HISTORY OF ART (ARTH)

ARTH 1100 - Art Histories: An Introduction (4 Credits)
Crosslisted with SHUM 1100
This team-taught course introduces students to the History of Art as a global and interdisciplinary field. Led by a selection of professors from the department, in collaboration with staff and faculty of the Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, its primary aim is to familiarize students with the most significant geographical areas, epochs and works of art, as well as with methods employed in their study and analysis. The course will be organized around a changing selection of themes central to the history of art. The theme for fall 2024 is Materiality. Considering how artists and artisans from antiquity to the present have mobilized a broad range of materials and processes to create works of art, we will explore the intimate relationship between makers, matter, and meaning.
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)
Exploratory Studies: (EAAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2026, Fall 2025, Fall 2024, Fall 2023
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 1158 - FWS: Chinese Modernism: From Shanghai to Hong Kong (3 Credits)
How can a painting serve as a map of political displacement and cultural survival? This seminar investigates the transformation of Chinese modernism as its center of gravity shifted from the cosmopolitan 1930s Shanghai—to the postwar Hong Kong. By examining film, woodcut prints, and ink painting, students will explore how artists negotiated national identity during times of radical change. As a first-year writing seminar, the course emphasizes visual literacy, teaching students to translate complex visual evidence into persuasive academic prose. Through a scaffolded sequence of assignments, including formal analyses and responses to archival documents, students will engage in a rigorous process of drafting and peer review. This course invites students from all majors to develop their critical voice by analyzing how art responds to historical upheaval.
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 1163 - FWS: Origins of Photography (3 Credits)
This course will allow first-years to answer the question: from where, and how, did the idea evolve that one might catch a picture in a net, as one might catch not only a butterfly but the piece of sky in which it flew? By discovering how photography evolved, students will learn how many forces—artistic, scientific, technological, political, phenomenological, and structural—are responsible for the appearance of a single invention and idea. Episodes from the history of optics, perspective drawing, mapmaking, landscape, chemistry, view painting, will be glimpsed (1300-1800) as well as the race to capture the image in the camera obscura (1800-1839) and an introduction to early photographic processes (1839-1870).
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2026, Spring 2018
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 1164 - FWS: Looking through Smoke: Photography and Visibility (3 Credits)
We think that photographs show us a perfect re-creation of the world around us, but photographs are imperfect slices of reality. Historically, what kinds of people, places, and phenomena were photographs unable to capture? What lurks just outside of or beyond the edge of the frame? This course will ask students to consider the politics of making photographs and rendering certain subjects visible (or invisible). Throughout the course, we will examine photographs from the nineteenth century to the present and read texts by art historians, cultural critics, and creative writers that present different ways of seeing and interpreting photographs. Students will develop two kinds of writing in this course—formal analyses of photographs through close-looking and persuasive, well-researched essays based on analyses of scholarly texts.
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2026
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 2000 - Introduction to Visual Studies (3-4 Credits)
Crosslisted with VISST 2000, COML 2000, AMST 2000
This course provides an introduction to modes of vision and the historical impact of visual images, visual structures, and visual space on culture, communication, and politics. It examines all aspects of culture that communicate through visual means, including 20th-century visual technologies-photography, cinema, video, etc., and their historical corollaries. The production and consumption of images, objects, and events is studied in diverse cultures. Students develop the critical skills necessary to appreciate how the approaches that define visual studies complicate traditional models of defining and analyzing art objects.
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, ETM-AS), (CA-AG, KCM-AG, LA-AG)
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2026, Winter 2026, Spring 2025, Spring 2024
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 2200 - Introduction to the Classical World in 24 Objects (4 Credits)
Crosslisted with CLASS 2700, ARKEO 2700
The art of Ancient Greece and Rome has a complex legacy within western culture that is inseparable from ideas about power, beauty, identity, and knowledge. As such, 'Classical' art has been appropriated for all kinds of ends, many of them deeply problematic. But what did ancient statues, paintings, vessels, or buildings mean for the cultures that originally created, viewed, and lived alongside them? How were they embedded within political and social structures, religious practices, and public or domestic spaces? What can they tell us about practices of representation and story-telling? How might they help us access ancient attitudes to gender, ethnicity, or social status? And why is any of this still relevant today? This course on Greek and Roman art and archaeology will address all these questions. Covering the time span from the Bronze Age (3rd millennium BCE) to the late Roman Empire (4th century CE), we will focus on one object or monument each lecture, considering how it can be considered exemplary for its time. Where possible, we will engage with artefacts in our collections at Cornell, including the plaster-casts, as we develop skills in viewing, analyzing, and contextualizing material evidence. (ARKEO-RMNE)
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)
Exploratory Studies: (EUAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Summer 2026, Spring 2026, Winter 2026, Summer 2025
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 2221 - Archaeology of Roman Private Life (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with CLASS 2743, ARKEO 2743
What was it like to live in the Roman world? What did that world look, taste and smell like? How did Romans raise their families, entertain themselves, understand death, and interact with their government? What were Roman values and how did they differ from our own? This course takes as its subject the everyday lives of individuals and explores those lives using the combined tools of archaeology, architecture and art, as well as some primary source readings. In doing so, it seeks to integrate those monuments into a world of real people, and to use archaeology to narrate a story about ancient lives and life habits. Some of the topics explored will include the Roman house; the Roman family, children and slaves; bathing and hygiene; food; gardens, agriculture and animals. (ARKEO-RMNE)
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2023, Spring 2019, Spring 2012, Spring 2009
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 2240 - The Art and Architecture of Ancient Egypt (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with NES 2433, ARKEO 2433
Why did the ancient Egyptians build pyramids, and why did they stop building them? Why did they depict things in ways that seem stiff and unnatural? Is ancient Egyptian art ?art?? These are some of the questions explored in this course, which spans late prehistory (c. 3500 BCE) to the Roman period (early centuries CE). We will take a thematic approach, progressing chronologically and introducing key genres where appropriate. First, we will explore central issues of symbolism, landscape, and materials through the architecture and furnishings of temples and royal tombs. Next come the social worlds of art. Can we speak of artists? How were gender, class, and ethnicity represented? Finally, we will survey the legacies of Egyptian visual culture in antiquity and the modern West. (ARKEO-RMNE)
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)
Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2026
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 2255 - Ecocriticism and Visual Culture (4 Credits)
Crosslisted with AMST 2255
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)
Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2025, Fall 2018
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 2355 - Introduction to Medieval Art and Culture (4 Credits)
Crosslisted with MEDVL 2355
Survey lecture course covering the creation, encoding, and reception of Medieval (roughly AD 500-1500) European, Byzantine, and Islamic architecture, ornament, manuscripts, liturgical and luxury objects. The approach is thematic but chronologically grounded; attention is also given to cultural interaction in the Mediterranean basin.
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Spring 2022, Spring 2021, Spring 2020
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 2400 - Introduction to Early Modern Art: Cosmopolitanism and Empire (4 Credits)
Crosslisted with VISST 2645
This course offers an introduction to the diverse global encounters and exchanges that shaped early modern European art and material culture, c.1400-1650. The course will be structured around nine European imperial and/or cosmopolitan centres and their connections between one another, and with the Ottoman Empire, Asia, Africa, and the Americas. We will explore how global commerce influenced material and artistic consumption, and the ways in which early modern slavery was part and parcel of Europe's art world. Special focus discussions will deepen students' knowledge of artistic materials and media and the ways in which global connections impacted the making of early modern art. Students will gain a broad understanding of early modern art and practices of making, the historical contexts in which art objects were produced, and their social and cultural uses. Students will become familiar with the language and approaches of art history and material culture studies, as well as with key methodologies including globalized, decolonial, critical race, and gender theories.
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)
Exploratory Studies: (EUAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2026, Fall 2025, Fall 2024, Spring 2024
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 2500 - Bastard of Science on the Doorstep of Art: A History of Early Photography (4 Credits)
Crosslisted with VISST 2500
This course examines the prehistory, invention, and uses of photography in the nineteenth century. Special attention is paid to the colonial and cultural histories of photography's early appearances around the globe, its antiquated duties and fascinating machinery before the rise of the hand camera.
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)
Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2026, Fall 2025, Fall 2024, Fall 2023
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 2501 - 20th-21st Century Photography: You Push the Button, We Do the Rest (4 Credits)
Photography created a global image culture in the 20th century, thanks to the invention of film and the hand camera. This class surveys its modern uses for journalism, medicine, colonialism and its resistance, color photography, memory making, movie making, surveillance, racial justice, identity formation, space exploration, microscopy, and more. Special emphasis, however, is placed on the development of photography as a cornerstone of fine art around the world. The history of photography is outlandishly broad; so are the scope of this course's lectures, in order to offer a powerful view of the kinds of pictures photography has made and how its magic has worked.
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS)
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 2550 - Introduction to Latin American Art (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with LATA 2050, VISST 2550, SHUM 2550, AMST 2555
This course is designed to introduce students to Latin American art from the pre-Columbian period to the present. It will cover the arts of ancient civilizations including the Olmec, Maya, Aztec, Moche, and Inca, as well as the colonial, modern, and contemporary arts of Latin America and the Latino/a diaspora. Major themes include the relationship between art and religion, innovations and transformations in Latin American art across time, art and identity, as well as Indigenous and Afro-Latin American contributions to the visual arts. This course examines the societal relevance of images across Latin American cultures by paying close attention to the historical and political contexts in which they were created. Course readings are drawn from the disciplines of art history, anthropology, and history, along with theoretical perspectives on colonialism, postcolonialism, identity, race, and ethnicity.
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)
Last Four Terms Offered: Winter 2026, Fall 2023, Spring 2021, Spring 2019
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 2600 - Introduction to Modern Western Art: Materials, Media, and the End of Masterpieces (4 Credits)
This course offers a broad introduction to some of the artistic practices that have come to be known as modern in Europe and the United States. Beginning with the upheavals of the French Revolution and carrying through to the turmoil of two world wars, we will survey the role of both fine art and visual culture in a period of great political, social, and technological change. The very definition of art was revolutionized in this moment, as an emphasis on materials and experiments with new media like photography and cinema took precedence over the production of highly-skilled masterpieces. Particular attention will be given to exchanges between western representation and that of other cultures. Topics covered include revolutionary propaganda; romantic unreason; caricature and political critique; the changing pace of the modern city; architecture in the machine age; the place of women in modernity; and the impact of new technology on spectatorship. Students should leave the course with increased familiarity with key art movements in the modern era and the skills to analyze and appreciate art and visual culture from any period.
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)
Exploratory Studies: (EUAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2025, Fall 2024, Fall 2023, Fall 2021
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 2650 - 20th Century North American Art, Architecture, and Design (4 Credits)
This survey course introduces students to key movements and figures in North American Art, Architecture, and Design across the twentieth century. Engaging with works of art and design from within the cannon as well as vernacular and everyday objects, students will explore the intersections of politics and visual culture, with particular attention to questions of race, gender, colonialism, and labor across geographic space. Questions we will consider include: How have art and material culture produced particular relationships to landscape and national identity? How have borders and the experience of migration forged unique forms of artistic practice and urban life? How have technological innovations transformed cities, spaces, and media? And what does it mean to engage critically with these historical forces through diverse forms of representation?
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS)
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 2700 - Introduction to Black Art (4 Credits)
Crosslisted with ASRC 2700, AMST 2700
This course surveys global and American black art and visuality from the 18th century to the present and introduces its major figures, movements, criticisms and social, political, and economic issues. We begin with an overview of African art and global structures of slavery and colonialism in the 18th and 19th centuries to ask how racial blackness structures the way the modern world has been imagined and visualized, as well as how black people created art that resisted and challenged a modern mode of visuality that excluded and negated them. We then focus primarily on black art made in the 20th and 21st centuries, with emphasis on painting, sculpture, crafts, performance, photography, film, and new media in order to understand how black artists respond to and shape their social and political realities. This course examines the role that art can play in politically turbulent times and centers black artists as important critics of an antiblack world and visionaries of new life possibilities. We will use an interdisciplinary lens to understand the diverse output of black artists including the fields of art history, black studies, gender and sexuality studies, cultural studies, and technology and new media studies. Some classes will be held in the Johnson Museum and Olin Library to work directly with visual objects and artworks.
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)
Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2026, Spring 2026
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 2750 - Introduction to Humanities (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with SHUM 2750, HIST 2050, ENGL 2950, GOVT 2755, COML 2750, CLASS 2750, AMST 2751, ASRC 2750, ROMS 2750, VISST 2750, ARKEO 2750, FGSS 2750, BSOC 2750
These seminars offer an introduction to the humanities by exploring historical, cultural, social, and political themes. Students will explore themes in critical dialogue with a range of texts and media drawn from the arts, humanities, and/or humanistic social sciences. Guest speakers, including Cornell faculty and Society for the Humanities Fellows, will present from different disciplines and points of view. Students will make field trips to relevant local sites and visit Cornell special collections and archives. Students enrolled in these seminars will have the opportunity to participate in additional programming related to the annual focus theme of Cornell's Society for the Humanities and the Humanities Scholars Program for undergraduate humanities research. (ARKEO-COS)
Enrollment Information: Enrollment preference given to: students in the Humanities Scholars Program (HSP).
Exploratory Studies: (CU-SBY)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2026, Spring 2026, Fall 2025, Spring 2025
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 2800 - Introduction to the Arts of China (4 Credits)
Crosslisted with ASIAN 2288, ARKEO 2800, SHUM 2800
This course offers a survey of the art and culture of China from the Neolithic period to the twenty-first century to students who have no previous background in Chinese studies. The course begins with an inquiry into the meaning of national boundaries and the controversial definition of the Han Chinese people, which will help us understand and define the scope of Chinese culture. Pre-dynastic (or prehistoric) Chinese culture will be presented based both on legends about the origins of the Chinese and on scientifically excavated artifacts. Art of the dynastic periods will be presented in light of contemporaneous social, political, geographical, philosophical and religious contexts. This course emphasizes hands-on experience using the Chinese art collection at the Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art for teaching and assignments. In addition to regular sections conducted in the museum, students are strongly encouraged to visit the museum often to appreciate and study artworks directly. (ASIAN-SC)
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)
Exploratory Studies: (EAAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2023, Fall 2020, Spring 2018, Spring 2017
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 2805 - Introduction to Asian Art: Material Worlds (4 Credits)
Crosslisted with VISST 2805, ASIAN 2285, SHUM 2805
Trade in and to Asia proved to be a key force in creating our modern globalized world. The Indian Ocean and the China Seas converged on Southeast Asia, where a cosmopolitan array of ships from every shore plied their trade, set sail, and returned with the monsoon winds. People, goods, and ideas also traveled on camelback across the undulating contours of the Gobi Desert, connecting India, the Near East and Central Asia with China, Korea, and Japan. This course introduces students to the raw ingredients of things in motion, poised interactively in time and space, as material worlds collide. Wood, bamboo, bronze, clay, earthenware, ink, spices, textiles and tea - students will navigate sites of encounter at the Herbert F. Johnson Museum from pre modern to the present. (ASIAN-SC)
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)
Exploratory Studies: (EAAREA, SAAREA, SEAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2026, Spring 2025, Spring 2024, Spring 2023
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 3100 - History of Photography (3 Credits)
Exploratory Studies: (EUAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2022, Fall 2020, Fall 2018, Summer 2009
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 3111 - Making Photography Matter: A Studio Course (3 Credits)
Photography/Image Analysis/Graphic Design is a hands-on course devoted to the practical understanding of conception, production, and innovation in the photographic image world. Each unit of the course confronts a fundamental problem of contemporary photographic communication-quality of light, framing, series, post-production, publication design, to name a few example topics-from practical, theoretical, and historical perspectives. The goal of the course is to enrich students' understanding of how to make images that solve practical social and scholarly problems in an impactful, immediate, and public way.
