

UBC Department of Art History, Visual Art & Theory

Master of Arts in Art History



We acknowledge that the UBC Vancouver campus is situated on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the x̣ʷməθkʷəỵəm (Musqueam).

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Artist Emelina Soares installing her sand carpet piece at the AHVA Gallery in the Audain Art Centre, for the 41st annual graduate symposium exhibition, *Tracing Erasure* (2018).

Program Overview

The Master of Arts in Art History program is a two-year thesis program, designed to instruct students in methods of research and presentation of scholarly materials.

All of our programs are designed to provide a grounding in a broadly based and methodologically diverse art history. The program offers advanced study of art history in areas of European and North American art, Asian art, and the indigenous arts of the Americas leading to the Master of Arts (MA) (Art History).

Admissions

Applicants for the MA in art history program normally have preparation in the discipline equivalent to the undergraduate major in art history at UBC. This translates into a minimum of ten courses (30 credits) in art history at the third- and fourth- year levels. It is recommended that these courses represent a significant range of historical periods and/or geographic areas. An A mark must have been earned in at least 12 credits, with at least a high B standing in the remainder, for an overall average of not less than B+.

In addition, applicants must also satisfy the Faculty of Graduate Studies minimum admission requirements. As per the Faculty of Graduate Studies eligibility, the master's degree at UBC requires a bachelor's degree (or honours bachelor's degree) requiring four years of study with a B+ average in third- and fourth-year- level coursework. From Quebec, a three-year bachelor's degree is acceptable provided the Diplôme d'Études Collégiales (DEC) has been previously awarded. Given the writing-intensive nature of the program, students must have exceptional skills in English. The admissions committee carefully reviews all application materials, including writing samples and test scores, to determine whether applicants are adequately prepared.

Apply online at: www.grad.ubc.ca/apply/online/.

Students may enter the program only in the fall and complete all requirements within five years of initial registration.

It should be noted that these standards constitute a minimum and admission remains at the discretion of the department. If you do not meet these requirements, please contact the department's graduate program coordinator for advice on how to fulfill them.

Further information is available online at www.ahva.ubc.ca.

Application Deadline

The deadline for receipt of complete applications is early January. All supporting material must be received by the deadline. Notifications of acceptance are normally sent by late March.

Fees

Please refer to the UBC Calendar for tuition and fee information. An online version is accessible at students.ubc.ca. The MA art history program can be pursued on a full-time basis only.

Language Requirement

Reading proficiency in a language other than English is desirable for many seminars at the fourth- and fifth-year levels and is regarded as an essential skill. Therefore, MA candidates are required to have a reading knowledge of one language other than English appropriate to work in their field. In most cases the language requirement will be fulfilled by the end of the student's first year of studies.

- Students may demonstrate their proficiency in a language other than English by passing a reading knowledge exam (translation with dictionary). Exams are scheduled in the Department of Art History, Visual Art and Theory in October and February. For some languages, exams may be administered by another UBC department.
- Students who have not obtained proficiency in a language other than English should register in a UBC language course. Completing a language course at a level of 200 or above (not including conversation courses) with a grade of not less than 72% fulfills the language requirement. If they prefer, and instructors permit, students may register in a language course as an auditor and write the departmental reading knowledge exam.
- Students who need proficiency in a language using a non-Roman script may receive special consideration. Courses taken to fulfill the language requirement are not counted toward the required credits for the MA degree.
- Students with a first language other than English can request to have the language requirement waived.

Program Requirements

The MA in art history requires 30 credits of coursework of which 24 must be in ARTH courses numbered 500 or above.

The 30 credits include the Methodology of Art History (ARTH 571, 6 credits), required in the first year, and the Master's Thesis (ARTH 599, 6 credits), normally begun in the second year. The remaining 18 credits may be chosen from art history or from other departments as per the following guidelines:

- The two-year MA program should include coursework with a broad range of historical periods and geographical regions.
- Up to 3 credits of coursework at the 400 level may be counted toward the degree, with approval from the graduate advisor.
- Up to 6 credits of coursework may be taken outside the department.
- Students can repeat a seminar (with the exception of ARTH 540) if the content is substantially different and if it is taught by a different instructor.
- Students should not take more than 6 credits (excluding the Master's Thesis, ARTH 599) with the same instructor.
- ARTH 577 (Directed Reading) is permitted only in the special case that the student's supervisor is not teaching a research seminar for the two consecutive years of MA coursework.
- Courses taken to fulfill the language requirement are not counted toward the required credits for the MA degree. In order to remain in the program, students must maintain an overall average of 78% in all art history courses and not receive a grade lower than 72% in any single course.

Graduate Courses

All graduate (500-level) courses—with the exception of CCST 503—are open to all graduate students.

Not all courses are offered every year.

