Program in Art History at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

Why are the objects that we call "works of art" made? Who makes them? Who sees them? What functions do they serve? What kinds of meaning have they offered to viewers in the past? What kinds of meaning can they have for us now? Questions like these are central to the study of art history.

The University of Illinois offers two distinct majors in the History of Art. Art History majors enrolled in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences follow a curriculum that emphasizes studies of diverse visual traditions in academic classes that stress writing and research skills. These students receive a BA (Bachelor of Arts) degree. The Art History majors in the College of Fine and Applied Arts combine historical academic courses with studio and design courses in a curriculum that includes experience in making art along with the study of its histories. These students receive a BFA (Bachelor of Fine Arts) degree. All of the art history classes include students from both degree tracks, so you will get to know students with a wide range of passions and interests – passions for seeing and thinking like an artist; passions for understanding art as an aspect of history and culture.

The faculty of the Art History Program are active scholars who are internationally recognized experts in their fields offering courses on topics including the arts of ancient Greece, Imperial China, medieval and renaissance Europe, and modern and contemporary Africa and the Americas. Your course of study will include small seminars where you might help design an exhibition for the university art museum, or research a fifteenth-century manuscript in the University Library Rare Books Collection. In all of your courses you will work with faculty who are committed to helping you develop skills in visual analysis, critical thinking, and effective writing.

Studying art history can lead to careers in museums and galleries, in education, art librarianship, and the management of visual resources for universities and arts institutions.

The Art History Program is supported by a range of resources at the university including:

- **The University Library**, the largest public university library in the U.S., includes many branch libraries in specific subjects such as History and Philosophy, Modern Languages, Education and Social Sciences.
- **The Ricker Library of Art and Architecture** is a branch of the University Library, and its collection includes more than 120,000 books, 33,000 serials, and a wide selection of videos.
- **The Manuscript and Rare Book Collection**, also part of the University Library, includes original illustrated books and rare artists’ editions of books from the fifteenth through twentieth centuries.
- **The Krannert Art Museum** has a permanent collection of over 8,000 works of art from all areas of the world and hosts an ongoing schedule of rotating exhibitions.
- **The Spurlock Museum** is an ethnographic museum with a diverse array of functional and art objects that represent past and present cultures from around the globe.