

V&A Academy

INTRODUCTION TO ART HISTORY



Introduction

So many periods of artistic developments, styles, and art movements! Have you ever wondered how to unravel these periods and feel confident about the context and history of the art produced? This course will be an introduction to Western Art from the Classical World to the Contemporary World. We will explore the many ways Art History helps us to unravel those different movements and styles. You will understand how artists have shaped our world. We will explore how techniques changed, how literature and music impacted on our artists' lives and work, how women artists made an increasingly important contribution to the art world. Looking at architecture, sculpture, paintings, metalwork, ivory carving, photographs, drawings, woodcuts, lithographs, and objects we will explore hundreds of years of Western art and get to know the men and women who made it.

Information

Tuesdays, 23rd September to 25th November 2025, 10.30-13.00.
Online.

Watch lecture recordings on demand, available at the end of each day, until Tuesday 17th February.

Your course leader

Dr Jacqueline Cockburn is an art historian and linguist. After a career in academic teaching at Birkbeck college, University of London and Westminster School, she is now a freelance lecturer. She is course director and lecturer at the V & A and also lectures at The Royal Academy, The Art Fund, Artscapades, The London Art History Society, The Arts Society and a number of private institutions. Her focus is European Art 1850- 1950. Jacqueline is Managing Director of Art and Culture running residential courses in Andalucía, Southern Spain in the art and culture of the region. She has just published a museum guide to goya (Prestel 2025)

Note: V&A Academy programmes are subject to change without notice.

Week 1 – 23 September

10.20 Introduction

10.30 What is Art History? Understanding Visual Analysis

Jacqueline Cockburn

12.00 Classical Art and its Variants in the Ancient Greek and Roman Worlds **David Bellingham**

Week 2 – 30 September

10.20 Introduction

10.30 Early Christian and Byzantine Art **Sally Dormer**

12.00 Medieval Art and Architecture **Sally Dormer**

Week 3 – 07 October

10.30 Rebirth – The Art and Culture of the Italian Renaissance **Kevin Childs**

12.00 Rebirth – The Art and Culture of the High Italian Renaissance **Kevin Childs**

Week 4 – 14 October

10.30 Spain and the Discovery of the New World **Jacqueline Cockburn**

12.00 The Northern Renaissance in 15th and 16th Century Europe from Jan van Eyck to Durer and Bruegel' **Clare Ford-Wille**

Week 5 – 21 October

- 10.30 'Baroque in 17th and 18th Century Europe from Bernini to Rembrandt to Tiepolo and Boucher' **Clare Ford-Wille**
- 12.00 From Rococo to Romanticism **Kathy McLauchlan**

Week 6 – 28 October

- 10.30 Truths, Visions and Nature: the Pre-Raphaelite Progress
Justine Hopkins
- 12:00 'Becoming Radical; Realism and Impressionism' **Jacqueline Cockburn**
- 13:00 Meet and Greet

Week 7 – 4 November

- 10.30 'From Cezanne to Munch; pioneers of a brave new world'
Jacqueline Cockburn
- 12.00 'Squaring up to Cubism' **Jacqueline Cockburn**

Week 8 – 11 November

- 10.30 'From Matisse to Kollwitz; Expressionism' **Jacqueline Cockburn**
- 12.00 'The weird and wonderful world of Surrealism' **Jacqueline Cockburn**

Week 9 – 18 November

10.30 New York New York; from Hopper to Pollock.' **Jacqueline Cockburn**

12.00 'Pioneers of Modern Architecture.' **Greg Votolato**

13.00 Meet and Greet

Week 10 – 25 November

10.30 'Languages of Late Century Architecture' **Greg Votolato**

12.00 'Rewriting Art Histories: Women in the Pictur'e **Marie- Anne Mancio**

Notes: