Visual Cultures in Colonial and 19th Century Latin America

Class code: ARTH-UA 9850
Instructor Details: Caroline “Olivia” Wolf
cow3@nyu.edu
Office Hours, by appointment

Class Details: Visual Cultures in Colonial and 19th Century Latin America
MW 5:15 – 6:45 pm
Location to be confirmed.

Prerequisites: No prerequisite required.

Class Description: The course will examine key aspects of Latin American art from the colonial period to the early decades of the twentieth century. Through the analysis of artistic images of Mexico, Peru, Brazil and Argentina, will discuss the role of visual representation in the process of conquest and colonization of the territory in Latin America, and later in the construction and consolidation of national states and regional identities. With the alternation of guided visits to museums in Buenos Aires and classes, students will have the opportunity to learn about artistic languages, techniques, iconography, production systems, and some aspects of Latin American history.

Desired Outcomes: Throughout the course, students will learn about major movements in Latin American Art and Architecture from the Colonial to 19th century Modern eras, and should arrive at its conclusion with the following outcomes:

1) A preliminary understanding of the cultural and historical backgrounds surrounding the eras and movements discussed.
2) Gain familiarity with a wide range of visual representations from the 16th to the 20th centuries in Latin America.
3) Gain the ability to relate Latin American visual culture to the historical processes that shaped the continent’s complex and diverse multi-cultural identities
4) Gain an understanding of how art history, in the analysis of the visual world, transverses all major fields of learning and study--from philosophy, sociology, anthropology, religious studies, music, to the sciences.

Assessment Components
Discussion and Participation (20%), Midterm (25%), Research Progress Presentation (20%), and Final Research Paper (35%).

Discussion and Participation
Classroom participation is an important component of this course. As a supplement to class and museum lectures, students will be expected to assist introducing class readings and discussion each class on a rotating basis, highlighting key ideas and examples of visual culture cited in the text. There will also be brief on-site museum observation exercises that will count toward your participation grade.

Midterm Exam
The mid-term exam will consist of slide identifications of key works highlighted in classroom and museum lectures, the definition of key terms and two essay questions, associated with class discussions and readings.

Research Progress Presentations
The student will present their research in progress for their final research project on a Latin American object, artist or architect to the rest of the class. Each presentation will be approximately 15 minutes long, with time for questions. A 4-5 page visual analysis draft of the selected item for the final research paper will also be due at this time. (This is intended to provide students with early feedback.)

Final Research Paper
Research project on the work of a Latin American artist or architect. This research project includes two parts: a 4-5 pages of formal analysis of a work of art or architecture produced by an artist or architect (your choice) as the subject of your research, with a draft and initial bibliography due on the date of the research progress presentation; and final 10 page (not counting bibliography and illustrations) research paper, which should include a social and political analysis (Due May 15). Students are encouraged to draw from primary sources at local archives, libraries, museum collections and institutions. Papers will be due as scheduled. All written work for this course should be typed in Times or Times New Roman, 12-point font, double-spaced, with 1 inch margins all around. Pages should be numbered, and a separate title page included. Bibliography and footnotes should conform to the Chicago Manual of Style format (reference available in the Reference section of the Library). Reproductions of all images discussed should be labeled and included at the back of the essays. Methodology will be discussed in class. To be graded, your papers must be clearly structured, cogent, well written, and conscientiously edited before being turned in. No late papers accepted without written excuse. All papers should be emailed in PDF format.

Failure to submit or fulfill any required course component results in failure of the class.
Assessment Expectations

**Grade A:** The student makes excellent use of empirical and theoretical material and offers well structured arguments in his/her work. The student writes comprehensive essays / exam questions and his/her work shows strong evidence of critical thought and extensive reading.

**Grade B:** The candidate shows a good understanding of the problem and has demonstrated the ability to formulate and execute a coherent research strategy.

**Grade C:** Work is acceptable and shows a basic grasp of the research problem. However, the work fails to organize findings coherently and is in need of improvement.

