Why GRADUATE STUDIES in ART HISTORY?

The Queen’s Art History program is strongly committed to mentoring and to the training of graduate students in a variety of interdisciplinary approaches, methodologies, and issues, including the technical examination of art, gender studies, critical theory, cultural representation, curatorial studies, and the relationships among art, literature, and science.

The program offers a wide range of courses that delve into case studies relating to broader issues. All Art History courses emphasize visual literacy and the contextual relevance of the discipline within culture and history.

Why QUEEN’S?

The Art History program at Queen’s maintains close ties with the Agnes Etherington Art Centre on campus, which features innovative exhibitions, programs, and high-quality collections encompassing European paintings of the Baroque era, smaller concentrations of the art of Indigenous peoples of North America, decorative arts, costume and heritage quilts of the region. In addition, the gallery holds a fine collection of the art of West and Central Africa.

“Choosing Art History at Queen’s was one of the best decisions I have ever made. Attending Queen’s was a positive and nurturing experience, made possible because of an advisor and faculty members who were active scholars, thoughtful pedagogues and caring mentors.”

– John Potvin, PhD

Program STRUCTURE

PhD (4 years): course work, demonstration of a reading knowledge of language(s) (depending on the topic), field essays and field exams, thesis proposal, thesis.

We encourage you to identify an area of research interest and contact a potential supervisor before applying.

Visit the Art History Department website to read faculty profiles and learn more about faculty members’ research areas. When you find a faculty member with similar research interests to yours, contact him/her and tell them about your interest in graduate work, area of research interest and related experience. The email correspondence is also an opportunity for you to find out if the faculty member is accepting new graduate students to supervise.

RESEARCH Areas

- Medieval art and architecture, neo-Medievalism
- 14th to 18th-century Southern and Central European arts
- 17th-century Dutch and Flemish art
- 19th to 20th century European and Scandinavian art
- History of photography
- Modernism
- Global contemporary art
- Indigenous cultures
- Canadian visual culture
- Global cultural contact
- Technical art history
- History of conservation and cultural heritage preservation
- History of collecting and museums
- Curatorial studies
- Art and medicine

The Queen’s Art History program shares a department with Canada’s only Master’s in Art Conservation programme, and our graduate students have the opportunity to take lecture courses in Art Conservation and work with Art Conservation Faculty. Graduate students in Art History carry out internships locally and abroad, recently at such institutions as the National Gallery of Canada, the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna, the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, and the Louvre in Paris. The program offers opportunities to teach, has an outstanding record of supporting students to win major grants, and offers opportunities to participate in a student-organized peer-reviewed interdisciplinary international conference. Queen’s Art History Ph.D. students have access to generous funding to travel and carry out onsite research.
ACHIEVE YOUR ACADEMIC GOALS

YEAR I
- Key priorities include your relationship with your supervisor, forming your committee, coursework, field exams, and language exams.
- Meet early with your supervisor to set expectations and discuss roles, responsibilities, program requirements, resources, research/occupational goals, timelines, and any required accommodation plans.
- Attend and participate in graduate seminars such as Work in Progress. Look to Student Academic Success Services for a variety of supports.

YEAR II
- Priorities include completing your comprehensive examination and pursuing substantive research.
- Set up regular meetings with your supervisor to discuss progress and obstacles to timely completion.
- Find your way through the academic process with the help of Expanding Horizons and the SGS Habitat.
- Seek experiential/professional development opportunities. Attend or present at a graduate conference such as Context and Meaning.

YEAR III
- Continue to meet regularly with your supervisor, review research progress, and write your dissertation. Check out the SGS Dissertation Boot Camp or Dissertation on the Lake.
- Use conference presentations to create, discuss, and explore ways to disseminate research findings. Learn from the Expanding Horizons Publishing workshop.
- Begin discussion of potential thesis defense examiners.

YEAR IV & TRANSITIONING
- Plan date of thesis submission for examination.
- Present your research to graduate students and faculty or at conferences and work with supervisor to prepare for defense.
- Review submission for examination guidelines. Secure necessary oral defense accommodations.
- Discuss career pathways, references letters, and publication options with your supervisor.

WHAT WILL I LEARN?
A graduate degree in Art History can equip you with valuable and versatile skills, such as:
- Knowledge and technical skills
- Effective communication skills
- In multiple forms for diverse audiences
- Information management:
  - Prioritize, organize and synthesize large amounts of data
  - Time management:
    - Meet deadlines and manage responsibilities despite competing demands
- Project management:
  - Develop ideas, gather information, analyze, critically appraise findings, draw and act on conclusions
- Creativity and innovation
- Perseverance
- Independence and experience as a collaborative worker
- Awareness, an understanding of sound ethical practices, social responsibility, responsible research and cultural sensitivity
- Professionalism in all aspects of work, research, and interactions
- Leadership: initiative and vision leading people and discussion

WHERE CAN I GO?
A PhD degree in Art History can take your career in many directions. Our PhD students are equipped with a strong foundation for careers in:
- Academia and teaching
- Museum, curatorial and cultural policy positions
- Writing and publishing
- Commercial galleries
- Auction houses
- Archives
- Taking time to explore career options, build experience, and network can help you have a smooth transition to the world of work after graduation.

Visit careers.queensu.ca/gradmaps for the online version with links!
Applications FAQs

What do I need to know to APPLY?

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS
- MA in Art History or a related discipline with an A average in the primary courses.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS
- Curriculum vitae
- Writing sample
- Statement of research interest
- If English is not a native language, prospective students must meet the English language proficiency requirements in writing, speaking, reading, and listening. The School of Graduate Studies requires the following minimum scores: TOEFL (paper-based): 550, (2) TOEFL iBT: Writing (24/30); Speaking (22/30); Reading (22/30); Listening (20/30), for a total of 88/120 (applicants must have the minimum score in each test as well as the minimum overall score), or (3) IELTS: 7.0 (academic module overall band score), or (4) PTE Academics: 65.

KEY DATES & DEADLINES
- Application due: January 10th.
- Notification of acceptance: mid-March.

Before you start your application, please review the Graduate studies application process.

What about FUNDING?

The minimum funding guarantee for Art History PhD students is $18,000 per year, throughout years 1-4. In recent years, doctoral students who do not hold a major external grant have received $20,000-$24,000/year for 4 years. The funding package may be comprised of Queen’s Graduate Awards, Teaching Assistantships, and named internal Fellowships. Many doctoral students in their 3rd year are eligible for a Bader Fellowship, worth up to $30,000.

We encourage all students to apply for external funding from OGS, SSHRC and other sources. Queen’s will automatically issue a $10,000 award to incoming PhD students who have won federal government tri-council awards. For more information, see the School of Graduate Studies’ information on awards and scholarships.

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