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The University of Manchester

Art History & Visual Studies
Newsletter: Spring 2017

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UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER

Introduction

Welcome to the Art History and Visual Studies Spring 2017 newsletter!

Our department is packed with world-class researchers, supportive lecturers, and talented students, all of whom are passionate about Art History. The current Research Excellence Framework (a UK-wide benchmark for research quality) placed us in the top three Art History Departments in the UK, and we achieved a 92% student satisfaction rating in the last National Student Survey. This edition of our newsletter is focused on our research, our events, but most of all our students.

If you have any questions please do get in touch — Dr Colin Trodd, Senior Lecturer and Admissions in Art History & Visual Studies (collin.trodd@manchester.ac.uk).

Perspectives: First Year

Rachel Hughes discusses her first few months in Manchester:

“My first semester as an Art History student has been an experience. Starting university was slightly nerve wracking, weaving your way across campus while being bombarded with thousands of flyers and freebies, all the time trying to figure out where your meant to be. However, Welcome Week was a great introduction to university life; I met lots of new people and discovered what courses I’d be taking. The relaxed schedule allowed plenty of free time to explore Manchester and all the art galleries; which gave us a taste of what lay ahead on the course.

Admittedly, at first the prospect of essays and presentations left me panic-stricken, but the Art History lecturers were always on hand to give guidance and reassurance. As for the degree itself, the subjects are so diverse, ranging from prehistoric sculpture to contemporary photography: no stone is left unturned and learning goes well beyond sitting taking notes! From a curator’s tour around the Whitworth, to an evening lecture with the artist Alex Hartley, to weekly seminars in the phenomenal Manchester Art Gallery. Fortunately my timetable left me with two hours between lectures on a Tuesday, providing the perfect opportunity to attend the Whitworth’s Tuesday Talks, an extraordinary opportunity to hear leading figures in the art world explore contemporary art. For those, like me, already thinking about a future in the arts sector, the University offered the chance to attend the AAH (Association of Art Historians) careers day, a golden opportunity to hear from a wide range of speakers with experience in areas such as curatorship, conservation, arts journalism, gallery marketing, museum education and research.

Overall the first semester has been an amazing learning curve brimming with opportunities, leaving me excited by the prospect of what the rest of my degree holds in store.”



This summer sees the publication of Professor Carol Mavor's new book:

Aurelia: Art and Literature through the Mouth of the Fairy Tale

Reaktion Books, June 2017

256 pages | 140 colour plates

In eighteenth-century London butterfly collectors weren't known as lepidopterists they were the Society of Aurelians, employing an old term that refers to that mysterious cask where beauty is divined: the chrysalis. As a twenty-first-century Aurelian, Carol Mavor moves through the enchanted woods and flowered fields of our fairy-tale-telling history in pursuit of our most intricately laced and resplendently clad stories, in turn showing us how deeply fantasy, myth, nursery rhyme and dream have influenced our wider art and culture. Mavor reawakens us with new insights through the stories that we have known since childhood. For example, when Alice stumbles upon a Wonderland cake marked 'Eat me', or when the witch dangerously lures in Hansel and Gretel with her delicious gingerbread house, Mavor uncovers eating as curious and obsessional. Yet, she also unearths magical enchantment in more surprising places. She discovers a tragic candyland in the poetry of 1950s genius child-poet Minou Drouet. She showcases a subterranean fairy tale from the Ice Age in the cave paintings of Lascaux. She shows how the brown fairies that flit among the poems of Langston Hughes become a lesson in civil rights. And, perhaps most dramatically, she holds aloft Miwa Yanagi's photograph of Little Red Riding Hood and her grandmother embracing within the cut-open belly of the wolf as a grisly allegorical work commemorating the victims of Hiroshima. With the haunting, melancholic rhythm of nursery rhymes, Mavor reads us the world of the fairy tale as our own world, full of trouble and dangers, but yet also full of heroes and magic, showing us where fantasy, literature and our own social and political histories meet in the depths of our shared imagination.



Internships: The Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice



Each year, two of our second-year students are awarded summer internships at The Peggy Guggenheim Collection, the world-famous gallery of modern art in Venice. Miriam and Florence talk about their experience:

Miriam Dafydd

“When reflecting upon my time at the Peggy Guggenheim Collection (PGC), I find the need to pinch myself in disbelief at the opportunities offered to myself and the other interns. For a whole month, I had the pleasure of being greeted each day by the works of Jackson Pollock, Picasso, Braque and Kandinsky, each becoming familiar friends by my last day there. Interns are given a great deal of responsibility and respect at the PGC. We were responsible for preparing the gallery to receive hundreds of visitors, and to be its public representatives. Each morning, we would complete tasks such as cleaning the gallery’s sculpture garden, or scrubbing works by Jean Arp and Henry Moore. We were also given the task of providing talks for visitors, something that at first seemed daunting, but soon became easy. On our days off, we made the most of living in beautiful Venice. There were organised trips to Padua, as well as Palazzo Labia to see its extraordinary seventeenth-century frescoes, and the Palazzo Cini which is full of splendid medieval altarpieces collected by the former owner.”

Florence Bradley

“I would highly recommend applying to the Peggy Guggenheim Internship to anyone studying Art History, regardless of whether or not they are considering pursuing a career working in a museum environment. The internship provides you with invaluable insight into how a private museum functions, both through lessons from the museum’s director and through the extensive time that you yourself have to observe the way the public, the staff and the artworks all interact within a museum space. One of the things that I wasn’t expecting, which became one of the most valuable things about the internship, was that you get to work and socialise with a hugely diversified group of interns who come from all over the world.”



