

THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO**VISUAL ARTS HISTORY 4451F, FALL 2017
SEMINAR IN MEDIEVAL ART****MEDIEVAL ART IN NORTH AMERICAN CONTEXTS:
COLLECTING, DISPLAY, REPRESENTATION**

Thursdays, 11:30 to 2:20 p.m., John Labatt Visual Arts Centre, Rm. 247

Professor Kathryn Brush

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Office Hour: Thursdays, 3 to 4:00 p.m., or by appointment

Prerequisites:

For undergraduate students: VAH 2251E/251E or VAH 2252F/G (Early Medieval Art) or VAH 2253E/253E (Romanesque and Gothic Art) or VAH 2254F (Romanesque Art); priority will be given to fourth-year students. For graduate students: previous course work in medieval art and/or modern art, museum history, historiography, and intellectual history would be helpful. Reading knowledge of a language other than English would be useful for all seminar participants.

You are responsible for ensuring that you have successfully completed all course prerequisites and that you have not taken an antirequisite course. Enrolment in this course without the normal prerequisite may not be used as the basis of an appeal. If you are not eligible for this course, you will be removed from it at any time, and you will receive no adjustment to your fees. These decisions cannot be appealed.

Course Description

This seminar explores the collecting, display, and representation of medieval art in the USA and Canada during the past century. In 1914, less than a year after the Armory Show introduced North Americans to the art of the European avant-garde, Europe's Middle Ages "arrived" in New York in a Metropolitan Museum of Art exhibition that featured the collection of the banker-philanthropist J. Pierpont Morgan. In Manhattan that same year the sculptor George Gray Barnard opened his "Cloisters," an evocatively staged collection of medieval architectural and sculptural fragments which the artist believed would demonstrate "the power of the medieval chisel" to Americans. These early public displays of medieval objects did much to promote the appreciation, collecting, and study of medieval art and visual culture on this side of the Atlantic.

The seminar analyzes a wide range of ideologies and tensions that have animated the display and representation of displaced objects from medieval Europe in North American contexts. In addition to evaluating the idiosyncracies of collecting at individual institutions, the seminar will focus on issues of cultural transfer,

reappropriation, and reinterpretation. How, for example, has the public (visual) consumption of medieval art been valued and positioned in relation to objects and ideas from other historical eras and geographies, including those of non-Western cultures and the modern age? How and why have collections of medieval art been employed in the past and present to articulate distinctly American and/or Canadian concerns and identities, whether public, private, individual, or collective? Strategies of arrangement and display, both historical and contemporary, at selected institutions will be given critical consideration. In 2017 the Middle Ages continue to figure prominently in the North American popular imagination: in what ways might exhibitions of “authentic” medieval objects build on and complicate such popular culture projections? How can museums and educational institutions employ new technologies to help interpret medieval visual culture in more accessible and “experienceable” ways?

An October field trip to the Malcove Collection (Art Museum at the University of Toronto), one of Canada’s largest and most important collections of medieval objects, will offer seminar participants real-life insight into current debates about the collecting, display, and representation of medieval visual culture.

Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course students will be able to:

Recognize the diverse relationships that exist between medieval cultural objects and the contexts of their production, presentation, and reception in the Middle Ages and during the modern era

Engage critically with the histories of major North American art collections and analyze diverse ways in which these collections have been assembled, displayed, and interpreted by a wide range of patrons, users, and audiences

Analyze and compare characteristics of art and cultural production from different geographic areas of Europe and North America

Apply appropriate terminology to carry out sophisticated visual analyses of works of art, architecture, and media, and gain knowledge of key critical and theoretical frameworks employed in the study and analysis of art history and visual culture

Participate constructively in group discussions and present findings that demonstrate an advanced level of visual literacy and research ability

Enrich their understanding of twenty-first century art and society via engagement with cultural forms and practices of the past.

Evaluation

Class Participation	20%
Short Presentations (2, with written components)	20%
Seminar Presentation (with annotated bibliography and abstract)	25%
Research Paper	35%

Requirements

1) Attendance

Students are expected to attend all class sessions and be prepared for and participate in all meetings, discussions and/or critiques. Under University regulations, if a student misses 15% of his/her classes without written corroboration for health or bereavement, he/she can be debarred from participation in final tests, evaluations, assignments, and/or critiques. If a student is consistently absent from a 3-hour class for one hour, he/she will exceed the 15% cut-off.

Please know that attendance at seminar meetings is considered mandatory.

UWO Medical Policy

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade *must* apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department. For the UWO policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness, see: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/academic_policies/rights_responsibilities.html [downloadable Student Medical Certificate (SMC): student.uwo.ca under the Medical Documentation heading].

Please note that the instructor will NOT accept any missed assignments, whether totalling more than 10% or less than 10%, unless the student has arranged accommodation through the Dean's Office.

