

The background of the entire page is a reproduction of Rembrandt's painting 'Old Man in an Armchair' (1653). It depicts an elderly man with a long white beard, wearing a dark red robe, sitting in a wooden armchair. He is resting his head on his right hand, looking down with a somber expression. The lighting is dramatic, coming from the left, highlighting his face and hand against a dark, shadowy background.

MANCHESTER
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The University of Manchester

Art History & Visual Studies Newsletter: No. 6

Rembrandt? *Old Man in an Armchair*, 1653?

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UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER

Introduction

Welcome to the Art History and Visual Studies Newsletter!

This pocket-sized Art History Newsletter has been devised to offer a view on some of the many wonderful courses we'll be teaching on our undergraduate programme in 2017/18, as well as review some of the more interesting exhibitions and displays at leading art galleries in London and elsewhere.

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

Spotlight: New Course for Spring 2018

Spring 2018 sees a new course enter our program, as Dr Luke Uglow teaches the art of connoisseurship, and why it matters more than ever!

Connoisseurship: The Theory and Practice of Attribution

This course provides instruction in the theory and practice of connoisseurship, in the close study of style and technique with the aim of identifying authorship. Focused on paintings from the 16th to the 19th century, the discussion will concentrate on the key issues of attribution and dating. By foregrounding the physical object themselves this course will evaluate the oeuvre artists such as Leonardo, Rembrandt and Canaletto, and explores the academic and commercial function of connoisseurship. It will also review the history of connoisseurs and connoisseurship, investigating key figures such Jonathan Richardson and Giovanni Morelli, and debating important methodological problems such as judging quality and pecuniary value, science versus sensibility, or the impact of technology on our knowledge and understanding of paintings and their authors. Overall, the course aims to prepare students for careers working with old master paintings within commercial and public galleries, private collections and auction houses.

Leonardo da Vinci? 1490? (Private Collection)



We're already looking forward to the new academic year, so here's an overview of some of the research-led courses being taught by our world-leading academics:

Dr Charlie Miller: Magic in Modern and Contemporary Art

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)

Dr Luke Skrebowski:

Art After Modernism: Approaching Contemporary Art Since the 1960s

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)



Dr Ed Wouk: The Global Renaissance

This module explores the 'Global Renaissance', focusing on Europe's relations with Latin America, Africa, Asia, and the Middle East in the early era of global expansion and colonization. It will take into consideration the vast amount of recent literature on cross-cultural exchange in the 15th and 16th centuries, and will also cover some 17th century topics. The unit explores what the visual arts and material culture as a whole can tell us about the mobility of ideas, the growth of global trade, and cultural/religious conflict in this era of increasing internationalism. We consider these issues primarily from the European perception of an expanding world. The theme of globalism is addressed through the lens of painting, sculpture, and architecture, as well as maps, textiles, and ceramics. Extensive consideration is given to the medium of print and its role in shaping cultural encounters.

Professor Carol Mavor: Fairy Tales and Other Utopias in Modern Art

Fairy tale readings will range from the stories of the Brothers Grimm to Lewis Carroll's Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass to J.M. Barrie's Peter Pan to Hans Christian Andersen's tales of magic and morality. Visually, students will analyze photographs taken by Carroll and Barrie and the paper cut-outs constructed by Andersen, as well as a range of modern and contemporary artists who have been drawn to the fairy tale, including: Joseph Cornell, Jim Dine, Walt Disney, Bernard Faucon, Chris Marker, Ron Mueck, Hagop Sandaldjian, Kiki Smith and Miwa Yanagi



Collecting, Museums, Display:

The Afterlife of Objects

This course considers the role played by collecting and museums - the 'life' of artworks and other objects after their physical production - in the organisation of the experience and the understanding of art and material culture. It looks at the institutional, social and cultural values associated with the public visibility of individual objects as well as their definition within larger systems of display. As such, the course is both issue-based and site- or case-study specific. It will provide some grounding in the history of collecting and the museum, as well as in contemporary debates about the function of the art object in the contemporary museum. It looks at how such matters have been tackled by a range of theorists. Attention will be given to the response by different art museums to the development of new means of displaying objects and relations between objects through the formation of the Internet. The lectures will be divided into four thematic sections (Collecting, Display, Space/Site and Beyond the Institution) and the seminars will each mirror these themes.