ARTH 531 (3/6)	Studies in Early Medieval Art
ARTH 533 (3/6)	Studies in Medieval Art
ARTH 535 (3/6)	Early Modern: Renaissance
ARTH 537 (3/6)	Early Modern: 17th Century
ARTH 539 (3/6)	Studies in 19th Century Art
ARTH 540 (3/6)	Studies in 20th Century Art
ARTH 543 (3/6)	Studies in Canadian Art
ARTH 548 (3/6)	Studies in Architecture
ARTH 550 (3/6)	Studies in Art in the Islamic World
ARTH 551 (3/6)	Studies in Chinese Art
ARTH 553 (3/6)	Studies in Japanese Art
ARTH 555 (3/6)	Studies in South and Southeast Asian Art
ARTH 561 (3/6)	Studies in the Indigenous Arts of the Americas
ARTH 571 (6)	The Methodology of Art History <i>(a rigorous two-term required methodologies seminar led by two professors who are specialists in divergent areas)</i>
ARTH 577 (3/6)	Directed Reading <i>(permitted only in the special case that the student's supervisor is not teaching a research seminar for the two consecutive years of the PhD coursework)</i>
ARTH 599 (0)	MA Thesis
CCST 500 (3)	Seminar in Interdisciplinary Frameworks in Museum and Curatorial Studies
CCST 501 (3)	Seminar in Contemporary Contextual Issues for Museums and Curatorial Practice
CCST 502 (3)	Case Studies in Museum and Gallery Exhibitions

Committee and Supervision

During the course of the program, students are advised by two departmental committees.

Thesis Committee

The Thesis Committee consists of a research supervisor (chair or first reader) and a second faculty member (second reader) and is normally constituted by the student before the end of first-year coursework to supervise thesis work through to graduation. The Thesis Committee oversees the formulation of a thesis topic, presentation of thesis research, and the deposit of the finished thesis.

Art History Graduate Advisory Committee

The Art History Graduate Advisory Committee oversees the entire art history graduate program to ensure students' timely progress in fulfilling program requirements. The committee offers general assistance in planning coursework, fulfilling the language requirement, selecting a Thesis Committee, and formulating a thesis topic.

The Art History Graduate Advisory Committee is chaired by the graduate advisor. The graduate advisor is available for regular consultation throughout the program.

The student will meet with the graduate advisor and another member of the Advisory Committee in September of each academic year.

Second Year Student Meeting

In March of the second year in the program students will be asked to schedule a meeting with their supervisory committee. The date of the meeting is determined between the student and their committee, however, it is recommended that the meeting be completed by May in order to give the student sufficient time to incorporate the suggested recommendations into their thesis.

Ahead of the scheduled meeting the student should provide their committee with a 9-10 page document outlining their thesis research. The committee should receive this roughly two to three weeks before the scheduled meeting. The document should translate into a 20 minute presentation which the student will give when they meet with their committee.

The meetings can happen remotely, in person or hybrid depending on what the student and committee prefer. If a room needs to be booked for an in-person meeting please contact the Graduate Program Coordinator.

The meeting will consist of the student, supervisor and second reader. If the supervisor would like a member of the Art History Graduate Committee to be present they must let the Graduate Advisor know.

Once the meeting is over the supervisor must email the Graduate Advisor and Graduate Program Coordinator to confirm that the meeting requirement has been fulfilled.

MA Thesis

The Master's Thesis (ARTH 599) is designed to train students in the skills of scholarly research and analysis. It entails the development and convincing presentation of an argument in the form of a thesis that should be no longer than 60 pages of text and footnotes. An appropriate thesis topic needs to be conceived as a specific and limited problem that poses an intervention within an existing research field and its debates. It should normally involve work within existing literatures and thus be capable of completion with library research rather than travel.

Students should select a Thesis Committee and a thesis topic by the end of their first year's coursework in order to begin research during the summer. Whenever possible, the thesis topic should arise from coursework, i.e, a seminar paper. Students who will not be able to take a seminar in their area of thesis research until the second year should consult their thesis supervisor or the graduate advisor before the end of the first year in order to plan summer research in anticipation of this seminar.

Students should expect that more than a single draft will be necessary for an acceptable thesis. Thesis Committee members are allowed a minimum of two weeks to read and comment on each draft, and students must allow for this time, particularly in regard to meeting a deadline for submission of the thesis to the UBC Library. These deadlines are printed in the "Academic Year" section of the UBC Calendar.

When the Thesis Committee has approved the thesis, it will be submitted for marking in order to complete requirements for ARTH 599. The student must also submit an application for graduation to Enrolment Services; the application is available from Enrolment Services, the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, or online at www.students.ubc.ca.