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2024, Spring 2022
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 3210 - The Archaeology of the City of Rome (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with CLASS 3736, ARKEO 3010
This course tells the history of the Roman empire through the urban development of its capital from the early 1st millennium BCE to the advent of Christian emperors in the 4th century CE. What does the archeology reveal about how the geography and environment of this site, its society and political systems, military conquests, economy, infrastructure, resources, and technologies interacted to create the center of an empire? Special focus is on how the appropriation of other peoples and cultures shaped the metropolis itself. Did it manage to integrate individuals from Africa, the Near East, from North of the Alps and Britain, and if so, how? The history of excavations and the reception of the city's architecture in the 19th and 20th centuries will provide a critical lens for analyzing some of the master narratives associated with ancient Rome and its ruins. (ARKEO-RMNE)
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)
Exploratory Studies: (EUAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2024, Fall 2011
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 3225 - Archaic and Classical Greece (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with CLASS 3735, ARKEO 3225
This lecture class centers on the formative periods of ancient Greek culture, the centuries from about 800-300 BCE. Its aim is to place Greece within the cosmopolitan networks of the Mediterranean and beyond, while simultaneously looking at specific local traditions. Only within this complex glocal frame will it become clear what is unique about Greek art. In surveying major genres such as architecture, ceramics, sculpture and painting we will also investigate the question of whether and how changing resources and modes of production, various political systems (such as democracy or monarchy) and situations (war, colonization, trade), gender, or theories of representation had an impact on the art of their time. Some of the particular themes to be discussed are: the role of the Near East for the development of Greek visual culture; city planning; images in public and private life; visualizing the human body and the individuum; Greek art in contact zones from the Black Sea to Southern Italy and Sicily; foreign art in Greece; the concept of art; reception of Greek art in modern times. (ARKEO-RMNE)
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2022, Spring 2018, Fall 2013
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 3250 - Introduction to Dendrochronology (4 Credits)
Crosslisted with CLASS 3750, ARKEO 3090, MEDVL 3750
Introduction and training in dendrochronology (tree-ring dating) and its applications in archaeology, art history, climate and environment through lab work and participation in ongoing research projects using ancient to modern wood samples from around the world. Supervised reading and laboratory/project work. Possibilities exists for summer fieldwork in the Mediterranean, Mexico, and New York State. (ARKEO-TM)
Distribution Requirements: (HA-AG), (HST-AS)
Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2026, Fall 2025, Fall 2024, Fall 2022
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 3300 - Romanesque and Early Gothic Art and Architecture: Europe and the Mediterranean, 1000-1150 A.D. (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with NES 3759, MEDVL 3300
This course will address both Romanesque and the earliest manifestations of Gothic art and architecture as Western Mediterranean phenomena, rather than northern European ones. We will adopt a comparative approach which includes Islamic and, to a lesser extent, Byzantine cultures and material. In addition to the more usual art historical skills, such as visual and stylistic analysis and compare-and-contrast, we will use selected primary sources and historical analysis to attempt to understand the objects and monuments we address.
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2024, Spring 2010, Spring 2009
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 3315 - Experiencing Islamic Art: The Johnson Museum's Collection (3 Credits)
Grounded entirely in the collection of our on-campus museum, this course will introduce students to a broad chronological and geographical selection of examples of 'Islamic' visual culture via close encounters between students and objects. In addition to the scholarly essays and articles through which students habitually learn to analyze visual culture, we will employ fiction (some of which the students themselves will generate), poetry from all relevant periods, including contemporary, current events, travel literature, and more. All written work will be, as will all class sessions, grounded in the physical objects that will form our principal focus.
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, GLC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)
Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2026, Spring 2026
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 3400 - Art, Identity, and the Human Body in Early Modern Europe (3 Credits)
This lecture introduces students to the multivalent attitudes towards and understandings of the body in early modern Europe, and how artmakers contributed and responded to these forces between 1400 and 1650. Bringing together the histories of art, science, and philosophy, as well as social, cultural, medical, and global history methodologies, this course explores how artworks and objects reveal the fluid cultural practices and societal norms of early modern Europe. Lecture topics will include the rediscovery of the classical bodily ideal; the influence of humoral theory and anatomical studies on artmaking; the interactions of art and the bodily senses; global encounters with non-European monstrous bodies, and the gendered, racialized, eroticized, divine, aging, and/or disabled body. Students will gain a nuanced comprehension of how early modern people saw and understood themselves and their bodies, in life, and in art.
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)
Exploratory Studies: (EUAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2026, Spring 2025
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 3515 - The Black Home in Theory, Art, and Architecture (3 Credits)
Why is the black home and black place an unstable concept in the United States? Why does spatial disinvestment, gentrification, redlining, and eminent domain disproportionately target black people and families? What effect does this instability and erasure have on the feeling of black home, black gender, domesticity, and psychological well-being? This interdisciplinary course explores these questions through examination of black geographical and critical theories, architectural theory and history, painting, sculpture, and film about the black home and black domesticity. Topics and objects of study range from the slave cabin and the shack to racial suburbs and urban environments, from psychological theories about the black family to queer renderings of home and gender —all toward an understanding of the struggles of black space and place making.
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS)
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 3550 - Modern and Contemporary Latin American Art (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with LSP 3551, LATA 3680
This course concerns a selection of influential artistic movements in Latin American from the early twentieth century to the present. Attention is given to issues such as the effects of colonialism and imperialism on Latin America's visual arts, the creation of national art, the relation of Latin American art and artists to cultural centers in Europe, The United States and other regions of the globe, the interaction of high art and popular culture, and the role of gender and race in various aspects of artistic practice. Students will also become acquainted with Latin American and Latinx artists working with new technologies.
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, GLC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)
Exploratory Studies: (LAAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Spring 2024, Fall 2013, Fall 2008
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 3565 - Art and Architecture of Colonial Latin America (4 Credits)
Crosslisted with LATA 3565, VISST 3565
This course surveys the artistic and architectural traditions of Latin America during the period of Spanish colonial rule (ca. 1520s-1820s). It will center primarily on visual cultures of the viceroyalties of New Spain (Mexico) and Peru, but will also cover works of art and architecture from the Caribbean and the northern Andes. The course explores the legacy of pre-Columbian visual traditions in the colonial era as well as the lasting impact of colonial artistic practices in modern and contemporary Latin America. It will also examine colonial Latin America as the crossroads of dynamic artistic and cultural interaction between Indigenous, European, and Afrodescendant groups. Topics to be explored include issues of visual translation and transmission, art and agency, and the creation of new colonial artistic practices and idioms.
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)
Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2022, Spring 2018, Spring 2013
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 3566 - Art and Architecture of the Pre-Columbian Americas (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with VISST 3566, LATA 3566, ARKEO 3566, LSP 3566, MEDVL 3566
This course introduces students to the arts of the ancient Americas from circa 2000 BC to the Spanish invasions of the 15th and 16th centuries. The term pre-Columbian refers to the span of time during which indigenous cultures flourished before Christopher Columbus? voyage of 1492. This course covers the arts of indigenous Mesoamerica (Mexico, Guatemala, Belize, and Honduras), the Caribbean (Cuba, Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic, and the Greater and Lesser Antilles), and Andean South America (Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, and Chile). Students will become familiar with the history, archaeology, and visual arts of the earliest cultures that populated these regions up through the Inca, Aztec, and Maya cultures that encountered the Spaniards. This course also explores the legacies of pre-Columbian cultures among contemporary Chicana/o/x and Latina/o/x artists in the United States. (ARKEO-RLAC)
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)
Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2025, Fall 2021, Fall 2018, Fall 2016
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 3590 - Heritage, History, and Identity in Cambodia (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with ANTHR 3590, ARKEO 3590, ASIAN 3351, VISST 3590
This winter course on site in Cambodia will focus on Cambodian heritage past and present - how it's been created in the past, including the city of Angkor, and how that heritage and history is understood and engaged today. We will visit historical sites as well as museums and other relevant sites, including performances, where history is remembered and engaged. There will be lectures, including by Cambodian experts, as well as film showings. The course will be based in Siem Reap, in collaboration with the Center for Khmer Studies, and there will also be excursions to Phnom Penh, the capital. (ARKEO-TM, ASIAN-SC)
Prerequisites: KHMER 1100.
Course Fee: Course Fee, TBA. Fee amount approximate.
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)
Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL); (SEAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Winter 2025, Winter 2023
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 3600 - Contemporary Art: 1960-Present (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with VISST 3600
This course discusses new art practices since the 1960s. Although numerous artistic experiments took place during the first half of the twentieth century, it was with the declining importance of modernist painting and sculpture by the late 1950s that newer modes of artistic practice became established. The course will explore the rise of Fluxus, Minimalism, Conceptualism, Land Art, Video and Performance, Postmodernism, and Postcolonialism. These practices are situated in relation to intellectual and social movements since the 1960s, including counterculture, feminism, race, ecology, institutional critique, and globalization. This course focuses primarily on Western European and North American art, but also incorporates selected global developments.
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Fall 2018, Spring 2017, Spring 2016
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 3611 - Art of South Asia, 1200-Present (4 Credits)
Crosslisted with ASIAN 3382
This course surveys the art and architecture of South Asia since 1200 CE. We cover major developments over the last eight centuries, including the architecture of the Sultanate Period, Vijaynagar, painting and architecture in the Deccan and South India, Mughal art and architecture, and Rajput painting. We look at British period colonial art and architecture, the rise of nationalism and modernism in Indian art and the circulation of vernacular images, including posters and bazaar prints in the twentieth century. The recent globalization of South Asian contemporary art is also examined. Artistic movements are situated with reference to social, economic, and political developments. (ASIAN-SC)
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)
Exploratory Studies: (SAAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2023, Spring 2021, Spring 2009
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 3620 - After Nature: Art and Environmental Imagination (4 Credits)
Crosslisted with AMST 3629
This course looks at what it means to make art in, of, and after nature, and asks how that art might contribute to shaping the world we live in. Tracing a trajectory from the collection and display of natural history specimens to views of European and American landscapes to contemporary artists who address ecological crises, the course offers both a history of landscape in western art and a study of environmental imagination. We will further explore how nature is represented on Cornell's campus, including in the Johnson Museum, the Lab of Ornithology and the Botanic Gardens. This course includes opportunities to creatively reflect on our personal relationship to nature through hands-on activities. Students from all disciplines are welcome to engage with themes including natural curiosities, parks and gardens, ideas of wilderness, the picturesque, environmental preservation, earth works, and the post-natural.
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)
Exploratory Studies: (CU-SBY)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2024, Spring 2021
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 3625 - Paris, Capital of Modernity? (4 Credits)
Crosslisted with SHUM 3625
This course takes a critical perspective on the centrality of Paris to canonical narratives of modernity and modern art and architecture. We will look both at some of the defining art movements of the 19th century and at the influx of people and objects from other cultures-many of whom and which arrived in Paris via colonialist violence and imperialist plunder-that contributed to those movements. Beginning with the French and Haitian Revolutions, moving through Impressionist travels in North Africa and the export of Haussmanization to South America, and ending with Le Corbusier's plan for redesigning Algiers, the course aims to redress some of the silences and oversights written into the history of modern art.
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, GLC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2022
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 3650 - History and Theory of Digital Art (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with VISST 3650, INFO 3660, STS 3650
In this course, we will examine the role of electronic and digital technologies in the arts of the late 20th and 21st centuries with emphasis on Europe and North America. Beginning with the cybernetically and systems-inspired work of the late sixties, we will explore early uses of computer technology, including early experiments in synthetic video in the 1970s. An overview of pre-internet telematic experiments will lead to an investigation of net art and later currents of digital art. The ongoing development of behavioral art forms will be a central theme. Critical evaluation of various attitudes concerning technology will be encouraged.
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)
Exploratory Studies: (EUAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2026, Fall 2024, Fall 2022, Fall 2021
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 3651 - Women in New Media Art (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with VISST 3651, FGSS 3655, SHUM 3651
The work of women artists has been central to the development of new media art. These rich and varied practices include installation, virtual reality environments, net art, digital video, networked performance, tactical media, video games, remix and robotics. This course will begin with an overview of feminist art and early experiments in performance and video art to then investigate multiple currents of digital media. Discussions will focus primarily on works by women artists from Europe, the Americas and Australia.
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, SCD-AS), (CA-AG, D-AG, LA-AG)
Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2026, Spring 2021, Spring 2020, Spring 2018
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 3741 - Greco-Roman Art from Alexander to Augustus (c.350 BC-AD 20) (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with CLASS 3741
This course explores the visual arts of the Mediterranean region from the court of Alexander the Great to the principate of Augustus, the first Roman emperor. During the first half of the semester we will explore the civic, domestic and religious uses of sculpture, painting, architecture, and other media in major settlements of the Hellenistic world such as Alexandria, Pergamon and Rhodes, focusing on the third to first centuries BCE. In the second half of the semester, we will turn to the rise of the Roman empire and the relationship between native Italian artistic traditions and those of the Hellenized Mediterranean, as Republican Rome drew influences (and booty) from its conquered territories. Throughout the course we will examine visual images alongside relevant literary and archaeological material, emphasizing the role of the visual arts within broader aesthetic, intellectual and political trends.
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2024, Spring 2021, Fall 2016
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 3755 - Humanities Scholars Research Methods (4 Credits)
Crosslisted with SHUM 3750, ASIAN 3375, ANTHR 3950, NES 3750, COML 3750, CLASS 3850
This course explores the practice, theory, and methodology of humanities research, critical analysis, and communication through writing and oral presentation. We will study the work and impact of humanists (scholars of literature, history, theory, art, visual studies, film, anthropology, gender and sexuality studies), who pose big questions about the human condition. By reading and analyzing their scholarship-critiquing them and engaging their ideas-we will craft our own methods and voices. Students will refine their research methods (library research, note taking, organizing material, bibliographies, citation methods, proposals, outlines, etc.) and design their own independent research project.
Enrollment Information: Priority given to: students in the Humanities Scholars Program (HSP).
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2026, Spring 2025, Spring 2024, Spring 2023
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 3803 - Urban Interfaces: Art, Architecture, and Urbanism in China at the turn of the 21st Century (3 Credits)
How does art, architecture, and urban space interface with one another and what is the role of art in public space and public life? This course considers these questions within the context of China's unprecedented urban transformation at the turn of the 21st century, paying attention to the ways in which art and architecture are at once resistant to and at the same time entangled with capitalist and governmental forces. From Beijing's Tiananmen Square to Guangzhou's skyscraper construction sites; from virtual cities to New York City-a center of the Chinese diaspora-we will look transregionally at how different types of urban spaces prompted new aesthetic forms and how such creative acts contributed, in turn, to the transformation of these very spaces.
