

# Department of Art and Art History

*University of Colorado at Boulder*

MA in Art History Program

Graduate Student Handbook

University of Colorado at Boulder  
Department of Art and Art History  
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## **Preface**

This handbook is meant to explain, in detail, the information needed to be successful in the MA Program in Art History at CU Boulder. While this handbook is meant to be all-inclusive, it is not a substitute for all information at the Graduate School/University level and it is strongly encouraged to maintain a high level of communication with faculty and the Art History Graduate Coordinator.

Policies and regulations of the University of Colorado at Boulder can be found at: <http://www.colorado.edu/policies>

# 1. Requirements

The Department of Art History offers a free standing MA in Art History. An M.A. degree must be completed within 4 years of beginning coursework in the graduate program (Graduate School requirement). **However, M.A. students in the Department of Art and Art History are expected to complete their coursework and defend their theses within two years. These requirements pertain only to the MA degree in Art History. Students pursuing the BA/MA MA/MBA or MS will not follow the requirements outlined below.**

## MA in Art History Course Requirements

- **A minimum of 30 semester hours must be completed, of which 21 must be completed in residence on the Boulder campus.**

### Required Courses:

- Theories of Art History, (ARTH 6929), must be taken during the first semester. This course may be taken twice for up to 6 credit hours.
- At least one 3-credit 5000 or 6000 level course in four of the following areas of art history: Medieval Art; Early Modern/Renaissance Art; Art of the Americas; Asian Art; Modern Art; Contemporary Art; Critical Theory/Museology. When available, ancient art may constitute an area.
- At least one 3-credit 3000 level or above course in a department outside of the Department of Art and Art History which supplements the Major or Minor area of specialization.
- M.A. Thesis (ARTH 6959): 4-6 credit hours.
- Under special circumstances, a project may replace the Thesis.

### Restrictions:

- No more than 9 hours of independent study credit may be applied toward the M.A.
- Pass/Fail courses do not count toward the M.A.
- ARTH 5087 does not count toward the M.A.
- Students are encouraged to attend undergraduate lecture courses to prepare themselves for graduate seminars and for the comprehensive exam.

## **MA in Art History Language Requirement**

All Programs in the Department of Art History require proficiency in languages relevant to the field of study. Students should consult with their advisor regarding the language required for their field at the beginning of their first year.

All M.A. students must demonstrate proficiency in one foreign language during their first year of the program. Language exam structure may vary based on the requirements of the faculty member supervising the test.

- Departmental Language Exam tests reading proficiency in the following languages: French, German, Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese.
- Generally, a faculty member chooses reading selections from various subjects that are deemed appropriate. With the aid of a dictionary, students are expected to complete a translation of the text presented for testing. The exam is graded by a faculty member.
- Students do not need to pass a reading language exam if they have previously and satisfactorily completed coursework with a grade of B or higher equal to three progressive semesters at the college level.

## **First Year Review**

- During the last two weeks of April, students are required to hold a 1-hour meeting chaired by the prospective Thesis Advisor and 1 or 2 other faculty members with whom the student has taken courses. The first year review focuses on the student's ability to continue in the program, and preparation for the Comprehensive Exam as well as selection of a Thesis topic.
- Students are responsible for organizing and scheduling the First Year Review meeting.
- Students should request the First Year Review Form from the Graduate Program Coordinator or from the department Website. The form should be signed by faculty present at the Review and returned to the Graduate Coordinator.
- If student coursework and performance is found to be unsatisfactory during the First Year Review, faculty will vote on student continuance in the M.A. Program. Students may be asked to leave the program at the culmination of the First Year Review. Students have the right to appeal this decision by submitting a petition to the faculty. The decision of the Art History faculty is final.

## Comprehensive Exam

The Comprehensive Exam is given to measure the graduate student's knowledge of art history at the M.A. level. It consists of questions, developed by the student with their advisor, pertinent to the student's **major** and **minor** areas of study.

