

Doctoral Study in Art History in the Department of Art History and Art, Case Western Reserve University

Doctoral Program Review

Mission Statement

Doctoral study in art history at Case Western Reserve University promotes humanistic knowledge through concentrated inquiry into the aesthetic, social, and cultural forces that shape visual production. A strong curriculum based in object analysis is facilitated by the department's long-standing partnership with the nearby Cleveland Museum of Art. This provides a remarkable opportunity at the Ph.D. level for direct acquisition of specialized knowledge as well as professional curatorial and arts management experience. Close contact with the museum, where most courses are taught and whose world-class library is our graduate program's main research resource, is encouraged for all advanced students, even those intending to enter academia. CWRU's doctoral curriculum integrates intellectual discourse with training for world citizenship through the application of theoretical analysis, close looking and creative thinking to artistic problems exemplary of cultural difference.

Department faculty in art history exhibit a variety of expertise that ranges across disciplines from ancient to modern, with a concentration on Western art and coverage of east and south Asia. There is particular faculty strength across the board in museology/history of collecting/history of art markets as well as in specific subject areas. Many professors are active guest curators and contribute catalogue essays and related expertise to exhibitions held in the United States and abroad, projects in which doctoral students are regularly invited to participate. Numerous curators at the Cleveland Museum of Art hold adjunct faculty status, teach from time to time, supervise independent projects

and participate on doctoral committees. Ph.D. students are encouraged to work directly with curatorial files and may assist curators in planning special exhibitions. The development of knowledge and skills at a sophisticated professional level is greatly enhanced not only by internship opportunities at the Cleveland Museum of Art, the Museum of Contemporary Art, Cleveland, and other University Circle and Northeast Ohio gallery and museum venues, but also through a vigorous program of visiting lecturers, symposia and workshops sponsored by the department, the CMA and the University's Baker-Nord Center for the Humanities. Dissertation topics are encouraged to include or focus on collecting issues as well as following more traditional avenues of historical investigation.

Admissions Standards

Admission to the Ph.D. program in Art History requires appropriate preparation in art history at the undergraduate and/or master's degree level, and the consent/assignment of a departmental faculty advisor. The doctorate is awarded in recognition of advanced mastery of a specific area within the discipline. Candidates must demonstrate the ability to identify a unique problem in their chosen field, perform independent research, and communicate the results in a dissertation. The following criteria are weighted in admission decisions: undergraduate and master's degree GPA, GRE scores, language preparation, and research abilities. In addition to submission of a personal statement, two research papers, and three letters of recommendation, an interview is strongly encouraged. MA students from our own program who wish to continue on for the Ph.D. must also submit a statement of purpose. Admission preference is given to students whose scholarly interests closely parallel those of a department faculty member, who

wish to train a focus on distinctive holdings in the collection of the Cleveland Museum of Art, and/or those planning a museum-based thesis.

The manner in which the program addresses the needs of the state or the region and placement objectives for graduated

As one of only two Ph.D. granting Art History programs in Ohio, an important aim of CWRU's doctoral program is the training of art history instructors for the region's art schools, colleges and universities, as well as providing a junior faculty cohort for other institutions of higher learning across the country. Just as significant is the goal of training curators, registrars and educators for positions at the Cleveland Museum of Art and other statewide and national museums and exhibiting institutions, a career track for which the department's record has been particularly impressive over the past several decades. Placement opportunities also encompass positions of expertise in art publishing, and at art libraries, private collections, auction houses and commercial galleries.

Review information

Date of last review: spring 2012

Date of next scheduled web update: Spring 2014

Date of next scheduled complete review: Spring 2019