



## Winterim Course Guide | 2020

**Art History in Five Movements:** *What is art? Has the answer changed in the past 500 years? "Art History in Five Movements" will use dramatic narrative films and documentaries about significant individual artists as a springboard for in-depth exploration and analysis of five significant points/movements in art history: Michelangelo and the High Renaissance, Van Gough and Impressionism, Frida Kahlo and Post Colonialism, Surrealism, Feminism, etc., Jean Michel-Basquiat and Neo-Expressionism and finally, Yayoi Kusama, Cai Guo-Qiang and Contemporary Artistic Expression in Asia. Each of these artists is intended to be the hub of a larger discussion about the movement/s of which they were/are a part and their contemporaries, and the broader social and cultural context for their work.*

**Baseball & American Culture:** *How has baseball, "America's Pastime," shaped (and been shaped by) American culture, particularly with regard to the experiences of Black Americans and immigrants? Who are the forgotten figures in this quest for equality? "Jackie Robinson made my success possible," said Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. "Without him, I would never have been able to do what I did." The history of the game of baseball has shaped, and has been shaped, by America's ongoing quest for equal rights for all of its citizens. As King's words make clear, baseball has often - though not always - led the way towards a more fair and just American society. From the era of Reconstruction, through segregation and Jim Crow, through the Civil Rights Movement, to the adoption of free agency, baseball has been a testing ground for cultural change in America and in its journey toward "a more perfect union."*

**Baseball - Heroes and History:** *Why is baseball known as the American Pastime? This class will offer the student an opportunity to learn about the origin and development of our National Pastime, baseball. It will trace the sport from its early beginnings to the present day, and explore the major impact it has had on our culture and society. The class will offer the student a chance to explore baseball through different periods of history, while covering such topics such as: the great players, stadiums, formation of teams and leagues, and growth and changes of the game throughout its history.*



**Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*:** *Particularly in times of challenge and conflict, how does theatre, and telling of collective stories, act as a Force for Good in the community it serves?* We will give our community the holiday gift of our own version of *A Christmas Carol*. By exploring theatrical transformation, radio plays, and the fun of creative storytelling, company members will play multiple roles, design their own "virtual prosceniums," create all the sounds and music with instruments and found objects, and sing carols of the season. Participation can include musicians and singers. Students are also needed to produce and stage manage. We will broadcast the show, inviting the entire Frederick Gunn community audience. COVID? BAH! HUMBUG!

**Creative Writing:** *How do we express ourselves through poetry and/or fiction? (And why?)* As Maya Angelou said, "There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside you." There is a human drive to tell stories and to hear stories told, to connect. Hence, this course's main goal is to awaken that drive (or encourage it): to instill a familiarity with—and appreciation for—the creative writing process. Students will write original pieces of fiction and/or poetry, which they will then submit for scheduled writing workshops; these meetings will serve as peer-led constructive critiques to help each student grow as a writer and editor of his or her own work. Also, as good writers are good readers, students will read a selection of poetry and fiction in order to hone their understanding of how literature works, especially now that they are sitting behind the writer's desk themselves.

**Cryptography:** *What systems have been used in the past and the present to keep secrets? How is your information kept safe today?* Students will explore cryptography through the analysis of historical and modern ciphers. We will learn the mathematics behind some cryptographic techniques and practice implementing them ourselves. Mathematical analysis of these techniques will allow us to understand how they work and how they can be broken. (This course has a prerequisite of Algebra I. You must have passed Algebra I to sign up for this course.)

**Cultivating High Performance:** *Can small changes in our daily habits and the way we think lead to great gains in performance?* You may have heard "you are what you eat", which is true. But even more true is that you are what you repeatedly do and what you repeatedly think. We will use the tools of exercise science and sports psychology to look at how exercise, diet, sleep and psychology can impact performance, both academically and athletically. You will come away with an understanding of how to build and implement your own performance programs.



**December Sky:** *What could go wrong?* We will attempt to master the craft of building, launching, and recovering model rockets. This is a hands on adventure where even failures have the potential to be spectacular.