- Students should be prepared to take the exam in the fall of their second year in the program, the semester before beginning thesis hours.
- Students should work with two separate faculty, a major and a minor advisor, to develop **3 questions with separate bibliography for the major exam and 2 questions with separate bibliography for the minor exam.**
- Students will arrange the date of the exam with the major and minor advisor.
- Students must pass the exam in order to register for thesis hours.
- **The exam will consist of a choice of two questions developed in the major (a two hour essay) and a choice of two questions developed in the minor (a 90-minute essay).**
- It is the responsibility of the examinee to arrange a space for the exam.
- The use of books, notes, electronic aids (other than an approved computer), or other aids is prohibited during the examination.
- One week prior to the examination, the major advisor submits a list of questions to the Graduate Coordinator.
- On the day of the examination, the examinee picks up these questions in a sealed envelope from the Graduate Coordinator.
- The order of the examination (e.g., major essay first, minor essay second) is at the discretion of the examinee.
- Examinees may take an hour break between the two essay questions. A sample sequence would be: an examinee opens the major essay question envelope and writes an essay for two hours; the examinee takes a break for one hour; the examinee returns from break, opens the minor question envelope, and then answers that question for 90 minutes.
- If the examinee desires to type her/his essay questions, rather than write them in longhand, arrangements must be made with the Visual Resource Center to borrow one of their computers. Internet access will be blocked on these computers during the examination period. At the end of the exam period, the student will upload essay questions onto a flash drive that is provided by major advisor.
- **Grading:** The major advisor and minor advisor grade their respective portions of the examination. In consultation with one another, the two advisors determine whether the examinee has passed or failed the exam.

## **MA Thesis Requirement**

In consultation with the Thesis Advisor, the student will select, develop and defend an art history thesis.

### **Developing A Thesis:**

Students should begin formulating their thesis topic in the semester prior to the semester in which they intend to begin researching their thesis. The topic should be discussed with the intended advisor and proposed in a **Pre-Thesis Review following successful completion of the Comprehensive Exam**

- Upon initial formulation of the thesis, the student will prepare an abstract of 1-2 typewritten pages as well as a bibliography relevant to the proposed topic and methodology of the thesis.
- Pre-thesis forms may be obtained from the Graduate Program Coordinator or the Website.
- It is the student's responsibility to submit the abstract to the thesis advisor and, upon approval of the primary advisor, to circulate it to the rest of the Thesis Committee.
- All members of the Thesis Committee must sign the Pre-thesis form, thus authorizing the Graduate Program Coordinator to register the student for thesis hours.
- The Pre-Thesis form must be completed before the student can register for thesis hours.

### **Thesis Specifications:**

- demonstrate mastery of the relevant scholarship and original scholarly research and writing at the graduate level in Art History
- The thesis should be based on independent study and analysis
- The thesis should represent 4-6 credit hours.
- In most cases, the thesis will be the equivalent of a 30-50-page paper, exclusive of endnotes, bibliography, and illustrations.
- The Thesis must be submitted in draft form to all members of the Thesis Defense committee at least one week before the Thesis Defense.

### **Thesis Defense:**

- In consultation with the Thesis Advisor, the student will select a thesis committee for the Thesis Defense, an oral examination that consists of not less than 2 members of the art history graduate faculty, including the Thesis Advisor.

- Any changes to the composition of the Thesis Committee after the Pre-thesis Review require a petition to the Associate Chair for Art History followed by a vote by the tenured/tenure track faculty.
- The committee may include more members and graduate faculty outside the Department or outside the University if approved by the Department of Art and Art History.
- The Master Exam Report Form should be submitted to the Graduate Program Coordinator. This form will be forwarded by the Graduate Coordinator to the Graduate School. This form can be found here: <http://cuart.colorado.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/MasterExamReport2013.pdf>
- This form will be signed by the major advisor at the Thesis Defense.
- The Thesis must be written according to the guidelines of the graduate school, outlined in this form: “[Graduate School Thesis Specifications](#)”
- The M.A. Thesis is submitted to the Graduate School in the electronic form specified by the Graduate School, in accordance with the Graduate School’s deadlines ([Electronic Thesis Information](#)). Prior to submission, an appointment with a Graduate School advisor must be made to ensure that all the formal requirements are met. A hard copy of the signature page, complete with the Thesis Committee members’ signatures, is submitted to, and remains in, the Graduate School.