Health and Mental Wellbeing

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western http://www.health.uwo.ca/mental_health/ for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

2) Class Participation and Course Materials

The quality and success of this seminar—designed as a collaborative undertaking—is dependent on the input and participation of all class members. It is therefore essential that students keep up with course readings and writing assignments. Each participant is expected to engage actively in group discussions and to respond constructively to individual presentations by posing questions, raising problems, and

putting forward independent observations and hypotheses. Critical reading and looking, as well as the ability to develop and present clearly articulated analyses (written and verbal), are fundamental to advanced work in art history.

Course Materials and Readings:

Readings will be assigned on a weekly basis. This seminar addresses a large and important topic that is just beginning to receive extended critical study; most publications to date are article-length, focusing on individual institutions.

An essay collection from 1996 provides an important point of departure for our exploration (Elizabeth Bradford Smith, ed. *Medieval Art in America: Patterns of Collecting 1800-1940*, College Park, Pennsylvania: The Palmer Museum of Art, 1996), and copies are available for purchase in the UWO Bookstore.

A copy of this book is also on one-day reserve in the D. B. Weldon Library.

Other readings will be assigned from books and articles available on-line via OWL, the D. B. Weldon Library (e.g., articles available via journal databases), or in the form of photocopies available for consultation in the Visual Resources Library (Rm. 241, John Labatt Visual Arts Centre). Please note that your textbooks from VAH 1040 (History of Western Art) and the VAH 1041-VAH 1045 series (Art, Visual Culture, and Power, etc.), and your 2000-level medieval courses, especially Marilyn Stokstad, *Medieval Art: Second Edition* (2004), will provide helpful background information, images, and bibliography.

OWL

Training: <https://owl.uwo.ca/portal/site/owldocs>

Owl Course Site: <https://owl.uwo.ca/portal>

All students will have access to the course OWL site; the course outline, the Chicago Manual of Style (pdf.), reading assignments, and class announcements will be posted there.

3) Short Presentations

Each seminar participant will give two short presentations.

The first will focus on a critical review and analysis of an article (or articles) in *Medieval Art in America: Patterns of Collecting 1800-1940* or of a recent publication that relates to the theme of this seminar (short list to be distributed in class). You will prepare a short (2- to 3-page, double-spaced) written report, analyzing how the article or publication contributes to your understanding of the formation of a taste for medieval art—and/or its acquisition (or imitation)—by European and North American collectors, scholars, artists, and institutions in late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. You are encouraged to take a critical approach to your assigned article(s) or publication as

you consider specific contexts in which medieval art has been studied, collected and/or interpreted. On the day of your presentation you will discuss the issues and arguments examined in your report and submit it for grading. Class discussions should be extemporaneous and approximately 15-20 minutes in length; it is recommended that you bring in a few Powerpoint slides (or YouTube videos; books with images, etc.) to better acquaint other seminar participants with the site(s), concept(s) or issue(s) you are considering. Please note that while the oral presentation should be informal, the written report is to follow scholarly standards (see note regarding plagiarism and citation below).

The second short presentation will consist of a preliminary report on your seminar topic; you are required to present (and distribute to all class members electronically and/or in hard copy) a *bibliography* of the materials you have consulted, or are planning to consult, in order to facilitate the exchange of information. You are also required to prepare and distribute a *brief (i.e., 1-page) statement* outlining the chief issues or problems posed by your particular research topic as well as the proposed directions to be taken by your arguments and/or approaches. Please bring any questions or research/logistical problems you are encountering to the attention of the class, and be prepared for others to offer comments regarding your topic, the bibliography, etc.

It will be important to bring along images (a brief Powerpoint presentation; YouTube videos; maps; books; pamphlets) in order to help your classmates envision the ideas and/or objects/buildings you are examining.

4) Major Seminar Presentation

The third, more formal, presentation (1 to 1¼ hours in length) should be conceived as the in-depth presentation of your research subject. For this presentation you are required to distribute copies of a three- to five-paragraph abstract and an annotated bibliography to the class; *please note that you are also responsible for assigning relevant readings to the other seminar members one week in advance of your report.* In addition to a Powerpoint presentation, you are encouraged to make use of such visual aids as maps, drawings, or DVD/video (e.g., YouTube) clips. You should be prepared to handle questions and lead the rest of the seminar group in a discussion of the material presented. *It will be useful to devise questions in advance in order to mobilize discussion.* You can certainly refer to notes to aid you with your presentation, but please avoid reading from a prepared “script.”

5) Research Paper

Your final research paper for the course should develop from ideas explored in your major seminar presentation. The critical responses from other class members and the instructor will help to clarify and broaden your ideas, and to suggest new avenues to be explored in the final paper. Your arguments are expected to improve and display increasing methodological sophistication as the semester progresses.