**Grade D:** The work passes because some relevant points are made. However, there may be a problem of poor definition, lack of critical awareness, poor research.

**Grade F:** The work shows that the research problem is not understood; there is little or no critical awareness and the research is clearly negligible.

Grade conversion

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Exams and Submission of work

Final Exam dates cannot be changed under any circumstance.

Mid term exam dates will be scheduled with each professor and it must be before the break. Unexcused absences from exams are not permitted and will result in failure of the exam. If you are granted an excused absence from examination (with authorization, as above), your lecturer will decide how you will make-up the assessment component, if at all (by make-up examination, extra coursework, or an increased weighting on an alternate assessment component, etc.).

Written work due in class must be submitted during the class time to the professor.

**Final essays must be submitted to the professor in print and electronic copy.** If the student is not in Buenos Aires, he / she must send a printed copy via express postal mail (i.e. FeDEX, DHL, UPS, etc) to the NYU Center in Buenos Aires – Anchoarena 1314 - (C1425ELF) Argentina. This copy must arrive before or on the date of established deadline.
NYU’s Global Programs (including NYU Buenos Aires) must adhere to a strict policy regarding course attendance. No unexcused absences are permitted.

Each unexcused absence will be penalized by deducting 1% from the student’s final course grade.

Absences are only excused if they are due to illness, religious observance or emergencies.

Absences due to illness or mental health issues must be discussed with the Assistant Director for Academics Affairs, María Pirovano Peña within one week of your return to class.

The date on the doctor’s note must be the date of the missed class or exam.

If students have more than four unexcused absences, they will fail the course.

Each class lasts one hour and half or two hours. Missing one class represents one absence. For those courses that meet once a week (three-hour block), missing one class represents two absences.

Students are responsible for making up any work missed due to absence.

NYU BA also expects students to arrive to class promptly (both at the beginning and after any breaks) and to remain for the duration of the class. Three late arrivals or early departures (10 minutes after the starting time or before the ending time) will be considered one absence. Missing more than 20 minutes of a class will count as a full absence.

Please note that for classes involving a field trip or other external visit, transportation difficulties are never grounds for an excused absence. It is the student’s responsibility to arrive at an agreed meeting point in a punctual and timely fashion.

Make-up classes for Holidays are mandatory as regular scheduled classes.

Students observing a religious holiday during regularly scheduled class time are entitled to miss class without any penalty to their grade. This is for the holiday only and does not include the days of travel that may come before and/or after the holiday. Students must notify their professor and the Office of Academic Support in writing via email one week in advance before being absent for this purpose.

Academic accommodations are available for students with documented disabilities. Please contact the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities at 212-998-4980 or see their website (http://www.nyu.edu/life/safety-health-and-wellness/students-with-disabilities.html) for further information. Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in a class are encouraged to contact the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities at (212) 998-4980 as soon as possible to better ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion. For more information, see Study Away and Disability.

Late work should be submitted in person to the Assistant Director for Academics Affairs during office hours (Mon – Fri, 9.30 am to 5 pm), who will write on the essay or other work the date and time of submission, in the presence of the student. Another member of the administrative staff can accept the work, in person, in the absence of the Assistant Director for Academics Affairs and will write the date and time of submission on the work, as above.
Work submitted within 5 weekdays after the submission time without an agreed extension receives a penalty of 10 points on the 100 point scale.

Written work submitted after 5 weekdays after the submission date without an agreed extension fails and is given a zero.

**Language Courses:** Work submitted within 2 days after the submission time without an agreed extension receives a penalty of 10 points on the 100-point scale. Written work submitted after 2 days after the submission date without an agreed extension fails and is given a zero.

