptian's conceptual approach to Matisse's dancing lines.

Week 5. Painting bodies II

This class will focus more on the storytelling potential of portraying the human body in more abstracted ways, from Duchamp to Kirchner and Willem de Kooning.

Week 6. Sculpting bodies

As a companion to the previous class, we will examine how the human body has been portrayed in sculpture. Approaches in painting and sculpture will be compared.

Week 7. Storytelling bodies I

History painters created complex visual narratives, striving to convey human drama and emotion through their portrayal of the body. We will explore how artists can use figures to convey narrative and abstract concepts.

Week 8. Storytelling bodies II

The nature of acceptable stories in painting changed drastically in the 19th century with French Realist painting. We will look at key works by Manet and Courbet, and consider how they used traditional narrative strategies to subvert traditional painting narratives.

Week 9. Divine Light

This class investigates different strategies used by architects, artists and sculptors to harness light as a narrative device, and to suggest a divine presence. We will also consider how light starts to be explored in different ways in the work of Turner.