

# Art History



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
SYDNEY

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Art History major or minor  
Undergraduate program

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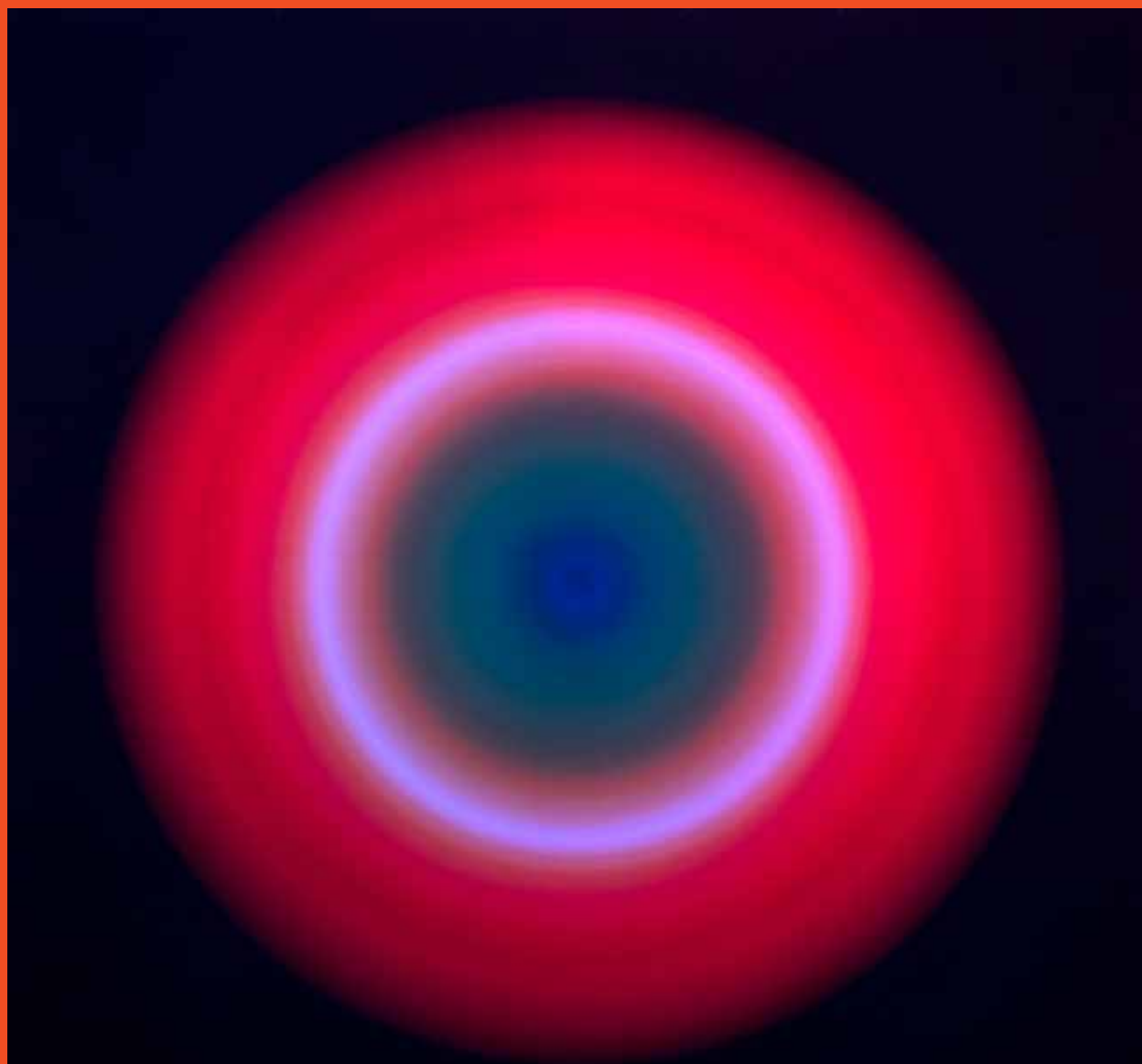
Honours  
Advanced Coursework

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Art Curating  
Postgraduate program

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Museum and Heritage Studies  
Postgraduate program





Cover Image: Peter Sedgley in the current Light and Darkness exhibition at Chau Chak Wing Museum  
Above: Untitled, Work on board bark - ochre pigment on bark.  
Roy Ramingining Burnyila, date unknown.  
University Art Collection, The University of Sydney.



Michiel Coxcie, the elder (attrib.) (1499–1592),  
Adam and Eve c.1530  
egg tempura and oil on oak panel, 142 x 112 cm,  
Donated by Sir Charles Nicholson, 1865, University of  
Sydney, Art Collection, Image credit © Michael Myers

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Information in this booklet is to be used as a guide only, as there may be changes closer to the start of the academic year.

Please check the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Future Students web page for complete course and study information:

[sydney.edu.au/arts/study.html](http://sydney.edu.au/arts/study.html)

## Welcome

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Welcome to Art History, a dynamic teaching and research environment where we offer a stimulating and broad spectrum of learning opportunities led by world-renowned scholars. Established in 1968, Art History has inspired several generations of students to engage with art and visual culture both within Australia and around the world. From 65,000 years of art and culture from Australia's First Nation's people to contemporary global art and the study of museums, galleries, cultural institutions and arts practitioners, we are experts in art history, curating, museum and heritage studies. Our graduates work across a wide range of public, commercial, and independent spaces in the arts and culture, museum and heritage sectors and are employed in curatorial, collection, exhibition, education, and leadership roles, Indigenous arts centres, contemporary and artist run spaces, arts festivals and fairs, auction houses, and in the expanded space of curating objects, cultures, and artists.

We offer a broad spectrum of engagement with global histories of art, its networks and exchanges including Indigenous Australian art, Italian Renaissance frescoes, Islamic and Asian art and architecture, eighteenth-nineteenth century art and visual culture, modern and contemporary art from across the world, and the history and theory of practices such as photography, fashion, and design. Our postgraduate degrees are unique in the wide-ranging study of the museums, galleries and institutions that play a vital role in the art and culture of societies across the globe.

Students at all levels from undergraduate majors, postgraduate coursework degrees to those enrolled in higher research degrees benefit from the excellence of our resources including the prestigious Schaeffer Fine Arts Library located in our home building of RC Mills, the Chau Chak Wing Museum and other on-campus galleries, and the rich offerings of Sydney's art and cultural institutions. Students benefit from the added stimulus offered by the many activities of the Power Institute, which presents exciting international speakers, events and publications to enrich your learning experience. We are as committed to the vital task of making sense of art and visual culture in today's world, as we are to the deep understanding of the visual arts of cultures distant in place and time. Study with us and you will be immersed in the historical and cultural diversity, complexity and relevance of art, visual culture and museums, and well prepared to take on intellectual and employment opportunities that the world offers to visually literate, critical minds, in the cultural sector and beyond.



**Donna West Brett**  
**Associate Professor and Chair of**  
**Art History**

## Art History

### at the University of Sydney

Art History at the University of Sydney is uniquely placed in Australia in its diverse learning opportunities across art history, art curating, and museum and heritage studies. Studying art history, visual culture and its institutions fosters insight and skills in understanding and interpreting visual communication, expression, innovation and critical thinking that are highly relevant in today's constantly changing, image-saturated world.

Our world-renowned scholars specialise in global histories of art, its networks, exchanges and institutions across a range of arts practice from painting, prints, sculpture, design, fashion and architecture to photography, performance art and new media. Explore frescoes from the Renaissance, Islamic art and architecture, Asian art, European art of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, global modern and contemporary art, Australian Indigenous art, and the moving image through historical, social and theoretical enquiry, and through the close study of art objects and images. Our postgraduate studies in art curating and museum and heritage studies extend these offerings and provide opportunities for the development of advanced skills required in the worlds of curating, exhibition, conservation and collections management.

Art History at Sydney is enriched by the Power Institute, which houses one of Australia's leading fine art libraries, publishes award-winning books, engages with partner organisations to generate new research, and hosts an annual series of public lectures and seminars featuring internationally renowned scholars. We also work closely with the Chau Chak Wing Museum and Sydney College of the Arts on campus and major galleries, museums and institutions across New South Wales to give students access to a rich collection of artworks and objects, and wider cultural opportunities.

## The Schaeffer Library

Art History students benefit from the excellence of the The Schaeffer Fine Arts Library, one of the leading art libraries in Australia in terms of the academic quality and breadth of its holdings. The collection incorporates the Power Research Library of Contemporary Art and the Power Visual Resources Library. The architecturally distinguished library is used to support teaching and learning in Art History at Sydney and is especially rich in resources relating to modern and contemporary art.

## Career Opportunities

A degree in Art History, Art Curating, or Museum and Heritage Studies has a wide range of real-world applications. Our graduates find successful careers nationally and internationally in galleries, museums, art history and research, education, auction houses, appraisals, consultancies, publishing, design, architecture, advertising, photography, editing, fashion, print media, radio and television, and many other industries not immediately related to the field of the visual.

Beyond rigorous training in argument and writing, and invaluable skills in visual analysis, these degrees provide a pathway into arts and film industries and opportunities to gain hands-on experience in the kind of teamwork and leadership valued not only in the arts sector but across industry more broadly. Our postgraduate Art Curating degree is specifically designed to give insight and experience that can provide a platform for curatorial careers and arts professional careers in traditional and non-traditional settings. Equally, the Museum and Heritage Studies degree offers a pathway to a wide range of careers in the cultural and heritage sectors. The discipline's excellence in theoretical as well as historical studies in higher degree research has produced many young researchers who have successful academic careers in universities and leadership positions in the arts and cultural sector across Australia and internationally.



