CIEE London, England

**Course title:** British Art History: The Golden Age

**Course code:** AHIS 3001 LNEN

**Programs offering course:** Semester Global Internship, London Open Campus Block

**Open Campus Track:** Art and Architecture

**Language of instruction:** English

**U.S. semester credits:** 3.00

**Contact hours:** 45.00

**Term:** Spring Block I 2021

**Course Description**

This course investigates the history of British art through the works of key artists, like Reynolds, Hogarth, Turner and Gainsborough during the late eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries. Special emphasis shall be placed on the main themes running through British art during this Golden Age--ideas about imperialism, patriotism, family life, rural nostalgia and urban modernity. Our focus will be on portraiture, landscape, history painting and images of everyday life. Discussions will include artistic engagement with Shakespearean drama and key historical subjects, while the more humble themes of land, family, rural life and the city will also be examined. Students will visit London’s many art museums with galleries exhibiting art from the Golden Age.

**Learning Objectives**

By completing this course, students will:

- Critically engage with the historical context of British Arts in the Golden Age.
- Evaluate the connection between politics and the Arts during the era.
- Articulate how religion has historically been represented or ignored through the arts.
- Deconstruct the key debates on early modern art in Britain.
- Critically analyse context and meaning in the Golden Age arts.

**Course Prerequisites**

An introductory course in history of art and critical theory.

**Methods of Instruction**

The methodology will be based on interpretative group work in the form of discussions about the texts read and films/plays/musicals watched, and art objects or performances observed. The more theoretical parts of class sessions will sometimes consist of lectures as well. The first week of the course will serve to establish a basic repertoire of analytical instruments – based on current cutting-edge research – with which all participants are to familiarize themselves. This repertoire may be widened as the course proceeds, for example in cases where students feel that they need additional tools to be able to analyze more adequately a certain text, film, etc.

**Assessment and Final Grade**

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<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tr>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Short Essay</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mid-term Exam</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<td>Final Essay</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
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**Course Requirements**

**Presentation**

Each student will introduce a key portrait, painting or engraving relating either to the artists studied or the
themes developed in the course. The schedule of presentations will be set at the end of week 1 and will commence towards the end of week 2.

Short Essay

In this short essay, you will be asked to write a 850-1000 word-long piece that discusses one of the galleries visited, or one of the art collections studied on this course. You may want to consider how an exhibition was curated, how an artist’s work was presented, the way that a particular gallery makes explicit its ethos, or perhaps attitudes to private collections, connoisseurship and auctions during the Golden Age of painting.

Mid-term Exam

This exam will ask you to interpret a work by one of the painters studied in weeks 1-3 and to write an essay in response to themes discussed so far in the course.

Final Essay

The final essay, a piece of between 1500-1750 words, will require you to analyse the works and cultural significance of one of the artists studied in weeks 4-6.

Class Participation

Participation is valued as meaningful contribution in the digital and tangible classroom, utilizing the resources and materials presented to students as part of the course. Meaningful contribution requires students to be prepared in advance of each class session and to have regular attendance. Students must clearly demonstrate they have engaged with the materials as directed, for example, through classroom discussions, online discussion boards, peer-to-peer feedback (after presentations), interaction with guest speakers, and attentiveness on co-curricular and outside-of-classroom activities.

Attendance

Regular class attendance is required throughout the program, and all absences will result in a lower participation grade for any affected CIEE course. Due to the intensive schedules for Open Campus and Short Term programs, absences that constitute more than 10% of the total course will result in a written warning.

Students who transfer from one CIEE class to another during the add/drop period will not be considered absent from the first session(s) of their new class, provided they were marked present for the first session(s) of their original class. Otherwise, the absence(s) from the original class carry over to the new class and count against the grade in that class.

For CIEE classes, excessively tardy (over 15 minutes late) students must be marked absent.

Attendance policies also apply to any required class excursion, with the exception that some class excursions cannot accommodate any tardiness, and students risk being marked as absent if they fail to be present at the appointed time.

Absences for classes will lead to the following penalties:
N.B. Course schedule is subject to change due to study tours, excursions, or local holidays. Final schedules will be included in the final syllabus provided to students on site.