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)
Exploratory Studies: (EAAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2026, Spring 2025, Spring 2023
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 3850 - The Arts of Southeast Asia (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with VISST 3696, ASIAN 3350, MEDVL 3850
The arts of Southeast Asia are studied in their social context, since in traditional societies creative processes are often mapped on the sequence of events that compose human lives. We will be looking particularly at the gendered ways in which bodies are mapped on the land, and how these various framings are often reflected in the unique relationships that emerge between works of art and textual sources. The South Asian epics of the Ramayana (Story of Rama) and the Mahabharata will be explored during the semester as infinitely renewable sources of inspiration. Special emphasis will be devoted to localized encounters in Indonesia, Cambodia, Burma/Myanmar, Vietnam, and Thailand. (ASIAN-SC)
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)
Exploratory Studies: (SEAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2026, Fall 2025, Fall 2024, Fall 2022
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 3910 - Visual Cultures of the Global Cold War (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with VISST 3910
This lecture course explores the intertwined histories of art, architecture, and visual culture during the Global Cold War. Tracing a time period from the end of the World War II to the close of the twentieth century, the course examines the entanglement of politics and aesthetics through histories of decolonization, soft power, technological development, and consumer culture. Moving beyond a U.S.–Soviet framework, the course investigates the Cold War as a global phenomenon, tracing artistic exchange, architectural experimentation, and aesthetic production across Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Middle East, and Europe. Despite geopolitical polarity, this time period is marked by increasing interconnectivity globally and the expression of modernity through technological development and popular media. Visual culture indexes, and comments upon, these social and economic transformations.
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS)
Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2026
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 4035 - Cornell's Collection of Greek and Roman Art (4 Credits)
Crosslisted with SHUM 4035, CLASS 4035, ARKEO 4035
This class examines the history and holdings of Cornell's teaching collection of ancient Greek and Roman objects. Designed to start a systematic inventory of the collections, it requires hands-on engagement with the objects (defining their material, age, function etc.) as much as archival work. Questions concerning the ethics of collections and calls for decolonizing museums will play a central role as we ultimately think about how to make use of and display the objects in our custody. (ARKEO-RMNE)
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)
Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2025, Spring 2024, Fall 2020
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 4101 - Proseminar: Introduction to Methods (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with VISST 4101
Works of art have always engendered political, social, and cultural meanings. This seminar presents an introduction to the methods used by art historians and the objects and ideas that constitute the historiography of their discipline. If art history was once understood as the study of the development of style in European art, over the past century its practitioners have attempted to embrace a global perspective and to address issues of class, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, and gender. Readings will focus on historically situating methods and the implications of their cross-cultural application. They will be discussed in the framework of institutions, apparatuses and practices that have shaped the field, identifying how these have contributed to systemic mechanisms of hegemony and exclusion. Papers will encourage students to put methods into practice, realizing in the process that subject matter is not an isolated choice to which methods are applied, but something that profoundly affects the approach that the researcher brings to the writing and conceptualizing and doing of art history.
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)
Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2026, Fall 2025, Fall 2024, Fall 2023
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 4110 - Curatorial Practicum (3 Credits)
The Curatorial Practicum is a semester-long course offered at the Herbert F. Johnson Museum in collaboration with the Department of the History of Art and Visual Studies. This Spring 2026 the seminar theme, "Performing Indonesia," will be co-taught by Kaja McGowan, Associate Professor of Art History, and Ellen Avril, Judith H. Stoikov Curator of Asian Art at the museum. Library and museum collections of the performing arts of Indonesia will provide a wealth of possible stories that span almost eight decades. Students will be encouraged to explore the politics of display and shifting attitudes toward performance and rituals of spectatorship. They will also be invited to examine questions of heritage tourism, small-scale artisanal activity, provenance, repatriation, and community engagement. As an integral part of the course, curatorial interventions within the museum's galleries will be staged.
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2026, Fall 2023, Fall 2022, Fall 2021
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 4151 - Topics in Media Arts (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with VISST 4151, STS 4511
From the 20th-century to the present, artists have made art using live entities including plants, animals, cells, tissue cultures and bacteria. They have designed habitats, plants, body organs, imaged new species and attempted to salvage extinct ones. Some artists also have produced works in traditional media such as painting, sculpture, and photography. While artists always have depicted and sometimes directly engaged with aspects of the natural world in their art, bio art responds to recent developments in biology and information technologies. Because of its foundation on the life sciences this art entails significant ethical, social and political dimensions. In this seminar students will explore multiple areas of bio art with attention to pertinent artistic and critical literature and to the scientific practices in which the works are based. These interdisciplinary investigations will prepare students for a grounded assessment of bio art.
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2026, Spring 2024, Fall 2020, Fall 2018
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 4153 - Topics in Feminist Media Arts (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with FGSS 4153, VISST 4153
Fall 2024 Topic: Feminist Posthumanisms in Visual Arts. While feminist art in new media address traditional feminist concerns such as the female body, identity, representation, feminist history, and consumerism, others directly engage with recent theoretical currents on the Anthropocene, posthumanism, and new materialisms that view humans and non-humans as co-dependent. Non-humans include environmental factors, animals, plants, bacteria, and machines. This seminar will examine work by contemporary artists from various geographical areas and cultural traditions engaged with posthumanist perspectives in relation to relevant theoretical texts and previous feminist media arts.
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, SCD-AS), (CA-AG, D-AG, LA-AG)
Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2026, Fall 2024, Fall 2023, Fall 2022
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 4155 - Topics in Latin American Art (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with VISST 4155, LATA 4155
Topic: Latin American Moderinsims and Technology. The involvement of Latin American artists with modern media technologies dates at least to the late nineteenth century and has especially flourished in the last three decades. The canonical histories and criticism of Latin American art for the most part depict a history of artistic production in which technology plays a minor or invisible role. This construction of history reinforces the assumption that experimentation, innovation, and theorization in technological art are exclusive provinces of the developed world. As the history of art expands to include diverse areas of media arts and visual culture, the recognition of Latin American artists' involvement with technology is not only overdue but also essential to the development of more diverse and rigorous understandings of both modernity and modernism.
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Spring 2023, Fall 2021, Spring 2020
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 4160 - Topics in Colonial Encounters (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with LATA 4160, VISST 4160
The colonial period in Latin America (circa 1521-1820s) witnessed the formation of one of the most diverse societies in the world. Labor regimes, religious activities, marriage alliances, and commercial contacts engendered by the Spanish colonial enterprise brought Spaniards, Africans, and Indigenous peoples into dynamic contact. This cross-fertilization of cultures resulted in the construction of new cultural categories and colonial identities whose reverberations continue to be felt into the present day. This course explores the role that visual culture played in the articulation of identity in Latin America. For the purposes of this seminar, identity can be loosely defined as the overlapping allegiances to which one ascribes, whether racial, cultural, gendered, religious, or community-based. The visual culture of colonial Latin America can reveal multitudes on the construction of self and community across temporal and geographical contexts. We will explore a variety of colonial Latin American objects and images, including paintings, textiles, and material culture. Our discussions of images will be guided by readings on hybridity, coloniality, cross-cultural exchange, and the early modern Atlantic world.
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)
Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2026, Fall 2025, Spring 2023, Spring 2021
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 4166 - Colonial Connectivities: Curating the Arts of the Spanish Americas (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with VISST 4166, ARKEO 4166, LATA 4166
This seminar immerses students in the diverse painting traditions of colonial Latin America (1500s-1800s), with a focus on artistic practice in Peru, Ecuador, Venezuela, and the Hispanophone Caribbean. Themes include the pluralism and material makeup of devotional images, aesthetic constructions of race and class, the development of artistic workshops, and the role of rebellion and revolution in art. Students will participate in the curatorial development of Cornell's first exhibition of colonial Latin American art, scheduled to open in June 2024. They will research the paintings selected for the exhibition; devise the installation layout and design; write wall texts; and collaborate on the development of educational programming. Activities will also include a field trip to Buffalo State University observe scientific analysis of select paintings from the exhibition. (ARKEO-RLAC)
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2024
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 4171 - 19th Century Art and Culture (4 Credits)
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2023, Fall 2022, Fall 2021, Spring 2021
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 4211 - Visual Narratives in Ancient Art (3 Credits)
This seminar explores the numerous ways in which a picture can be worth a thousand words. Offering a global and comparative perspective, it examines the complex relationship between narrative and image and the ensuing notions of temporality in spatially based pictorial media. Focusing on ancient visual culture—from Greek vase painting, Roman historical reliefs, Gandharan biographical friezes, Indian Buddhist jataka panels, to early Christian sarcophagi—the course provides a rich ground for exploring diverse narrative strategies across geographic and temporal boundaries. We will engage with different narratological methodologies by focusing on some of the key visual stories connected to myths, epics, religious figures, folk tales, and oral histories. Students will develop skills to analyze how stories unfold through images as well as to critically examine the politics of narrative and issues of representation across cultures.
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS)
Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2026
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 4231 - Fakes and the Authentic: Connoisseurship, Value, and Judgement (4 Credits)
Crosslisted with ANTHR 4231, ARKEO 4231, SHUM 4231
What is authenticity and why does it matter? Connoisseurship-the expertise required to make discerning judgments-involves assessments of quality,authenticity, historical and cultural significance, and many other issues. This course focuses on connoisseurship in the fine arts, archaeology, and ethnography in both academic contexts and the art world. Emphasis is on developing a nuanced understanding of authentication, at the core of the art market and an important determinant of relevant data for academic art historians and archaeologists. Topics include the role of authenticity in assigning value; looting and faking in relation to antiquities markets; technical analysis and forgery detection. (ARKEO-TM)
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)
Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2025, Fall 2023
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 4233 - Greek and Roman Art and Archaeology (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with CLASS 4746, ARKEO 4233
Topics Rotate: Spring 2026 topic: Olympia. Few sites of Greek antiquity enjoy a global resonance as large as that of Olympia, origin of the Olympic games. And yet, with its monumental archaeological traces reaching from the Bronze Age to late Antiquity, Olympia was more than a venue for athletic competitions. Besides those, the seminar focuses on the development of the site from an early hero cult to panhellenic sanctuary, its embeddedness in the landscape, its various political affiliations and mediterranean networks, its artistic productions, but also on Olympia as tourist destination in antiquity and today. Moreover, the site has been a laboratory of archaeological methods and negotiations of cultural heritage which we will revisit, beginning with the French and German excavations in the 19th century and continuing to this day with the involvement of a larger international community. Nazi Germany (Berlin 1936), Western Germany (Munich 1972), Greece (Athens 2004), and Cornell (Temple of Zeus Caf?will serve as case studies on the modern reception of Olympia. (ARKEO-RMNE, ARKEO-TM)
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2026, Fall 2025, Fall 2024, Spring 2023
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 4305 - Looking for Love: Visual and Literary Cultures of Love in the Medieval Mediterranean, 1100-1400 AD (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with NES 4795, MEDVL 4305
A comparative and interdisciplinary seminar whose focus is the visual world created by the pan-Mediterranean (Iberian Peninsula, Maghreb, France, Italy, Turkey, Egypt, and Persia) culture of Courtly Love beginning during the 11th century ad, and continuing as a principle factor in medieval cultural production for the remainder of the period. Particular attention will be paid to the ways in which the visual dimensions of this culture nuance, compliment, contradict, or at times even exist independently of, its oral and written spheres. Reading knowledge of any Romance or Semitic language and/or Persian, in addition to English, is highly advantageous.
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2026, Spring 2022, Spring 2020, Spring 2010
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 4310 - Methods in Medieval (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with NES 4700, JWST 4310, MEDVL 4310, RELST 4310, SPAN 4570
Topic: Writing Through the Forest in Search of Trees. Hello, Humanities Student! Are you a plotter or a pantser? Not sure? Come and join us to find out, and to gain valuable insight into what kind of a writer you are, and how to manage that writer most effectively and productively. This theme-centered methods seminar, through a communal focus on trees, woods, glens, and copses in the pre-modern world, will hone in on the most indispensable tool in the humanist's belt: writing. From the generation of ideas, to their organization into an outline (or a blueprint, or whatever euphemism we, as a group or as individuals, decide to apply to the initial, tangled pile of yarn) to the first draft. Followed by frank and constructive criticism of the initial draft as a group and in pairs, and then on to the part that all students-really, all humanists?okay, all writers-find to be the greatest struggle: Your paper has some good ideas, but it really needs a rewrite. Now what do you do? As we write, and rewrite, we will also read widely. In addition to primary sources, scholarly articles and essays, we will include criticism, personal essay, theory, excerpts from fiction, and more, in an effort to open students' writing up to a myriad of possibilities for persuasive and compelling written communication.
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)
Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2026, Fall 2025, Fall 2023, Spring 2021
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 4320 - Tales of the Alhambra and Lalla Rookh: Case Studies in Orientalism (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with NES 4320
An introduction both to the History of Art and to an interdisciplinary approach to research and analysis through close study of these two works. Beginning with a sampling of Said's Orientalism and its critics, we will follow with a group read and analysis of each illustrated work, including text-image consideration and analysis. There will be heavy focus on multi-media primary source material in Kroch library, the Johnson Museum, and my own personal collection; consideration of both works in their 19th-c context, as well as medieval and earlier roots. We will devote half the semester to each, with 'hinge point' marked by a study day at Olana. Final product could include small exhibition, in tandem with individual papers/projects.
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2024
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 4351 - Problems in Byzantine Art (4 Credits)
Crosslisted with CLASS 4752, MEDVL 4351, NES 4351, RELST 4351, VISST 4351, ARKEO 4351
Topic Spring 23: Portraiture.Byzantine artists produced a wide variety of images that modern interpreters have recognized as portraits. These images illuminate individual identity and visual representation in Byzantium. On the one hand, the constituent elements of a portrait (such as physiognomy, gesture, dress, and attributes) illuminate cultural understandings of personhood. On the other hand, those elements are assembled and displayed through means (composition, medium, and context) that illuminate cultural understandings of images and their ability to extend personal energy. We will focus on the primary sources, including preserved monuments (manuscripts, mosaics, sculptures, etc.) and literary witnesses (epigrams, historians' accounts, etc.), supplemented by selections from the secondary literature on identity, individuality, and subject formation in Byzantium.Seminar topics rotate each semester. Previous topics include: Ravenna, Hagia Sophia, Byzantine Iconoclasm, Spiral Relief Columns. (ARKEO-RMNE)
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2023, Spring 2022, Spring 2016, Spring 2014
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 4354 - Byzantine Archaeology (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with ARKEO 4354, NES 4354
A seminar on the archaeology of the Byzantine Empire, from the late Roman through to the early modern periods. Topics to be covered include: long-term changes in settlement patterns and urban development; the material traces of state and monastic control over productive landscapes; the idea of the border and the nature of its defense; and the fraught relationship between Byzantine and classical archaeologies. (ARKEO-RMNE)
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Fall 2019
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 4361 - Staffage: Figures for Scale, 1500-1850 (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with ARKEO 4712, SHUM 4711, VISST 4711, COML 4711
"Staffage" is a term in the history of landscape painting. It refers to little figures who populate the scene, invariably dwarfed by their surroundings. The few critics who noticed them assigned them various roles: to illustrate "the benefits which nature affords to creatures living in the region" (Goethe, 1800); or, alternatively, "to lend the landscape its specific poetic character" (Fernow, 1806). From landscape, staffage migrated into archaeological documentation and architectural illustration. Here, tiny figures gain additional roles: to convey the scale of the monuments depicted, and the societies that inhabit them. Our study of staffage alternates between close looking at a wide range of pictures, and readings from the historical and theoretical literatures on the aesthetics and politics of landscape painting. (ARKEO-COS)
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)
Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2025
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 4420 - Victimizers, Victimes: White South African as Refugees (3 Credits)
This course explores an unsettling phenomenon: white South African Afrikaners, the architects and for more than 40 years the political exponents of apartheid, now cast themselves as victims of discrimination. Consequently, they now, in relation to the US, enjoy a privileged status as refugees. This course seeks to provide an account of how we have arrived at this strange historical conjuncture. Those who, for decades, and with impunity, where the perpetrators of racism now claim that they are victims. How did we arrive at this most inexplicable moment? What forces are at play to allow for not only the dissemination of this discourse, but now enable these historical perpetrators to enjoy preferential refugee status?