J.W. Power, *Tete (Head)*, c.1935, oil on canvas, 66 x 50.7 cm  
Edith Power Bequest, 1961, the University of Sydney,  
managed by the Museum of Contemporary Art



The Schaeffer Library

## Art History as a major or minor

Art is a profound and persistent human impulse. Art History explores the history of making, viewing and experiencing works of art and architecture. It asks key questions such as what is art for, what does it mean, and how does it function in broader culture? These questions will be part of a dynamic encounter with complex and compelling works of art. You will gain the historical knowledge and analytical skills to make sense of such works across time and space, to relate them to each other and to the specific historical and cultural contexts for which they were created.

You will be trained in the skills of visual and spatial analysis that are fundamental to our discipline - the ability to critically interpret the visual appearance of a given object. As well as the canonical forms of painting, sculpture and architecture, you will encounter a wide spectrum of media and art practice, from community-based social practice to internet art, from fresco to pop, from processional ritual to performance art, from land art to bark paintings.

Studying the history of art fosters insight and skills in understanding and interpreting visual communication, expression and innovation that are highly relevant in today's image-saturated world. Many of our graduates go on to careers in the visual arts industry, as curators, critics, artists, art advisers, collection managers, registrars or educators. They work in art museums, commercial galleries, auction houses, state and local government or community arts programs, as well as in art journalism and criticism.



Salome with the Head of John the Baptist, Jacob Cornelisz van Oostsanen, 1524  
 Oil on panel, 71.8cm x 53.6cm

### Learning outcomes

- Demonstrate a sophisticated knowledge of the depth and complexity of art in relation to specific historical, cultural and social contexts across a diverse range of global examples.
- Apply sophisticated skills of visual and spatial observation in the critical analysis of works of art, architecture and visual culture.
- Understand the diversity of materials and techniques that comprise art as it is practiced worldwide and distinguish between materials and techniques.
- Demonstrate a nuanced knowledge of key concepts, theories and critical approaches to the study of art history and visual culture.
- Examine and solve complex problems related to the study of art and visual culture through primary research and critical analysis and explore artworks in their relation to other cultural forms and modes of expression.
- Utilise a variety of tools and methods to research artworks and sites, and to critically evaluate sources of information about artworks.
- Encounter artworks and spaces first hand and in situ and confidently engage with their physical presence and contexts in museums, sites and other settings.
- Participate actively in communicating and presenting in oral, written and digital forms.

## Degree Structure and Requirements

### A major in Art History requires 48 credit points including:

- 12 credit points of 1000-level core units
- 6 credit points of 2000-level core units
- 6 credit points of 2000-level selective units
- 18 credit points of 3000-level selective units
- 6 credit points of 3000-level Interdisciplinary Project units

### A minor in Art History requires 36 credit points including:

- 12 credit points of 1000-level core units
- 12 credit points of 2000-level core or selective units
- 12 credit points of 3000-level selective units

Art History minor pathway			
Year 1	Sem 1	Core: ARHT1001 Style and Substance: Introducing Art History	
	Sem 2	Core: ARHT1002 Shock of the Now: Global Art since 1900	
Year 2	Sem 1 and/or Sem 2	Selective: 2000 level unit from the Art History major table	Selective: 2000 level unit from the Art History major table
Year 3	Sem 1 and/or Sem 2	Selective: 3000 level unit from the Art History major table	Selective: 3000 level unit from the Art History major table

Bachelor of Arts with an Art History major pathway					
Year 1	Sem 1	Core: ARHT1001 Style and Substance: Introducing Art History	Bachelor of Arts Core: FASS1000 Studying the Arts	Elective unit from Table A or S	1000-level unit in another major/minor from Table A or S
	Sem 2	Core: ARHT1002 Shock of the Now: Global Art since 1900	Elective unit from Table A or S	Elective unit from Table A or S	1000-level unit in another major/minor from Table A or S
Year 2	Sem 1	Selective: 2000 level Art History unit	Open Learning Environment units	Elective unit from Table A or S	2000-level unit in another major/minor from Table A or S
	Sem 2	Core: ARHT2680 Why Art Matters	Open Learning Environment units	Elective unit from Table A or S	2000-level unit in another major/minor from Table A or S
Year 3	Sem 1	Selective: 3000 level Art History unit	Selective: 3000 level Art History unit	2000/3000-level unit in another major/minor from Table A or S	2000/3000-level unit in another major/minor from Table A or S
	Sem 2	Selective: 3000 level Art History unit	FASS3999 Interdisciplinary Impact	3000-level unit in another major/minor from Table A or S	3000-level unit in another major/minor from Table A or S

## Honours

An honours year in Art History allows students to specialise further in their area of interest. The honours year comprises two 4000-level seminar units of study and a thesis of 18,000-20,000 words in length.

### Honours admission requirements

Honours is separate fourth year program in the Bachelor of Advanced Studies. Admission into Honours requires the completion of a major in Art History with an average of 70 percent or above and completion of a second major.

Prior to commencing honours, you will need to ensure you have completed all other requirements of the Bachelor of Arts or other bachelor degrees, including Open Learning Environment (OLE) units.

Honours in Art History requires 48 credit points including:

- 12 credit points of 4000-level Honours Seminar units
- 36 credit points of 4000-level Honours Thesis units

\*If intending to complete Honours, the second major from Table A/Table S must be completed by S2, Year 3  
Please refer to the units of study descriptions.

\* Table S: University shared pool of majors, minors and units of study, excluding Visual Arts major or minor

\* OLE: Open Learning Environment unit

## Advanced coursework

In the Bachelor of Advanced Studies offered through the School of Art, Communication and English (SLAM), students will engage in advanced seminars that complement their individual research in project units. In SLAM, this may be within the study of arts-based practices such as visual art, film, performance and writing, as well as literature, linguistics, or live and digitised media. Students will have the opportunity to apply disciplinary knowledges and methodologies to the legacies of the past, present and possible futures in the areas of communication, technology, literature and art in creative ways.

Advanced Coursework requires completion of a minimum of 24 credit points, including:

- a research, community, industry or entrepreneurship project of at least 12 and up to 36 credit points.

Where students are completing Advanced Coursework in this subject area, they should complete 12 credit points of advanced coursework units of study and 12 credit points of advanced coursework project units of study.

Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Advanced Studies with Art History major pathway					
Year 1	Sem 1	Core: ARHT1001 Style and Substance: Introducing Art History	Bachelor of Arts Core: FASS1000 Studying the Arts and Social Sciences	Elective/minor unit from Table A or S	1000-level unit in another major/minor from Table A or S
	Sem 2	CORE: ARHT1002 Shock of the Now: Global Art since 1900	Elective unit from Table A or S	Elective/minor unit from Table A or S	1000-level unit in another major/minor from Table A or S
Year 2	Sem 1	Selective: 2000 level Art History unit	Open Learning Environment units	Elective/minor unit from Table A or S	2000-level unit in another major/minor from Table A or S
	Sem 2	Core: ARHT2680 Why Art Matters	Open Learning Environment units	Elective/minor unit from Table A or S	2000-level unit in another major/minor from Table A or S
Year 3	Sem 1	Selective: 3000 level Art History unit	Selective: 3000 level Art History unit	Elective/minor unit from Table A or S	2000/3000-level unit in another major/minor from Table A or S
	Sem 2	Selective: 3000 level Art History unit	FASS3999 Interdisciplinary Impact	Elective/minor unit from Table A or S	2000/3000-level unit in another major/minor from Table A or S
Year 4	Sem 1	Selective: SLAM4004 Working the Arts and Humanities or CAVA4001 Art Writing and Artists	Project Unit: SLAM4001 SLAM Project: Pasts, Presents, Futures A	Elective unit from Table A or S	3000-level unit in another major/minor from Table A or S
	Sem 2	Selective: SLAM4003 Meaning in the Anthropocene	Project Unit: SLAM4002 SLAM Project: Pasts, Presents, Futures B	Elective unit from Table A or S	3000-level unit in another major/minor from Table A or S

## Units of Study

Undergraduate Program taught within the Discipline:

### 1000-level units of study

#### Core

ARHT1001	Style and Substance: Introducing Art History
ARHT1002	Shock of the Now: Global Art since 1900

### 2000-level units of study

#### Core

ARHT2680	Why Art Matters
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#### Selective

ARHT2602	Romanticism and Visual Art
ARHT2614	Pollock to Psychedelia
ARHT2616	High Renaissance Art
ARHT2618	French Art, Salon to Cezanne
ARHT2636	Contemporary Indigenous Art
ARHT2640	Contemporary Turns in Asian Art
ARHT2671	Art, Travel, Empires
ARHT2674	Fashion and Dress: Past and Present
ARHT2676	Planetary Art: Nature, Ecology, Environment
ARHT2677	Art, Memory, and Identity
ARHT2678	Islamic Visual Cultures: China to Spain

### 3000-level units of study

#### Selective

ARHT3617	British Art and Empire
ARHT3633	Australian Art: Mainstream to Marginal
ARHT3646	The Asian Modern: Art in East Asia
ARHT3662	On Photography and the Wretched Screen
ARHT3663	Gender and Sexuality in Asian Art History
ARHT3673	Art and the Aesthetics of the Everyday
ARHT3675	Objects and Problems at Chau Chak Wing Museum
ARHT3678	Text, Image, Sound: Islamic Book Arts
ARHT3679	First Nations Art
ARHT3680	A Material World: Cultures of Design
ARHT3681	Fieldwork: Art and the City
ARHT3682	Art, Cities and Early Modern Worlds
ARHT3683	Sensation: Encountering Contemporary Art
ARIN3630	Digital Arts

### Interdisciplinary Project unit of study

If you are completing two majors and both of your majors are from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, please select the Interdisciplinary Impact unit of study for your first major, and the Industry and Community Project unit of study for your second major.

