ART HISTORY

Art history is the study of humankind through a variety of visual media. The art historian seeks to interpret and understand works of art of many types, ranging from the monumental to small scale, by learning about artists' lives, their beliefs and passions as well as the societies in which they lived.

Graduates with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Art History have a variety of skills that are in professional demand by museums, galleries, auction houses and publishing. It may also provide a solid preparation and distinct advantage for students wanting to further their academic education in fields like law, medicine, and other professional preparation for careers requiring a broad intellectual background.

POSSIBLE HIRING ORGANIZATIONS
(sample only)

- Museums
- Art Galleries
- Auction Houses
- Federal Government
- Colleges and Universities
- Historical Societies
- Antique Dealers and Restorers
- Architectural Firms
- Libraries
- Film Production
- Higher Education
- Corporations
- Publishing
- State or Local Government

TYPICAL SKILLS LIST

- Appreciation of Aesthetics
- Attention to Detail
- Creativity
- Critical Analysis
- Communication Skills
- Good recall ability
- Intense Research Skills
- Interpretive Skills
- Interpersonal Skills
- Open-minded
- Organization Skills
- Presentation/Public Speaking
- Time-Management
- Self-discipline

POSSIBLE CAREERS FOR ART HISTORY MAJORS
(not exhaustive)

ANTiquarian BOOK TRADER
This person researches, buys, sells or brokers antique or rare books. He or she usually freelances and may own his or her own business.

ANTIQUES DEALER
This person requires exceptional research skills with regard to period, style and maker of art, artifacts, architecture and furniture. He or she works independently or for a shop that retails or wholesales antiques to private collections or public entities. BA in art history or the equivalent is needed, with some knowledge of the history of photography and decorative arts and details of furniture construction. An internship or experience in auction house is useful. Requires significant interaction with people if one runs a shop, but dealers can also rent space in an antiques mall or sell online. Foreign languages are useful but not necessary, but good research skills are essential. Dealers will be familiar with a wide range of reference materials, maker's marks, imprints, history of technology and design, as well as prints and drawings. Requires significant interaction with people if one runs shop. Good business and accounting skills and knowledge of tax laws is needed.
ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATOR
This person would have an extensive knowledge of period architectural styles and construction techniques and would generally oversee contractors who would restore/ preserve architectural edifices consistent with when they were constructed. He or she might work for a preservation society or be a freelance consultant. BA or beyond in art history with special training in conservation and restoration; many graduate programs are awarding an MA or certificate in art conservation. Research-oriented and languages may be useful. Good background in chemistry, physics and studio art techniques; manual dexterity, attention to detail. Some involvement with people. Programs are available at NYU, SUC at Buffalo, University of Delaware, University of Texas at Austin, and Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario.

ART APPRAISER
This individual would be self-employed or work for insurance agencies, real estate entities, banks or private/public collectors to determine the current market value of a particular piece of work or an entire estate or collection. Maximum involvement with people. Requires diplomacy in dealing with trust officers, antique dealers, and family of the deceased. High ethical standards and integrity are essential as are research skills. Appraisers are familiar with a diverse range of reference materials, maker's marks, imprints, the history of technology and design, as well as prints and drawings. Attention to detail essential. Good writing skills. Knowledge of IRS standards for appraisals and on-line reference tools. No foreign languages are necessary, but Spanish may be an asset.

ART GALLERY
One may own a gallery or work in one in various capacities. Galleries generally represent selected artists and showcase and sell their work on commission. One who works in a gallery may actually hang the show, do publicity and marketing, host invitational and open receptions, organize sales and develop thematic ideas from which to build an exhibit. Good business, marketing, communication and writing skills; fundraising skills; flexibility; diplomacy; ability to motivate others; sensitivity to artists' needs; and, depending on the scale of the gallery, experience in exhibition design, curatorial work, sales, and art education are useful. Practical administrative and supervisory experience required, along with an ability to work with diverse audiences and artists. Willingness to explore new gallery models in changing environment.

ART LIBRARIAN
A librarian would work in a corporation or institution to catalogue and maintain records on specific collections. Usually has MA in art history and MLS, rudiments of French, German, and other languages often necessary as well as good communication and writing skills and administration/management skills necessary as well a computer and image technology skills. Some research covering a wide gamut of topics necessary, attention to detail and involvement with people.

ART PUBLISHER
He or she reproduces art work en masse in various formats like books, magazines, posters, prints and canvas reproductions to sell to public and private entities. A publisher will be responsible for conducting market research on current trends and styles in art and choosing pieces which reflect that trend to publish and distribute.

ART TEACHER
Teachers can be formally or informally trained, work independently or for organizations and institutions to teach students about art from the historical perspective. Public school teachers generally need at least a bachelor's degree to teach. Community college faculty must have a masters degree with a minimum of 18 hours in the teaching discipline. Generally, 4-year colleges and universities require a Ph.D.

ARTISTS' REPRESENTATIVE
This individual would represent a ‘stable' of artists to galleries, museums, collectors and investors. He or she would attempt to procure showings and prepares publicity connected with the artists and events involving them. Works on a percentage basis.

ARTS ADMINISTRATOR
An administrator works to provide continuity as a liaison between arts organizations and communities. He or she might write and procure grants for programs and presentations, work to obtain not-for-profit status, develop programs to promote the visual and performing arts in the community.

ARTS LAWYER
This individual has a license to practice law and specializes in cases dealing with the fine and performing arts. He or she would be knowledgeable about contemporary issues confronting both artists and presenters.

ARTS PUBLISHER
BA; MA or PhD useful but not necessary (depending on the type of publisher, e.g. academic, commercial, independent; and position). Languages often needed as well as research skills and ability to be significantly involved
with people. Business and/or graphic design skills along with good writing skills are useful or essential depending on position; possibility of free-lancing

**ARTS WRITER**
This individual would usually work with newspapers or publication houses to write reviews of art and artists. Requires extensive knowledge of artists, art history, contemporary styles and media.

**CURATOR (Museum)**
This individual is responsible for overseeing art/artifact collections of corporations and/or museums as well as museum staff. PhD in art history is normal, depending on the institution as well as working knowledge of German, French or other appropriate languages. Often, there is research and some involvement with people. One must have the ability to collaborate.

**CURATOR (Corporate)** BA; MA or PhD may be helpful. Ability to communicate particularly with people not necessarily knowledgeable about art; may also need installation and interpretive skills; training in connoisseurship; ability to manipulate databases for record maintenance. Languages may be necessary depending on the nature of the collection. Some research and involvement with people.

**COLLECTION MANAGER**
This individual would work under a curator to develop and produce exhibitions connected to particular collections of art works in museums or corporations. He or she would be responsible for maintaining the health of the collection and the hanging/placing of it.

**CURATORIAL MANAGER**
Ability to interact with a variety of art professionals and to represent a client to them; ability to manage various jobs such as framing, shipping and installation on behalf of a client; ability to represent the best interests of the work of art to non-art professionals, such as a private or corporate collector, his/her family, and/or corporate staff at all levels of hierarchy, including insurers. Superior organizational skills. Attention to details, particularly in respect to record-keeping. Self-motivated and comfortable with the instability and freedom of freelance employment.

**DOCUMENTARY FILM/VIDEO MAKER**
Makes/directs/produces TV and Film Documentaries. BA; MA or beyond useful but not necessary. Background in TV or film production; good business and writing skills; strong organizational and research skills. Languages may be necessary. Maximum involvement with people.

**EXHIBITION INSTALLATION**
Minimum requirement is a B.A. in Art History and M.A. would be helpful as is artistic training and mechanical skill. There may or may not be active involvement with other people.

**FREELANCE WRITER**
This person writes opinion type pieces dealing with art criticism, art history and art-related travel. Would actually need a BA in art history although advanced degrees may help to open some doors. Languages may be necessary as well as research ability. One might need to be aggressive in obtaining assignments or marketing work, have excellent communication and writing skills and a high tolerance for economic uncertainty.

**GOVERNMENT AGENCIES**
BA, MA and/or PhD can all be appropriate depending on duties. Languages may be necessary, some do a great deal of research depending on position and involvement with people. Good communication and writing skills; political skills.

**MUSEUM ADMINISTRATOR**
BA; MA in museology and PhD in art history for top positions. Business skills normally useful, including clerical skills; ability to manipulate databases and spreadsheets. It is normally expected that a person in this position will be adept at fund-raising. Maximum involvement with other people.

**MUSEUM EDUCATOR**
This individual is responsible for developing and presenting the educational opportunities associated with a museum and its collections. M.A. in Art History is required as is some research. Languages may be necessary, e.g. Spanish, in order to be able to work with an ethnically diverse audience. Good communication skills essential because of a maximum involvement with people.

**PRESERVATIONIST**
This individual has extensive experience with historical methods of manipulating and maintaining artists’ media as well as competent restoration and conservation techniques.
REGISTRAR
Handling, shipping, storage, and conservation of works in museums, galleries, libraries, and other collections.

VISUAL RESOURCE CURATOR
This individual must have knowledge of computer programs for slide cataloguing and familiarity with the issues concerning image digitization as well as basic photographic techniques for the production of slides necessary. Openness to technology and technological change, attention to detail and patience in dealing with people require. BA or MA in art history, MLS becoming more necessary as is fluency in French, German, or other languages.