

Art: Art History

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Faculty from other disciplines also support this program.

Art history explores the thoughts, works, and lives of artists, architects, and designers from the distant past to the ever-changing present. Art history at Principia College includes the study of architecture, sculpture, painting, photography, and decorative arts from around the world, including aspects of western and non-western art. Artists do not create in a vacuum, and art history examines history, religion, philosophy, science, technological developments, and literature to understand the ideas and influences behind creative expressions. Students learn about a variety of art and architectural theories from their foundational courses onward.

Designed by the prominent twentieth-century architect Bernard Maybeck, the campus of Principia College began as a work of art. From this basis of fine architecture “at home” and with the rich resources of the art museums nearby in Saint Louis, Principia College students experience works of art and architecture first-hand as a normal part of daily life. Visits to museums and galleries, which often include student presentations, are a regular part of the curriculum at every level.

Because Principia is internationally-oriented, art history has a vital role to play in every student’s academic program. Many successful professionals around the world think first of a nation’s art treasures as they investigate their potential commonalities. Knowing how to understand the meaning and messages of art is therefore an important talent to be cultivated. The visual arts, thoughtfully considered, form ready-made cultural bridges. Art allows us to envision and share the aspirations of humanity, whether in the form of a cave painting, a mosque, or a work of Abstract Expressionism. In every instance, works of art, carefully studied, allow us to view the world more expansively and with sensitivity.

The study of art history prepares students for a variety of professions, including museum and gallery work, the conservation or preservation of art and architecture, art publishing, and education, as well as for graduate study in art history, architecture, law, business, and economics. Art history exemplifies a well-rounded liberal arts education with its multi-disciplinary approach, and this provides students with a rich understanding of the relationships between artistic expression and other areas of study.

Students majoring or minoring in art history may also major or minor in studio art (<http://catalog.principiacollege.edu/majors-minors/art/>). The three art history courses required for the major in studio art may count toward both the studio art major and the art history minor. Only three additional courses would be required for a studio art major to fulfill the art history minor.

Departmental Learning Outcomes

- **Knowledge:** A general knowledge of the characteristics of the historical art and/or architecture studied.

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- **Communication:** A capacity to speak and write clearly about art and/or architecture using discipline-specific vocabulary.
- **Scholarly Research:** Skill in researching important concepts and/or issues in various periods of art and/or architectural history.
- **Context:** An understanding of how historical, social, and cultural contexts influence the artist's and/or architect's ideas and practices, as well as art historical movements.
- **Theory:** Skill in applying theoretical methodologies to the study of art history and/or architectural history.

Major

- B.A. in Art History (<http://catalog.principiacollege.edu/majors-minors/art-history/ba/>)

Minor

- Minor in Art History (<http://catalog.principiacollege.edu/majors-minors/art-history/minor/>)

ARTH 100 Intro to Western Art to 1400 3.0 SH [GEA]

This course surveys the visual arts in their many facets from prehistoric times and ancient Mesopotamia, Egypt, Greece, and Rome, through medieval Europe. Sometimes known as "from caves to cathedrals," this course introduces students to fundamental principles for the study of art history and theory, and the verbal language that unites the visual arts.

Class Level Restriction: Freshman and Sophomore only.

ARTH 101 Intro:Western Art 1400-Present 3.0 SH [GEA]

This survey course begins with the Renaissance in Northern Europe and Italy, and chronologically studies the major innovations in painting, sculpture, architecture, and other visual arts, introducing students to fundamental principles for the study of art history and theory, and the verbal language that unites the visual arts.

ARTH 110 Survey Asia/Africa/Americas 3.0 SH [GEA]

This course surveys the art of South and Southeast Asia, China, Korea, Japan, the Americas, the Pacific, and Africa from their beginnings to the present. It introduces key vocabulary terms, methods for understanding the meaning of the various works, the cultural context in which these works were formed, and the role of the artist in society.

ARTH 132 Themes in Renaissance Art 3.0 SH [GEA]

This course studies the art and architecture of Italy and Northern Europe from 1300 to 1600, focusing on the changing opportunities available to artists, the impact of liberal arts education on artists' and architects' success, and the means by which artists and architects became recognized as independent creative individuals.

Class Level Restriction: Freshman only.

ARTH 200 Ancient Art 3.0 SH [GEA]

This course explores the sculpture, architecture, painting, and other visual arts of the ancient classical world, beginning with the earliest Aegean cultures, giving special attention to issues of art and life in various Greek centers.

ARTH 203 Medieval Art 3.0 SH [GEA]

This course opens with Early Christian and Byzantine art and architecture, explores the innovations in manuscript production, the ideals of the world of Charlemagne, the majesty of Romanesque churches, and the dazzling color, light, and space of Gothic cathedrals.

