

DEPARTMENT OF ART: ART HISTORY & ART CONSERVATION

Winter Term 2025

ARTH 122/3.0
Curating Art Worlds



CALENDAR DESCRIPTION:

This course introduces students to key "art world" institutions, such as museums, artist-run centres, biennales, and auction houses, by examining their histories, current practices, and future challenges. Using a case study approach, the course provides students with introductory professional skills, concepts and ideas to think and work in a diversity of arts careers while gaining transferable skills.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

What is an "art world"? Is there just one, or are there many? How might you engage with "art worlds" as an audience member, artist, historian, curator, administrator, educator, fundraiser, dealer, board member, or collector? This course prepares you for a career as an arts professional, providing you with tools to understand and demystify "art worlds," introducing you to key challenges and problems facing art institutions today to help you become a more empowered, engaged, and critical thinker.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

A detailed list of readings and requirements will be available during the first class. The course is a lecture course with tutorial sections.

Course Learning Outcomes

In this class, a student will develop the following skills and knowledge:

1. Describe and analyze key art institutions and their distinctive professional practices, including museums, art galleries, artist-run centres, art fairs, art exhibitions, art markets, and art criticism. (Foundational knowledge)
2. Demonstrate intercultural competence and empathy through an analysis of colonial histories and current colonial legacies of "art worlds". Recognize and compare the work of artists, curators, and administrators seeking to decolonize "art worlds". (Caring)
3. Identify the role of art and artists within the institutional structures of "art worlds". (Human dimension)
4. Describe and analyze the histories, current practices, and future challenges of key art institutions, making connections between historical contexts such as colonialism, social and political issues, and geographic locations. (Integration)
5. Develop foundational professional skills that contribute towards a career in the cultural sector, or transferable skills for careers outside the arts, including improving critical thinking, observation / documentation, and writing skills.

Demonstrate critical reading skills by summarizing the core arguments of historical, theoretical, or practical texts. Actively and effectively communicate arguments in writing by crafting short texts on art. (Application)

6. Practice competent and sensitive engagements with museums, galleries or artist-run centres, by visiting them in person in their original locations. (Learning how to learn)