After completing editorial changes required by the Thesis Committee, the student will prepare the thesis for deposit to the Faculty of Graduate Studies. Instructions for "Masters and Doctoral Thesis Preparation and Submission" can be obtained from the Faculty of Graduate Studies website: <https://www.grad.ubc.ca/current-students/dissertation-thesis-preparation>.

Students should also consult the "Guidelines for the Various Parties involved in Graduate Student Thesis Research," available from the Faculty of Graduate Studies.

Financial Support

Grant-writing workshops are scheduled in the department during September and October. All students are urged to participate.

Opportunities for financial support in the MA program include the following:

Graduate Support Initiative Awards (GSI)

Graduate Support Initiative Awards (GSI) are offered to the best and brightest incoming MA students for full-time graduate study. All applicants to the program are automatically considered for this award. In the event that a student receives another funding offer, in excess of the GSI allocation, the department reserves the right to withdraw the offer so that another student can receive funding.

University Affiliated Fellowships

The university offers a limited number of Affiliated Fellowships to students with a minimum first-class standing. Awards are based on academic excellence and are open to any graduate student regardless of citizenship or visa status. Applications for Affiliated Fellowships are available to students upon their acceptance to the program, and are normally due in November of the first year. Students who are awarded these highly competitive fellowships receive funding for their second year of study. These fellowships are valued between \$8,000 and \$16,000.

Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) Canada Graduate Scholarship (CGS-M)

This award is based on academic excellence and valued at \$17,500. Students who are either Canadian citizens or landed immigrants are eligible and are required to submit applications for this prestigious award in order to be included in the adjudication for Affiliated Fellowships. Applications are due in the fall. Further information is available at https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/students-etudiants/pg-cs/cgsm-bescm_eng.asp

* Students applying to UBC are encouraged to apply for the CGS-M during the final year of their undergraduate degree.

Teaching Assistantships

The department has a number of TA positions available every year. TA positions are normally offered to students entering the second term of the first year of the program, and these teaching assistantships will continue to be offered to students until they have completed their degree (conditional on satisfactory performance, availability of positions, enrolment, and funding). Notice of teaching assistantships are posted in the department by March 31. Duties include leading tutorial sessions and grading exams and papers for undergraduate courses for up to 12 hours per week.

For additional information on financial support for graduate students, consult the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies website at

<http://www.grad.ubc.ca/>.

Financial support counselling is also available in the UBC Office of Awards and Financial Aid at (604) 822-5111 or through their website at <http://www.students.ubc.ca/finance/>

Art History Travel Research Scholarship

The department has a fund designated to support travel for the purpose of thesis research. Preference is given to PhD students.

Conference Travel

The Graduate Student Travel and Research Dissemination Fund is a one-time travel support of up to \$500 for students presenting a paper at a conference or symposium. More information can be found at:

<https://www.grad.ubc.ca/awards/graduate-student-travel-research-dissemination-fund>

Facilities, Programs, and Resources

Guest Lecturer and Visiting Artist Programs

Each year the department invites distinguished international and Canadian critics, curators, artists, and scholars to address challenging and topical themes relevant to the study and practice of art. In addition to the short-term distinguished visitors, AHVA also hosts artists in residence at the Audain Art Centre. Past artists in residence include Beau Dick, Marianne Nicolson, and Stan Douglas. Visiting artists, guest lecturers, and artists in residence may deliver a public lecture, lead an intensive seminar, participate in graduate student critiques, conduct studio visits and assist students in the development of their work and early professional career.

These programs are made possible by the generous support of the Rennie Collection, Joan Carlisle-Irving Endowment, Audain Endowment for Critical and Curatorial Studies, and the Koerner Foundation.

The AHVA Visual Resources Centre (VRC)

The Visual Resources Centre (VRC) houses a community study space, meeting spaces and over half a million visual materials. The VRC has total holdings of over 450,000 35mm photographic slides, videos, films, DVDs and a growing database of 60,000 digital images, covering all areas of art history and visual art as represented by the curricula of the AHVA department and the film program. As a vital teaching and research facility for both faculty and students, the VRC continues to extend its resources and services to the university communities through collaborative projects in the areas of e-learning and distance education.

Irving K. Barber Learning Centre: Music, Art, and Architecture Library

The Music, Art, and Architecture Library is located in the Irving K. Barber Learning Centre. The collection includes books and journals on visual art, art history, architecture, community and regional planning, dance, design, and music. Special materials include exhibition catalogues, pamphlets, microforms, clippings, picture files, CD-ROMs, and online indexes and databases.

Circulating books are located in the open stacks of the Irving K. Barber Learning Centre. Most material circulates for two weeks. The library provides many areas for students to

study: silent and group study spaces, a graduate research room, and a digital media commons. Library staff with specialization in visual art and art history is available to assist with reference, instruction, and tours.