If you are completing two majors but only one of your majors is from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, please select the Interdisciplinary Impact unit of study for that major.

If you are completing one major only and that major is from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, please select the Interdisciplinary Impact unit of study for your major.

FASS3999	Interdisciplinary Impact
FASS3333	Industry and Community Project

### Advanced Coursework units of study

SLAM4003	Meaning in the Anthropocene
SLAM4004	Working the Arts and Humanities
CAVA4001	Art Writing and Artists

### Advanced Coursework Project units of study

SLAM4001	SLAM Project: Pasts, Presents, Futures A
SLAM4002	SLAM Project: Pasts, Presents, Futures B
FASS4901	Advanced Industry and Community Project A
FASS4902	Advanced Industry and Community Project B

### Honours seminar units of study

ARHT4113	Art is the Issue: Histories and Theories
ARHT4114	Vision and Frame: Art Encounters

### Honours thesis units of study

ARHT4111	Art History Honours Thesis 1
ARHT4112	Art History Honours Thesis 2

\*Please note that some units of study are not taught every academic year. Some units are taught on a rotational basis.



Kunisada Utagawa / Toyokuni III  
Three men wrestling a large carp in water 1847-1852, ink on paper, 34 x 23 cm  
University of Sydney Art Collection, Donated by Ms Ellen, Waugh 2010



Araya Rasdjarmrearnsook, Village and Elsewhere: Artemisia Gentileschi's Judith Beheading Holofernes, Jeff Koons' Untitled, inkjet on photo paper  
80 x 80 cm, University of Sydney Art Collection, purchased with funds from the Dr M J Morrissey Bequest Fund in memory of Professor A L Sadler 2014



Jeffrey Smart, Coogee Baths - Winter 1961, oil on canvas, 91 x 122 cm  
Donated through the Alan Richard Renshaw bequest 1976

## 2023 Units of Study

Undergraduate units of study taught within the Discipline

### Semester 1

ARHT1001	Style and Substance: Introducing Art History
ARHT2614	Pollock to Psychedelia
ARHT2636	Contemporary Indigenous Art
ARHT2677	Art, Memory, and Identity
ARHT3646	The Asian Modern: Art in East Asia
ARHT3682	Art, Cities and Early Modern Worlds
ARHT3683	Sensation: Encountering Contemporary Art
ARHT4111	Art History Honours Thesis 1
ARHT4112	Art History Honours Thesis 2
ARHT4113	Art is the Issue: Histories and Theories
SLAM4001	SLAM Project: Pasts, Presents, Futures A
SLAM4002	SLAM Project: Pasts, Presents, Futures B
SLAM4004	Working the Arts and Humanities

### Semester 2

ARHT1002	Shock of the Now: Global Art since 1900
ARHT2671	Art, Travel, Empires
ARHT2674	Fashion and Dress: Past and Present
ARHT2680	Why Art Matters
ARHT3633	Australian Art: Mainstream to Marginal
ARHT3673	Art and the Aesthetics of the Everyday
ARHT3675	Objects and Problems at Chau Chak Wing Museum
ARHT3678	Text, Image, Sound: Islamic Book Arts
ARHT3679	First Nations Art
ARHT4111	Art History Honours Thesis 1
ARHT4112	Art History Honours Thesis 2
ARHT4114	Vision and Frame: Art Encounters
SLAM4001	SLAM Project: Pasts, Presents, Futures A
SLAM4002	SLAM Project: Pasts, Presents, Futures B
SLAM4003	Meaning in the Anthropocene

### Semester 1 and 2 - intensives

ARHT3681	Fieldwork: Art and the City Intensive July
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## Unit of Study descriptions\*

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### 1000 Level Units

#### **ARHT1001 Style + Substance: Introducing Art History**

Taking a diverse, global view of art making from the Ancient to the Modern world, ARHT1001 will introduce students to key philosophical and methodological approaches in the field of Art History. As our experiences are increasingly mediated through a variety of visual platforms, this course will help students develop critical perspectives on visual communication. The development of professional skill sets will be a key focus. As such, the course serves as an essential introduction to Art History for those considering a career in the arts, education, or the museum and design sectors.

#### **ARHT1002 Shock of the Now: Global Art since 1900**

Art shapes our cities, streets, galleries, phones and minds. It is now made with every conceivable material, and sometimes none at all. It shocks, challenges, soothes, entertains, engrosses and overwhelms us. This unit charts the history of Modern and Contemporary Art across the world, as it is shaped by and shapes society, politics and environment. It shows current concerns in art, with materials, landscape, self-image, politics, and the body are grounded in a century of global experiment.

### 2000 Level Units

#### **ARHT2602 Romanticism and Visual Art**

This unit explores Romantic Art in Europe from 1780-1830, emphasizing the relationship of this art with wider social, cultural, philosophical and literary currents. We explore the most compelling Romantic art and architecture, including works by Caspar David Friedrich, Blake, Turner, and Delacroix.

#### **ARHT2614 Pollock to Psychedelia**

This unit studies the interplay between high art and popular culture in America from the 1950s onwards. Pop Art, Minimalism and Performance formed alongside emerging youth cultures of political protest, drugs and rock music. We examine the interactions of high art, youth culture and mass media.

#### **ARHT2616 High Renaissance Art**

The Unit of Study will explore a range of alternative approaches to some of the most famous works of art

in the Western tradition, including works by Leonardo, Raphael, Michelangelo and Titian. Topics to be investigated include: problems of definition in High Renaissance and Mannerist art; Rome under Julius II and the creation of an imperial capital; Venetian visual poesis; art and dynastic display in Medicean Florence; civic ritual and public space; eroticism and mythology at princely courts; portraiture and gender.

#### **ARHT2618 French Art, Salon to Cezanne**

This unit treats French Art in terms of the cultural structures that allowed academic art, Realism, Impressionism and Post-Impressionism to emerge. Mainstream art is studied alongside emerging avantgardes. Other topics include nationalism, exoticism, and peripheral versus metropolitan modernism.

#### **ARHT2636 Contemporary Indigenous Art**

The new has no meaning without the old, and the radical newness of the contemporary Indigenous art movement is underpinned by cultural practices dating back 50,000 years. Through in-depth visual analysis of individual artists and art-producing communities, you will consider the distinct Indigenous art practices and relate them to issues of cultural and political sovereignty, colonisation, lands rights and representation. Problematizing the historical and contemporary reception of Indigenous art, the unit prioritises Indigenous modes of value and reflects on the deep systems of knowledge that continue to inspire artists, curators and scholars.

#### **ARHT2640 Contemporary Turns in Asian Art**

This unit explores contemporary art from across Asia beginning in the 1970s. The unit places artistic developments, curatorial practice, and artworks within the context of rapid geo-political and socio-cultural change, particularly exploring the effects of nationalism and globalisation. Students will learn to analyse artworks and institutions in terms of critical notions of modernity and contemporaneity in these Asian contexts. The unit broadly surveys artistic developments, its institutions and histories thematically whilst paying critical attention to the global interaction between "Asia" and the West, as well as to the institution of the biennale/triennial and museums in parts of Asia.

\* Please note that not all units of study are offered every calendar year.

### **ARHT2671 Art, Travel, Empires**

This unit examines art and the culture of travel from a post-colonial perspective. The work of European Orientalists will be analysed alongside work by North African, Persian and Ottoman artists and in conjunction with photography, international exhibitions, travel literature and film.

### **ARHT2674 Fashion and Dress: Past and Present**

This unit offers an introduction to the study of dress through the discussion of major theories and methodologies that inform current scholarship in the field. With a focus on designers, wearers, and cultural practices of dressing the body, the unit will question how dress communicates as a form of visual expression.

### **ARHT2676 Planetary Art: Nature, Ecology, Environment**

This unit studies contemporary and historical artists in relation to today's environmental crisis. Students engage with how art objects and artmaking relate to issues pertaining to nature, ecology, and the environment. Through visual and textual analysis, students gain interdisciplinary perspectives on art's place within contemporary posthumanist theories, the significance of ecological thinking to contemporary aesthetics, art's historical response to the impact of science and technology, and art's recognition of the importance of Indigenous knowledges to planetary ethics.

### **ARHT2677 Art, Memory, and Identity**

Students study contemporary and historical art in relation to collective or public memory, as well as personal memory. Memory as a subject, and memory as a tool, are considered in relation to the making of art objects and their reading. The unit looks at art's connection with the past, with history, trauma, loss and remembrance, as well as art's connection with identity, dreams, and childhood. Students gain informed perspectives on how memory is theorised as a phenomenon both real and imaginary, and why it memory often judged as more important to art than history.

### **ARHT2678 Islamic Visual Cultures: China to Spain**

This unit draws on the diverse visual cultures of the Islamic world to offer a thematic and chronological survey of its arts, architecture, and material cultures from the seventh century to the present, from China to Spain. Through an object-oriented approach we engage with major themes and questions regarding the making, perception, and socio-political meanings of objects, spaces, and rituals. Taking a broad view of the Islamic world and its relationship to global visual histories, you will develop knowledge of regional and cross-cultural

exchanges that have informed art making throughout history, honed by reflections on current world issues and hands-on museum visits.

### **ARHT2679 First Nations' Art**

This unit will explore the diversity of visual art from First Nations Artists communities across North America, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. It seeks to introduce students to both the art and the cultural traditions that underpin the creation of art craft and visual culture, emphasising both the historical development of this art and its continuing vibrancy. The unit will interrogate the purpose and status of art in Indigenous cultures, and its place in wider social and political struggles. It will introduce students to a wide range of complex and compelling art and artifacts.