ARTH 205	Topics in Art History	3.0 SH	[GEA]
<p>This course is designed to provide a close look at specific topics in the history of art. Topics might include courses linked to local exhibitions of important works of art, traditions of special interest to abroad programs, or courses organized around the special expertise of visiting faculty. The title will be extended to describe the current topic. May be taken more than once, provided the topics differ.</p>			
ARTH 230	Asian Art	3.0 SH	[GEA]
<p>This course examines bronzes, ceramics, paintings, sculpture, architecture, and other visual arts of the Asian world in their socio-political and historical contexts.</p>			
ARTH 232	Art of the Italian Renaissance	3.0 SH	[GEA]
<p>This course explores art and architecture in Italy in the 15th and 16th centuries including major works by such world-famous artists and architects as Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, Raphael, and Palladio. It explores the achievements of artists in major centers - Florence, Rome, and Venice - and in courtly settings, and how they preserved their culture.</p>			
ARTH 234	17th-18th Century Art	3.0 SH	[GEA]
<p>This course studies paintings, sculpture, architecture, and other visual art in Europe from 1600 to the end of the 18th century, from Bernini to Vermeer, David to Houdon, with special attention to the emergence of influential women artists such as Artemisia Gentileschi and Angelica Kauffmann.</p>			
ARTH 235	19th Century European Art	3.0 SH	[GEA]
<p>This course investigates the work of artists in Spain, France, Germany, and Great Britain during the nineteenth century, with an emphasis on how their art was influenced by different national perspectives.</p>			
ARTH 237	20th Century Art	3.0 SH	[GEA]
<p>This course examines the major artistic movements of the 20th century, including Fauvism, Cubism, Expressionism, Abstract Expressionism, and performance art. How the historical and socio-political contexts shaped artistic expression is a major consideration, along with the initiative of individual artists.</p>			
ARTH 246	The Art of Activism	3.0 SH	[GESS]
<p>This course follows various social movements and their artistic campaigns to understand how creative ideas can change society. The course will look at campaigns using art, performance, and parody from the 18th Century in Europe to today, including the Civil Rights Movement and recent protest movements in North America, to understand how they were successful. Also listed as SOAN 246.</p>			
ARTH 258	Art in the USA	3.0 SH	[GEA]
<p>This course traces the innovations and achievements of visual artists in the USA from the eighteenth through the twenty-first centuries with particular emphasis on artists' responses to themes such as wilderness, the growth of cities, the industrial revolution, war and peace, women's rights, urban life, and internationalism.</p>			
ARTH 260	History of Photography	3.0 SH	[GEA]
<p>This course explores the history of photography from its early-19th-century origins to the present, giving special attention to the innovations of such major figures as Daguerre and Niépce, Henry Fox Talbot, Nadar, Stieglitz, Ansel Adams, Cindy Shearman, Andy Warhol, and other 21st-century photographers.</p>			
ARTH 282	Islamic Art	3.0 SH	[GEA]
<p>This course examines Islamic art from its beginnings in the Arabic peninsula through its response to local traditions in Syria and Palestine, and its expansion into Egypt, Spain, North Africa, and India.</p>			
ARTH 285	20th Century Architecture	3.0 SH	[GEA]
<p>This course covers major movements of 20th-century architecture, including the Arts and Crafts movement, Modernism, Post-Modernism, and contemporary movements, as well as urban planning.</p>			
ARTH 300	Adv Studies/Ancient	3.0 SH	[]
<p>This seminar studies current issues in ancient Greek and Roman art and architectural history. Topics treated thematically will vary, and the title will be extended to describe the current topic. The emphasis is on research/writing, oral presentation, and various approaches. May be repeated up to a total of six semester hours provided the topics differ.</p>			
<p>Prerequisite: ARTH 200.</p>			
<p>Class Level Restriction: Junior and Senior only.</p>			

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ARTH 332 Adv Studies/Medieval & Renaiss 3.0 SH []

This seminar studies current issues in Medieval and Renaissance art history. Topics treated thematically will vary, and the title will be extended to describe the current topic. The emphasis is on research/writing, oral presentation, and various approaches. May be repeated up to a total of six semester hours provided the topics differ.

Class Level Restriction: Junior and Senior only.

ARTH 354 Adv Studies/17th-18th C Art 3.0 SH []

This seminar studies current issues in 17th- and 18th-century art history. Topics treated thematically will vary, and the title will be extended to describe the current topic. The emphasis is on research/writing, oral presentation, and various approaches. May be repeated up to a total of six semester hours provided the topics differ.

Class Level Restriction: Junior and Senior only.

ARTH 355 Adv Studies/19th-20th C Art 3.0 SH []

This seminar studies current issues in the history and theory of 19th- and 20th-century art. Topics treated thematically will vary and the title will be extended to describe the current topic. The emphasis is on research/writing, oral presentation, and various methodological approaches. May be repeated up to a total of six semester hours provided the topics differ.

Class Level Restriction: Junior and Senior only.

ARTH 449 Capstone Proposal 1.0 SH []

This seminar course prepares students to write their capstone. Students research possible topics and create a reading list in order to develop a written proposal for their capstones.

Class Level Restriction: Junior and Senior only.

ARTH 450 Capstone 3.0 SH []

This Capstone course involves guided research, writing, and discussion with the faculty member of record, and should culminate in a Capstone research paper of 30 or more pages, accompanied by an annotated bibliography.

Prerequisite: ARTH 449.

Class Level Restriction: Senior only.