**Please note** end of semester essays must be submitted on time.

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### Plagiarism Policy

**Academic Integrity**

Academic Integrity is intimately related to the teaching and learning process. When writing research papers, you need to keep in mind that plagiarism includes the use of another person’s words, ideas, judgment, images or data as though they were your own, whether intentionally or unintentionally. It also includes presenting and/or paraphrasing discourse or ideas from a published work (in print or on internet) without quotation marks and clear without acknowledgment of the original source.

For formatting in your papers, refer to MLA guidelines.

On matters regarding academic integrity, refer to the section “Academic Standards and Discipline” in the College of Arts and Science Bulletin [http://bulletin.cas.nyu.edu/page/academic.policies#STANDARDS](http://bulletin.cas.nyu.edu/page/academic.policies#STANDARDS) and to “Statement on Academic Integrity” in NYU Expository Writing Program: Policies and Procedures: [http://www.nyu.edu/cas/ewp/html/policies___procedures.html#statementacademicintegrity](http://www.nyu.edu/cas/ewp/html/policies___procedures.html#statementacademicintegrity)

All your written work must be submitted as a hard copy AND in electronic form to the instructor.

It is expected that the student follow the rules on academic honesty and intellectual integrity established by NYU University.

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### Required Text(s)

Readings will be posted on the course website, but if you are interested in the study of the region, you may want to own some of the books from which many of our readings are drawn.


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### Supplemental Texts(s)

Primary sources, articles and visual materials are available electronically:

- **Maps:** [https://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/historical/history_americas.html](https://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/historical/history_americas.html)
- See also: [https://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/map_sites/hist_sites.html#americas](https://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/map_sites/hist_sites.html#americas)

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The use of Blackberrys, phones and IPods in class are forbidden. Laptops to be used for notes or class-related research discussions only. It is recommended to bring cameras and note-taking materials to museum visits.

**Internet & Equipment**

**Schedule**

**Week 1**

M- Feb. 6:

Class Introductions, Syllabus, Visual Analysis & Historiography  
(Note: we will visit the Biblioteca Nacional during next class, please bring ID.)

**UNIT 1:** From Colonial Art to Independence

W- Feb. 8:

Colonial Contexts & Intro to Local Resources  
VISIT to the Biblioteca Nacional / Museo de la Lengua (Be sure to bring ID. We will meet for class lecture, then travel to library for last portion of the class.)

F- Feb. 10:

Make up class for Monday, February 27 (Holiday).  
Regional, Religious and Ethnic Representations of Encounter  
READ: Gauvin Bailey, "Chapter 1, First Encounters: The Pre-Hispanic World and the Colonial Scene," in *Art Of Colonial Latin America*, pp. 19-68;


**Week 2**

Arts, Architectures and Identities

M- Feb. 13

Colonial Culture and Indigeneity  


W- Feb. 15

MUSEUM VISIT to Museo de Arte Hispanoamericano "Isaac Fernández Blanco", Suipacha 1422.  
Colonial Architecture  

**Week 3**

Colonial Case Studies

M- Feb. 20

Mexico & Peru  

**T- Feb. 21**  
NYU BA Lecture on Carnaval (Makeup day for May 8).  

**W- Feb. 22**  
Argentina, Paraguay & Brazil  

**Week 4**  
**M- Feb. 27**  
Holiday. No regular class.  
**W- March 1**  
MUSEUM VISIT to Museo Ethnografico, calle Moreno 350. Meet at museum.  
Indigenous cultures and Colonial contexts  

**UNIT 2:**  
**The First Moderns**

**Week 5**  
**M- March 6**  
Revolutionary Visual Culture  
READ: Chasteen, Chapter 3, Independence, in *Born in Blood & Fire: A Concise History of Latin America*, pp. 87-114;  
ADES, Chapter 1, “Independence and its Heroes.”

**W- March 8**  
Early Modern Academies in Latin America  
READ: ADES, Chapter 2 “Academies and History Painting,”  

**Week 6**  
Travel Narratives and Artistic Missions  
**M- March 13**  
Humboldt, Vidal, Rugendas, and Debret  
Hispanic Enlightenment,” Postcolonial Studies, vol. 12, no.4, pp.441-466.