### **ARHT2680 Why Art Matters**

Why Art Matters explores the importance of art in the world, through object-based seminars, lectures and student led presentations. It asks why art is so fundamental to human experience, and how we might study it and articulate its importance. It builds key art historical skills of recognition, analysis, interpretation and expression, and introduces students to a wide variety of different material objects and artworks. The course is taught in small group streams, largely in the Chau Chak Wing museum and will help all majoring art history students build confidence and skill in researching, analysing and communicating about art.

## **3000 Level Units**

### **ARHT3617 British Art and Empire**

This unit critically analyses the role of the visual arts in mediating the experience of urbanism in 19th-century Britain and its function across a global Empire. We undertake an in-depth study of the rich holdings of this art at the Art Gallery of New South Wales.

### **ARHT3633 Australian Art: Mainstream to Marginal**

What are the current debates and issues driving Australian art, film, and visual culture? In interrogating present-day cultural perspectives, this unit examines, analyses and reinterprets the relationship between colonial and contemporary imagery through screenings, on-site gallery visits and the study of works held in university and other local art and film collections.

### **ARHT3646 The Asian Modern: Art in East Asia**

This unit investigates key debates about the visual culture of East Asia and explores the rise of modernities in parts of East Asia. It provides a thematically-grounded survey

of issues, movements and artistic developments spanning the early modern and modern periods. Focus is paid to the role of cultural production in forging links within and across societies and more broadly, the relation of art with political, social, technological and economic change. Critical attention will also be given to the global interaction between “Asia” and the West, and its impact on ideological and theoretical frameworks that govern processes of image-making.

#### **ARHT3662 On Photography and the Wretched Screen**

This unit will draw on a wide range of photographic and moving image material, including university and museum collections, to examine the pivotal role of photography in recording and shaping our imageculture across diverse global contexts. The unit will engage with key debates to examine the social, cultural, theoretical, historical and art practice contexts of the photograph as an image and as an object. Key theories from Roland Barthes and Susan Sontag to Hito Steyerl will be used to interrogate themes of memory, documentary and the real, witnessing, conflict, gender and sexuality, decolonisation, and the digital.

#### **ARHT3663 Gender & Sexuality in Asian Art History**

This unit investigates issues of gender and sexuality in art, visual culture and art history in modern and contemporary Asia from the 19th century to the present. Students will explore women- and/or queer-centred histories of the production and reception of art, and the rise of feminist and queer art and art history in parts of Asia.

#### **ARHT3681 Fieldwork: Art in the City**

This unit takes students out of the classrooms and into major world cities to explore not only the history of architecture and public space but also the galleries, collections and artworks housed in the city. It offers a vital opportunity for students to learn with and from artworks, buildings, spaces and monuments in situ. The Fieldwork may take place in Summer or Winter Intensive periods.

#### **ARHT3673 Art and the Aesthetics of the Everyday**

Students study contemporary and historical art made in response to the ebb and flow of daily life and the material conditions of the street, the city, and the home. They study key texts of the art and politics of the everyday and topics related to the nineteenth, twentieth and twenty-first century theory and practice. Students will focus on artists who heighten awareness of the banal and mundane, of the detritus of life, of gendered distinctions between home and city, and the paradoxical revelation of the marvelous in the everyday.

#### **ARHT3675 Objects and Problems at the Chau Chak Wing Museum**

This unit brings students into sustained contact with objects in the CCW Museum and challenges students to research and curate them. It is designed to build and test the key skills of art historians ‘in the world’ –from basic analysis of materials and techniques to complex questions of cultural meaning- by analyzing objects and the challenges they pose.

#### **ARHT3678 Text, Image, Sound: Islamic Book Arts**

This unit provides a thematic study of historical and contemporary book arts in the Islamic world, drawing on the art of painting and calligraphy as well as key texts to engage with the foundational interrelations between text, image, orality and other forms of sensory experience. Starting with early Qur’ans, we move to pre-modern illustrated manuscripts, and modern and contemporary works of art inspired by manuscript cultures, exploring histories of authorship, portraiture, patronage, workshop practices, audience and perception, as well as the collecting and display of manuscripts in museums. Several site visits to Sydney’s various collections offer opportunities for object-based learning.

#### **ARHT3679 First Nations Art**

This unit explores the range and depth of First Nations Art globally with special attention to the Indigenous Art and visual culture of Australia and North America. It is designed to explore not only the material and formal features of First Nations’ art but the social, cultural and spiritual traditions in which it is embedded and the understandings of time, space and country that inform First Nations art. It also explores the debates that have surrounded the notion and definition of “First Nations” art in recent years.

#### **ARHT3680 A Material World: Cultures of Design**

Design shapes how we live in the world. From dressing our bodies, to inhabiting carefully composed interiors, and encountering innovative objects, the limits of our understanding are frequently materially determined. In this unit, students will engage with design histories – both past and present – to understand how design forms our experience of the world. Close studies will be made of key objects, designers, and materials, building a fluency with design from a variety of cultures and movements. The unit will be delivered through object-based learning, providing students with an opportunity to connect with professional and real-world contexts as they explore design cultures.

### **ARHT3682 Art, Cities and Early Modern Worlds**

From Renaissance Italy to Safavid Persia and beyond, this course will take students across the globe to explore art in the cities and spaces of the Early Modern World. Works of art and design shaped and enriched the lives of these places. The course will take an expanded view of the distinct and interwoven visual and material histories of these worlds, exposing students to cutting-edge thinking, writing and exhibitions. You will encounter comparative, globally aware and materially expansive approaches to art through seminars, site visits and discussions led by a team of teachers dedicated to opening access to an expanded vista of these great cities, sites and works of art.

### **ARHT3683 Sensation: Encountering Contemporary Art**

Today transformations in how art is made, networked, theorised and curated is indelibly tied to new and expanded ways of encountering contemporary art. From political imperatives of decolonisation, globalisation and the environment, indigeneity, to feminist and queer art, or art as spectacle, new impetuses for artmaking and curating are dynamically changing the cultural landscape. Social media and the digital turn offer new modes of engaging with contemporary visual culture. This unit addresses these recent transformations to explore the expanded field of contemporary art in the digital sphere and in the physical encounter with art in local art spaces, galleries, biennales and beyond.

### **FASS3333 Industry and Community Project**

This unit is designed for third year students to undertake a project that allows them to work with one of the University's industry and community partners. Students will work in teams on a real-world problem provided by the partner. This experience will allow students to apply their academic skills and disciplinary knowledge to a real-world issue in an authentic and meaningful way.

### **FASS3999 Interdisciplinary Impact**

Interdisciplinarity is a key skill in fostering agility in life and work. This unit provides learning experiences that build students' skills, knowledge and understanding of the application of their disciplinary background to interdisciplinary contexts. In this unit, students will work in teams and develop interdisciplinarity skills through problem-based learning projects responding to 'real world problems'.

### **SLAM4001 Advanced Studies Project Part 1**

Each student will develop, in consultation with their teacher, a project involving the application of contemporary scholarship in their discipline to a question arising within their disciplinary specialisation, for example:

issues concerned with cultural, institutional or digital archives (with links to Fisher Library or other libraries/online data repositories/community organisations); the creation and development of contemporary practice[s]; or how cultural practices, from arts-based work through to the practice of language, address futures, dystopian, utopian or otherwise.

### **SLAM4002 Advanced Studies Project Part 2**

Each student will complete, in consultation with their teacher, a project involving the application of contemporary scholarship in their discipline to a question arising within their disciplinary specialisation, for example: issues concerned with cultural, institutional or digital archives (with links to Fisher Library or other libraries/online data repositories/community organisations); the creation and development of contemporary practice[s]; or how cultural practices, from arts-based work through to the practice of language, address futures, dystopian, utopian or otherwise.

### **SLAM4003 Meaning in the Anthropocene**

This unit focuses on key themes for understanding meaning in the Anthropocene, an age of human planetary impact: human-nature relations, social and environmental activism. Students will learn how the various disciplines in the School of Art, Communication and English engage with the Anthropocene in literary, visual, digital and performative modes. Collaborating with the Sydney Environment Institute, the unit underscores the contribution of the arts to the ethics and aesthetics of meaning in an age of global economic crisis. This unit is team-taught and assessment will accommodate a student's research interests.

### **SLAM4004 Working the Arts and Humanities**

We will explore how we might think about 'work' in the arts and humanities. First: works of art, culture, literature, film. What is a work of art? How do works 'work'? How do they function? Second, labour in the humanities and arts: the industrial conditions cultural work in contemporary conditions of precarity and uberisation? Third, how the arts and humanities are put to work. What values are associated with these fields, to the labour involved? How are the knowledges generated in the arts and humanities put to use, appropriated, marginalised, dismissed? The unit is team taught and accessible to students from diverse backgrounds; assessment tailored to student's research interests.



Photo by Anthony  
Fretwell. 2020.

# Chau Chak Wing Museum

Expect the unexpected.

The University of Sydney's museum of art, science, history and ancient cultures. Free entry, open 7 days.



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**SYDNEY**

[www.sydney.edu.au/museum](http://www.sydney.edu.au/museum)

## Honours units

### **ARHT4111 Art History Honours Thesis 1**

This unit involves research towards and preliminary writing of an Honours thesis of 18 000–20 000 words, in collaboration with a supervisor approved by the Subject area of Art History Honours Coordinator.

### **ARHT4112 Art History Honours Thesis 2**

In this unit you complete and submit your substantial, independent research project in Art History. Regular meetings with a supervisor approved by the Subject area of Art History Honours Coordinator will guide your progress. You will continue to submit drafts at agreed times, and develop your expertise in relevant research methods and analytical skills as well as in the subject matter of your specialist topic.