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS)
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 4444 - Experimental Media (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with GERST 4444, PMA 4444, VISST 4444
This seminar examines "experimental media", an umbrella term for experimental literature, poetry, film, video, photography, music, radio, theater, sound art, computer games, and other new media. With a focus on the twentieth- and twenty-first-century German-speaking world, we will discuss aesthetic experiments with form, structure, and materiality. With a view toward interdisciplinarity, our guiding questions will address the distinctions between art and non-art, amateurs and experts, and experimental and commercial media, as well as the possibilities of collaboration and the limits of the experimental method. While coursework will primarily involve reading, writing, and thinking about aesthetic texts and humanistic scholarship, there will be some hands-on work with media objects and experimental media archeology. Taught in English.
Enrollment Information: Primarily for: seniors.
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS)
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 4460 - Fashion in Early Modern Europe (3 Credits)
This seminar charts the rise of fashion consumption and its links to artistic and material culture in early modern Europe. This seminar brings dress and bodily adornment into conversation with notions of technological advancement, global encounters and trade, emergent colonialism, and cultural cross-fertilization. Students will examine extant garments and textiles in relation to painting, drawing, sculpture, print, and literary imaginings of dress to assess the impact of different artistic media on the rendition of dress. Students will consider the historiographical question of artistic mediation and its impact on contemporary understandings of historical clothing. Operating across the intersections of race, gender, class, and religious identities in early modern Europe, this seminar investigates how clothing and artistic production functioned in tandem to materialize markers of diverse identifications.
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)
Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2023
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 4462 - Early Modern Illuminations: Light, Sight, and the Visual World in Europe, 1400-1700 (3 Credits)
This seminar analyzes the contours of early modern Europe's artistic and scientific landscapes through the lens of light and vision. This class will explore how early modern artists conceptualized the nature of light and vision and engaged with optical theories in painting, architecture, and material culture. Each week students will investigate a key art theoretical and/or scientific text alongside relevant artworks and objects. Topics covered will include the impact of scientific devices like microscopes and the camera obscura on painting; the aesthetic functioning of chiaroscuro; the development of linear perspective and trompe-l'oeil; the politics of shine; and luminous materialities. Students will probe techniques of artmaking and ways of seeing and will gain a nuanced understanding of the broader epistemological, social, and environmental factors that shaped European aesthetics and intellectual cultures.
Distribution Requirements: (HA-AG), (HST-AS)
Exploratory Studies: (EUAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2026
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 4465 - Early Modern Materialities, 1400-1700 (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with SHUM 4465, HIST 4665
This seminar analyzes the contours of early modern Europe's material landscape and the ways in which global exchanges and technological advancements impacted material production and consumption. Working within an interdisciplinary framework, we will explore the dynamic material, global, and social dimensions of objects, and the meanings that different materials could generate in art production. Each week we will investigate an early modern art material - from ivory, to amber, shells, and pearls - and its use and/or representation in a range of artworks. Students will learn to think materially; they will be introduced to multiple techniques of production, harvesting, and fashioning of materials, and will consider the broader social, economic, political, and environmental factors that shaped material culture. (HIST-HEU, HIST-HPE)
Enrollment Information: Enrollment limited to: seniors, juniors, and sophomores.
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)
Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2026, Fall 2025, Fall 2024
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 4510 - Blackness, Gender and Representation (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with AMST 4511
This interdisciplinary seminar explores the problem that blackness poses for representation, with a particular focus on black women's aporic positionality in this problem. Dominant discourses of representation pose it as a mode of making present what is physically absent through conceptual, aesthetic, and political means—a process and framework that produces a shared form of subjectivity and its attendant commons. Given histories of slavery and racial violence, how does blackness's excluded but constitutive positionality challenge this alleged commonality? Further, how does black feminist theory's positing of black women as endlessly productive, hole-like vestibule for modern subjective form problematize representation? We will utilize analysis of black feminist and critical theoretical texts and artworks to interrogate the ways that black women illuminate black gender as a problem for representation.
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)
Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2025
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 4515 - Black Abstraction (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with ASRC 4515, AMST 4515
Abstract art poses generative problems and possibilities for thinking racial blackness. Some accounts posit a turn from figurative representation to visual abstraction of blackness/black experience as a move toward freer artistic expression, unburdened by confining cultural markings of race. We will question the supposed freedom of this turn to abstraction and explore the conditions of violent exclusion from normative bodily and representational form that confine blackness to abstraction. Modernist abstraction's move to dismantle illusionism and emphasize materiality enables an understanding of blackness not as a stable, visible identity category but as free-floating trace, concept, formlessness, and obdurate materiality. This course analyzes practices and theories of abstraction in the twentieth century to the present, from the racialized contours of the Western avant-garde and black abstractionists.
Prerequisites: one previous History of Art or Africana course.
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2026
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 4520 - Reading Race Early Modern Art (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with SHUM 4520
This seminar explores the ways in which artists and craftspeople created representations of non-Europeans that shaped, negotiated, and challenged pluralistic biological and symbolic conceptions of race between 1450 and 1700. Against the backdrop of increasing global contact, European colonial enterprises, and the explosion of the Atlantic slave trade, this seminar will critically explore constructions of Blackness, whiteness, and racialized otherness and will consider the roles played by art and material culture in practices of race-making. Thinking materially, students will assess the impact of different artistic media on understandings of racialized difference. Considering race at its intersections with gender, class, religion, science, and disability, this seminar will analyze how artworks reveal and obscure the real, complex experiences of non-Europeans in Europe.
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Spring 2024
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 4540 - Film History for Art Historians (3 Credits)
This seminar will offer a survey of film theory and history tailored for art historians, especially but not exclusively for modernists. The influence of cinema on twentieth-century aesthetics cannot be overstated, yet art historians routinely work without enough knowledge about the history of cinema or the grammar and rhetoric of its techniques. The history of montage, continuity editing, cinematography, and narrative form will be covered as we encounter major works from world cinema in dialogue with significant movements in modern art. German Expressionism, Surrealism, Italian Neorealism, Documentary Film, Film Noir, Hollywood Auteurism, East Asian Auteurism, and Bollywood Cinema will be among the major movements covered, as will the late entry into the fine art world of moving image media.
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2026, Spring 2025, Spring 2020, Spring 2019
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 4545 - The Photobook (3 Credits)
Satisfies Tutorial Requirement. The history of photography as an art has been mostly on the page, not on the wall. This course refocuses the standard museum and gallery history of photography back to the book. Significantly, it takes advantage, through field trips, of the proximity of Cornell to the George Eastman House in Rochester, whose library houses the most important photobooks from around the world, including the best creations from Russia, Japan, and the United States. Students will learn the basics of photographic printing, book construction, the role of the photobook in the rise of the artist's book in the twentieth century, as well as advanced skills in analysis of the photographic picture and sequencing. Major themes will include the scientific photobook of the nineteenth century, the documentary photobook of the 1930s, the propaganda photobook of the communist era, the postwar photobooks of Japan, the personal/domestic turn of the 1970s, and the present state of the photobook in the digital era.
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)
Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2026, Fall 2025, Fall 2024, Fall 2023
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 4556 - Decolonial Poetics and Aesthetics: Arts of Resistance in the Americas (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with LSP 4556, AMST 4556, ENGL 4556, VISST 4556
Exploring a genealogy of Latinx, Afro-Latinx, Black, Indigenous, and Chicana/o/x theorizations of modernity and identity, the course asks, what is the decolonial? Is it a space between the colonial and post-colonial? Is it a creative process, an intellectual theorization, or a historical period? Is it a performance, intervention, or embodied experience? Tracing a historical trajectory of the decolonial in poetry, performance, installation, and visual art, the course examines decolonial modes of making and being from the sixteenth to the twenty first century.
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Fall 2022, Spring 2020
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 4620 - Art and the Remapping of the World (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with SHUM 4680, VISST 4680
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2023
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 4621 - Art and Empire in Britain and France (3 Credits)
This seminar explores the images and objects produced, collected, and displayed in the context of the British and French empires of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Drawing on a range of perspectives-including postcolonial studies, critical race studies, and indigenous studies-we will develop a critical vocabulary for addressing the history of colonialism and the ongoing process of decolonization, asking what particular problems and opportunities art history presents for the study of empire. In what ways were aesthetics entangled with imperial ideology? How did works of art support or challenge dominant political, social, and cultural narratives? And what does a study of historic empires have to offer to our understanding of globalization today? We will also engage with the ways in which the legacy of empire is treated in contemporary museology. Readings on France and Britain will be combined with theoretical texts that have informed scholarship on the history of imperialism more broadly. Participants in the seminar are encouraged to apply the themes covered to a geographical area and time period of their choice in their final paper.
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)
Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2024, Spring 2021
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 4625 - Liquidities: Seascapes in Art and as History (3 Credits)
This seminar explores readings in the blue humanities as they relate to art history, with a particular focus on the genre of the seascape as a means of framing human-oceanic, interspecies, and cross-cultural encounters. After establishing a theoretical basis in oceanic thought, we will explore the methodological potential such watery thinking offers for an art history attuned to cross currents, fluid interactions, and unsettled narratives. Though anchored in the Western perspective of the seascape, course readings will also be attentive to the long history of fluid models of identity and objecthood in diverse Indigenous cultures, and to the limitations inherent in the terrestrial bias of much Western scholarship.
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Spring 2024
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 4630 - Museum Histories (3 Credits)
Museum Histories considers current and ongoing crises in arts institutions (COVID, labor issues, underrepresentation of minorities, calls for restitution of wrongfully-acquired objects) in relation to both the history of museums and collections and the kinds of histories they are able to tell. Readings will focus particularly on the 18th and 19th centuries and the ways in which museums developed alongside and in support of nationalist and imperialist agendas, asking to what extent present problems are informed by choices and alignments made in the past. We will also invite curators to discuss how museums can best address the issues covered and how curatorial strategies might address inherent inequalities within our institutions. Students are welcome to do their final projects on an aspect of contemporary museum practice as informed by the history discussed in the seminar.
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2022
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 4673 - The Kinship of Repair: Asian and Asian American Artists in Collaboration (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with SHUM 4673, ASIAN 4467, FGSS 4673, VISST 4673, AAS 4673
(ASIAN-SC)
Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2022
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 4690 - Comparative Modernities (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with VISST 4641
Since the late 19th century, the effects of capitalism across the globe have been profoundly transformative and have intensified with the demise of the older colonial empires, the rise of nationalism and independent states, and the onset of neoliberal globalization. These transformations are manifested in the domains of high art, mass culture and popular culture, yet remain inadequately studied. This seminar theorizes and explores non-Western modernist and contemporary art practice in a comparative framework. Taught as a seminar, it assumes active participation by advanced undergraduate and graduate students who have a prior knowledge of Euro-American modernism and art history, and who wish to better understand the great artistic and visual transformations from the beginning of the 20th century onwards in a global context.
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)
Exploratory Studies: (EUAREA, SAAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2024, Fall 2021, Spring 2020, Fall 2015
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 4695 - Studies in Global Modern Art (3 Credits)
Topic: Art of the Arab World, Central Asia, Iran, Turkey.This seminar focuses on the art and visual culture of West Asia and North Africa from the nineteenth century to the present. We will examine methodologies informed by art history, media studies, area studies, and postcolonial theory. We will also study periods and genres. These include colonial era photography, painting, and architecture; nationalist oriental painting from the early twentieth century; the consolidation of modernism during the mid-twentieth century; and contemporary artistic practice in the era of globalization.
Distribution Requirements: (CA-AG, D-AG), (GLC-AS, SCD-AS)
Exploratory Studies: (EUAREA, SAAREA, SEAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2026, Fall 2020, Fall 2016, Spring 2012
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 4706 - The Poetics of Embodiment: Figurines in the Early Middle Ages (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with SHUM 4706, MEDVL 4706, RELST 4706, ARKEO 4706
How can a small sculpture produce monumental effects? Recent shifts in metal-detecting and excavation practices have transformed our understanding of the scope of figural art after the Roman empire's collapse; the field is newly flooded with evidence of toys, puppets, and other tiny bodies. Working across the disciplines of anthropology, archaeology, art history, philosophy, and gender studies, this course investigates how figurines shaped space, ritual, and concepts of personhood in the early medieval world. (ARKEO-RMNE)
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)
Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2025
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 4720 - Curating the British Empire (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with STS 4634, BSOC 4634, HIST 4634
During Europe's colonial era, the modern museum emerged as a site of cultural and scientific authority. This course investigates the history of imperial collections and collectors, with a focus on Britain and the East India Company in the nineteenth century. Examples of topics include: the supply chain for artifacts and knowledge resources; changing conceptions of intellectual property, ownership and access; household versus public versus for-profit collections; museums and the narration of social values and cultural identities; debates over the function or aims of museums and related institutions; the collections and the administration of the empire; the collections and the growth of the sciences; the postcolonial legacies of colonial collections. (HIST-HEU)
Distribution Requirements: (CA-AG, HA-AG), (GLC-AS, HST-AS)
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2026, Fall 2022, Spring 2022, Spring 2019
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 4754 - Themes in Mediterranean Archaeology (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with CLASS 4754, NES 4654, ARKEO 4254, ANTHR 4254, MEDVL 4754
This seminar provides a higher-level general introduction to, and survey of, contemporary theories, methods, and approaches in the archaeology of the Mediterranean world. Rather than focusing on a specific geographical sub-region or chronological period, this course examines and critically assesses the practice and distinctive character of Mediterranean archaeology more broadly. (ARKEO-TM)
Prerequisites: some previous background in archaeology, material culture studies, ancient history, or related fields.
