Chapman University Department of Art
presents

Bachelor of Arts
Art History
Senior Thesis
Presentations

Meet the Art Historians
Kristi Collacott  Lauren Luchowski
Department of Art Mission Statement

The Mission of the Department of Art at Chapman University is to offer a comprehensive education that develops the technical, perceptual, theoretical, historical and critical expertise needed for successful careers in visual art, graphic design and art history. The department supports artists, designers, and scholars within a rigorous liberal arts environment that enriches the human mind and spirit. We foster the artistic and academic growth necessary to encourage lifelong study and practice of the arts through a curriculum that contains strong foundation and history components as a basis for continued innovations in contemporary practice and scholarship.

Art History Program

Art History majors work with their faculty advisor to design a program of study that reflects their personal and professional interests and inclinations. They have the opportunity to work closely with faculty specializing in the fields of Russian and Soviet art and design, Italian Renaissance art, and European and American modernism. After completing 18 credits of lower-division course work, students select one course in each of three areas (Ancient, Early Modern, and Modern/Contemporary Art) as the basis for developing a cluster of upper-division courses. The degree's capstone course is the Senior Thesis. Graduates may pursue a wide range of arts-related professions or go on to further training at the graduate level.
Purpose of Senior Thesis

The Senior Thesis is a self-directed research project that formulates an original argument. In their last year, students work closely with two faculty members of their choice to develop an avenue of inquiry with the goal of yielding original insight. The Senior Thesis is a fundamental step in the students' scholarly growth and vital for graduate school applications.
Kristi Collacott

Kristi started drawing when she was 3 after her father took her to Corona del Mar; she came home and drew the sailboat she'd seen. The picture is still hanging in his office twenty-some years later. In kindergarten, Kristi won the award for "Most Artistic," which in her book tops the Pulitzer Prize. All through grade school she was a student at The Art House in Fullerton under the guidance of Cherene Raphael, and attended the Orange County High School of the Arts the first two years of high school. Currently, Kristi is completing a BFA in Studio Art and a BA in Art History at Chapman University in Orange, California. Graduation is quickly approaching in May of 2009.

Moral Voyeurism is a continuation of the discussion begun in 2001 by art historian, Marie't Westermann. In her essay, "Costly and Curious, Full of Pleasure and Home Contentment: Making Home in the Dutch Republic," she introduces the striking similarities in design principles and applications between seventeenth century Dutch genre painting and contemporary interior design catalogues such as Crate and Barrel and Restoration Hardware. Westermann argues that these visual parallels expressed a similar middle-class ideology of family and privacy, stressing the value both periods placed on house ownership and interior adornment. Despite the gap in time and difference in visual media, she suggests, the investment in the domestic interior space reveals a similar psychological and economic motivation.

Serving as a public view into the private domestic realm, genre paintings were visual propaganda for the moral ideal of Dutch culture, aesthetic instructionals of virtue, conditioning the viewer's reading and interpretation of the represented domestic space as well as the domestic realm he or she inhabited. Westermann's assessment ends however, before it can be asked how the visual instruction imbedded in Dutch genre paintings might still be operating on the reader of today's home journal. Is the Dutch construct of visual discourse between subject and viewer still active in the voyeuristic examination of domestic space today? Do home journals invite a similar moral judgment of one's home based on aesthetics? Most importantly, how do these habits affect the contemporary viewer's thoughts regarding their own domestic realm and domestic space in general?

Building on Westermann's analysis, this paper argues a visual and conceptual connection between the public examination of the private realm and moralistic propaganda seen in Dutch genre painting and the "moral voyeurism" that continues to operate in today's home design publications. Both kinds of imagery reveal a social domestic cleanliness and order and it is the viewer of the image who is ultimately affected. Comparing their own homes with the aesthetic ideal found in the glossy print form of a magazine page, viewers can only come to the conclusion that their own space will almost always fall short. This leads them to the conclusion that home in the ideal form can only be found elsewhere, as in the pages of a magazine, and must be sought out through consumption. This leaves the distressed viewer with the morally driven desire to continue to search out and acquire the ideal, which continues the cycle. Like the moralizing commentaries familiar to the Dutch viewer from emblem books, the texts and captions that accompany the carefully orchestrated photo essays on ideal homes reinforce these visual messages.
Lauren Zuchowski

Lauren Zuchowski is graduating in May 2009 with a BA in Art History degree. Her research interests are the relationship between art and public policy with a focus on contemporary art. She plans on finding a job in the art world and then continuing on to graduate school within the next few years.

This thesis addresses censorship in contemporary art and whether or not the Nazi’s Entartete Kunst (Degenerate Art) Exhibition of 1937 is the ultimate example of censorship. Entartete Kunst has become the ultimate example of iconoclasm in the visual arts and many cases of censorship are compared with it.

This research examines whether or not a correlation exists between the Nazi censorship of modernist artists in the 1930s and the more recent examples in contemporary art. More specifically, the parallels between Entartete Kunst and the 1999 Sensation exhibition at The Brooklyn Museum of Art are critically investigated to show that such aggressive attempts at censorship depend very little on public reception and entirely on political agendas.

Chris Ofili, Holy Virgin Mary, 1996
For more information, please contact us at guggenheimgallery@chapman.edu 714-997-6729. The gallery is open Monday-Thursday from noon-5 pm.