### **ARHT4113 Art is the Issue: Histories & Theories**

This unit concentrates on key developments in the history of art history as a discipline. The seminar centres on selected polemical texts and disputes in the discipline, to demonstrate that much of what all art historians do is contested and problematic. From the question of what we should study to the always vexed question of ‘how’ we should study it, the aim of this unit is to give you a sense of both the history and the problematic of the discipline in which you will be engaged whether you intend careers as scholars, researchers, curators, or art writers.

### **ARHT4114 Vision & Frame: Art Encounters**

This unit extends and tests students’ art historical knowledge and analytic skills through in situ encounters with a variety of art objects and images, histories and traditions. These encounters are set against selected polemical texts and disputes in the discipline. Our weekly engagements range from the museum’s modernist aesthetic hang, media specific exhibitions, de-materialised art projects, curated exhibitions, popular culture, Indigenous Australian and Chinese art.

# Master of Art Curating

The Master of Art Curating is a postgraduate coursework degree that fosters in-depth understanding of the importance of art and visual culture. Your studies will prepare you for dynamic careers in the arts and cultural sector from public and commercial institutions to Indigenous arts centres, contemporary and artist run spaces, art fairs, auction houses, and in the expanded space of curating objects, cultures, and artists. You will cultivate comprehensive knowledge of the cultural, theoretical, social, political and economic forces that shape gallery and museum systems. Your studies will be enriched by diverse units in historical and contemporary art and curatorship, object-based learning, collection management, education, and hands-on exhibition curating. You will complete your studies with either a written dissertation on a research topic of your choosing, or through a project-based placement in an art gallery museum or cultural institution within Australia or overseas. Collectively your studies will position you as an expert in the vital role art plays in shaping the values, ethics and identities of cultures and societies locally and globally.

## What you'll study

To qualify for the Master of Art Curating, you must complete 72 credit points, comprising:

- 3 core units (18 credit points)
  - Working with Art: Objects in Focus
  - The Art Museum: Past, Present and Future
  - Contemporary Curating
- 2 selective units (12 credit points)
- 6 electives (36 credit points)
- 1 capstone experience (6 credit points)

## Why study with us?

Study with us and you will be immersed in the historical and cultural diversity, complexity and relevance of art, visual culture and museums. Your studies will critically engage with knowledge from Australia's First Nation's people to contemporary global art and the study of museums, galleries, cultural institutions, art spaces, and arts practitioners. You can select

from a range of units taught in partnership with on campus and local institutions that cultivate critical and practical expertise, such as the Chau Chak Wing Museum or the Art Gallery of NSW. Capstone study units offer project-based internships in local, national and international institutions, or focus on a written dissertation which offers a pathway to research degrees.

You will be eminently positioned for careers across a wide range of public, commercial, and independent spaces in the arts and cultural sector. Our graduates are employed in curatorial, collection, exhibition, education, and leadership roles, Indigenous arts centres, contemporary and artist run spaces, arts festivals and fairs, auction houses, and in the expanded space of curating objects, cultures, and artists.

View full course information including the admission requirements here:  
- <https://www.sydney.edu.au/courses/courses/pc/master-of-art-curating.html>

## Master of Art Curating

Candidates for the Master of Art Curating must complete 72 credit points including:

- a minimum of 18 credit points of core units of study; and
- a minimum of 12 credit points of selective units of study; and
- a maximum of 36 credit points from elective units of study.
  - a maximum of 12 credit points of elective units can be taken from units of study outside those listed in the Art Curating unit of study table, including:
  - a maximum of 6 credit points from units of study offered by other faculties.
- a minimum of 6 credit points of capstone units of study.

### Graduate Diploma in Art Curating

Candidates for the Graduate Diploma in Art Curating must complete 48 credit points including

- a minimum of 12 credit points of core units of study; and
- a minimum of 18 credit points of selective units of study; and
- a maximum 18 credit points from elective units of study
- a maximum of 6 credit points of elective units can be taken from units of study outside those listed in the Art Curating table

#### Core

ARHT6914	Working with Art: Objects in Focus
ARHT6935	The Art Museum: Past, Present and Future
ARHT6960	Contemporary Curating

#### Selective

ARHT5902	Writing for the Art and Museum Sector
ARHT5908	The Business of Art
ARHT6936	Biennales, Triennales and Contemporary Art
ARHT6956	Indigenising Museums: Theory and Practices

#### Electives

ARHT6930	Film Theory: Art, Industry, Culture
ARHT6932	Ways of Curating: Exhibition and Display
ARHT6933	Exhibiting Australian Art
ARHT6937	Collecting and Exhibiting Asian Art
ARHT6942	Elective Art Curating Internship
ARHT6953	Backstage at the Mitchell Library
ARHT6957	Art and Crime: Theft, Fakes and Forgery
ARHT6959	Curatorial Lab
ARHT6961	Curating Islamic Art in 10 Objects
ARHT6962	Art Unseen: Addressing Absent Objects
ARHT6963	Designer Labels: Curating Design Objects
GCST6901	Cultural Policy
MHST6902	Museum and Heritage: Engaging audiences
MHST6903	Managing Collections and Heritage Sites
MUSM7030	Exhibition Development
MUSM7032	Museum and Gallery Administration
MUSM7035	Ethics of Cultural Property
MUSM7036	Museums and the Digital
WMST6904	Modernist Cultural Studies
FASS7001	Academic English for Postgraduates
FASS7002	Critical Thinking and Persuasive Writing
WRIT6000	Professional Writing
WRIT6001	Professional Editing

### Graduate Certificate in Art Curating

Candidates for the Graduate Certificate in Art Curating must complete 24 credit points including

- a minimum of 12 credit points of core units of study; and
- a minimum of 18 credit points of selective units of study; and
- a maximum 18 credit points from elective units of study

#### Capstone

Master of Art Curating Students need to complete either: ARHT6923 OR ARHT6920 and ARHT6921. Students completing the Dissertation can count ARHT6920 towards their elective.

ARHT6920	Dissertation Part 1
ARHT6921	Dissertation Part 2
ARHT6923	Capstone Art Curating Internship

# Museum and Heritage Studies

The Master of Museum and Heritage Studies is a postgraduate coursework degree that will develop your deep understanding of the historical and theoretical currents in museum and heritage studies. units build fundamental skills while the core units allow you to specialise in museums or heritage – and complete subjects on exhibitions, ethics, the practice of heritage and communities, administration, digital – furthering your practical and theoretical skills. This is extended in capstone units, of either an internship project or a dissertation.

## What you'll study

To qualify for the Master of Museum and Heritage Studies you must complete 72 credit points, including:

- a minimum of 24 credit points of core units of study; and
- a minimum of 18 credit points of core elective units of study; and
- a maximum of 24 credit points of elective units of study. With the permission of the Degree Coordinator a maximum of 12 credit points of elective units can be taken from units of study outside those listed in the Museum and Heritage Studies subject area of the Postgraduate Unit of Study Table, including a maximum of 6 credit points from units of study offered by other faculties; and
- at least 6 credit points of capstone units of study.

## Capstone (compulsory project)

The Master's degree offers a choice of professional and research tracks through its capstone options:

- an internship placement which allows you to gain hands on experience by undertaking a supervised project based in a recognised, gallery, museum or heritage or arts organisation; or
- research and writing towards a dissertation of 12,000 words on an approved topic, under the supervision of an academic member of staff.

Internship placements are project-based and allow you to work under a supervisor in a host organization. The placements are actively supported by the program and require academic work that allows for the development of a clear sense of the relationship between theory and practice. In the dissertation pathway, you are encouraged to identify a research question that contributes to or extends existing knowledge in the field, develop an appropriate research design to address the chosen question and write a scholarly account of the results arising from the project.

## Why study with us?

### Hands-on professional practice

Graduates of the program will develop the knowledge base and skills necessary for modern museum and heritage practice and research by investigating the theory and history of tangible and intangible aspects of cultural heritage and the collecting of cultural and natural objects, methods of display and interpretation within the evolving nature of the museum and heritage as a concept and as an organisation. They will also have experienced meaningful professional practice within the museum and heritage sector, which is increasingly becoming a pre-requisite for a career in these highly competitive areas.

### Industry connections and engagement

Access the wealth of resources offered by the University museum collections and their curatorial staff. The University of Sydney has strong academic and professional ties with major institutions in Australia, including the Art Gallery of New South Wales, the Australian Museum, the Australian National Maritime Museum, the National Gallery of Australia, the National Museum of Australia, the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage, the Powerhouse Museum and Museums of History NSW.

View full course information including the admission requirements here:  
- <https://www.sydney.edu.au/courses/courses/pc/master-of-museum-and-heritage-studies.html>

### Master of Museum and Heritage Studies

Candidates for the Master of Museum and Heritage Studies must complete 72 credit points including

- a minimum of 24 credit points of core units of study; and
- a minimum of 18 credit points of selective units of study; and
- a maximum of 24 credit points of elective units of study
  - with the permission of the Degree Coordinator a maximum of 12 credit points of elective units can be taken from outside the table, including
  - a maximum of 12 credit points from units of study offered by other faculties.
- at least 6 credit points of capstone units of study.

### Graduate Diploma in Museum and Heritage Studies

Candidates for the Graduate Diploma in Museum and Heritage Studies must complete 48 credit points including

- a minimum of 12 credit points of core units of study; and
- a minimum of 18 credit points of selective units of study; and
- a maximum of 18 credit points from elective units of study.
  - with the permission of the Degree Coordinator a maximum of 6 credit points can be taken as elective units from units of study outside those listed in the table, including:
  - a maximum of 12 credit points from units of study offered by other faculties.