<http://ikblc.ubc.ca/>

The Museum of Anthropology

UBC's Museum of Anthropology, designed by Arthur Erickson and opened in 1976, is situated on the Point Grey cliffs overlooking Howe Sound and the North Shore mountains. Both its setting and architecture are inspired by coastal First Nations settlements of British Columbia. The collections include the famous Northwest Coast First Nations collection, the Walter and Marianne Koerner Collection, an international textile collection, and archaeological findings of British Columbia and the North Pacific Rim.

<http://moa.ubc.ca>

The Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery

This standalone contemporary art gallery opened in 1995. The gallery is a public facility contributing to the cultural life of the campus, the city, the province, and beyond. Throughout the year the gallery hosts a variety of informative and provocative exhibitions that confirm the creative and eclectic aspects of contemporary art. Exhibitions are generated internally or borrowed and draw on work from local, national, and international artists, other Canadian art institutions, art organizations and international sources. The gallery attempts to expose the broadest possible spectrum of visual concerns to both the university community and the public at large. It also sponsors visiting speakers as well as occasional symposia.

<http://belkin.ubc.ca>

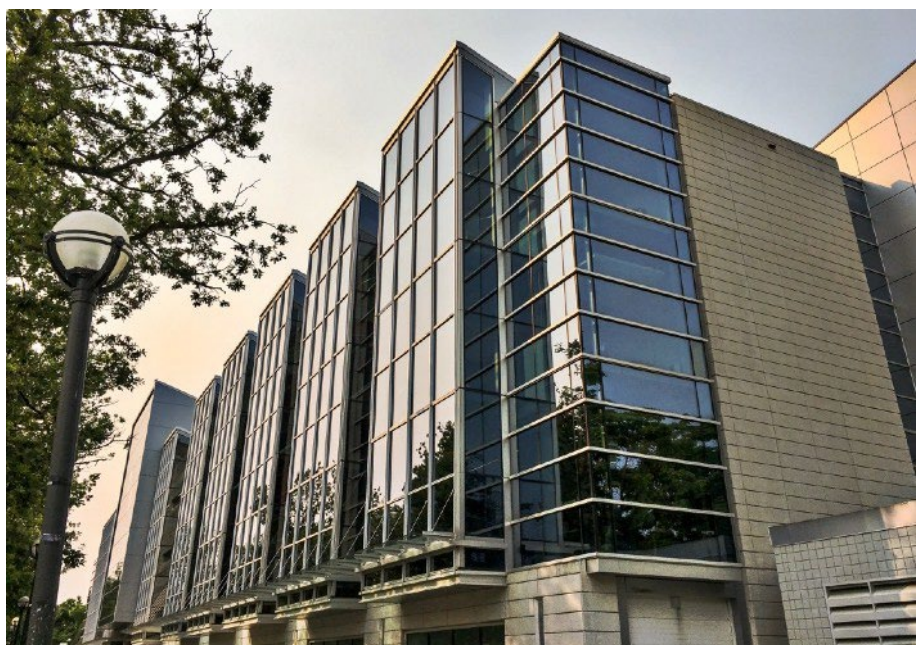
Xwi7xwa Library

Xwi7xwa (pronounced whei-wha) began in the 1970s with the founding of the Indian Education Resource Centre. The collection later came under the care of the Native Indian Teacher Education Program (NITEP). When the First Nations House of Learning opened the Longhouse in May of 1993, NITEP transferred the collection to Xwi7xwa Library. Xwi7xwa Library, now a branch of the UBC Library, has collections consisting of approximately 12,000 items, including about 6,000 books, 450 videos, 5,000 vertical file

materials, curriculum resources, journals and newspapers, maps, posters, theses and dissertations, the G.A. (Bud) Mintz special collection, and some archival materials. The collections focus on First Nations in British Columbia, but also include contextual materials about Aboriginal people in Canada as a whole.

In addition to special collections, Xwi7xwa has research librarians expert in Indigenous areas, and is an international leader in Indigenous classification research.

<https://xwi7xwa.library.ubc.ca>



TOP The Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery

BOTTOM The Music, Art, and Architecture Library (inside the Irving K. Barber Learning Centre).

Contacts

Faculty and Areas of Research

Please visit ahva.ubc.ca for AHVA faculty biographies and research areas.

Staff Contact Information

Please visit ahva.ubc.ca for AHVA staff contact information.

Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery Contact Information

Please visit belkin.ubc.ca for staff contact information.

For questions and inquiries, please contact:

Graduate Program Coordinator

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Disclaimer

This brochure in no way contradicts or modifies any rule laid down in the University Calendar, which should be consulted when precise information on any specific point on course program requirements is required. This is obtainable from the Office of the Registrar:

Brock Hall, 2106
1874 East Mall
Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada V6T 1Z1
(604) 822-2844
<http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/>

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Faculty of Arts