

## The Art History Honors Program

**Overview:** The Art History Department's Honors Program offers Art History majors the opportunity to undertake focused independent research. It can be a highly rewarding experience and a great chance to undertake original scholarship. Our students work closely with the faculty in their chosen field to craft a thesis that contributes to the larger understanding of the history of art. There are also undergraduate research funding opportunities available, including the Marc Ernstoff Prize in Art History and the Undergraduate Humanities Fellowship program at the Fox Center for Humanistic Inquiry.

Students selected for the Art History Honors Program will take a graduate-level seminar (or equivalent), complete an Honors thesis, and defend that thesis in an oral examination. There are also mandatory College requirements in the fall and spring semesters, including meetings, deadlines for degree applications, and the electronic submission of the thesis. For an explanation of the College Honors Program please view <http://catalog.college.emory.edu/academic/honors-program/index.html>, and responses to frequently asked questions: <http://catalog.college.emory.edu/academic/honors-program/honors-faq.html>. A dedicated Art History Honors information session will be held on **Wed. January 29 at 5:30 pm.**

**Detailed description:** The Honors Program is a senior-year (two semester) program. Art History students are officially admitted to the Honors Program in the spring of their junior year (with the exception of second-semester juniors who expect to graduate the following fall). The College sets the calendar for the date by which the student must defend the thesis before their committee and the date for final submission; this year, for example, students must **defend their thesis by April 2** in order to have time to make any required revisions before the **final submission of the thesis on April 9.**

Students wishing to write a thesis in Art History should be committed to pursuing independent research and to writing about that research in a vivid, well documented, and persuasive way. The drafting and refinement of the thesis constitute one of the most important aspects of a longer research paper. An honors thesis is generally 30 to 50 pages in length and includes scholarly documentation through footnotes, bibliography, and images.

Students admitted into the Art History Honors Program register for three required courses during their senior year: ARTHIST 495A in the fall; ARTHIST 495BW in the spring; and a 700-level seminar course during one of the semesters, determined in consultation with their advisor. These courses are *over and above* the courses taken to fulfill the major. ARTHIST 495A may fulfill the Experience and Application (XA) GER requirement and ARTHIST 495BW may fulfill the Continuing Communication (W) requirement. At the end of fall classes, Honors students participate in the department's Honors symposium and give a preliminary presentation of their research to the faculty.

**Acceptance into the Art History Honors program:** Students who have obtained a 3.7 grade point average are eligible to apply to undertake an Honors thesis in Art History and will receive a letter of invitation. This is the first step in a larger process that also involves:

- 1) *Finding a topic in consultation with an advisor.* The advisor who supervises the project is almost always a faculty member with whom the student has taken one or more classes; the advisor must be a full-time faculty member in art history
- 2) *Crafting an abstract.* The abstract should be approximately 700 words (about 2 pages, double spaced) and include a preliminary bibliography of 3-4 key references
- 3) *Submitting an abstract by the Monday of the week following Spring Break, no later than 5 p.m.* The abstract must be approved by the student's thesis advisor before submission. It is then evaluated by the Art History faculty as the basis for a focused, feasible, and compelling Honors thesis. Although students are naturally still learning about their thesis topics, the faculty read the submitted abstracts with an eye to their focus and specificity, method of approach, and the larger interest of the topic to determine feasibility. Even if you are eligible to write an Honors thesis, you must still determine a suitable topic in conjunction with an advisor, and that topic must be approved by the Art History faculty.

Please submit the polished and completed abstract by email attachment to the Honors Coordinator, [Prof. Megan O'Neil, megan.eileen.oneil@emory.edu](mailto:megan.eileen.oneil@emory.edu). This year, abstracts are due on **Monday, March 24, 2025**.