The final paper (for undergraduates: 10-12 pages of text, Times Roman 12 point, double-spaced with one-inch margins, plus notes, bibliography, and illustrations; for graduate students: 12-15 pages+ of text), is to be presented in a professional, clearly organized fashion with a proper scholarly apparatus. The paper should follow the Chicago Manual of Style, which is the style sheet used in the Department of Visual Arts (see the "Chicago.pdf" file posted on the OWL site for this course). Please note, however, that endnotes are preferred, as they conform most closely to scholarly practice in the field of art history. For further information, see also: <http://www.lib.uwo.ca/services/styleguides.html>. Photocopies or printouts of images, whether scanned from books or downloaded from the Internet, should be included as plates with figure references in the text of the paper. All plates should be numbered and captioned; alternatively you may provide a list of figures. Further details regarding the research and writing of papers will be discussed in class.

Due Date for Final Paper: December 7 (last day of class)

****Essays will be accepted only in hard copy (i.e., they may not be Faxed or forwarded electronically). Please note that I gladly accept EARLY, but not late assignments. Please consider the option of handing in your paper prior to the deadline.**

Plagiarism and Citation:

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage of text from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. The Department of Visual Arts uses the Chicago Manual of Style (see the "Chicago.pdf" file posted on OWL for this course, as above).

Plagiarism is a major academic offence. .

****N.B.:** *The University of Western Ontario places a very high value on academic honesty. Plagiarism of any kind (e.g., unacknowledged borrowings from published sources, the internet or other student papers; close paraphrasing, etc.) is regarded as a major scholarly offence, and appropriate action will be taken. It is imperative that you write your essays in your own words. Consult the section on "Scholastic Discipline for Undergraduate Students" in the on-line UWO Academic Calendar for 2017-18:*

http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2017/print_pg113.html (please note that the same regulations are applied to students in graduate programs).

Plagiarism

Plagiarism, which may be defined as "The act or an instance of copying or stealing another's words or ideas and attributing them as one's own," will not be tolerated. (Citation excerpted from Black's Law Dictionary, 1999, 7th ed., p. 1170). (Refer to the link above, http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2017/print_pg113.html with regard to academic penalties for plagiarism.) This includes presenting the visual or aural work of another creator as your own. Visual or aural plagiarism may involve both hand-based media such as drawing, painting, printmaking and sculpture, as well as digital media such as photography, video and sound. It includes work subsequently manipulated or transferred between different media, as well as self-plagiarism – work submitted for

assignments previously produced and graded for another course. Similar to textual plagiarism, all student work involving the visual or aural work of others must be appropriately cited/identified whether in print or orally. Failure to do so will lead to academic penalties similar to those identified in Western's Academic Calendar.

N.B.: Scholastic offences are taken seriously. BE SURE to read the policies noted above, with special attention to the definition of Scholastic Offences.

Other Important Course Policies:

1. Students with Disabilities: For Western's Policy on Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities see www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2017/print_pg118.html "In its efforts to accommodate disabilities appropriately, the approach adopted by the University is collaborative, involving the student requesting the accommodation, the instructor, department (or school or program where applicable), and/or Faculty which provides the accommodation, and Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) in the Student Development Centre which coordinates the request for and provision of accommodation."
2. Student Accommodation for Religious Holidays: For purposes of this policy "the University has approved a list of dates which are recognized religious holidays which require members of those religions to be absent from the University; this list is updated annually and is available at departmental, Deans' and Faculty advising Offices." For Western's Policy on Religious Holidays see www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2017/pg119.html
3. Electronic Devices: You may use a computer or tablet to take notes in class. Please know, however, that it is tremendously distracting (not just for you, but for me and your fellow students) when you use your computer or tablet during class time for such other activities as checking e-mails, surfing the web, and visiting social media websites (among other things). Thus such activities are prohibited. Students must turn off all cell phones, PDAs, cameras, or similar electronic devices while in the classroom so as to avoid disruptions caused by ringing and vibrating phones. Should you need to receive an urgent phone call during class time, I ask that you first notify me at the beginning of class and that you keep your phone on vibrate and step out of the classroom to receive the call.
4. Culture of Respect and Code of Student Conduct: All students will conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the Code of Student Conduct and treat all members of the Western community with respect. See: <http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/board/code.pdf>
5. Enrolment in the course constitutes an agreement to participate in class and to carry out the prescribed oral presentations and writing assignments. "Make-up" presentations and other assignments will not be permitted except under extreme circumstances (and only with official documentation approved by the Dean's office). Please know that you are committed to present on the dates assigned to you at the beginning of term.

*****N.B.***** *Students are responsible for being aware of, and fulfilling on time, all assignments. Please note that I gladly accept early, but not late papers and*

assignments. Late papers and assignments will be accepted only in the event of a family or medical emergency, or bereavement, and official documentation will be required in the Academic Counselling office of your home Faculty, as per the UWO Policy. Any missed or late assignments, except in the case of the above, must be given the grade of "F" [=0].

6. E-mail Policy: As this is a small class I will aim to reply to your e-mail messages promptly. However, I have a number of other teaching, research, and administrative commitments, and thus I will do my best to reply to your e-mail within two business days (business days being Monday through Friday). Should you wish to discuss something via e-mail, please aim to contact me *well in advance* of deadlines, and not at the last minute (e.g., the night before an assignment is due). Please be aware that I *do not* discuss grades via e-mail.