**Emergency Medical Responder:** *What is the job, knowledge, and responsibilities of being a first responder?* Students who choose this course will have the opportunity to take a basic level medical course and pursue certification as an EMR through the National Registry. The content would appeal to students who are interested in the medical field or in the emergency response systems present in most communities. During the winterim, students will learn basic anatomy and physiology, the responsibilities of first responders, and some of the skills necessary to volunteer/work as an EMR (vitals assessment, history taking, and operating as a team). They will acquire the majority of the training necessary to take the National Registry test to seek certification as an EMR. (\*Note: some additional training may be necessary for students who choose to pursue certification. Any additional practice/training can be provided by the teachers upon return to campus, but opting into this level of commitment is not required in order to take this course. It should be noted that there is no minimum age requirement for students to become Nationally certified as an EMR but CT maintains a minimum age of 14).

**Environmental Racism & Justice:** *How have race and socioeconomic status impacted the distribution of environmental burdens? How can we confront these inequalities and move to a more just society?* As humanity has strived to develop the natural world and exploit essential resources, environmental burdens such as pollution are accrued and must be distributed. These “costs” associated with economic growth have been placed upon the shoulders of racial minority and socioeconomic groups at disproportionately high rates around the world, and in the US in particular. By examining various case studies and primary literature, and hearing from guest speakers from the field of public health, we will learn how these disparities have furthered inequalities throughout recent history. Students will become proficient in synthesizing recent research from experts, with the hope that they can weave this data into a human-centered narrative that they can share with friends and family. Our ultimate goal is to seek answers to the most important question of all: how can we as a society accept and redress environmental racism to ensure that future generations are assured justice?



**Food as Culture - World Cuisine:** *What can we learn about a culture and its individuals by delving into their cooking and eating habits?* In this course, we will seek to understand the cultures of various regions around the world by exploring their flavours, cooking techniques, eating habits, and commonly eaten foods. Cuisines of the world can be influenced by a variety of factors such as religious observance, tradition, superstition, climate, geographic location, cost, or accessibility. Students will examine those influences and the impacts they have on regional cuisines. There will also be a practical cooking component as students will research recipes and reproduce them in their own kitchens. (This course requires that you have access to a kitchen and the ability to get ingredients for your cooking projects.)

**Goal Setting for Greatness:** *How can you use the tools at your fingertips to reach personal, health, and scholastic goals while having fun and using the most popular social media tools?* 'Push yourself, because no one else is going to do it for you.' Have you ever set goals for yourself and got to the point where you weren't able to successfully work towards them? This course is for you! Without goal setting, you will lack focus and direction. Goal setting is a process that starts with careful consideration of what you want to achieve, and ends with a lot of hard work to actually do it. In between, there are some very well-defined steps that transcend the specifics of each goal. During this three week course we will be working together as a team exploring different personal growth practices to reach individual goals. You will be guided through the process of self-development and building healthy habits through daily goal setting, gratitude, and self-awareness through fun interactive activities using social media and various other tools.

**Imagining America:** *How do you imagine America? What is your story to tell?* America is not always what we imagine it to be. How do we reconcile the promise of what America might be with current realities? Where do mythology and reality collide? Through short story readings and screenings, students will gain an appreciation of multicultural view points from diverse voices in America. Students will write their own story, "Imagining America."

**Journey to Self-Discovery:** *What can we learn from journeys in literature and film to help us interpret our own journey in life?* Journeys often lead us to a phase of self-discovery and revelation about the world around us. From the quest of a hero to the growth of a child experiencing adult adventures, the journey is traced in literature, film, and poetry. Such journeys allow the reader and viewer to develop empathy and to observe the trials and tribulations of life. Travelling vicariously with a variety of authors and film directors, this



course explores the development of character during physical and emotional journeys, and will culminate in the creation of the journey story of the student's own.

**Les Misérables:** *What was going on in France when Victor Hugo wrote Les Misérables? What did he set out to capture and convey? Did he achieve his desired outcome? How has the story evolved through different mediums?* In this course, students will learn about what led Victor Hugo to write *Les Misérables*, the book's international reach, and its development and further acclaim as a musical. Students will make connections between the themes of the novel and current socio-political issues. Students will acquire an overview of French politics and history of the 1800s and work to understand who Victor Hugo was and what he set out to accomplish.