**Submitting the Thesis with the Graduate School:**

- Information regarding Thesis Submission to the Graduate School at the University of Colorado at Boulder can be found at:  
<http://www.colorado.edu/graduateschool/thesis-and-dissertation-specifications>

## Suggested Sequence for Completion of the Program

1<sup>st</sup> Semester: 3 courses

- Theories of Art History (ARTH6929, may be taken twice)
- One or two Graduate seminars
- One elective course, either inside or outside the department

2<sup>nd</sup> Semester: 3 courses

- Two or three Graduate Seminars
- One elective course, either inside or outside the department
- Fulfillment of the Language Requirement.
- First Year Review

Summer Semester:

- Preparation for Comprehensive Exam, with consideration of knowledge required for the thesis.

| 3<sup>rd</sup> Semester: three courses

- Outside department elective (if not completed earlier)
- Comprehensive Exam taken in late August or by mid-semester
- File Pre-Thesis Review
- Pre-Thesis Review
- Approval for thesis hours
- Two to Three Graduate Courses

4<sup>th</sup> Semester: thesis

- Writing of the thesis. Advisable not to take courses during this semester.
- Thesis Defense
- Submission of the Thesis to the Graduate School
- Graduation

## 2. Advising and Registration

Advisors in the Department of Art and Art History are responsible for supervising and approving a student's curriculum while in the program. It is vital for students to communicate with their advisor throughout their time at CU. It is strongly encouraged prior to each registration period that students visit with their advisor to discuss their upcoming course load. Questions about requirements may be addressed to the Director of Graduate Studies for Art History, a Faculty Advisor, the Department's Graduate Program Coordinator, or the Graduate Student Liaison. After successfully completing the First Year Review, the student will choose Major and Minor areas of concentration in art history. Students should have completed coursework in their chosen Major and Minor areas in preparation for their Comprehensive Exam and Thesis, and will work with faculty in these areas chosen areas.

### General Advising Contact information:

#### *Graduate Program Coordinator*

Alexei Bogdanov  
Phone: 303-492-2419  
Email: bogdanov@colorado.edu

#### *Director of Graduate Studies for Art History*

Professor Claire Farago  
Email: farago@colorado.edu

# General Registration Information

## **Enrolling in Courses:**

You can enroll in classes during your assigned enrollment appointment, the schedule adjustment period and the open enrollment period through the add deadline. See the [Add/Drop Calendar](#) for specific dates and deadlines.

## **Viewing Your Enrollment Period:**

Click **Your Enrollment Dates** in MyCUInfo. The **Enrollment Appointments** table lists your appointment begin time, appointment end time and the maximum number of units in which you may enroll. Students who do not register by the third Friday in the fall or spring semester are assessed a \$100 late-registration fee.

## **Adding and Dropping Courses After Registration:**

Students may add and/or drop courses through MyCuInfo, without penalty, during the drop/add period (i.e., at the beginning of each semester). Students will not be charged tuition for courses dropped during this time, and dropped courses do not appear on their transcript. After the last day to add a class in [MyCUInfo](#), all added classes require the instructor's signature on a **Special Action Form** (available at the instructor's home department). Instructors usually only approve an add for students who have been attending regularly and in classes with space available.

## **Leaves of Absence:**

Students are allowed four years to complete the two-year degree program. Students who must interrupt studies for a compelling reason—i.e., a medical condition—may be granted a leave of absence. Information on leaves of absence is available at: <http://www.colorado.edu/registrar/students/withdraw-cu/leave-of-absence>

## **Information for Students with a Tuition Waiver can be found here:**

<http://www.cu.edu/employee-services/benefits/tuition-benefit/boulder>

# 3. Resources

## *Departmental Resources*

**Department Offices:** The Department office is located in room 330 of the Art and Art History building (Visual Arts Complex or VAC). The Graduate Student Office is located in room 309. The Graduate Coordinator is located in room 330B.