W- March 15 Constructing Modern Identity— Costumbrismo and Ethnic Representation


F- March 17 MAKEUP DAY for Monday, May 1. Midterm Review

Week 7 Midterm and Museum Visit

M-March 20 Midterm Exam

W- March 22 MUSEUM VISIT to the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes [MNBA].

Gender, Landscape and Nation


Laura Malosetti Costa, “Poetic Painting in Picturesque Poetry between Literature and Visual Arts in the Emergence of National Symbolic Repertoires in the XIX Century River Plate Area.”

Week 8 SPRING BREAK. Holiday, NYU / NYU BA offices closed, March 24- April 2.

Week 9 Picturing Identity

M- April 3 Constructing Modern Identity— Heroes

Guest Lecture: Carolina Vanegas


UNIT 3 Modernity Remixed— Breaks and Bridges in Visual Culture in the 20th – 21st century

W- April 5

The Centennial Era across Latin America and its Visual Expressions (1910)

READ: Natalia Majluf, “‘Ce N’est Pas le Perou,’ or the Failure of Authenticity: Marginal Cosmopolitans at the Paris Universal Exhibition of 1855,” Critical Enquiry, vol. 23 no. 4, 868–893.

Make up day for Monday, Week 15

Photography

Brizuela, Natalia. “‘Curiosity! Wonder!! Horror!!! Misery!!!!’ The Campanha de Canudos, or the Photography of History”, Qui Parle 15.2 (Fall 2005): 139-169

Week 10

Modernisms and National Identity

M - April 10
Modernismo and Early Twentieth Century Vanguards (Argentina and Uruguay)
READ: Ades, Chapter 6, “Modernism and the Search for Roots” and Manifesto 6.11,
Ades, "The Southern School, Joaquín Torres-García, "Arte Madi/Arte Concreto Invención;"

Pedro Figari, “Regional Autonomy” [1924], in Patrick Frank (ed.), Readings in Latin American Modern Art (Yale University Press, 2008), 14–16.

W- April 12
Brazil’s Semana de Arte Moderna and New Debates on Abstraction


Week 11

Revolutions in Modernism

Surrealism
READ: Barnitz, Twentieth Century Art of Latin America, Ch. 4.


W- Apr. 19
MUSEUM VISIT: Museo del Bicentenario (Pending re-opening)
The Mexican Muralists and Impact Across Latin America

David Siqueiros, “Toward a Transformation of the Plastic Arts.”

Week 12

M- Apr. 24
RESEARCH PROGRESS PRESENTATIONS / Visual Analysis and Bibliography Drafts due

T- Apr. 25
Religion in Latin America NYU BA lecture (Makeup lecture for May 10)

W- Apr 26
Abstraction: Concrete & Neoconcrete Art
READ: Barnitz, Ch. 8 and Ch.9

Your Instructor

Interested in transnational imaginaries, my research explores issues of immigration and identity in the visual culture and built environment of Latin America. My dissertation focuses on the art and architecture of Arab-speaking diaspora communities in modern Argentina as a response to nationalist discourses. I also examine the contemporary patronage and artistic production of immigrant communities and
refugees throughout Latin America today. I have also analyzed the costumbrismo movement in 19th century Peru as well as the twentieth-century architecture of Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Uruguay. In 2013-2014, I served as the Camfield Fellow in the Latin American curatorial department of the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston (MFAH). My research has been funded by Fulbright-Hays DDRA fellowship, the Brown Foundation Research Award, a SAHARA travel award from the Society of Architectural Historians (SAH) and the Wagoner Foreign Study Scholarship. Prior to becoming a Ph.D. candidate at Rice University, I received my MA in the History of Art at Indiana University in 2011 and BFA from the University of Notre Dame in 2001.

For select publications, please see: https://rice.academia.edu/CarolineWolf