**Never Stop Exploring:** *How do you make the most of your travel time, opportunities, and resources to enhance and enrich your knowledge and human experience?* Travel enriches the human spirit. The world is full of opportunities to gain understanding, learn from hands-on experience, interact with different cultures, and enrich your human experience through travel. Travel can be foreign or domestic, but every foray outside of our everyday life expands our perspectives, understanding, and enhances our lives. This course is designed to educate, inform, and inspire world and cultural exploration. Learn to locate, explore, evaluate, and utilize available travel resources and tools to maximize travel adventures including personal travel, family travel, backpacking, study abroad opportunities, and volunteer research travel. Learn from an experienced traveler who has successfully executed travel to over 45 countries and territories, plus domestic travel in over 26 states.

**Open Mic Night!:** *If you could sing one song at an Open Mic Night, what would it be? What does it mean to interpret a song that is not your own? How do you sing someone else's song and make it yours?* Students will learn, interpret, listen, and ultimately, sing and record songs from a variety of music genres, including jazz standards, pop/Disney, rock, decade-specific, and holiday music. Fundamental music terminology and basic singing skills will be reviewed—no experience necessary. Each student will leave with a portfolio of recorded repertoire.

**Post-Katrina New Orleans:** *What went wrong in New Orleans before and after Katrina, and what did we/should we have learned from it?* This course will examine the history and culture of New Orleans, Hurricane Katrina, and the flaws in the city that the hurricane laid bare. David Simon's (The Wire) HBO show *Treme* explores this time and place. We will watch



an episode a day and spend time discussing it in the context of the city. Topics will include: the history of New Orleans; Mardi Gras culture and traditions; emergency response and FEMA; the music of New Orleans; and race and policing.

**Scientific Thinking in Real Life:** *Have you ever wondered how you can apply math and science skills to real life? Do you wish you could go beyond what you've learned in the classroom?* This course, inspired by University of Queensland and Brisbane Grammar School (AUS), will advance your knowledge as we unpack some important scientific thinking skills using real-world examples.

**Social Justice in Documentary Film:** *How can documentary film be used as a tool for social change?* The course will focus on issues of social justice. It will not be about the ins and outs of filmmaking, but the power that film has in shaping thought. It will show direct links between documentaries and societal changes that came from them. In addition to viewing documentaries, students will explore social issues that are important to them and investigate how those issues have been portrayed in documentary film.

**Songwriting:** *How do you write a good, memorable song?* By analyzing the songs of everyone from Bob Dylan to Beyonce, we will discover and explore the necessary elements of songwriting and then learn how to create and combine these elements on our own. We will be spending equal time on the lyrics and the music, while also touching on form, genre, and arrangement. Our songwriters will develop their own writing process, voice and style and then choose one of their songs to be fully produced in the TPACC studio in January. Genres can include pop, rock, country, hip hop, folk and R&B. Any level of experience is welcome.

**Sports: Race, Gender, Identity:** *How do we research and discuss stereotypes, historical precedence, and issues relating to gender, identity, and race in the sports world with a macro and micro lens?* Sports have long been an outlet to express athleticism, energy, and simply, fun. However, the sports world has never been immune to issues, voices, and stereotypes surrounding race, gender and identity. This course will provide students an opportunity to research the complex relationship between race, gender, and identity in sports with specific investigations into Black Lives Matter in the NBA and WNBA, equal pay for the US Women's National Soccer Team, local Connecticut cases regarding transgender high school athletes, among others. Students will have the ability to research and discuss



these topics while examining and reflecting upon their own personal experiences in sports. Guest speakers will share first-hand experiences with students of how they have witnessed these complex relationships or have used their platforms in sports.

