

V&A Academy

INTRODUCTION TO ART HISTORY

Tuesdays

6 October – 8 December 2026





Introduction

Discover art, from the Classical to the Contemporary. Join V&A experts for an introduction to hundreds of years of European art history.

From the Classical to the Medieval, Renaissance to Rococo, or the Impressionists to the Cubists – have you ever wondered how to make sense of the different styles, movements and developments in art? Join a host of popular V&A Academy course tutors on this introductory art history course, to explore hundreds of years of evolving artistic practices. Boost your confidence in unravelling the context and histories of artistic production, and discover how social, historical and technological changes have shaped European art.

Information

Tuesdays, 6 October – 8 December, 2026, Online.

Watch lecture recordings on demand, available at the end of each day, until 14 February 2027.

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

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. Jacqueline is Managing Director of Art and Culture Andalucía running residential courses in Andalucía, Southern Spain in the art and culture of the region.

Contributing Speakers

Dr. David Bellingham is an art historian, author and Programme Director for the Master's Degree in Art Business at Sotheby's Institute of Art, London where he leads a core unit on *Professional Practice*, as well the elective *The Market for Antiquities & Old Masters*. David has published books and articles on a variety of subjects, including: art fairs; art business ethics; Greek & Celtic mythology; the art market for classical sculpture and frescoes; the paintings of Sandro Botticelli; and authenticity issues in the paintings of Frans Hals. David has most recently delivered a paper on Collecting and Display in Ancient Rome at the Institute of Historical Research, University of London, and contributed essays to exhibition catalogues on contemporary artists at JD Malat Gallery, London and the Street Art Museum Amsterdam. He is currently editor of the Antiquities volume for *A Cultural History of Collecting* (Bloomsbury Publishing) and writing a chapter on 'Taste' for the Eighteenth-Century volume. David has recently launched a podcast on 'The Art Business' in which he hosts alumnae/-i and others working in the art world.

Dr Sally Dormer is a medieval art historian. She read History at the University of Durham, before an MA in Medieval Art History and a Ph.D on illuminated manuscripts at the Courtauld Institute of Art. She is Course Director for the V&A's Early Medieval, and Late Medieval and Early Renaissance online Year Courses and was, from 2000-2019, Dean of a study abroad-semester for two universities in Tennessee, USA. She also teaches, or has taught for, Gresham College, the London Art History Society, and the Art Society (formerly NADFAS), and leads study tours abroad and in England for Art Pursuits and Cox & Kings.

Information

Kevin Childs is a freelance writer and lecturer on culture and art history in the United Kingdom and Italy, where he leads specialised tours of Rome, Venice and Florence. As well as convening and contributing to courses at the Victoria and Albert Museum he has taught on the Art History and Visual Culture BA course at Exeter University. He has written regularly for The Independent and Huffington Post and has published articles and reviews in The New Statesman, The Guardian and The Times.

Dr Kathy McLauchlan graduated at Oxford University and the Courtauld Institute. In 2001 completed a PhD thesis on French painters in Rome during the 19th century. A freelance lecturer specialising in 19th century art history, she has published catalogues and articles for the British Council and the Barbican Art Gallery. Currently a course director at the Victoria & Albert Museum, where she organises courses and study days on the history of art and design.

Clare Ford-Wille is an independent lecturer. She was an associate lecturer at Birkbeck College, University of London for many years. Clare also lectures regularly for many other institutions including the Victoria & Albert Museum, the Wallace Collection, the National Trust, and the NACF as well as leading groups to places of art historical interest in Europe.

Marie-Anne Mancio is a trained as an artist in interdisciplinary practice before her DPhil (University of Sussex) Maps for Wayward Performers in contemporary live art practice. An accredited Arts Society lecturer, she has lectured internationally including for Dulwich Picture Gallery, 'The Bed in Art' for HENI films, Tate, and The Feminist Lecture Program. As a founder member and co-Director of feminist art collective InFems, she writes, creates text-based art including a commission by Carolina Herrera, and co-curates exhibitions, latterly 'Lost Girls' for War Child at Flowers. She is currently writing a book on The Sex Worker in Art.

Joshua White has taught for over 20 years at Christie's Education in London where he was director of The London Art Course. Joshua has direct experience of the art market, working as a Gallery Director between 2018 and 2020, specialising in 20th Century photography. Elsewhere, he has lectured for Sotheby's Institute, Tate Modern, The University of California and the Arts Society. On television and radio, Joshua has been a guest contributor to Channel 5's 'Great Paintings of the World', BBC Radio 4's 'Behind The Scenes' and BBC Radio 3's 'Turning Picasso.' For publication, he has produced exhibition catalogues and written for the BBC, the FT, Christie's Magazine and Flash Art. Recently, he set up The London Art Club to provide independent adult education in art history.

Week 1 – 6 October

- 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 – 13 October

- 10.30 Early Christian and Byzantine, **Sally Dormer**
12.00 Medieval Art and Architecture, **Sally Dormer**

Week 3 – 20 October

- 10.30 Rebirth - the Art and Culture of the Early Italian Renaissance, **Kevin Childs**
12.00 An Age of Grandeur: The High Renaissance in Italy, **Kevin Childs**

Week 4 – 27 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 – 3 November

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

Week 6 – 10 November

- 10.30 Ploughing the Fields of Realism, **Jacqueline Cockburn**
12.00 The Impressionist Surface, **Jacqueline Cockburn**

Week 7 – 17 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 – 24 November

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

Week 9 – 1 December

- 10.30 New York New York; from Hopper to Pollock, **Jacqueline Cockburn**
12.00 Rewriting Art Histories: Women in the Picture, **Marie- Anne Mancio**

Week 10 – 8 December

- 10.30 Pioneers of Modern Architecture, **Joshua White**
12.00 Postmodernism In Art and Design, **Joshua White**