ART HISTORY - MASTER OF ARTS (MA)

The art history program at CU Boulder gives students an interdisciplinary foundation in the history of art to prepare them for careers as scholars, museum professionals and related creative professions in the history of art. Its main objective — through graduate seminars, teaching opportunities, museum internships and scholarly fieldwork — is to foster critical thinking about contemporary and historical forms of art as well as visual and material culture.

Students develop their specialized interests from a combination of individual mentoring and collaborative approaches to intellectual inquiry. The program offers a supportive environment committed to debate and experimentation applicable to a variety of career choices. Graduates typically regard their two years in the art history master’s program as a formative period of intellectual growth and professional experience.

Our diverse faculty offers a constantly changing curriculum of seminar topics geared to highlight current research, and a strong foundation in critical historiography and contemporary critical theory. Students in our interdisciplinary program also take advantage of exciting course offerings in cultural anthropology, classics, history, a wide range of literature programs, ethnic studies, gender and women’s studies, art practices, and new media.

Our intimate atmosphere offers exceptional opportunities to work with permanent faculty and distinguished art historians from other institutions through our Visiting Scholars program. This longstanding feature of our graduate curriculum brings four to six leading scholars to campus every year to present their current work in a graduate seminar, public lecture and informal events.

Areas of specialization include: medieval art, Renaissance art and art theory, Latin American, Native North American, modern art and architecture, contemporary art and critical theory.

Concurrent Degree Program

BA/MA in Art History

This program is open only to students enrolled in the BA art history degree program at CU Boulder.

It is expected that the BA/MA program be completed within five years. Both degrees, BA and MA, are awarded simultaneously upon meeting all the requirements for each degree. Six credit hours (two courses) may be shared between the two programs:

1. one course outside the Department of Art and Art History at the 3000 level or above
2. ARTH 6929

There is a formal application process with letters of recommendation, statement of intent, transcripts, GRE scores and a writing sample, as required for the two-year MA program. Students must have a minimum overall GPA of 3.00 and a GPA of 3.60 or above in the major of art history at the time of application. They take the GRE and formally apply to the graduate program during the second semester of their third (junior) year and begin taking graduate courses in the first semester of their fourth (senior) year. By the end of the fourth year, students must complete the language requirement of at least three progressive semesters at the college level or above, in a language appropriate to their studies.

During the second semester of their senior year, students should select a thesis advisor from among the art history faculty. This faculty member will direct the student’s thesis and chair the student’s mid-program review committee. Students will be evaluated through a mid-program review during the last two weeks of April of their senior year. This is the equivalent of the first year review in the two-year MA program. It focuses on a review of student course work and performance, on selecting the major and minor areas of study in preparation for the comprehensive exam (see below) and on selection of a thesis topic.

Students will register for thesis hours during the second semester of their fifth year, pending successful completion of the comprehensive exam and approval of their thesis abstract. They will take the comprehensive exam during the first week of the second semester of the fifth year. Upon the successful completion of their comprehensive exam, they will obtain approval of their thesis abstract from their thesis committee (“pre-thesis review”) by the end of the second week of the second semester of their fifth year.

In all other details, the graduate portion of the BA/MA program is identical to the two-year MA program, as stipulated above.

Dual Degree Program

MA/MBA in Art History

To support the university’s mission of advancing knowledge across disciplines, and in recognition that business education and training has relevance to many academic fields, the Leeds School of Business and Department of Art and Art History endorse a dual degree program in which both a Master of Business Administration and a Master of Fine Arts (or Master of Arts in art history) is awarded to those students who satisfy the requirements outlined below. This three-year program offers students the opportunity to earn both degrees together in less time than if the degrees were earned sequentially.

Admissions Process and Degree Requirements

Students must apply to and meet the application requirements for each program separately. Admitted students spend their first year in one of the two programs, the second year in the other program and the third year is a combination of the two. MFA students are required to complete 43 credit hours of MBA course work and 45 credit hours of AAH course work. MA (art history) students are required to complete 43 credit hours of MBA course work and 30 credit hours of art history course work. Both degrees must be awarded simultaneously.

Note: Residents of Western states, including Alaska and Hawaii, may be eligible for in-state tuition for this dual degree program. For more information, visit the “Western Regional Graduate Program” section on the Office of the Registrar’s Exceptions to One-Year Domicile (http://www.colorado.edu/registrar/students/state-residency/domicile-exceptions) webpage.

Requirements

Prerequisites

The following are required for admission to the graduate program:

1. A baccalaureate degree from an approved college with a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.00.
2. A score of 153 or higher on the verbal section and an above-average score (at least 60 percent below) on all other sections of the Graduate Record Examination.
3. A broad general background in history, literature and philosophy.
4. An extensive background in art history.
5. Applicants to the master’s program in art history are asked to write a 750- to 1,000-word essay in Part II, number 6 on the application form. Applicants are also required to provide a writing sample of approximately 10–20 pages. Typically, this is a paper submitted for an undergraduate class.