**Superheroes for the Moment:** *Why do humans yearn for superheroes? How do our superheroes reflect ourselves? Batman...Iron Man...Captain Marvel? From Beowulf to Wolverine, Hercules to Harry Potter, humans have yearned for superheroes. Why? And why over time do we re-invent them to fit the current moment? This course will examine superheroes in their historical context and what they can tell us about ourselves. Along the way, students can expect to invent a superhero for 2020. "Katniss Everdeen is an updated Theseus."* – Suzanne Collins, author of *The Hunger Games*.

**The Big History Project:** *Where Did We Come From? What Causes Change? Where Are We Heading?* Big History looks at the past from the Big Bang to modernity, seeking out common themes and patterns that can help us better understand people, civilizations, and the world we live in. The purpose of the Big History story is for students to learn how the Universe progressed from something incredibly simple to the most complex lifeforms that we are currently aware of today. While the vast majority of the Universe's history has revolved around the creation of stars, planets, and galaxies, Big History focuses on how humans are connected to everything in the Universe and how humans will deal with the challenges of the future. What makes Big History unique is that it draws upon an even broader array of disciplines, such as chemistry, physics, and astronomy to inform historical analysis. Throughout, students encounter challenging ideas and questions and learn to connect ideas across 13.8 billion years of time and an array of disciplines. Finally, this course emphasizes how one engages with new ideas and information rather than a single set of concepts and facts.

**Thinking like Einstein:** *How can we use Einstein's way of thinking as an inspiration to solve a problem or paradox?* This course will cover some of the most salient moments of the life and work of Albert Einstein. We will watch documentaries and read portions of essays written by Albert Einstein on various topics: science, philosophy, politics, history, etc. Although his scientific theory will be discussed, this class will also include Einstein's ideas on government, the meaning of life, his opinion on freedom and human rights, his personal relationships and his first impression of the USA. Contradictions can be found in all fields of study: contradictions on political views, in science we find plenty of debates that are always welcome, contradictions on a movie, on historical views, in a literature book, and even in



your personal relationships. In the words of Einstein, imagination is more important than knowledge.

**Translation Across Genres:** *How can we express ourselves in more than one language and genre?* Traditional translation entails creating an equivalent in a 'target' language for a text in an original language. In this class, we'll do that, but we'll also work on cross-genre translation, i.e. translations from one mode of expression (like music or photography) to another (like text or dance). Technology allows for the immediate sharing of such hybrid work. Fluency in more than one language is not required but curiosity and a willingness to experiment and share one's work are essential.

**TV Sitcom Script Writing:** *What goes into the full process behind writing a spec script for an existing television sitcom? Why are we drawn to certain sitcoms and their characters? Who wants to watch a lot of television during Thanksgiving week? That is what you will need to do in order to prepare for this course before we get to writing in December.* The course is designed to break down the process of writing a spec script for an existing television sitcom. A spec script is what all aspiring TV writers use as a sample in order to break into the business. We will focus on all of the major components of a TV script, including format, tone, character consistency, dialogue, storylines, and other thematic elements. Students will work in pairs on various writing assignments, culminating in a final project in which they will write most, if not all, of a spec script for a TV sitcom (past or present) of their choice. Peer-to-peer feedback will be as important as teacher feedback, so critical analysis is an important aspect of the course.

**Wilderness - Humans and Nature:** *How does the way we learn to perceive nature determine how we treat it?* We will focus on expedition leadership and planning through the lens of land use and responsible recreation. Students will investigate the complex relationships between humans and the natural world as they identify their personal land ethic. With an eye to the contrast between indigenous care for the land and the colonial use of it, we will look at the history of a few National Parks. We will study the Center for Outdoor Ethics' Leave No Trace principles as we plan and execute an overnight expedition.

**Women & Prison:** *The number of women in United State prisons has skyrocketed 834% in the last four decades. Why?* This course will begin by examining the stereotypes that surround incarcerated women by watching Orange is the New Black, reading news articles,



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and analyzing social media posts. Next, students will learn more about women in the criminal justice system by reading excerpts from *The New Jim Crow* (Michelle Alexander), hearing from experts, and exploring organizations that work specifically with incarcerated women. Students will synthesize what they're reading, what they're watching, what they're hearing, and how they're feeling to develop their own understanding of where stereotypes and perceptions come from and why they matter.