Department of Art History and Museum and Exhibition Studies

Contact Information:
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Administration:
Chairperson, Andrew Finegold

The Department of Art History and Museum and Exhibition Studies offers the BA in Art History, the Minor in Art History, and the Minor in Museum and Exhibition Studies (MUSE).

UIC's Department of Art History and Museum and Exhibition Studies takes advantage of its location at the heart of the country. Chicago, with its vibrant and often turbulent history, its outstanding contributions to art-making and architecture, and its richly endowed museums and libraries, offers an exceptional setting for the study of art and the urban environment. The department is devoted to the interdisciplinary exploration of artworks, artifacts, and architecture from antiquity to the present, across the world. Beyond the chronological and geographical breadth of our fields of study, we are committed to visual and cultural literacy. The department connects the varied creative practices of the College of Architecture, Design, and the Arts, and engages the wider humanist educational mandate of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and of the university as a whole. The Department of Art History and Museum and Exhibition Studies serves the entire UIC community, with undergraduate students from all over campus choosing to take our classes for major, minor, and General Education credit, and simply because they are excited about art and its history and the distinctive set of skills its study provides.

The faculty is made up of scholars who in some cases are also artists, architects, archaeologists, curators, and university administrators. Our research is published by leading journals and presses, and has been supported by competitive fellowships from prestigious institutions such as the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Getty Research Institute, the Clark Art Institute, the National Gallery of Art, and the Smithsonian. We train art historians, museum professionals, future practitioners of the arts and architecture, as well as students who go on to a wide range of careers that draw on the rapidly growing importance of visual communication and global cultural understanding for the brave new world we find ourselves in today. As a department we help students develop their innate capacities for intellectual curiosity, critical thinking, historical understanding, and eloquent written communication. At the center of the training we offer to students is the capacity to translate visual experience into language, a skill evermore necessary for personal and professional success and for a fully human experience of our increasingly image-saturated and image-dominated daily life.

BA in Art History

The BA program introduces undergraduate students to the study of the visual arts and the built environment across time and space: architecture, painting, sculpture, design, photography, film, and media arts as well as museum and exhibition studies. The art and architecture of Chicago and the many local museums and galleries are a living part of the general curriculum and are specific components in specialized courses. While some of our majors pursue graduate education and scholarly careers in teaching and museum work, others have established careers in arts advocacy, galleries, cultural foundations, and in architectural and art publishing. The Art History degree is also useful in a wide variety of fields where visual literacy and cross-cultural sensitivity provide graduates with a professional advantage, such as business, politics, public service, work in journalism, media, and broadcasting, law, library science, and urban planning.

Minor in Art History

The Minor in Art History program introduces undergraduate students to the study of the visual arts and the built environment across time and space: architecture, painting, sculpture, design, photography, film, and media arts as well as museum and exhibition studies. The art and architecture of Chicago and the many local museums and galleries are a living part of the general curriculum and are specific components in specialized courses. The minor is especially useful as a complement to other majors where visual literacy is an asset. These include all of the humanities disciplines, most of the social sciences, areas that rely in visual communication, such as Business and Communications, as well as areas that rely on close visual analysis, such as the medical fields.

Minor in Museum and Exhibition Studies (MUSE)

The Minor in Museum and Exhibition Studies (MUSE) program introduces undergraduate students to the history, theory and practices of museums and other exhibition venues.

Degree Program

- BA in Art History

Minors

- Minor in Art History
- Minor in Museum and Exhibition Studies