**Weekly Schedule**

**Week 1**

Class: 1.1 Introduction: Discourses on Art History / An Overview

This week will involve an introductory lecture outlining the aims and objectives of the course, and an overview of the history of art in the United Kingdom. Special emphasis will be placed on paintings and portraits. The week's learning activity will be supplemented by a comprehensive tour of the National Gallery.

Readings: Brush, 2010, chapters 1 and 2

Site visit: The National Gallery

**Week 2**

Class: 2.1 The Works of William Hogarth

Exploring the works of William Hogarth, this week's lectures and activities will present a critical overview of his works and the context of their time. We will consider his parody of the Masters – Leonardo da Vinci's *The Last Supper*, for instance – and his work as a graphic satirist in the six *Marriage a la Mode* engravings.

Class: 2.2

We will look at Hogarth as an artist committed to exposing social injustice and to using his paintings as a mode of philanthropy. We will look at *Beer Street* and *Gin Lane* and at the paintings undertaken for the Foundling Museum.


Site visit: the Foundling Museum.

**Week 3**

Class: 3.1 Painting Shakespeare

Starting with Hogarth's painting of the actor, David Garrick, for which he was paid £200 – the highest sum ever paid for a portrait, according to the artist – we will look at the intersection between art and the theatre. By looking at paintings by Fuseli and Smirke, and at the series of paintings displayed at John Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery at the end of the Eighteenth century, we will discover how art was used to memorialize performance and how it helped construct a stronger sense of the stage's cultural significance.
We will also be considering the development of the private collection, the public exhibition and the art auction this week. We will look at the figure of the connoisseur and concerns about his mode of authenticating the value of paintings.

Site visit: the theatre paintings at the Garrick Club, London.

**Mid-Term Exam**

**Week 4**

**Class: 4.1 Celebrity Artists: Joshua Reynolds & Thomas Gainsborough**

Bitter rivals, Reynolds and Gainsborough realized that painting portraits of notorious characters in the aristocracy gained them the commissions they needed. We will unpick the relationship that developed, midwifed by the Royal Academy, between art and commercial enterprise and we will uncover why the rivalry between these two painters developed. We will look both artists’ theories of art and consider their paintings of some of the most celebrated figures of the later Eighteenth century: the Duchess of Devonshire, the actress and Royal mistress, Mary ‘Perdita’ Robinson, and King George III and his Queen, Charlotte.

**Class: 4.2**

In this class we will explore the relationship between the painter and patron. We will look at how the painters’ intimacy with Royalty and aristocracy affected the reception of their work.


Site visit: The National Portrait Gallery

**Week 5**

**Class: 5.1 The Miniature, the Silhouette & the Female Painter**

The fashion for portrait miniatures on ivory and in watercolour became more and more pronounced in the later Eighteenth century. Increasingly, the portrait miniature was worn to demonstrate evidence of a relationship, a love affair, a lost loved one. We will look at these, and their odd cousin, the eye portrait, before considering why Maria Cosway, a more talented painter than her more famous husband, was overlooked in studies of portrait miniatures. From Maria we will look at other avenues open to female painters: from those making a living by producing silhouettes and waxworks – much discussed in the literature of this period – to Angelica Kaufmann and Mary Moser who courted friendship with Joshua Reynolds as a way of guaranteeing a role at the Royal Academy.

**Class: 5.2**

We will also be looking at portable art – miniatures and mourning pieces – and the collecting habits of women.


**Week 6**

**Class: 6.1 The Artist as Literary Illustrator: Blake & Cruikshank**

In the late Eighteenth and early Nineteenth century, first William Blake and then George Cruikshank worked to embed the illustration into the printed book. They took up a tradition of Eighteenth-century publishing and turned the book illustration into its own art form. We will look at how Blake’s images critique and annotate Milton, Chaucer and Dante and will compare this with the collaborative relationship developed between Cruikshank and writers such as Hone, Dickens and Ainsworth.


**Class: 6.2 Final Exam**
**Course Materials**

**Readings**

Antal, F. 'The Moral Purpose of Hogarth’s Art,’ Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes, Vol. 15, No. 3/4 (1952), pp. 169-197 (all articles below are available via JSTOR)