Dr Cordelia Warr: Dress and Adornment in Renaissance Italy

This course investigates the visual culture of clothing and adornment in renaissance Italy. The study of dress has been described as 'hybrid'. Daniel Roche, in his influential *The Culture of Clothing: Dress and Fashion in the 'ancien régime'* (Cambridge, 1994) put forward five headings under which dress could be interrogated: the artefact, textiles, pictorial representation, social and economic sources, and philological sources. Lou Taylor's *The Study of Dress History* (Manchester, 2002) also sought to look at dress through a number of lenses, including artefact-based approaches, ethnographical approaches and those using oral history, social and economic history, and material culture, as well as the use of visual and literary sources.

Exhibitions: Summer 2017

OK, summer is here, so here is a pocket sized review of some the best events in the region – and beyond! Nonetheless, it gives you an opportunity to find out more about artists and topics you might be interested in as you prepare to study at university. As always, look online for further details concerning the events covered in this Newsletter.

Wyndham Lewis: Life, Art and War

The iconoclastic artists and writer (and founder of Vorticism) gets his first big UK show in 30 years. Best seen in tandem with Tate Liverpool show noted below.
Until 1 January, Imperial War Museum North

Mucha: In Quest of Beauty

The soul artist of the Slavs gets a mega show to himself. The Beatles loved his reworked pastorals, but will this event include designs from *The Age of Wisdom*, which looks like a 'lost' Fall album cover? Why not find out.
Until 29 October, Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool.

Portraying a Nation: Germany 1919-1933

Important, timely and spooky double exhibition of works by Otto Dix and August Sander, two of the most important commentators on German culture prior to WW11.

Until 15 October, Tate Liverpool.

Joseph Beuys

The wax man cometh... again. Overview of the once and future king of the Post-War German art scene.

Until 11 August, Waddington, London.

Liverpool(e): Mover, Shaker, Architectural Risk-Taker

Cracking display of the history of Liverpool's unbuilt civic projects, including rival designs for the world-famous cathedrals.

Until 9 September, RIBA North, Liverpool.



True Faith Joy Division: the dark-side of the Beatles/ Smiths/ Happy Mondays? Manchester's fabled quartet get a well-earned retrospective which includes a wonderful range of designs and artworks.

Until 3 September, Manchester Art Gallery.

Dreamers Awake This show combines women surrealists from the 1930s, such as Carrington, Cahun, and contemporary artists, including Emin and Lucas.

Until 17 September, White Cube, London

True to Life: British Realist Painters of the 1920s and 1930s High Society frozen in marmoreal form: strange and disturbing visions of a lost Britain.

Until 29 October, Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh.

Douglas Gordon The William Blake-lover has mind-melded his mind forged manacles with James Hogg and Robert Louis Stevenson; now Robbie Burns is the grabbed man.

Until 29 October, Scottish National Portrait Gallery Edinburgh.

Soul of a Nation Wide-ranging and ground-breaking exhibition of art inspired by the Civil Rights Movement in 60s America.

Until 22 October, Tate Modern, London.

Matisse in the Studio Book your inch of floor space at the mega show of the summer- and autumn!

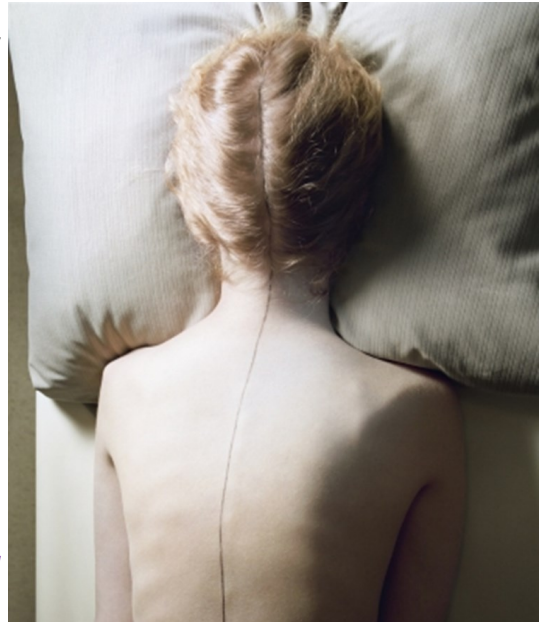
Until 12 November, Royal Academy, London

Chris Ofili: Weaving Magic: See this well-received show from the man who continues to believe in the magic of figuration.

Until 28 August National Gallery, London

Watts 200: Colour. Cosmos. Celebrity. G. F. Watts: England's Michelangelo? President Obama's favourite artist is the subject of a one-off programme of exhibitions and events celebrating his life and times.

Throughout 2017. Watts Gallery Compton.





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