### Graduate Certificate in Museum and Heritage Studies

Candidates for the Graduate Certificate in Museum and Heritage Studies must complete 24 credit points including

- a minimum of 6 credit points of core units of study; and
- a minimum of 6 credit points of selective units of study; and
- a maximum of 12 credit points from elective units of study.

### Core

MHST6901  
MHST6902  
MHST6903  
MHST6904

Museum and Heritage: History and Theory  
Museum and Heritage: Engaging audiences  
Managing Collections and Heritage Sites  
Museum and Heritage: Objects and Places

### Selective

MHST6913  
MHST6914  
MHST6915  
MHST6916  
MUSM7030  
MUSM7032  
MUSM7035  
MUSM7036  
JCTC6100

Indigenous Museums and Heritage  
Heritage Studies in Practice  
Heritage Studies and Communities  
The Idea of Heritage  
Exhibition Development  
Museum and Gallery Administration  
Ethics of Cultural Property  
Museums and the Digital  
Sites of Trauma, Landscapes of Genocide

### Elective

MHST6906  
  
ARCL6902  
ARHT5902  
ARHT5908

Internship Professional Placement  
Elective  
The Archaeology of Athens  
Writing for the Art and Museum Sector  
The Business of Art

ARHT6914  
ARHT6935  
ARHT6953  
ARHT6956  
ARHT6960  
ARHT6961  
ARHT6962  
ARHT6963  
GCST6901  
JCTC6908  
MECO6901  
WMST6902  
WMST6904  
ARCH9082  
ARCH9028  
ARCH9081  
FASS7001  
FASS7002  
WRIT6000  
WRIT6001

Working with Art: Objects in Focus  
The Art Museum: Past, Present and Future  
Backstage at the Mitchell Library  
Indigenising Museums: Theory and Practice  
Contemporary Curating  
Curating Islamic Art in 10 Objects  
Art Unseen: Addressing Absent Objects  
Designer Labels: Curating Design Objects  
Cultural Policy  
Exhibiting Jewish Australia  
Media Relations  
Arguing the Point  
Modernist Cultural Studies  
Conservation of Traditional Buildings  
Conservation Methods and Practices  
Heritage Law and Policy  
Academic English for Postgraduates  
Critical Thinking and Persuasive Writing  
Professional Writing  
Professional Editing

### Capstone

MHST6905  
MHST6907  
MHST6908

Internship Project  
Dissertation Part 1  
Dissertation Part 2

## 2023 Units of Study

Postgraduate program taught within the Discipline

### Semester 1

#### Art Curating

ARHT5908	The Business of Art
ARHT6920	Dissertation Part 1
ARHT6921	Dissertation Part 2
ARHT6923	Capstone Art Curating Internship
ARHT6932	Ways of Curating: Exhibition & Display
ARHT6935	The Art Museum: Past, Present and Future
ARHT6937	Collecting and Exhibiting Asian Art
ARHT6942	Elective Art Curating Internship
ARHT6960	Contemporary Curating

#### Museum and Heritage Studies

MHST6901	Museum and Heritage: History and Theory
MHST6903	Managing Collections and Heritage Sites
MHST6905	Internship Project
MHST6906	Internship Professional Placement Elective
MHST6907	Dissertation Part 1
MHST6908	Dissertation Part 2
MHST6916	Idea of Heritage
MUSM7035	Ethics of Cultural Property
MUSM7036	Museums and the Digital
MHST6913	Indigenous Museums and Heritage

### Semester 2

#### Art Curating

ARHT5006	Visual and Cultural Research Methods
ARHT5902	Writing for the Art and Museum Sector
ARHT6914	Working with Art: Objects in Focus
ARHT6920	Dissertation Part 1
ARHT6921	Dissertation Part 2
ARHT6923	Capstone Art Curating Internship
ARHT6930	Film Theory: Art, Industry, Culture
ARHT6933	Exhibiting Australian Art
ARHT6942	Elective Art Curating Internship
ARHT6956	Indigenising Museums: Theory and Practice
ARHT6959	Curatorial Lab
ARHT6962	Art Unseen: Addressing Absent Objects

#### Museum and Heritage Studies

MHST6902	Museum and Heritage: Engaging audiences
MHST6904	Museum and Heritage: Objects and Places
MHST6905	Internship Project
MHST6906	Internship Professional Placement Elective
MHST6907	Dissertation Part 1
MHST6908	Dissertation Part 2
MUSM7032	Museum and Gallery Administration
MHST6914	Heritage Studies in Practice
MUSM7030	Exhibition Development

#### Semester 1 Intensives

MUSM7036	Museums and the Digital (Semester 1A)
MHST6913	Indigenous Museums and Heritage (Semester 1B)

#### Semester 2 Intensives

MHST6914	Heritage Studies in Practice (Semester 2A)
MUSM7030	Exhibition Development (Semester 2B)

## Unit of Study descriptions\*

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### Art Curating

#### **ARHT5902 Writing for the Art and Museum Sector**

Writing is essential for working in art galleries and museums, such as interpretive texts for audiences, research for publications, education, criticism, or for digital media. This unit will study essential texts by curators and critics and offers workshops to develop skills in writing for a range of contexts, objects, and art forms. Engage in research and writing methods for object labels, podcasts and audio guides, audiences with diverse needs, auction catalogues and other contexts. The modules offer interactive platforms and collaborative learning opportunities with the Chau Chak Wing Museum and local collections to build experience and enhance skills for career readiness or development.

#### **ARHT5908 The Business of Art**

Delve into the world of art galleries and museums, auction houses, private and corporate collections, artist-run and alternative spaces as vital components of the global intersection between the art world and the art market. Through site visits, case studies and industry lectures students will study concepts of authenticity, value, exhibiting, selling and collecting art, alongside principles of law and ethics to gain a unique understanding of the business of art today.

#### **ARHT6914 Working with Art: Objects in Focus**

This unit introduces students to fundamental skills and issues in the study of art through object-based interpretation. It considers complexities and challenges related to the analysis, interpretation and display of individual works of art in the context of museums and galleries, and provides an introduction to the materials and techniques of art production from curatorial, public engagement and conservation perspectives. Students are supported to develop the ability to work closely with the physical art object, as classes will frequently take place in art galleries across Sydney.

#### **ARHT6920 & 6921 Dissertation Part 1/Dissertation Part 2**

Master degree candidates only may undertake research and writing on an approved topic towards a dissertation of 12000 words under the supervision of an academic staff member. The topic is elective. Art Curatorship students have the option of writing a thesis in the form of an exhibition plan and catalogue essay. The dissertation

is equivalent to two units of study. Students enrol in ARHT6920 Dissertation 1 in their first semester of research and complete by enrolling in ARHT6921 Dissertation 2 in the following semester.

#### **ARHT6923 Capstone Art Curating Internship**

The capstone internship for Master of Art Curating students is a project-based placement of 20 days minimum in an art gallery, museum or appropriate art organisation in Sydney, Australia or overseas. Internships invite critical reflection on art curatorial practice, foster the acquisition of essential knowledge and skills, and enhance students' employment prospects in the sector. Projects are supervised by a professional from the host institution and focus on specific areas of work eg. curatorial or collection research, exhibition development and installation, public programs or registration.

#### **ARHT6930 Film Theory: Art, Industry, Culture**

The relation of film to industrial modernity is an ongoing issue for film theorists. With the advent of digital image processes and production the relation of art and industry has re-emerged with a new set of problems. How do we conceptualise the new forms? What theoretical and aesthetic language(s) do we draw on? And how best to rethink film in the face of rapid technological, formal and cultural change? These issues will be investigated via an examination of the history of film theory's attempts to formulate concepts adequate to the age of industrial modernity.

#### **ARHT6932 Ways of Curating: Exhibitions & Display**

Exhibitions are the key medium through which art is displayed and interpreted as a prominent and diverse part of contemporary culture. This unit engages with current exhibitions in Sydney art museums and art spaces to interrogate textual, theoretical, and exhibition-based strategies. Students will critically engage with ways of thinking about curating from decolonisation, globalisation and communities, to historical, narrative, biographical, feminist, queer and activist models as they relate to current exhibitions in situ. A range of curatorial approaches will be analysed alongside historical and current art exhibition critique.

\* Please note that not all units of study are offered every calendar year.

### **ARHT6933 Exhibiting Australian Art**

What is Australian Art? How are we to understand its changing form and focus from the time of colonisation to the present? Through gallery visits and selected case studies, this unit will examine how contemporary artists, curators and writers are re-imagining and re-seeing the history of Australian art. Current and past exhibitions and collection displays will be explored alongside recent approaches to writing the history of Australian art.

### **ARHT6935 The Art Museum: Past, Present and Future**

This unit of study explores the art museum from its origins in Renaissance and Baroque princely and aristocratic collections, through to the creation of new public spaces and institutions for exhibiting art in the 18th and 19th centuries, including national Academies and international exhibitions. Shifting conceptions of the role of the art museum will be addressed: from public instruction to nation building and mass entertainment. The final section explores current debates, including those posed by an expanding range of new media and changing audience perceptions.

### **ARHT6936 Biennales, Triennales and Contemporary Art**

This unit explores the historical emergence and rapid growth of contemporary international surveys of art since the 1960s. The Biennales, Triennales, Documentas and related international exhibitions are a spectacular cornerstone of today's global art industry. The proliferation of museums, exhibitions, art fairs and cultural events at the international level are now competing with other areas of mass entertainment. In particular, the international contemporary art survey has become a pre-eminent, critical platform for art, trade and cultural politics. The unit is run in conjunction with the Biennale of Sydney. It is an intensive class, with a large component held in situ at Biennale exhibitions, performances, conferences and satellite events.