**The Visual Resources Center (VRC)** is located in the VAC in room 310. The mission of the VRC is to facilitate access to images, imaging and related information resources for teaching and research in the Department of Art and Art History. The VRC includes slide and flatbed scanning stations. The VRC includes:

- **A departmental image collection**
- **Training and support in digital imaging and related software**
- **Equipment for creative work, and documentation. (including laptops, data projectors, digital SLR cameras, tripods, etc...**
- **A collection of DVDs containing lectures and interviews from the Visiting Artist and Visiting Scholars Programs.**

**Visiting Artist Program** Artists of national and international reputation interact with graduate and advanced undergraduate students and discuss studio work. Artists present lectures during their visit, the lecture is free and open to the public. Graduate students in Art History are encouraged to attend.

**Visiting Scholar Program** This program is organized by the faculty of Art History to focus on the research and insights of individual academic experts representing a range of interests and disciplines. Three to five highly regarded historians and/or critics are invited to speak in a public lecture [where they](#) present current research. These scholars are invited by faculty who are currently teaching graduate seminars, where the Visiting Scholar contributes to the course as the guest speaker for one meeting.

**The CU Art Museum** The Permanent Collection of the CU Art Museum contains over 6000 works of art. The collection includes works from numerous time periods and cultures including ancient Greek pottery, Roman Glass, Iranian pottery, Southwestern and South American Santos, Southeast Asian pottery, African sculpture, Old Master works on paper, British Eighteenth-century prints, nineteenth- and twentieth-century American prints and paintings, Japanese ukiyo-

e prints, nineteenth-century photography, video and new media art. The collection and staff of the Museum are resources available to graduate students.

**Department Galleries** Gallery space is available in the Department for graduate students who wish to curate shows. Exhibition procedure information can be found here: <http://cuart.colorado.edu/resources/exhibition-procedures/>

## Other Campus Resources

**The Dennis Small Cultural Center (DSCC)** exists to serve underrepresented student groups on the CU-Boulder campus by providing programmatic support and a safe space for cultural expression and community gatherings. It serves the campus community as a whole by providing opportunities to enhance cultural awareness and celebrate diversity. The DSCC is committed to facilitating programs and resources that contribute to the intellectual, cultural, social, ethical and personal growth of all students. Their office is located in UMC 457.

**Special Collections** Special Collections houses rare works and contemporary artworks that support teaching and research in the arts, humanities, and sciences. The Collections include rare books, medieval manuscripts, contemporary artists' books, and a signature photo book and photography collection. Special subject collections reflect the interests and research of the CU-Boulder community and the state.

The [SCA Reading Room](#) (Norlin N345) is open to all students, scholars and members of the general public who wish to use our materials. All users must register and show a current photo ID upon their first visit to the reading room. Email [spc@colorado.edu](mailto:spc@colorado.edu) or call 303-492-6144 to schedule an appointment. The reading room is open Monday through Friday from 10am to 4pm. You can also [request copies and scans of materials](#).

**Archives** The Archives of Special Collections contains more than 1500 collections and 50,000 linear feet of materials, including manuscripts, correspondence, files, diaries, photographs, posters, newspapers and published works. Established in 1917, the Archives holds internationally renowned manuscript, photograph, records and media collections relating to Colorado, the Rocky Mountain West and transnational subjects. It also serves as a repository for the records of the University of Colorado Boulder.

**The Alliance for Technology, Learning, and Society** is a radically interdisciplinary research and teaching institute at the University of Colorado Boulder. Dedicated to integrating information technologies into all facets of modern life, ATLAS researchers and educators describe themselves as “dreamers and doers who seek to predict the future by inventing it.” Organized under the College of Engineering and Applied Science, the

| Institute's undergraduate and graduate programs encourage out-of-the-box thinking and creative exploration..