Distribution Requirements: (HA-AG), (HST-AS)
Exploratory Studies: (EUAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2026, Fall 2025, Fall 2021, Spring 2016
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 4774 - Indigenous Spaces and Materiality (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with ANTHR 4774, ART 3874, AMST 4774
The materiality of art as willful agents will be considered from ontology to an Indigenous expression of more than human relations. Located at the intersection of multiple modernities, art and science; the shift from art historical framings of form over matter and connoisseurship to viewing materiality as an active process that continues to map larger social processes and transformation will be discussed. Archives will be sites of investigation across varied Indigenous geographies marking place, space, bodies and land. This class is designed to introduce the latest methodologies in the field of art history, material culture and Indigenous Studies. Students will consult the archive, do hands-on evaluation of art, material culture, and expand their historic and theoretical knowledge about materiality. Beyond the theoretically and historically grounded critique this class provides, it will also introduce students to working with original documents and / or conduct on-site research. Students will consult the Cornell University library holdings of the Huntington Free Library's Native American Collection and conduct original archival research with historic and contemporary art and material culture at Haudenosaunee cultural centers, museums and exhibitions spaces through a class trip or individual visits (TBD).
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, SCD-AS), (CA-AG, D-AG, LA-AG)
Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2026, Fall 2024, Fall 2017
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 4816 - Modern Chinese Art (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with ASIAN 4473, SHUM 4916
China, a cultural giant of East Asia, made a passive entrance into modernity. With the advent of Western and American colonialism and imperialism, coupled with recent successes in westernization by the Japanese, Chinese artists had to redefine their roles as well as their visions. This turmoil bore witness to a vibrant beginning in modern Chinese art. Interactions between the Chinese themselves, and Chinese interactions with foreigners in the major cities of Shanghai and Beijing, fostered new directions in Chinese art and helped shape western visions of Chinese art history. Issues covered include: Chinese debates on western influence--their theoretical foundations and rationales; New visions for the future of Chinese art in the late 19th and early 20th centuries; Pluralistic approaches and arguments on Chinese identity in the modern era; Collecting art and the vision of history; The identity of traditional literati painters in the modern era-their roles, artworks, and deeds; Foreigners in China-the formation of major European collections of Chinese art, and the formation of Chinese art history in the West. (ASIAN-SC)
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)
Exploratory Studies: (EAAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2026, Fall 2025, Spring 2024, Spring 2023
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 4822 - Objects, Rituals, and Tea (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with ASIAN 4424
Tea is a ubiquitous commodity across time and cultures. The craze for tea has become a global phenomenon. The goal of this course is not only to elucidate the exchanges and transmissions that gave rise to the phenomenon, but also to unpack the definition of tea culture through the exploration of objects and rituals. How are tea objects related to rituals, etiquette, and movement? What do tea objects reveal about craftsmen/craftswomen and collectors? How are the objects related to religious, political, social, and economic environments of their times? Lastly, what is the importance of tea culture in shaping national and cultural identity in modern East Asia? (ASIAN-SC)
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, GLC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)
Exploratory Studies: (EAAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2026, Spring 2025, Fall 2023, Fall 2021
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 4844 - The Rise of Contemporary Chinese Art: Narratives in the Making of New Art (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with ASIAN 4844
An explosive period of artistic experimentation occurred in China following the end of the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976). The new artistic practices that were developed from the late 1970s onwards-from painting to sculpture, installation, performance, video-quickly came to be known as contemporary Chinese art. This course charts its development with a historiographic attention to the ways in which it has been narrativized by domestic and international critics, curators, and art historians. Analyzing artworks, exhibitions, and translated texts, we will explore major trends and discursive issues to reflect on how we tell the story of this art in its domestic and global contexts. (ASIAN-SC)
Distribution Requirements: (HA-AG), (HST-AS)
Exploratory Studies: (EAAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2026, Spring 2025
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 4845 - Contemporary Performance Art in East Asia, 20th -21st Century (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with ASIAN 4845
Since the mid-twentieth century, artists based in and across East Asia have turned to performance art, using bodily actions to blur the boundaries between art and everyday social life. This course analyzes performance art's sociocultural underpinnings by treating it as an artistic medium and a critical practice shaped by interrelated histories of geopolitical conflict, colonialism, modernization, authoritarianism, and globalization in the East Asian context. Students will examine a range of approaches including happenings, body art, durational pieces, site-specific practices, and socially engaged performances to consider broader theoretical issues such as performance's paradoxical dependence on visual documentation, censorship and the politics of visibility, gender and sexuality, temporality, and spectatorship. Attention will be given to local contexts while also tracing transnational networks and art festivals that influence how East Asian performance art circulates and is interpreted.
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)
Exploratory Studies: (EAAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2026
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 4852 - Shadowplay: Asian Art and Performance (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with ASIAN 4442, VISST 4852
Shadowplay is a superb medium for storytelling. As with many performing arts in Asia, neither the highly stylized images of puppets, nor its musical, or linguistic complexity detract from its wide popularity. Why does an art that appears so obscure exercise such broad appeal? This seminar explores the playful and politically adept fluctuations of shadows across screens from India to Mainland and Island Southeast Asia. We will also briefly examine East Asian developments, particularly in China and Japan. In each of the countries where shadow theatre exists it has acquired its own repertory and a distinct technique and style of its own. This aesthetic has translated locally into paint, sculpture, architecture, cinema, and modern and contemporary installation art. Classes will meet regularly in the Herbert F. Johnson Museum. (ASIAN-SC)
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)
Exploratory Studies: (EAAREA, SAAREA, SEAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2024, Fall 2021, Fall 2019, Spring 2012
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 4854 - Water: Art and Politics in Southeast Asia (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with VISST 4854, ASIAN 4499
This seminar will focus on the significance of water –economic, religious, political, social –and its role in the art and architecture of Mainland and Island Southeast Asia, with particular focus on Cambodia and Indonesia. While India and China can be seen to provide aquatic themes and patterns for transformation, the emphasis in this course will focus on local ingenuity, how technologies of water use and control at ancient sites in Southeast Asia can be seen to shape vivid symbologies, performing past and present. The course will be taught at the Herbert F. Johnson Museum.
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS)
Exploratory Studies: (SEAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2026, Fall 2018
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 4855 - Threads of Consequence: Textiles in South and Southeast Asia (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with ASIAN 4487, VISST 4855, SHUM 4455
This seminar explores how patterned cloths serve as a symbolic medium, functioning on multiple levels of understanding and communication. As spun, dyed, and woven threads of consequence, textiles can be seen to enter into all phases of social, economic, political, religious, and performance processes, often assuming unusual properties and attributes. As bearers of talismanic messages, signifiers of rank, and as the recipients of influences from maritime trade and touristic demand, textiles are read between the folds of complex exchange mechanisms in South and Southeast Asia. (ASIAN-SC)
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)
Exploratory Studies: (SAAREA, SEAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Spring 2024, Fall 2020, Spring 2019
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 4856 - Producing Cloth Cultures (4 Credits)
Crosslisted with VISST 4857, CLASS 4756, SHUM 4866
It is a fundamental part of human activity to dress or cover one's body and environment. While the symbolic significance of such clothing has long been recognized, the activity of producing fabric itself deserves more attention. By this we do not only mean the various techniques and technological devices involved in spinning, weaving, stitching, or sewing, but also the analogical activities and metaphors they entailed. What stories did they tell? How did their connection to writing, remembering, lovemaking, or ruling one's kingdom, to name but a few examples, play out metaphorically in cloth? And how did fabrics depend on or transform the transmission of techniques, fashions and motives, but also gender, concepts of the body or the built environment?This team-taught seminar explores the presence, production, function and meaning of fabric in the built and lived environment. In a comparative approach we will explore evidence from Greco-Roman and Asian Art from the distant past to the contemporary moment.
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)
Exploratory Studies: (SAAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2022, Spring 2015
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 4858 - Dancing the Stone: Body, Memory, and Architecture (4 Credits)
Crosslisted with ASIAN 4456, PMA 4358, VISST 4858, MEDVL 4858
This course examines the role of temples and their sculptural programs in South and Southeast Asia as creative stimuli for performative reenactments. Choreographic encounters between imagination and memory will be mapped as they occur at various points historically and politically in Java, Bali, Cambodia and India. Since architectural choreography implies the human body's inhabitation and experience of place, the nature of ritualized behavior and its relationship to performance and politics will be explored spatially, both in organizing experience and defining or redefining identity on colonial, national, and diasporic margins. Bringing back the haptic sense (i.e. of feeling and doing at the same time) students will have the unique opportunity to balance the demands of learning a Balinese traditional dance while exploring performance traditions in historical perspective. (ASIAN-SC)
Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)
Exploratory Studies: (SAAREA, SEAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2023, Spring 2014
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 4991 - Independent Study (1-4 Credits)
Individual investigation and discussion of special topics not covered in the regular course offerings, by arrangement with a member of the department.
Exploratory Studies: (CU-UG)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2026, Fall 2025, Fall 2024, Fall 2023
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 4992 - Independent Study (1-4 Credits)
Individual investigation and discussion of special topics not covered in the regular course offerings, by arrangement with a member of the department.
Exploratory Studies: (CU-UG)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2026, Spring 2025, Spring 2024, Spring 2023
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 4997 - Practical Field Training (1 Credit)
This independent study course offers history of art majors (i.e., undergraduates whose applications to affiliate with the history of art major have been approved) an opportunity to reflect on concepts from history of art as they were encountered and applied in a recent internship. Students write a short paper describing their work experience and how it connects to the educational objectives of the history of art major.
Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2026, Fall 2025, Spring 2015, Fall 2014
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 4998 - Honors Work I (4 Credits)
A course for senior Art History majors working on honors theses, with selected reading, research projects, etc., under the supervision of a member of the History of Art faculty.
Enrollment Information: Primarily for: Art History honors program seniors.
Exploratory Studies: (CU-UG)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2026, Fall 2025, Fall 2024, Fall 2023
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 4999 - Honors Work II (4 Credits)
The student under faculty direction prepares a senior thesis.
Prerequisites: ARTH 4998.
Exploratory Studies: (CU-UG)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2026, Spring 2025, Spring 2024, Spring 2023
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 5991 - Supervised Reading (1-4 Credits)
Individual investigation and discussion of special topics not covered in the regular course offerings, by arrangement with a member of the department.
Enrollment Information: Enrollment limited to: History of Art, Archaeology, and Visual Studies graduate students.
Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2026, Fall 2025, Fall 2024, Fall 2023
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 5992 - Supervised Reading (1-4 Credits)
Individual investigation and discussion of special topics not covered in the regular course offerings, by arrangement with a member of the department.
Enrollment Information: Enrollment limited to: History of Art, Archaeology, and Visual Studies graduate students.
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2026, Spring 2025, Spring 2024, Spring 2023
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 5993 - Supervised Study (1-4 Credits)
Individual investigation and discussion of special topics not covered in the regular course offerings, by arrangement with a member of the department.
Enrollment Information: Enrollment limited to: History of Art, Archaeology, and Visual Studies graduate students.
Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2026, Fall 2025, Fall 2024, Fall 2023
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 5994 - Supervised Study (1-4 Credits)
Individual investigation and discussion of special topics not covered in the regular course offerings, by arrangement with a member of the department.
Enrollment Information: Enrollment limited to: History of Art, Archaeology, and Visual Studies graduate students.
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2026, Spring 2025, Spring 2024, Spring 2023
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6000 - Graduate Research Methods in Art History (3 Credits)
This graduate seminar introduces a range of research methods in art history and visual studies. We will read and discuss a series of texts related to the history and current practice of the discipline of art history. In addition, each week, a member of the faculty will visit the seminar to discuss their own research practice. This course is required of all first-year Ph.D. students in History of Art, and is open to graduate students from other fields.
Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2026, Fall 2025, Fall 2024, Fall 2022
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6010 - Curatorial Practicum (3 Credits)
The Curatorial Practicum is a semester-long course offered at the Herbert F. Johnson Museum in collaboration with the Department of the History of Art and Visual Studies. This Spring 2026 the seminar theme, “Performing Indonesia,” will be co-taught by Kaja McGowan, Associate Professor of Art History, and Ellen Avril, Judith H. Stoikov Curator of Asian Art at the museum. Library and museum collections of the performing arts of Indonesia will provide a wealth of possible stories that span almost eight decades. Students will be encouraged to explore the politics of display and shifting attitudes toward performance and rituals of spectatorship. They will also be invited to examine questions of heritage tourism, small-scale artisanal activity, provenance, repatriation, and community engagement. As an integral part of the course, curatorial interventions within the museum’s galleries will be staged.
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2026, Fall 2023, Fall 2022, Fall 2021
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6035 - Cornell's Collection of Greek and Roman Art (4 Credits)
Crosslisted with CLASS 7035, ARKEO 7035
This class examines the history and holdings of Cornell's teaching collection of ancient Greek and Roman objects. Designed to start a systematic inventory of the collections, it requires hands-on engagement with the objects (defining their material, age, function etc.) as much as archival work. Questions concerning the ethics of collections and calls for decolonizing museums will play a central role as we ultimately think about how to make use of and display the objects in our custody.
Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2025, Spring 2024
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6060 - Visual Ideology (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with GERST 6600, COML 6600
Some of the most powerful approaches to visual practices have come from outside or from the peripheries of the institution of art history and criticism. This seminar will analyze the interactions between academically sanctioned disciplines (such as iconography and connoisseurship) and innovations coming from philosophy, psychoanalysis, historiography, sociology, literary theory, mass media criticism, feminism, and Marxism. We will try especially to develop: (1) a general theory of "visual ideology" (the gender, social, racial, and class determinations on the production, consumption, and appropriation of visual artifacts under modern and postmodern conditions); and (2) contemporary theoretical practices that articulate these determinations. Examples will be drawn from the history of oil painting, architecture, city planning, photography, film, and other mass media.
Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2025, Spring 2023, Fall 2019, Fall 2016
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6100 - History of Photography (4 Credits)
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2022
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6101 - Proseminar: Introduction to Methods (3 Credits)
Works of art have always engendered political, social, and cultural meanings. This seminar presents an introduction to the methods used by art historians and the objects and ideas that constitute the historiography of their discipline. If art history was once understood as the study of the development of style in European art, over the past century its practitioners have attempted to embrace a global perspective and to address issues of class, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, and gender. Readings will focus on historically situating methods and the implications of their cross-cultural application. They will be discussed in the framework of institutions, apparatuses and practices that have shaped the field, identifying how these have contributed to systemic mechanisms of hegemony and exclusion. Papers will encourage students to put methods into practice, realizing in the process that subject matter is not an isolated choice to which methods are applied, but something that profoundly affects the approach that the researcher brings to the writing and conceptualizing and doing of art history.
Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2026, Fall 2025, Fall 2024, Fall 2023
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6111 - Making Photography Matter: A Studio Course (3 Credits)
Photography/Image Analysis/Graphic Design is a hands-on course devoted to the practical understanding of conception, production, and innovation in the photographic image world. Each unit of the course confronts a fundamental problem of contemporary photographic communication-quality of light, framing, series, post-production, publication design, to name a few example topics-from practical, theoretical, and historical perspectives. The goal of the course is to enrich students' understanding of how to make images that solve practical social and scholarly problems in an impactful, immediate, and public way.