### **ARHT6937 Collecting and Exhibiting Asian Art**

This unit investigates the rising interest in Asian art by galleries, museums, bi/triennials and their audiences; it explores the politics and issues related to the circulation, exhibition and collection of modern and contemporary Asian art both inside and outside of Asia. Students will achieve a unique insight into institutional settings and curatorial practice in relation to Asian art both internationally and regionally. Critical attention is given to the global interaction between "Asia" and the West, with the aim to ultimately broaden the experience of students who are interested in curating aspects of pre-modern, modern, and contemporary Asian art.

### **ARHT6942 Elective Art Curating Internship**

The elective internship for Art Curating students is a project-based placement of 20 days minimum in an art gallery, museum or appropriate art organisation in Sydney, Australia or overseas. Internships invite critical reflection on art curatorial practice, foster the acquisition of essential knowledge and skills, and enhance students' employment prospects in the sector. Projects are supervised by a professional from the host institution and focus on specific areas of work eg. curatorial or collection research, exhibition development and installation, public programs or registration.

### **ARHT6953 Backstage at the Mitchell Library**

This unit engages with the special collections of the Mitchell Library, which is renowned as a repository for both Australasian art works and the historical documentation that supports them. Integrating the practical and scholarly elements of art history and art curatorship, it provides hands-on training in combining visual analysis with primary research. Relevant issues include the relationship of object and text, the comparison of contemporary perspectives with historical records, and the reliability of primary and secondary sources.

### **ARHT6956 Indigenising Museums: Theory and Practice**

The unit engages students with the particular sensitivities and protocols involved in caring for historic and contemporary collections of Indigenous art and culture in Australia and overseas. Shifts in the balance of cultural power have compelled many museums to critically reflect on the way that Indigenous collections and objects are stored, handled, interpreted and displayed and this unit will examine the theories and methodologies of Indigenising museums.

### **ARHT6955 Engaging with Photographs: Art & Object**

This unit of study introduces students to photography's rich history through the study of its production, material culture, social and aesthetic experience, dissemination, collection, display and interpretation. Students will engage with objects in local collections and with analogue and digital images via visual analysis and critical enquiry.

**ARHT6957 Art and Crime: Fraud, Fakes and Forgery**

Delve into the world of art and crime with this interdisciplinary unit as we study international cases from art heists, theft, fraud, fakes and forgery, to illicit looting and trafficking of cultural objects. Students will explore related issues of authenticity, provenance, Nazi-looted art, restitution of looted or stolen objects, and the repatriation of indigenous art and cultural materials. Students engage with real case studies, art objects from the Chau Chak Wing Museum, local collections, and from experts in the fields of art museums, auction houses, connoisseurship, and law. Designed for art museum professionals, art historians, cultural workers, and those interested in art and law.

**ARHT6959 Curatorial Lab**

Curatorial Lab provides an interactive experience exploring curatorial frameworks, methodologies and approaches working with artists from SCA. This unique unit develops practical and conceptual skills with the support of academic and professional gallery staff. Students develop a small project from concept to display in either digital or exhibition spaces that emphasises collaborative working processes across curatorial teams, artist, objects, or still and moving image. The Lab is a chance to workshop key aspects of contemporary curatorial practice, including commissioning artists, conceptual exhibition development, production logistics, exhibition design, installation, and writing.

**ARHT6960 Contemporary Curating**

This unit of study focuses on contemporary curatorial practices and explores emerging trends and new directions in curating. It considers the expanding role of the curator, moving from traditional contexts in the art gallery and museum, to contemporary art spaces, artist-run initiatives, public sites, and into globalised and virtual settings. Curating is its own discipline. It has its own histories and is constantly evolving new modes of exhibition-making. The Contemporary Curator is inventing new ways for art to involve itself in society and we investigate the curatorial practices that meet the complexities, complacencies, inequalities, and possibilities of the contemporary moment.

**ARHT6961 Curating Islamic Art in 10 Objects**

This hands-on, object-based unit draws on a wide range of visual material from the diverse cultures of the Islamic world to examine the pivotal and evolving role of Islamic art in today's museums. Seminars will be held in Sydney-based collections, working closely with a variety of media from different time periods – historical and contemporary arts – in order to gain knowledge and skills in interpreting and curating Islamic art. We will engage with fundamental questions in the study of Islamic art, and the challenges involved in studying its global histories of collecting, displacing, and displaying.

**ARHT6962 Art Unseen: Addressing Absent Objects**

Art galleries, museums and archives are only ever able to display a fraction of their collection. Much of what they hold remains in basements and storage facilities and these works are rarely, if ever, seen. This unit will take students into those overlooked collection areas to understand how cultural institutions connect with the works in their care. Students will work with prominent collections to produce content to bring underrepresented collection areas, cultures and individual artists into the public eye. The unit will also explore the social, political and art historical issues of display, and the relationship between audiences and taste, and cultures of display.

**ARHT6963 Designer Labels: Curating Design Objects**

Galleries and museums are increasingly diversifying the kind of objects displayed in their collections, and the ability to work with a broad and eclectic material culture is becoming an essential skill within the sector. This unit will introduce students to issues related to the display of design objects and materials in cultural institutions. The analysis and interpretation of fashion, interior design objects, the material cultures of mass-production, and design artefacts will be considered in the wider context of historical and theoretical studies, current curatorial practice, audience engagement strategies and collection management.

## Museum and Heritage Studies

### **MHST6902 Museum and Heritage: Engaging audiences**

Presenting collections, objects and places to the public is a major focus for museums, galleries and heritage organisations. The development of interpretation strategies and public programs to engage, educate and entertain audiences are regarded as key to the long-term viability of cultural institutions. This unit examines the theories and practices of museum education, heritage interpretation, audience research, communication and learning. The development and delivery of education, interpretation and visitor programs are examined in case studies and through practical work.

### **MHST6903 Managing Collections and Heritage Sites**

How museum collections and heritage places are managed and listed is a core function of cultural institutions. From global contexts, such as World Heritage, to national, regional and local museum collections and heritage lists, understanding how objects and places are documented, assessed, and registered is important for both museum and heritage practice. This unit introduces students to the theories and practices of collection and heritage management through current issues in the development, policy and maintenance of cultural collections and places.

### **MHST6904 Museum and Heritage: Objects and Places**

Objects and heritage places (such as indigenous sites, historical buildings, parks, gardens, ruins, archaeological sites, memorials, cultural landscapes) can be studied from a range of multi-disciplinary approaches. In this unit students are introduced to different theoretical and methodological frameworks used in object and place analysis. Changing ideas about the roles and meanings of objects and places from historical, contemporary and cross-cultural perspectives will be introduced. Practical work and case studies will be used to examine these issues.

### **MHST6905 Internship Project**

The internship unit allows students to gain hands on experience by undertaking a supervised project based in a recognised, gallery, museum or heritage or arts organisation. Projects are developed in close consultation with the institutions needs and the student's desired experience. The internship unit offers hands on experience of museums, heritage or cultural organisations and allows for a broadening of skills and expertise as well as an opportunity to gain an understanding of the relationship between theory and institutional practice. The capstone internship unit is designed to offer an experience that encourages students to synthesize their experience of theory and practice and includes a major Essay allowing you to consider a specific topic of your choice.

### **MHST6906 Internship Professional Placement**

The internship unit allows students to gain hands-on experience by undertaking a supervised project based in a recognised, gallery, museum or heritage or arts organisation. Projects are developed in close consultation with the institutions needs and the student's desired experience. The internship unit offers hands on experience of museums, heritage or cultural organisations and allows for a broadening of skills and expertise as well as an opportunity to gain an understanding of the relationship between theory and institutional practice.

### **MHST6907 Dissertation Part 1**

Research and writing towards a dissertation of 12000 words on an approved topic, under the supervision of an academic member of staff. Discipline permission required. Approval is subject to the availability of appropriate supervision and the discipline's discretion.

### **MHST6908 Dissertation Part 2**

Research, writing, Completion and submission of a 12000 word dissertation on an approved topic, supervised by an academic member of staff. Discipline permission required. Approval is subject to the availability of appropriate supervision and the discipline's discretion.

### **MHST6913 Indigenous Museums and Heritage**

Globally, Indigenous peoples have challenged museums, heritage agencies and professional practitioners over issues of ownership, control, management, display and interpretation of Indigenous culture, history and cultural property. We will examine how Indigenous communities, scholars and practitioners are decolonising museum and heritage practices and spaces.

**MHST6914 Heritage Studies in Practice**

The laws, policies and charters governing heritage across the globe share some commonalities but there are also different national approaches to the philosophies and practices underlying heritage management. In this unit of study we will examine how heritage is documented, classified, identified, assessed and managed in different parts of the world through case studies and practical work.

**MUSM7030 Exhibition Development**

Understanding display practices in museums is central to the functions of these cultural institutions. This unit of study examines the way in which exhibitions may function by exploring current issues and debates associated with the practice of exhibiting. We will consider how different spaces inform the interpretation of the cultural material and information displayed. In particular, we will examine the issue of representation as it relates to the museum context. This unit of study will provide students with an overview of the intellectual discourses and practical knowledge used to analyse, conceptualise, propose and develop exhibitions.

**MUSM7032 Museum and Gallery Administration**

Good management is critical to the long term survival of museums as vibrant cultural institutions. This unit of study explores the characteristics of a well managed facility and provides students with the skills necessary to evaluate the operation of their own museum, both in terms of budget, human resource management and general cultural stewardship. Students will also acquire a specific set of key management skills utilised by middle and senior management. They include strategic planning, project management, budget development and program evaluation. Professional competence in these areas is normally a prerequisite for career progression. Field studies and role play techniques are utilised as part of the teaching program.