**United Government of Graduate Students (UGGS)** UGGS is the primary advocacy group for graduate and professional students on the CU-Boulder campus. UGGS is committed to enhancing the graduate student experience at the University by interacting with the University administration and the University of Colorado Student Government (CUSG) concerning issues such as financial aid, graduate stipends, health care, tuition and fees and graduate student well-being. Graduate students from each department and program are solicited to serve on the UGGS Assembly, ensuring a diverse and complete representation of the graduate student body.

**Information about other On-Campus Resources including the Gender and Sexuality Center, Career Services, Dining and Housing, CU Nightride, the Recreation Center, the Office of Student Conduct, and the Office of Victims Assistance can be found here: <http://www.colorado.edu/health/health-education/campus-resources>**

## **Boulder and Denver Area Resources**

**Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art** Founded in 1972 by a group of local artists, Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art (BMoCA) is one of Colorado's premier venues for the exploration of contemporary art. Throughout its history, BMoCA has been a vibrant cultural cornerstone in its community. Each year, the museum presents an ambitious exhibition schedule and an innovative series of educational programs for audiences of all ages and interests. By welcoming diverse aesthetics and perspectives, BMoCA provides an open forum for dialog and an investigation of contemporary art through the creative expression of ideas.

**The Denver Art Museum** is an educational, nonprofit resource with collections of ancient and modern art from all cultures around the world. It has extensive collections in European, Asian, African, and American art, with exceptional, mostly unpublished, holdings in Precolumbian and Viceregal Art of the Americas. The Petrie Institute of Western American Art is another important resource of the Museum. The mission of the Denver Art Museum is to enrich the lives of present and future generations through the acquisition, presentation, and preservation of works of art, supported by exemplary scholarship and public programs related to both its permanent collections and to temporary exhibitions presented by the museum.

**The Museum of Contemporary Art Denver (MCA Denver)** explores the art and culture of our time through rotating exhibitions and public educational programs. Featuring regional, national and international artists, MCA Denver offers a wide range of exhibitions promoting creative experimentation with art and ideas. MCA Denver is an

innovative forum for contemporary art that inspires and challenges all audiences, creating understanding and dialog about the art of our time.

**The Clyfford Still Museum** opened in 2011 and is the newest addition to Denver's Cultural Arts District. It located adjacent to the Denver Art Museum in the city's Civic Center Cultural Complex. The Museum is the main repository for the work of Clyfford Still (1904-1980), an artist and teacher associated with the formation of Abstract Expressionism. The Museum was designed to exhibit his paintings and includes an extensive archive available to scholars.

**Kirkland Museum of Fine & Decorative Art** The Museum houses three principal collections: an international decorative arts collection, a regional collection with a focus on Colorado art, and a retrospective of the work of Vance Kirkland (1904-1981).

**The Anschutz Collection** at the American Museum of Western Art. The Museum's mission is to promote the public's understanding and appreciation of art depicting the American West from the early 1800s through the present day.

**Museo de las Americas** is dedicated to the exhibition of Latino art and culture in the American West and offers extensive public programs.

**The Museum of Outdoor Arts**, headquartered in Englewood, is a multifaceted arts organization that offers outdoor and indoor exhibitions.

**The Denver Museum of Nature and Science** offers diverse exhibitions spanning the arts and sciences. Its holding include an extensive collection of Native American art.

**The Denver Center for Performing Arts** is the nation's largest nonprofit theater organization. The venue hosts musicals, opera, plays and more.

**The Art Students League of Denver** is an art school modeled after the Art Students League in New York that provides an inclusive art community where professional artists guide individuals of all abilities to reach their highest potential.

An extensive list of cultural and arts related resources in Boulder can be found here: <http://bcn.boulder.co.us/arts/center.html>

A compilation of Denver area resources and events can be found here: <http://www.denver.org/events/visual-arts>