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2024
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6133 - Visual Culture during the Enlightenment and the Age of Revolutions in the Atlantic World (4 Credits)
Crosslisted with HIST 6133
The eighteenth century witnessed a number of important political, economic, scientific, and artistic transformations that shook the foundations of the Atlantic world. This seminar will focus on the intersections of art and liberation in the 18th century Americas. We will explore the role of visual culture, including maps, illustrations, paintings, talismanic objects, and ephemera in the mobilization of political dissent and revolution. The course will consist of a series of case studies that include the Tupac Amaru and Katari Rebellions (Peru/Bolivia), the Haitian Revolution, the Aponte Rebellion (Cuba), and various slave revolts across the Caribbean and Brazil, with a focus on the use of visuals in the spread of information and the creation of insurgent imaginaries in the years leading up to Independence in the 1820s. This course would bring in students from a variety of disciplines, including History, Art History, Visual Studies, Indigenous Studies, Latina/o Studies, and Latin American Studies, given its interdisciplinary focus and the relevance of these transformative political and social movements to the present day.
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2024
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6151 - Topics in Media Arts (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with VISST 6151, STS 6511
Topic - Biological Art (Bio Art): From the late 20th-century to the present, artists have made art using live entities including plants, animals, cells, tissue cultures and bacteria. They have designed habitats, crops, body organs, created new species and attempted to salvage extinct ones. Some artists also have produced works in traditional media such as painting, sculpture and photography. While artists always have imaged and sometimes directly engaged with aspects of the natural world in their art, bio art responds to recent developments in genetics and information technologies. Because of its foundation on the life sciences this art entails significant ethical and political dimensions. In this seminar students will explore multiple areas of bio art with attention to pertinent artistic and critical literature and to the scientific practices in which the works are based. For this purpose the class will consult with specialists and visit laboratories on campus relevant to the art covered in the course. We expect these interdisciplinary investigations to prepare students for a grounded assessment of bio art.
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2026, Spring 2024, Fall 2020, Fall 2018
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6153 - Topics in Feminist Media Arts (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with FGSS 6153
Fall 24 Topic: Feminist Posthumanisms in Visual Arts. While feminist art in new media address traditional feminist concerns such as the female body, identity, representation, feminist history, and consumerism, others directly engage with recent theoretical currents on the Anthropocene, posthumanism, and new materialisms that view humans and non-humans as co-dependent. Non-humans include environmental factors, animals, plants, bacteria, and machines. This seminar will examine work by contemporary artists from various geographical areas and cultural traditions engaged with posthumanist perspectives in relation to relevant theoretical texts and previous feminist media arts.
Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2026, Fall 2024, Fall 2023, Fall 2022
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6155 - Topics in Latin American Art (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with VISST 6155, LATA 6155
Topic: Latin American Modernisms and Technology. The involvement of Latin American artists with modern media technologies dates at least to the late nineteenth century and has especially flourished in the last three decades. The canonical histories and criticism of Latin American art for the most part depict a history of artistic production in which technology plays a minor or invisible role. This construction of history reinforces the assumption that experimentation, innovation, and theorization in technological art are exclusive provinces of the developed world. As the history of art expands to include diverse areas of media arts and visual culture, the recognition of Latin American artists' involvement with technology is not only overdue but also essential to the development of more diverse and rigorous understandings of both modernity and modernism.
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Spring 2023, Fall 2021, Spring 2020
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6160 - Topics in Colonial Encounters (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with LATA 6160
The colonial period in Latin America (circa 1521-1820s) witnessed the formation of one of the most diverse societies in the world. Labor regimes, religious activities, marriage alliances, and commercial contacts engendered by the Spanish colonial enterprise brought Spaniards, Africans, and Indigenous peoples into dynamic contact. This cross-fertilization of cultures resulted in the construction of new cultural categories and colonial identities whose reverberations continue to be felt into the present day. This seminar explores the role that visual culture played in the articulation of identity in Latin America. For the purposes of this seminar, identity can be loosely defined as the overlapping allegiances to which one ascribes, whether racial, cultural, gendered, religious, or community-based. The visual culture of colonial Latin America can reveal multitudes on the construction of self and community across temporal and geographical contexts. We will explore a variety of colonial Latin American objects and images, including paintings, textiles, and material culture. Our discussions of images will be guided by readings on hybridity, coloniality, cross-cultural exchange, and the early modern Atlantic world.
Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2026, Fall 2025, Spring 2023, Spring 2021
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6166 - Colonial Connectivities: Curating the Arts of the Spanish Americas (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with VISST 6166, ARKEO 7166, LATA 6166
This seminar immerses students in the diverse painting traditions of colonial Latin America (1500s-1800s), with a focus on artistic practice in Peru, Ecuador, Venezuela, and the Hispanophone Caribbean. Themes include the pluralism and material makeup of devotional images, aesthetic constructions of race and class, the development of artistic workshops, and the role of rebellion and revolution in art. Students will participate in the curatorial development of Cornell's first exhibition of colonial Latin American art, scheduled to open in June 2024. They will research the paintings selected for the exhibition; devise the installation layout and design; write wall texts; and collaborate on the development of educational programming. Activities will also include a field trip to Buffalo State University observe scientific analysis of select paintings from the exhibition.
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2024
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6190 - Comparative Modernities (3 Credits)
Since the late 19th century, the effects of capitalism across the globe have been profoundly transformative and have intensified with the demise of the older colonial empires, the rise of nationalism and independent states, and the onset of neoliberal globalization. These transformations are manifested in the domains of high art, mass culture and popular culture, yet remain inadequately studied. This seminar theorizes and explores non-Western modernist and contemporary art practice in a comparative framework. Taught as a seminar, it assumes active participation by advanced undergraduate and graduate students who have a prior knowledge of Euro-American modernism and art history, and who wish to better understand the great artistic and visual transformations from the beginning of the 20th century onwards in a global context.
Exploratory Studies: (SAAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2024, Fall 2021, Spring 2020, Fall 2015
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6210 - The Archaeology of the City of Rome (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with ARKEO 6110, CLASS 6766
This course tells the history of the Roman empire through the urban development of its capital from the early 1st millennium BCE to the advent of Christian emperors in the 4th century CE. What does the archeology reveal about how the geography and environment of this site, its society and political systems, military conquests, economy, infrastructure, resources, and technologies interacted to create the center of an empire? Special focus is on how the appropriation of other peoples and cultures shaped the metropolis itself. Did it manage to integrate individuals from Africa, the Near East, from North of the Alps and Britain, and if so, how? The history of excavations and the reception of the city's architecture in the 19th and 20th centuries will provide a critical lens for analyzing some of the master narratives associated with ancient Rome and its ruins.
Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2024
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6211 - Visual Narratives in Ancient Art (3 Credits)
This seminar explores the numerous ways in which a picture can be worth a thousand words. Offering a global and comparative perspective, it examines the complex relationship between narrative and image and the ensuing notions of temporality in spatially based pictorial media. Focusing on ancient visual culture—from Greek vase painting, Roman historical reliefs, Gandharan biographical friezes, Indian Buddhist jataka panels, to early Christian sarcophagi—the course provides a rich ground for exploring diverse narrative strategies across geographic and temporal boundaries. We will engage with different narratological methodologies by focusing on some of the key visual stories connected to myths, epics, religious figures, folk tales, and oral histories. Students will develop skills to analyze how stories unfold through images as well as to critically examine the politics of narrative and issues of representation across cultures.
Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2026
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6225 - Archaic and Classical Greece (3 Credits)
This lecture class centers on the formative periods of ancient Greek culture, the centuries from about 800-300 BCE. Its aim is to place Greece within the cosmopolitan networks of the Mediterranean and beyond, while simultaneously looking at specific local traditions. Only within this complex glocal frame will it become clear what is unique about Greek art. In surveying major genres such as architecture, ceramics, sculpture and painting we will also investigate the question of whether and how changing resources and modes of production, various political systems (such as democracy or monarchy) and situations (war, colonization, trade), gender, or theories of representation had an impact on the art of their time. Some of the particular themes to be discussed are: the role of the Near East for the development of Greek visual culture; city planning; images in public and private life; visualizing the human body and the individuum; Greek art in contact zones from the Black Sea to Southern Italy and Sicily; foreign art in Greece; the concept of art; reception of Greek art in modern times.
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2022
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6233 - Greek and Roman Art and Archaeology (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with CLASS 7746, ARKEO 6233
Topics Rotate: Spring 2026 topic: Olympia.
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2026, Fall 2025, Fall 2024, Spring 2023
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6300 - Romanesque and Early Gothic Art and Architecture: Europe and the Mediterranean, 1000-1150 A.D. (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with MEDVL 6300, NES 6759
This course will address both Romanesque and the earliest manifestations of Gothic art and architecture as Western Mediterranean phenomena, rather than northern European ones. We will adopt a comparative approach which includes Islamic and, to a lesser extent, Byzantine cultures and material. In addition to the more usual art historical skills, such as visual and stylistic analysis and compare-and-contrast, we will use selected primary sources and historical analysis to attempt to understand the objects and monuments we address.
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2024
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6305 - Looking for Love: Visual and Literary Cultures of Love in the Medieval Mediterranean, 1100-1400 AD (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with MEDVL 6305
A comparative and interdisciplinary seminar whose focus is the visual world created by the pan-Mediterranean (Iberian Peninsula, Maghreb, France, Italy, Turkey, Egypt, and Persia) culture of Courtly Love beginning during the 11th century ad, and continuing as a principle factor in medieval cultural production for the remainder of the period. Particular attention will be paid to the ways in which the visual dimensions of this culture nuance, compliment, contradict, or at times even exist independently of, its oral and written spheres. Reading knowledge of any Romance or Semitic language and/or Persian, in addition to English, is highly advantageous.
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2026, Spring 2022
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6310 - Methods in Medieval (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with NES 6700, JWST 6310, MEDVL 6310, RELST 6310, SPAN 6590
Topic: Writing Through the Forest in Search of Trees. Hello, Humanities Student! Are you a plotter or a pantser? Not sure? Come and join us to find out, and to gain valuable insight into what kind of a writer you are, and how to manage that writer most effectively and productively. This theme-centered methods seminar, through a communal focus on trees, woods, glens, and copses in the pre-modern world, will hone in on the most indispensable tool in the humanist's belt: writing. From the generation of ideas, to their organization into an outline (or a blueprint, or whatever euphemism we, as a group or as individuals, decide to apply to the initial, tangled pile of yarn) to the first draft. Followed by frank and constructive criticism of the initial draft as a group and in pairs, and then on to the part that all students-really, all humanists?okay, all writers-find to be the greatest struggle: Your paper has some good ideas, but it really needs a rewrite. Now what do you do? As we write, and rewrite, we will also read widely. In addition to primary sources, scholarly articles and essays, we will include criticism, personal essay, theory, excerpts from fiction, and more, in an effort to open students' writing up to a myriad of possibilities for persuasive and compelling written communication.
Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2026, Fall 2025, Spring 2025, Fall 2023
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6315 - Experiencing Islamic Art: The Johnson Museum's Collection (3 Credits)
Grounded entirely in the collection of our on-campus museum, this course will introduce students to a broad chronological and geographical selection of examples of 'Islamic' visual culture via close encounters between students and objects. In addition to the scholarly essays and articles through which students habitually learn to analyze visual culture, we will employ fiction (some of which the students themselves will generate), poetry from all relevant periods, including contemporary, current events, travel literature, and more. All written work will be, as will all class sessions, grounded in the physical objects that will form our principal focus.
Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2026, Spring 2026
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6320 - Tales of the Alhambra and Lalla Rookh: Case Studies in Orientalism (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with NES 6320
An introduction both to the History of Art and to an interdisciplinary approach to research and analysis through close study of these two works. Beginning with a sampling of Said's Orientalism and its critics, we will follow with a group read and analysis of each illustrated work, including text-image consideration and analysis. There will be heavy focus on multi-media primary source material in Kroch library, the Johnson Museum, and my own personal collection; consideration of both works in their 19th-c context, as well as medieval and earlier roots. We will devote half the semester to each, with 'hinge point' marked by a study day at Olana. Final product could include small exhibition, in tandem with individual papers/projects.
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2024
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6351 - Problems in Byzantine Art (4 Credits)
Crosslisted with CLASS 7752, MEDVL 6351, NES 6351, RELST 6351, VISST 6351, ARKEO 6351
Seminar topics rotate each semester. Topic for Spring 2023: Portraiture.Byzantine artists produced a wide variety of images that modern interpreters have recognized as portraits. These images illuminate individual identity and visual representation in Byzantium. On the one hand, the constituent elements of a portrait (such as physiognomy, gesture, dress, and attributes) illuminate cultural understandings of personhood. On the other hand, those elements are assembled and displayed through means (composition, medium, and context) that illuminate cultural understandings of images and their ability to extend personal energy. We will focus on the primary sources, including preserved monuments (manuscripts, mosaics, sculptures, etc.) and literary witnesses (epigrams, historians' accounts, etc.), supplemented by selections from the secondary literature on identity, individuality, and subject formation in Byzantium.Previous topics include: Ravenna, Hagia Sophia, Byzantine Iconoclasm, Spiral Relief Columns.
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2023, Spring 2022, Spring 2016, Spring 2014
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6354 - Byzantine Archaeology (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with CLASS 6754, ARKEO 6354, NES 6354
A seminar on the archaeology of the Byzantine Empire, from the late Roman through to the early modern periods. Topics to be covered include: long-term changes in settlement patterns and urban development; the material traces of state and monastic control over productive landscapes; the idea of the border and the nature of its defense; and the fraught relationship between Byzantine and classical archaeologies.
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Fall 2019
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6361 - Staffage: Figures for Scale, 1500-1850 (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with ARKEO 6712, SHUM 6711, VISST 6711, COML 6711
“Staffage” is a term in the history of landscape painting. It refers to little figures who populate the scene, invariably dwarfed by their surroundings. The few critics who noticed them assigned them various roles: to illustrate “the benefits which nature affords to creatures living in the region” (Goethe, 1800); or, alternatively, “to lend the landscape its specific poetic character” (Fernow, 1806). From landscape, staffage migrated into archaeological documentation and architectural illustration. Here, tiny figures gain additional roles: to convey the scale of the monuments depicted, and the societies that inhabit them. Our study of staffage alternates between close looking at a wide range of pictures, and readings from the historical and theoretical literature on the aesthetics and politics of landscape painting.
Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2025
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6400 - Art, Identity, and the Human Body in Early Modern Europe (3 Credits)
This lecture introduces students to the multivalent attitudes towards and understandings of the body in early modern Europe, and how artmakers contributed and responded to these forces between 1400 and 1650. Bringing together the histories of art, science, and philosophy, as well as social, cultural, medical, and global history methodologies, this course explores how artworks and objects reveal the fluid cultural practices and societal norms of early modern Europe. Lecture topics will include the rediscovery of the classical bodily ideal; the influence of humoral theory and anatomical studies on artmaking; the interactions of art and the bodily senses; global encounters with non-European monstrous bodies, and the gendered, racialized, eroticized, divine, aging, and/or disabled body. Students will gain a nuanced comprehension of how early modern people saw and understood themselves and their bodies, in life, and in art.