**MUSM7036 Museums and the Digital**

This unit investigates the current use and adoption of digital technologies and new media across the museum and gallery sectors internationally. It considers how museums use digital technologies and new media, its relationship to audiences through Web 2.0 and Museum3 environments, and the growing use of the web as an important tool for cultural institutions. This course is an opportunity to research and develop critical knowledge about the use of new media and its application in the museum.



The subject area offers the following postgraduate research degrees:

### Postgraduate Program

#### Art History Research Degrees

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Art History also offers the following postgraduate research degrees:

- Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)
- Doctor of Social Sciences (PhD)
- Master of Philosophy (MPhil)
- Master of Arts (Research)

The Art History research programs involve independent research work and the preparation of a thesis under the supervision of an academic in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. For those aiming to compete for specialist and academic posts in museums and universities, a research degree is becoming increasingly important. The rewards of working on new material or bringing new approaches are great, and the University offers breadth and depth of supervisory expertise in Art History and related fields.

Research students participate in regular Research Seminars run by Art History for a broad audience interested in art history, the visual, gallery and museum studies.

### Postgraduate Program

#### Museum Studies Research Degrees

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Museum Studies also offers the following postgraduate research degrees:

- Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)
- Doctor of Social Sciences (PhD)
- Master of Philosophy (MPhil)
- Master of Arts (Research)

The Museum Studies research programs involve independent research work and the preparation of a thesis under the supervision of the Coordinator of the program, and other academic staff in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. These research programs will specifically cater for research students interested in the role of the museum in social change; museum history and museology; museums and public culture as well as museums and the politics of representation.

Museum Studies currently attracts students from disciplines including History, Anthropology, Archaeology, Education and Art History and Theory. Research in Museum Studies is, however, rarely confined to any one of these disciplines.

Research students are involved in monthly reading groups, where students are given the chance to focus the readings on their own areas of interest. The group also provides a forum for more general museological issues. All students are encouraged to participate in wider forums such as national and international conferences, for which research grants may be obtained.

Further information about research courses:

[sydney.edu.au/study/study-options/postgraduate-research.html](http://sydney.edu.au/study/study-options/postgraduate-research.html)



## Staff

**Professor Jennifer Barrett**  
[jennifer.barrett@sydney.edu.au](mailto:jennifer.barrett@sydney.edu.au)

Jennifer's research explores museums, human rights, universalism and the international public sphere, and the museum in history and politics. She published *Museums and the Public Sphere* in 2011. She has held various administrative positions at the Faculty, including her current role of Pro Dean Academic.

**Professor Roger Benjamin**  
[roger.benjamin@sydney.edu.au](mailto:roger.benjamin@sydney.edu.au)

Roger's research focuses on French Orientalist art, 1880-1930 including Renoirs Algerian work; the art of Matisse, including an essay on his 1906 masterpiece *Le Bonheur de Vivre*; the interpretation of contemporary Indigenous Australian art, and contemporary Australian painting.

**Keith Broadfoot**  
[keith.broadfoot@sydney.edu.au](mailto:keith.broadfoot@sydney.edu.au)

Keith Broadfoot teaches across art history and film studies. He researches psychoanalytic approaches to art and film, with interests from the early modern to the contemporary.

**Dr Alex Burchmore**  
[alexander.burchmore@sydney.edu.au](mailto:alexander.burchmore@sydney.edu.au)

Dr Alex Burchmore is an art historian and arts writer, specialising in the study of Chinese and Southeast Asian art of the past and present, with a particular focus on ceramics, trade and exchange, and the interweaving of personal and material identities. His career in academia and the arts sector has encompassed a wide range of roles, including curatorial and provenance research at the Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, and the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra; and teaching and research with the Centre for Art History and Art Theory at the Australian National University.

**Associate Professor Donna Brett**  
[donna.brett@sydney.edu.au](mailto:donna.brett@sydney.edu.au)

Donna's research and teaching areas include international modernist and contemporary photography and art, curatorial studies and post-colonial theories. She has extensive art museum experience.

**Dr Anita Callaway**  
[anita.callaway@sydney.edu.au](mailto:anita.callaway@sydney.edu.au)

Anita teaches across the field of Australian visual culture dating from first European contact to the mid-twentieth century. Her research interests include ephemeral and theatrical arts of the nineteenth century; cross-cultural appropriation of indigenous and non-indigenous imagery; and modernism in performance, commercial art, and illustration.

**Dr Mark De Vitis**  
[mark.devitis@sydney.edu.au](mailto:mark.devitis@sydney.edu.au)

Mark coordinates the semester one first-year program in the subject area of Art History. Apart from his first-year work, he researches and teaches seventeenth-century European art, and is interested in exploring relationships between different forms of visual practice, including dress and representations of the dressed body. Please don't hesitate to email him if you have any questions about studying Art History at the University of Sydney.

**Professor Ann Elias**  
[Ann.Elias@sydney.edu.au](mailto:Ann.Elias@sydney.edu.au)

Ann's teaching and research interests include: environmental aesthetics; camouflage as a military, social and aesthetic phenomenon; flowers and their cultural history; coral reef imagery; visual representations of oceans and the underwater realm. Ann is a Key Researcher with the Sydney Environment Institute at the University of Sydney.

**Dr Peyvand Firozeh**  
[peyvand.firozeh@sydney.edu.au](mailto:peyvand.firozeh@sydney.edu.au)

Peyvand's research and teaching areas include art and architecture of the Islamic world, especially medieval and early modern Iran and India, Islamic mysticism and its relationship to material culture, and interconnections between art, politics and religion in the Islamic world.



**Dr Stephen Gilchrist****stephen.gilchrist@sydney.edu.au**

Belonging to the Yamatji people of Western Australia, Stephen Gilchrist is the Associate Lecturer of Indigenous Art. He has curated numerous exhibitions in Australia and the United States and has worked with the Indigenous collections of the National Gallery of Australia, The British Museum and the National Gallery of Victoria.

**Dr Anna Lawrenson****anna.lawrenson@sydney.edu.au**

Anna Lawrenson's research considers how the history, funding and administration of museums and galleries shapes their approach to public engagement. She co-authored an important monograph on blockbuster exhibitions in Australian museums and galleries. She has published in academic journals and been commissioned to conduct research within the museum sector producing reports that have been used for advocacy and funding.

**Dr Mimi Kelly****amelia.kelly@sydney.edu.au**

Mimi Kelly teaches modern and contemporary art. Her research focuses on the intersection of art, popular culture and feminism. Her professional expertise bridges contemporary art praxis, scholarly research, university teaching and visual art programming. She completed her PhD through Sydney College of the Arts in 2019 and has a Bachelor of Visual Arts (First Class Honours) from the South Australian School of Art, University of South Australia.

**Professor Mark Ledbury****mark.ledbury@sydney.edu.au**

Mark researches and teaches eighteenth-century and early nineteenth century European art, and is particularly interested in questions of genre, classification and definition – and in relations between painters and the world of the theatre across the long eighteenth century. He is currently working on a project called 'Theatre art and Community in France' when he's not busy programming speakers, publications and events for the Power Institute.

**Dr Yvonne Low****yvonne.low@sydney.edu.au**

Yvonne Low specialises in the modern and contemporary arts of Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia. Her research interests include colonial histories, cultural politics of art development, women artists and feminist art history, and digital art history. Yvonne has published over 40 books, peer-reviewed journals and exhibition catalogues, and is on the editorial committee of *Southeast of Now: Directions in Contemporary and Modern Art in Asia* and *Ambitious Alignments: New Histories of Southeast Asian Art*.

**Dr Chiara O'Reilly****chiara.oreilly@sydney.edu.au**

Chiara works on the history of museums and questions of Chiara O'Reilly teaches across the Museum and Heritage studies program. Her research examines museum and gallery history, collections, exhibitions and audience experience. Her work has been published in *Journal of the History of Collections*, *Museum Management and Curatorship* and *Museums and Social Issues* and she co-authored a book on the history of Blockbusters Exhibitions in Australian Museums and Galleries (2019). She is currently part of a number of collaborative research projects including "Museums as sites of Civil Society" and is also part of the "Nanosonic stories" team examining sound as a tool of science communication.

**Professor Mary Roberts****mary.roberts@sydney.edu.au**

European, particularly British, art of the nineteenth century; gender, Orientalism, the history and culture of travel; Ottoman art in the nineteenth century and cultural exchange with European artists.

## **Academic Coordinators 2023**

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For the current list of academic coordinators, please refer to the Art History webpage at [bit.ly/usyd-arht](https://bit.ly/usyd-arht) or email us at [sace.enquiries@sydney.edu.au](mailto:sace.enquiries@sydney.edu.au).

## **Support Staff**

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**Administration Officer:** Charlie Tapper

**Internship Officer:** Marina Grasso

**Senior Librarian, Schaeffer Library:** Anthony Green

**Librarian, Schaeffer Library:** Nicholas Keyzer

## **Prizes, Scholarships & Financial Assistance**

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Information on prizes and scholarships, and financial assistance available through the University can be found at: [sydney.edu.au/scholarships/](https://sydney.edu.au/scholarships/)

## **Policies**

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For information on policies that apply to current students, please visit: [sydney.edu.au/students/](https://sydney.edu.au/students/)

## **Keys Dates 2023**

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For the key dates in 2023 including semester start dates and breaks, please refer to the University webpage at [sydney.edu.au/students/study-dates.html](https://sydney.edu.au/students/study-dates.html).



# Art History

**School of Art, Communication and English (SACE)  
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences**

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