New Exhibitions

In 2016, Dr Ed Wouk, Lecturer in Art History and Visual Studies, curated a ground breaking exhibition at the University's Whitworth Art Gallery.

Marcantonio Raimondi and Raphael

Whitworth Art Gallery

30 September 2016 – 23 April 2017

Marcantonio Raimondi and Raphael features the work of one of the radical originators and innovators of the European tradition of printmaking, Marcantonio Raimondi (c. 1480-c. 1534). Marcantonio was one of the leading printmakers of the Italian Renaissance and is best known for his groundbreaking collaboration with the Renaissance artist Raphael. This is the first Marcantonio Raimondi exhibition for thirty-five years and the first ever in the UK.

Marcantonio's varied activities as a printmaker ranged from working with a circle of poets and scholars in his native Bologna, to being involved in one of the earliest intellectual property disputes (with his famous German contemporary, Albrecht Dürer), through to his close collaboration in Rome with Raphael that resulted in some of the most important and influential images in Western art. Later, he was sent to prison for making prints after drawings by Giulio Romano's series of erotic paintings, simply known as *I Modi* (*The Positions*).

Showcasing the world-class collections of Marcantonio's work at The University of Manchester, housed both at the Whitworth and The John Rylands Library, the exhibition will also feature loans of outstanding prints by Marcantonio and unique drawings by Raphael from major collections, including the Royal Collection; British Museum; V&A; Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge; Ashmolean Museum, Oxford; Stanford University, USA; Leeds Art Gallery; and Liverpool Libraries.

Manchester University Press will be publishing an extensively illustrated catalogue to accompany the exhibition. Dr

Ed Wouk, the co-curator explained how students were able to get involved with the project: "The Art History and Visual Studies students who took my 'Renaissance Print Cultures' module in 2016 have become indispensable partners in the endeavour, contributing to planning the display and writing entries for the catalogue. They will all finish their degrees at Manchester with gallery experience and as published authors with a major academic press."

Marcantonio Raimondi, Raphael
and the Image Multiplied

*"This astonishing collection
of works is a must-see"*

Laura Joyce



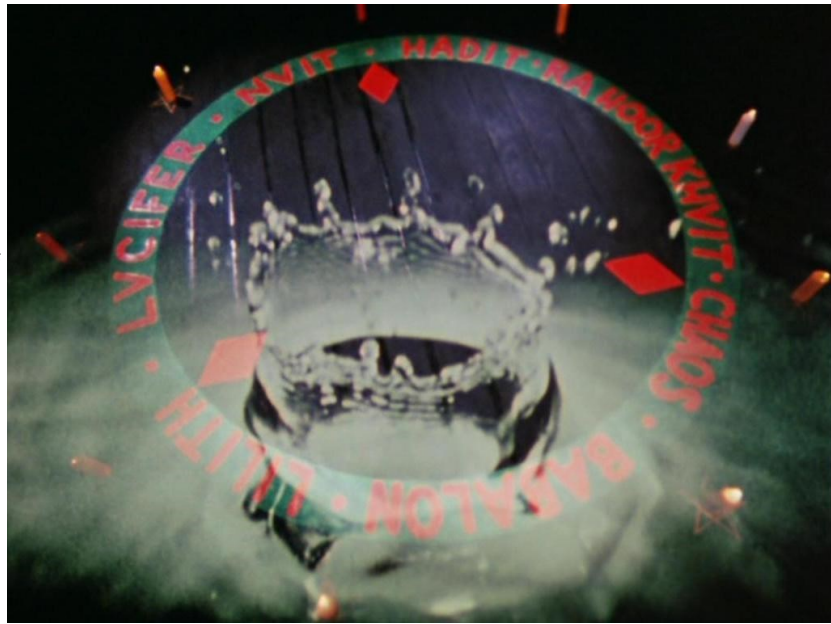
New Courses

We have some fantastic new courses running in 2016/17. Here is a small sample:

Magic in Modern and Contemporary Art: Dr Charlie Miller

Western modernity has understood itself as a process of disenchantment, excluding magic as pre-modern, marginal and irrational. Yet magic has always haunted modernity, not least in the domain of art. In this course, by magic I generally mean 'real' magic – shamanism and occultism, say – rather than secular or stage magic, although this is not a hard and fast distinction. In our work together we will track the problem of magic from its classic formulations in nineteenth-century anthropology and sociology, through modernist occultism and primitivism, to surrealism, and the postwar American counterculture. We will interrogate the turn to magic in contemporary art, and consider the politics of enchantment. Artists we look at might include: Pablo Picasso, Max Ernst, Ithell Colquhoun, Maya Deren, Kenneth Anger, Susan Hiller, Tony Oursler, Marina Abramovic.

(From Kenneth Anger's "Lucifer Rising" 1972)



Art After Modernism: Approaching Contemporary Art Since the 1960s:

Dr Luke Skrebowski:

This course examines major developments in artistic practice and theory from the mid-1960s up to the present day, situating them in their social, political and economic context. It considers art produced after the exhaustion of modernism and the failure of the (neo-)avant-garde. This period is characterised by the disappearance of conventional historical movements and the emergence of looser categories of practice such as Performance, Installation, Video and Relational art. The course compares and contrasts the earlier discourse of "the postmodern"

and the more recent discourse of "the contemporary" as accounts of art after modernism. Particular attention is paid to the multifarious, increasingly globalised nature of art since the 1960s and the methodological challenges this presents to the discipline.

(Liam Gillick, *The commune itself becomes a super state*, 2007)





Contacts

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degree programme, please contact:

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