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2026, Spring 2025
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6444 - Experimental Media (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with GERST 6444, PMA 6444, VISST 6444
This seminar examines “experimental media”, an umbrella term for experimental literature, poetry, film, video, photography, music, radio, theater, sound art, computer games, and other new media. With a focus on the twentieth- and twenty-first-century German-speaking world, we will discuss aesthetic experiments with form, structure, and materiality. With a view toward interdisciplinarity, our guiding questions will address the distinctions between art and non-art, amateurs and experts, and experimental and commercial media, as well as the possibilities of collaboration and the limits of the experimental method. While coursework will primarily involve reading, writing, and thinking about aesthetic texts and humanistic scholarship, there will be some hands-on work with media objects and experimental media archeology. Taught in English.
Enrollment Information: Primarily for: graduate students.
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6462 - Early Modern Illuminations: Light, Sight, and the Visual World in Europe, 1400-1700 (3 Credits)
This seminar analyzes the contours of early modern Europe’s artistic and scientific landscapes through the lens of light and vision. This class will explore how early modern artists conceptualized the nature of light and vision and engaged with optical theories in painting, architecture, and material culture. Each week students will investigate a key art theoretical and/or scientific text alongside relevant artworks and objects. Topics covered will include the impact of scientific devices like microscopes and the camera obscura on painting; the aesthetic functioning of chiaroscuro; the development of linear perspective and trompe-l’oeil; the politics of shine; and luminous materialities. Students will probe techniques of artmaking and ways of seeing and will gain a nuanced understanding of the broader epistemological, social, and environmental factors that shaped European aesthetics and intellectual cultures.
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2026
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6465 - Early Modern Materialities, 1400-1700 (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with HIST 6665
This seminar analyzes the contours of early modern Europe's material landscape and the ways in which global exchanges and technological advancements impacted material production and consumption. Working within an interdisciplinary framework, we will explore the dynamic material, global, and social dimensions of objects, and the meanings that different materials could generate in art production. Each week we will investigate an early modern art material - from ivory, to amber, shells, and pearls - and its use and/or representation in a range of artworks. Students will learn to think materially; they will be introduced to multiple techniques of production, harvesting, and fashioning of materials, and will consider the broader social, economic, political, and environmental factors that shaped material culture.
Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2026, Fall 2025, Fall 2024
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6510 - Contemporary Aesthetic Theory and its Discontents (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with GERST 6510, VISST 6500, COML 6370, GOVT 6517
After having been reduced to a mere ideological formation of bourgeois origin, aesthetics has recently made a strong comeback in the field of theory. This course probes the reasons for this historical change. From the arguments of the critics we will derive a catalogue of criteria for a viable aesthetics in order to examine how contemporary aesthetic theory relates to cognitive theories, the historicity of art and taste (including specific practices and institutions), and the emancipatory potentials of ethics and politics. Readings may include Adorno, Berger, de Bolla, Bourdieu, Noël Carroll, Cavell, Danto, Derrida, Dickie, Eagleton, Goodman, Guillory, Gumbrecht, Halsall, Luhmann, Lyotard, de Man, Walter Benn Michaels, Obrist, Ohmann, Scarry, Seel, Shustermann, Barbara Herrnstein Smith, Williams and others.
Exploratory Studies: (EUAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2026, Spring 2020, Fall 2014
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6511 - Blackness, Gender and Representation (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with AMST 6511
This interdisciplinary seminar explores the problem that blackness poses for representation, with a particular focus on black women's aporic positionality in this problem. Dominant discourses of representation pose it as a mode of making present what is physically absent through conceptual, aesthetic, and political means—a process and framework that produces a shared form of subjectivity and its attendant commons. Given histories of slavery and racial violence, how does blackness's excluded but constitutive positionality challenge this alleged commonality? Further, how does black feminist theory's positing of black women as endlessly productive, hole-like vestibule for modern subjective form problematize representation? We will utilize analysis of black feminist and critical theoretical texts and artworks to interrogate the ways that black women illuminate black gender as a problem for representation.
Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2025
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6515 - Black Abstraction (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with ASRC 6506, AMST 6515
Abstract art poses generative problems and possibilities for thinking racial blackness. Some accounts posit a turn from figurative representation to visual abstraction of blackness/black experience as a move toward freer artistic expression, unburdened by confining cultural markings of race. We will question the supposed freedom of this turn to abstraction and explore the conditions of violent exclusion from normative bodily and representational form that confine blackness to abstraction. Modernist abstraction's move to dismantle illusionism and emphasize materiality enables an understanding of blackness not as a stable, visible identity category but as free-floating trace, concept, formlessness, and obdurate materiality. This course analyzes practices and theories of abstraction in the twentieth century to the present, from the racialized contours of the Western avant-garde and black abstractionists.
Prerequisites: one previous History of Art or Africana course.
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2026
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6516 - The Black Home in Theory, Art, and Architecture (3 Credits)
Why is the black home and black place an unstable concept in the United States? Why does spatial disinvestment, gentrification, redlining, and eminent domain disproportionately target black people and families? What effect does this instability and erasure have on the feeling of black home, black gender, domesticity, and psychological well-being? This interdisciplinary course explores these questions through examination of black geographical and critical theories, architectural theory and history, painting, sculpture, and film about the black home and black domesticity. Topics and objects of study range from the slave cabin and the shack to racial suburbs and urban environments, from psychological theories about the black family to queer renderings of home and gender —all toward an understanding of the struggles of black space and place making.
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6520 - Reading Race Early Modern Art (3 Credits)
This seminar explores the ways in which artists and craftspeople created representations of non-Europeans that shaped, negotiated, and challenged pluralistic biological and symbolic conceptions of race between 1450 and 1700. Against the backdrop of increasing global contact, European colonial enterprises, and the explosion of the Atlantic slave trade, this seminar will critically explore constructions of Blackness, whiteness, and racialized otherness and will consider the roles played by art and material culture in practices of race-making. Thinking materially, students will assess the impact of different artistic media on understandings of racialized difference. Considering race at its intersections with gender, class, religion, science, and disability, this seminar will analyze how artworks reveal and obscure the real, complex experiences of non-Europeans in Europe.
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Spring 2024
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6540 - Film History for Art Historians (3 Credits)
This seminar will offer a survey of film theory and history tailored for art historians, especially but not exclusively for modernists. The influence of cinema on twentieth-century aesthetics cannot be overstated, yet art historians routinely work without enough knowledge about the history of cinema or the grammar and rhetoric of its techniques. The history of montage, continuity editing, cinematography, and narrative form will be covered as we encounter major works from world cinema in dialogue with significant movements in modern art. German Expressionism, Surrealism, Italian Neorealism, Documentary Film, Film Noir, Hollywood Auteurism, East Asian Auteurism, and Bollywood Cinema will be among the major movements covered, as will the late entry into the fine art world of moving image media.
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2026, Spring 2025, Spring 2020, Spring 2019
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6545 - The Photobook (3 Credits)
Topic 2024: Tutorial. The history of photography as an art has been mostly on the page, not on the wall. This course refocuses the standard museum and gallery history of photography back to the book. Significantly, it takes advantage, through field trips, of the proximity of Cornell to the George Eastman House in Rochester, whose library houses the most important photobooks from around the world, including the best creations from Russia, Japan, and the United States. Students will learn the basics of photographic printing, book construction, the role of the photobook in the rise of the artist's book in the twentieth century, as well as advanced skills in analysis of the photographic picture and sequencing. Major themes will include the scientific photobook of the nineteenth century, the documentary photobook of the 1930s, the propaganda photobook of the communist era, the postwar photobooks of Japan, the personal/domestic turn of the 1970s, and the present state of the photobook in the digital era.
Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2026, Fall 2025, Fall 2024, Fall 2023
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6550 - Modern and Contemporary Latin American Art (3 Credits)
This course concerns a selection of influential artistic movements in Latin American from the early twentieth century to the present. Attention is given to issues such as the effects of colonialism and imperialism on Latin America's visual arts, the creation of national art, the relation of Latin American art and artists to cultural centers in Europe, The United States and other regions of the globe, the interaction of high art and popular culture, and the role of gender and race in various aspects of artistic practice. Students will also become acquainted with Latin American and Latinx artists working with new technologies.
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Spring 2024
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6556 - Decolonial Poetics and Aesthetics: Arts of Resistance in the Americas (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with ENGL 6565, LSP 6565, VISST 6556
Exploring a genealogy of Latinx, Afro-Latinx, Black, Indigenous, and Chicana/o/x theorizations of modernity and identity, the course asks, what is the decolonial? Is it a space between the colonial and post-colonial? Is it a creative process, an intellectual theorization, or a historical period? Is it a performance, intervention, or embodied experience? Tracing a historical trajectory of the decolonial in poetry, performance, installation, and visual art, the course examines decolonial modes of making and being from the sixteenth to the twenty first century.
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Fall 2022, Spring 2020, Spring 2017
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6563 - Art and Architecture of Colonial Latin America (4 Credits)
This course surveys the artistic and architectural traditions of Latin America during the period of Spanish colonial rule (ca. 1520s-1820s). It will center primarily on visual cultures of the viceroyalties of New Spain (Mexico) and Peru, but will also cover works of art and architecture from the Caribbean and the northern Andes. The course explores the legacy of pre-Columbian visual traditions in the colonial era as well as the lasting impact of colonial artistic practices in modern and contemporary Latin America. It will also examine colonial Latin America as the crossroads of dynamic artistic and cultural interaction between Indigenous, European, and Afrodescendant groups. Topics to be explored include issues of visual translation and transmission, art and agency, and the creation of new colonial artistic practices and idioms.
Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2022
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6566 - Art and Architecture of the Pre-Columbian Americas (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with MEDVL 6566
This course introduces students to the arts of the ancient Americas from circa 2000 BC to the Spanish invasions of the 15th and 16th centuries. The term pre-Columbian refers to the span of time during which indigenous cultures flourished before Christopher Columbus' voyage of 1492. This course covers the arts of indigenous Mesoamerica (Mexico, Guatemala, Belize, and Honduras), the Caribbean (Cuba, Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic, and the Greater and Lesser Antilles), and Andean South America (Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, and Chile). Students will become familiar with the history, archaeology, and visual arts of the earliest cultures that populated these regions up through the Inca, Aztec, and Maya cultures that encountered the Spaniards. This course also explores the legacies of pre-Columbian cultures among contemporary Chicana/o/x and Latina/o/x artists in the United States.
Exploratory Studies: (LAAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2025, Fall 2018
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6595 - Heritage, History, and Identity in Cambodia (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with ANTHR 6590, ARKEO 6590, ASIAN 6651, VISST 6590
This winter course on site in Cambodia will focus on Cambodian heritage past and present - how it's been created in the past, including the city of Angkor, and how that heritage and history is understood and engaged today. We will visit historical sites as well as museums and other relevant sites, including performances, where history is remembered and engaged. There will be lectures, including by Cambodian experts, as well as film showings. The course will be based in Siem Reap, in collaboration with the Center for Khmer Studies, and there will also be excursions to Phnom Penh, the capital. (ASIAN-SC)
Prerequisites: background equivalent to: KHMER 1100.
Course Fee: Course Fee, TBA. Fee amount approximate.
Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL); (SEAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Winter 2025, Winter 2023
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6600 - Contemporary Art: 1960-Present (3 Credits)
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6611 - Art of South Asia, 1200-present (4 Credits)
This course surveys the art and architecture of South Asia since 1200 CE. We cover major developments over the last eight centuries, including the architecture of the Sultanate Period, Vijaynagar, painting and architecture in the Deccan and South India, Mughal art and architecture, and Rajput painting. We look at British period colonial art and architecture, the rise of nationalism and modernism in Indian art and the circulation of vernacular images, including posters and bazaar prints in the twentieth century. The recent globalization of South Asian contemporary art is also examined. Artistic movements are situated with reference to social, economic, and political developments.
Exploratory Studies: (SAAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2023
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6620 - Art and the Remapping of the World (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with SHUM 6680, VISST 6680
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2023
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6621 - Art and Empire in Britain and France (3 Credits)
This seminar explores the images and objects produced, collected, and displayed in the context of the British and French empires of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Drawing on a range of perspectives-including postcolonial studies, critical race studies, and indigenous studies-we will develop a critical vocabulary for addressing the history of colonialism and the ongoing process of decolonization, asking what particular problems and opportunities art history presents for the study of empire. In what ways were aesthetics entangled with imperial ideology? How did works of art support or challenge dominant political, social, and cultural narratives? And what does a study of historic empires have to offer to our understanding of globalization today? We will also engage with the ways in which the legacy of empire is treated in contemporary museology. Readings on France and Britain will be combined with theoretical texts that have informed scholarship on the history of imperialism more broadly. Participants in the seminar are encouraged to apply the themes covered to a geographical area and time period of their choice in their final paper.
Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2024, Spring 2021
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6622 - Liquidities: Seascapes in Art and as History (3 Credits)
This seminar explores readings in the blue humanities as they relate to art history, with a particular focus on the genre of the seascape as a means of framing human-oceanic, interspecies, and cross-cultural encounters. After establishing a theoretical basis in oceanic thought, we will explore the methodological potential such watery thinking offers for an art history attuned to cross currents, fluid interactions, and unsettled narratives. Though anchored in the Western perspective of the seascape, course readings will also be attentive to the long history of fluid models of identity and objecthood in diverse Indigenous cultures, and to the limitations inherent in the terrestrial bias of much Western scholarship.
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Spring 2024
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6624 - After Nature: Art and Environmental Imagination (4 Credits)
This course looks at what it means to make art in, of, and after nature, and asks how that art might contribute to shaping the world we live in. Tracing a trajectory from the collection and display of natural history specimens to views of European and American landscapes to contemporary artists who address ecological crises, the course offers both a history of landscape in western art and a study of environmental imagination. We will further explore how nature is represented on Cornell's campus, including in the Johnson Museum, the Lab of Ornithology and the Botanic Gardens. This course includes opportunities to creatively reflect on our personal relationship to nature through hands-on activities. Students from all disciplines are welcome to engage with themes including natural curiosities, parks and gardens, ideas of wilderness, the picturesque, environmental preservation, earth works, and the post-natural.
Exploratory Studies: (CU-SBY)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2024
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6625 - Paris, Capital of Modernity? (4 Credits)
This course takes a critical perspective on the centrality of Paris to canonical narratives of modernity and modern art and architecture. We will look both at some of the defining art movements of the 19th century and at the influx of people and objects from other cultures-many of whom and which arrived in Paris via colonialist violence and imperialist plunder-that contributed to those movements. Beginning with the French and Haitian Revolutions, moving through Impressionist travels in North Africa and the export of Haussmanization to South America, and ending with Le Corbusier's plan for redesigning Algiers, the course aims to redress some of the silences and oversights written into the history of modern art.