Advisor
Upon admission, students are assigned a faculty advisor. Students should remain in close contact with the advisor as regards course registration and program requirements. At the end of the second semester of full time study, students should select a thesis advisor (or project advisor) from among the art history faculty.

Course Requirements
The candidate for the MA degree in art history is required to demonstrate an adequate reading knowledge of French, German or another appropriate language before receiving the degree by satisfactory course work equal to three progressive semesters at the college level or above, or by passing an approved language examination. Language examinations may be arranged with one of the art history faculty on an individual basis.

Students are encouraged and expected to attend undergraduate lecture courses as needed to prepare themselves for graduate seminars and for the comprehensive exam.

No more than 9 credit hours of independent study credit may be applied toward the MA degree. A limit of 9 credit hours of transfer credits may be applied toward the MA degree.

Degree Plans
Plan I: Thesis Option
A minimum of 30 credit hours must be completed, of which 21 must be completed in residence on the Boulder campus.

Required Courses
- ARTH 6929 Seminar: Theories of Art History  
  3 credit hours
- ARTH 5949 Visiting Scholars Seminar  
  3 credit hours
- ARTH 6959 Master’s Thesis (Art History)  
  4-6 credit hours

Electives
At least one 3-credit-hour, 5000- or 6000-level course in four of the following areas of art history: medieval, early modern and Renaissance, art of the Americas, Asian art, modern art, contemporary art and critical theory/museology. When available, ancient art may constitute an area.

At least one 3-credit-hour, 3000-level or above course in a department outside the Department of Art and Art History that supplements the major or minor areas of specialization.

Additional courses to meet the 30-credit hour minimum.  
5-3 credit hours

Total Credit Hours  
30 credit hours

1 Must be taken during the first semester, and may be taken twice for up to 6 credit hours.
2 Must be taken during the second semester when offered. Students are encouraged to repeat this course.

Plan II: Project Option
A minimum of 36 credit hours must be completed, of which 21 must be completed in residence on the Boulder campus.

Required Courses
- ARTH 6929 Seminar: Theories of Art History  
  3 credit hours
- ARTH 5949 Visiting Scholars Seminar  
  3 credit hours
- ARTH 6969 Master’s Project (Art History)  
  4-6 credit hours

Electives
At least one 3-credit-hour, 5000- or 6000-level course in four of the following areas of art history: medieval, early modern and Renaissance, art of the Americas, Asian art, modern art, contemporary art and critical theory/museology. When available, ancient art may constitute an area.

At least one 3-credit-hour, 3000-level or above course in a department outside the Department of Art and Art History that supplements the major or minor areas of specialization.

First-Year Review
During the last two weeks of April, students are evaluated during the first-year review. It focuses on a review of student course work and performance, on selecting the major and minor areas of study in preparation for the comprehensive exam (see below) and on selection of a thesis topic, if applicable.

Comprehensive Exam
This exam is given to measure the graduate student’s knowledge of art history at the MA level. It consists of essay questions pertinent to the student’s major and minor areas of study. It is given once per year during the second week of October. The comprehensive exam consists of two essays: a two-hour essay in the major area and a 90-minute essay in the minor area. Students must pass the comprehensive exam in order to be eligible to register for thesis credit hours.

Thesis Abstract (‘pre-thesis review’)
By the end of the semester preceding the student’s thesis semester, the student will prepare an abstract of approximately 1–2 typewritten pages, with attached bibliography, outlining the thesis topic and method of inquiry. The thesis abstract must be approved by the student’s pre-thesis review committee in order for the student to register for thesis hours.

Thesis
This should demonstrate scholarly research and writing in art history, should be based on independent study and analysis and should represent the equivalent of 4–6 credit hours. In most cases, the master’s thesis is the equivalent of a 40–50 page paper, exclusive of endnotes, bibliography and illustrations.

Thesis Defense
In consultation with the thesis advisor, the student will select a thesis committee that consists of not less than three members of the art history graduate faculty, including the thesis advisor. The student will then schedule the thesis defense and prepare all necessary paperwork. The thesis must be submitted to all members of the thesis committee at least one week before the thesis defense. Graduate School guidelines (‘specifications’) must be used to prepare the MA thesis. Upon successful defense, the thesis is submitted to the Graduate School in the electronic form specified by the Graduate School, in accordance with the Graduate School’s deadlines. A hard copy of the signature page, complete with the thesis committee members’ signatures, is submitted to, and remains in, the Graduate School.
Additional courses to meet the 36-credit hour minimum.  11-9
Total Credit Hours            36

1 Must be taken during the first semester, and may be taken twice for up to 6 credit hours.
2 Must be taken during the second semester when offered. Students are encouraged to repeat this course.

**Time Limit**
It is expected that the MA program be completed within two years.