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2022
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6630 - Museum Histories (3 Credits)
Museum Histories considers current and ongoing crises in arts institutions (COVID, labor issues, underrepresentation of minorities, calls for restitution of wrongfully-acquired objects) in relation to both the history of museums and collections and the kinds of histories they are able to tell. Readings will focus particularly on the 18th and 19th centuries and the ways in which museums developed alongside and in support of nationalist and imperialist agendas, asking to what extent present problems are informed by choices and alignments made in the past. We will also invite curators to discuss how museums can best address the issues covered and how curatorial strategies might address inherent inequalities within our institutions. Students are welcome to do their final projects on an aspect of contemporary museum practice as informed by the history discussed in the seminar.
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2022
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6651 - Women in New Media Art (3 Credits)
The work of women artists has been central to the development of new media art. These rich and varied practices include installation, virtual reality environments, net art, digital video, networked performance, tactical media, video games, remix and robotics. This course will begin with an overview of feminist art and early experiments in performance and video art to then investigate multiple currents of digital media. Discussions will focus primarily on works by women artists from Europe, the Americas and Australia.
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6653 - History and Theory of Digital Art (3 Credits)
In this course, we will examine the role of electronic and digital technologies in the arts of the late 20th and 21st centuries with emphasis on Europe and North America. Beginning with the cybernetically and systems-inspired work of the late sixties, we will explore early uses of computer technology, including early experiments in synthetic video in the 1970s. An overview of pre-internet telematic experiments will lead to an investigation of net art and later currents of digital art. The ongoing development of behavioral art forms will be a central theme. Critical evaluation of various attitudes concerning technology will be encouraged.
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2026, Fall 2024, Fall 2022
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6673 - The Kinship of Repair: Asian and Asian American Artists in Collaboration (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with SHUM 6673, ASIAN 6667, FGSS 6673, VISST 6673, AAS 6673
(ASIAN-SC)
Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2022
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6684 - The Labor of Images: Encountering the Collective in Visual Cultures (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with SHUM 6684, COML 6684, PMA 6684, VISST 6684
Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2023
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6695 - Studies in Global Modern Art (3 Credits)
Topic: Art of the Arab World, Central Asia, Iran, Turkey.This seminar focuses on the art and visual culture of West Asia and North Africa from the nineteenth century to the present. We will examine methodologies informed by art history, media studies, area studies, and postcolonial theory. We will also study periods and genres. These include colonial era photography, painting, and architecture; nationalist oriental painting from the early twentieth century; the consolidation of modernism during the mid-twentieth century; and contemporary artistic practice in the era of globalization.
Exploratory Studies: (EUAREA, SAAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2026, Fall 2020, Fall 2016, Spring 2012
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6706 - The Poetics of Embodiment: Figurines in the Early Middle Ages (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with SHUM 6706, MEDVL 6706, RELST 6706, ARKEO 6706
How can a small sculpture produce monumental effects? Recent shifts in metal-detecting and excavation practices have transformed our understanding of the scope of figural art after the Roman empire's collapse; the field is newly flooded with evidence of toys, puppets, and other tiny bodies. Working across the disciplines of anthropology, archaeology, art history, philosophy, and gender studies, this course investigates how figurines shaped space, ritual, and concepts of personhood in the early medieval world.
Enrollment Information: Enrollment limited to: graduate and professional students.
Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2025
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6720 - Curating the British Empire (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with STS 6634, HIST 6634
During Europe's colonial era, the modern museum emerged as a site of cultural and scientific authority. This course investigates the history of imperial collections and collectors, with a focus on Britain and the East India Company in the nineteenth century. Examples of topics include: the supply chain for artifacts and knowledge resources; changing conceptions of intellectual property, ownership and access; household versus public versus for-profit collections; museums and the narration of social values and cultural identities; debates over the function or aims of museums and related institutions; the collections and the administration of the empire; the collections and the growth of the sciences; the postcolonial legacies of colonial collections.
Exploratory Studies: (SAAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2026, Fall 2022, Spring 2022, Spring 2019
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6754 - Themes in Mediterranean Archaeology (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with CLASS 7754, NES 7654, ARKEO 7254, ANTHR 7254, MEDVL 6754
This seminar provides a higher-level general introduction to, and survey of, contemporary theories, methods, and approaches in the archaeology of the Mediterranean world. Rather than focusing on a specific geographical sub-region or chronological period, this course examines and critically assesses the practice and distinctive character of Mediterranean archaeology more broadly.
Prerequisites: some previous background in archaeology, material culture studies, ancient history, or related fields.
Enrollment Information: Enrollment limited to: graduate students.
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2026, Fall 2025, Fall 2021, Spring 2016
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6774 - Indigenous Spaces and Materiality (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with ANTHR 7774, AMST 6774
The materiality of art as willful agents will be considered from ontology to an Indigenous expression of more than human relations. Located at the intersection of multiple modernities, art and science; the shift from art historical framings of form over matter and connoisseurship to viewing materiality as an active process that continues to map larger social processes and transformation will be discussed. Archives will be sites of investigation across varied Indigenous geographies marking place, space, bodies and land. This class is designed to introduce the latest methodologies in the field of art history, material culture and Indigenous Studies. Students will consult the archive, do hands-on evaluation of art, material culture, and expand their historic and theoretical knowledge about materiality. Beyond the theoretically and historically grounded critique this class provides, it will also introduce students to working with original documents and / or conduct on-site research. Students will consult the Cornell University library holdings of the Huntington Free Library's Native American Collection and conduct original archival research with historic and contemporary art and material culture at Haudenosaunee cultural centers, museums and exhibitions spaces through a class trip or individual visits (TBD).
Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2026, Fall 2024, Fall 2017
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6803 - Urban Interfaces: Art, Architecture, and Urbanism in China at the turn of the 21st Century (3 Credits)
How does art, architecture, and urban space interface with one another and what is the role of art in public space and public life? This course considers these questions within the context of China's unprecedented urban transformation at the turn of the 21st century, paying attention to the ways in which art and architecture are at once resistant to and at the same time entangled with capitalist and governmental forces. From Beijing's Tiananmen Square to Guangzhou's skyscraper construction sites; from virtual cities to New York City-a center of the Chinese diaspora-we will look transregionally at how different types of urban spaces prompted new aesthetic forms and how such creative acts contributed, in turn, to the transformation of these very spaces.
Exploratory Studies: (EAAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2026, Spring 2025, Spring 2023
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6816 - Modern Chinese Art (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with ASIAN 6673
China, a cultural giant of East Asia, made a passive entrance into modernity. With the advent of Western and American colonialism and imperialism, coupled with recent successes in westernization by the Japanese, Chinese artists had to redefine their roles as well as their visions. This turmoil bore witness to a vibrant beginning in modern Chinese art. Interactions between the Chinese themselves, and Chinese interactions with foreigners in the major cities of Shanghai and Beijing, fostered new directions in Chinese art and helped shape western visions of Chinese art history. Issues covered include: Chinese debates on western influence--their theoretical foundations and rationales; New visions for the future of Chinese art in the late 19th and early 20th centuries; Pluralistic approaches and arguments on Chinese identity in the modern era; Collecting art and the vision of history; The identity of traditional literati painters in the modern era-their roles, artworks, and deeds; Foreigners in China-the formation of major European collections of Chinese art, and the formation of Chinese art history in the West. (ASIAN-SC)
Exploratory Studies: (EAAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2026, Fall 2025, Spring 2024, Spring 2023
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6822 - Objects, Rituals, and Tea (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with ASIAN 6624
Tea is a ubiquitous commodity across time and cultures. The craze for tea has become a global phenomenon. The goal of this course is not only to elucidate the exchanges and transmissions that gave rise to the phenomenon, but also to unpack the definition of tea culture through the exploration of objects and rituals. How are tea objects related to rituals, etiquette, and movement? What do tea objects reveal about craftsmen/craftswomen and collectors? How are the objects related to religious, political, social, and economic environments of their times? Lastly, what is the importance of tea culture in shaping national and cultural identity in modern East Asia? (ASIAN-SC)
Exploratory Studies: (EAAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2026, Spring 2025, Fall 2023, Fall 2021
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6844 - The Rise of Contemporary Chinese Art: Narratives in the Making of New Art (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with ASIAN 6844
An explosive period of artistic experimentation occurred in China following the end of the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976). The new artistic practices that were developed from the late 1970s onwards-from painting to sculpture, installation, performance, video-quickly came to be known as contemporary Chinese art. This course charts its development with a historiographic attention to the ways in which it has been narrativized by domestic and international critics, curators, and art historians. Analyzing artworks, exhibitions, and translated texts, we will explore major trends and discursive issues to reflect on how we tell the story of this art in its domestic and global contexts. (ASIAN-SC)
Exploratory Studies: (EAAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2026, Spring 2025
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6845 - Contemporary Performance Art in East Asia, 20th -21st Century (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with ASIAN 6845
Since the mid-twentieth century, artists based in and across East Asia have turned to performance art, using bodily actions to blur the boundaries between art and everyday social life. This course analyzes performance art's sociocultural underpinnings by treating it as an artistic medium and a critical practice shaped by interrelated histories of geopolitical conflict, colonialism, modernization, authoritarianism, and globalization in the East Asian context. Students will examine a range of approaches including happenings, body art, durational pieces, site-specific practices, and socially engaged performances to consider broader theoretical issues such as performance's paradoxical dependence on visual documentation, censorship and the politics of visibility, gender and sexuality, temporality, and spectatorship. Attention will be given to local contexts while also tracing transnational networks and art festivals that influence how East Asian performance art circulates and is interpreted.
Exploratory Studies: (EAAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2026
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6850 - The Arts of Southeast Asia (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with MEDVL 6850
The arts of Southeast Asia are studied in their social context, since in traditional societies creative processes are often mapped on the sequence of events that compose human lives. We will be looking particularly at the gendered ways in which bodies are mapped on the land, and how these various framings are often reflected in the unique relationships that emerge between works of art and textual sources. The South Asian epics of the Ramayana (Story of Rama) and the Mahabharata will be explored during the semester as infinitely renewable sources of inspiration. Special emphasis will be devoted to localized encounters in Indonesia, Cambodia, Burma/Myanmar, Vietnam, and Thailand.
Exploratory Studies: (SEAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2026, Fall 2025, Fall 2024, Fall 2022
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6852 - Shadowplay: Asian Art and Performance (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with ASIAN 6646
Shadowplay is a superb medium for storytelling. As with many performing arts in Asia, neither the highly stylized images of puppets, nor its musical, or linguistic complexity detract from its wide popularity. Why does an art that appears so obscure exercise such broad appeal? This seminar explores the playful and politically adept fluctuations of shadows across screens from India to Mainland and Island Southeast Asia. We will also briefly examine East Asian developments, particularly in China and Japan. In each of the countries where shadow theatre exists it has acquired its own repertory and a distinct technique and style of its own. This aesthetic has translated locally into paint, sculpture, architecture, cinema, and modern and contemporary installation art. Classes will meet regularly in the Herbert F. Johnson Museum. (ASIAN-SC)
Exploratory Studies: (EAAREA, SAAREA, SEAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2024, Fall 2021, Fall 2019, Spring 2012
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6854 - Water: Art and Politics in Southeast Asia (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with VISST 6854
Exploratory Studies: (SEAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2026, Fall 2018
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6855 - Threads of Consequence: Textiles in South and Southeast Asia (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with VISST 6855, ASIAN 6644
This seminar explores how patterned cloths serve as a symbolic medium, functioning on multiple levels of understanding and communication. As spun, dyed, and woven threads of consequence, textiles can be seen to enter into all phases of social, economic, political, religious, and performance processes, often assuming unusual properties and attributes. As bearers of talismanic messages, signifiers of rank, and as the recipients of influences from maritime trade and touristic demand, textiles are read between the folds of complex exchange mechanisms in South and Southeast Asia. (ASIAN-SC)
Exploratory Studies: (SAAREA, SEAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Spring 2024, Fall 2020, Spring 2019
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6856 - Producing Cloth Cultures (4 Credits)
It is a fundamental part of human activity to dress or cover one's body and environment. While the symbolic significance of such clothing has long been recognized, the activity of producing fabric itself deserves more attention. By this we do not only mean the various techniques and technological devices involved in spinning, weaving, stitching, or sewing, but also the analogical activities and metaphors they entailed. What stories did they tell? How did their connection to writing, remembering, lovemaking, or ruling one's kingdom, to name but a few examples, play out metaphorically in cloth? And how did fabrics depend on or transform the transmission of techniques, fashions and motives, but also gender, concepts of the body or the built environment?This team-taught seminar explores the presence, production, function and meaning of fabric in the built and lived environment. In a comparative approach we will explore evidence from Greco-Roman and Asian Art from the distant past to the contemporary moment.
Exploratory Studies: (SAAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2022, Spring 2015
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6858 - Dancing the Stone: Body, Memory, and Architecture (4 Credits)
Crosslisted with ASIAN 6656, MEDVL 6858
This course examines the role of temples and their sculptural programs in South and Southeast Asia as creative stimuli for performative reenactments. Choreographic encounters between imagination and memory will be mapped as they occur at various points historically and politically in Java, Bali, Cambodia and India. Since architectural choreography implies the human body's inhabitation and experience of place, the nature of ritualized behavior and its relationship to performance and politics will be explored spatially, both in organizing experience and defining or redefining identity on colonial, national, and diasporic margins. Bringing back the haptic sense (i.e. of feeling and doing at the same time) students will have the unique opportunity to balance the demands of learning a Balinese traditional dance while exploring performance traditions in historical perspective. (ASIAN-SC)
Exploratory Studies: (SAAREA, SEAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2023, Spring 2014, Spring 2009
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6910 - Visual Cultures of the Global Cold War (3 Credits)
This lecture course explores the intertwined histories of art, architecture, and visual culture during the Global Cold War. Tracing a time period from the end of the World War II to the close of the twentieth century, the course examines the entanglement of politics and aesthetics through histories of decolonization, soft power, technological development, and consumer culture. Moving beyond a U.S.–Soviet framework, the course investigates the Cold War as a global phenomenon, tracing artistic exchange, architectural experimentation, and aesthetic production across Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Middle East, and Europe. Despite geopolitical polarity, this time period is marked by increasing interconnectivity globally and the expression of modernity through technological development and popular media. Visual culture indexes, and comments upon, these social and economic transformations.
Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2026
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 6920 - Hegel's Aesthetics: On the Ideal, History, and System of the Arts (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with GERST 6920, COML 6922
This course offers a systematic in-depth study of Hegel's Aesthetics, one of the towering monuments in the development of the discipline. In addition to Hegel's voluminous lectures, we will also consider more recent reactions to and critiques of it. Taught in English.
Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2025
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)

ARTH 7323 - History of Sound Art (3 Credits)
Crosslisted with MUSIC 7323
Practices associated with sound art can be found throughout the global twentieth century, but it emerged as a concept around 1980. What does it mean to say that a concept emerged? We will discuss this historiographical question at length in the seminar, tracing the genealogy of the sound-art concept and comparing its uneven historical development with various attempts at definition since 1980. Although many have advanced a logical definition based on identity conditions, we will instead adopt a historical approach. Our template will be Lydia Goehr's influential argument about the concept of the musical work; other important authors will include Foucault, Davidson, and Hacking.
Enrollment Information: Priority given to: graduate students.
Schedule of Classes (https://classes.cornell.edu/)