



**Universität  
Zürich** UZH

**Institute of Art History**

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## **Guidelines**

**Master Art History in a Global Context  
Specialized Master's study program**

Chair for History of Early Modern Art

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## **Precautionary Remark: Legal Foundation**

Please note that the guidelines and the information that they contain are not legally binding. The Office of Student Affairs provides you with all necessary information about the planning and orientation in your studies:

<https://www.phil.uzh.ch/de/studium/rechtsgrundlagen.html>

[https://www.phil.uzh.ch/de/studium/rechtsgrundlagen/rechtsgrundlagen\\_master.html](https://www.phil.uzh.ch/de/studium/rechtsgrundlagen/rechtsgrundlagen_master.html)

The most important documents are briefly explained in the table.

Table 1: Documents about the program

Document	Explanation
Framework ordinance	The Framework ordinance governing Bachelor's and Master's degree programs at the Faculty of Arts and Social Science (RVO PhF) of the University of Zurich sets the legal basis for study in Bachelor's and Master's degree programs of the PhF.
Study regulations at the Faculty of Arts and Social Science	The study regulations contain regulations for the implementation of the framework ordinance. It consists of a general part and of program-specific annexes. The general part regulates the cross-program aspects of study.
Program-specific annexes to the study regulations	The Program-specific annexes to the study regulations contain regulations for the individual programs. The core element of every annex is the curriculum. It contains information about the content structure of the program and its formal requirements. Formal requirements regulate the choice of the modules. They establish how many ECTS credit points have to be acquired in the different content-fields of the program. The program-specific annexes also contain possible combination restrictions and, in the case of master programs, admission requirements
Module catalogue	The module catalogue includes all modules permanently offered in the program and their description. Additional information about the current semester can be found in the course catalogue.
Sample curriculum	The sample curriculum shows one possible way to complete the program within the standard period of study. The sample is not mandatory and studies can be also organized differently.
Guidelines to individual programs	The guidelines contain information about the specific features of a program and serve as a guide for studies. The guidelines have an explanatory, non-regulatory character.
Guidelines for studying at the PhF	The Office of Student Affairs provides information about the framework ordinance and study regulations (e.g. deregistration from exams, module booking, thesis registration, validation of external achievements, etc.). The information is intended to support students in using the program-specific documents (appendix to the study regulations, sample curriculum, module catalog and course catalog) efficiently for planning their studies.

Please note: The above table is a legally non-binding translation of the official German document. For further details, please consult the official documents on the website of the Office of Students Affairs.

## Welcome

Welcome to the Specialized Master *Art History in a Global Context*.

The increasing mobility of people, goods, and information generated by globalization has drawn the attention on the central role of inter-relational aspects of life and culture. At the same time, digital technology provides a progressively broader access to ideas and artefacts of different cultures. These changes confront art history with the necessity to open its scope to diverse cultural productions and transcultural phenomena. A global perspective underscores the need to address new questions in respect to the artistic productions of the past and of the present, rethinking the identity of art history as a discipline, in order to ensure its relevance for the future.

What are the main issues and challenges of art history in a global context? How do global perspectives influence art historical practices and institutions, such as museums and the art market? How can art history rethink traditional categories such as “high” and “low”, “center” and “periphery”, and integrate the diversity of local aesthetic practices and discourses into a broader perspective?

By developing new fields of research and methodological approaches aware of post-colonial thinking, a global art history encourages to rethink traditional narratives, such as national historiographies based on European conceptions of time and space and on the notions of style and territory. An art history considered in a global perspective probes traditional forms of knowledge production in their political, social, and economic framework. It expands its discourse to include phenomena of transmission, translation, circulation, and exchange, as well as the lives of objects and their itineraries across time or space. It explores the national, ethnic, and cultural identities of artists and artworks, opening views onto the issues of hybridity or “in-betweenness”.

Art history considered in a global context works in interdisciplinary dialogue with other disciplines, such as anthropology, ethnography, gender studies, philosophy, political studies, visual and material studies, among many others.

## **About the Program**

### **1 Master *Art History in a Global Context***

#### **1.1 Program Objectives**

Participants study the history, the materials and production techniques of artworks from a global perspective, in relation to transcultural phenomena and decolonial thinking. They reflect key terms and theoretical approaches, develop specific methodologies, and contribute to current debates with international visiting faculty members. The program extends the traditional curriculum of European Art History toward non-western art.

The specialized Master is taught entirely in English and hosts every year new visiting faculty members. During the past years, international lecturers have contributed to the program. The coursework is based on seminars and lecture courses and combines a strong theoretical framework with direct engagements with original objects in museums and field trips in Switzerland and abroad.

Central to the teaching methodology is the scholarly cooperation and exchange with other chairs and departments of the University of Zurich as well as of other universities in Switzerland and abroad. Collaboration with local institutions, such as the Rietberg Museum or the Kunsthaus, allow to expand the horizon of the program beyond university-based art history to questions of conservation and curatorial practices.

The Master program prepares the candidates for a wide range of career opportunities among the field of art history. It is designed as a preparation for PhD level studies as a first step into an academic career as well as for a professional development in museums, in the art market or cultural management. Additional professional opportunities range from the field of conservation, to public cultural management, tourism, education, or journalism.

#### **1.2 Structure**

The Master program covers a period of two years, during which 90 ECTS credits must be acquired, of which 30 ECTS credits are achieved through the Master thesis. A minimum of 18 ECTS credits is to be achieved in both module groups, "Theories" and "Spaces" of global art history. At least 3 ECTS credits should be acquired from cross-disciplinary courses, such as language courses.

#### **Degree**

Master of Arts UZH

#### **Language of instruction**

English

### 1.3 Combination with a Minor Program

*Art History in a Global Context* is a Major program (90 ECTS credits) and can be combined with any Minor (30 ECTS credits) of the UZH. This includes other art historical programs – History of Art or East Asian Art History – or interdisciplinary combinations with the programs in Archaeology, Cultural Analysis, Eastern European History, Film Studies, Gender Studies, Iberian-Romance Literatures, Islamic Studies, Philosophy, Political Studies, Sociology and many more.

### 1.4 Admission Requirements

*This translation is for orientation purposes only. In case of contradictions or differences the German version shall apply (see [https://www.phil.uzh.ch/dam/jcr:915eae20-ec97-454c-82c7-4fce008f3abb/STO\\_06M-7645-090\\_HS21.pdf](https://www.phil.uzh.ch/dam/jcr:915eae20-ec97-454c-82c7-4fce008f3abb/STO_06M-7645-090_HS21.pdf)).*

The admission to the Specialized Master's study program Art History in a Global context requires above-average performance in the field of study «Art History», a substantial motivation letter, and an oral interview. Candidates who studied in the required field of study «Art History» but don't have the required specialized expertise are admitted with restrictions. Candidates without a Bachelor's degree in the required field of study may be admitted to the study program on a case by case decision if they meet the following profile requirements:

Profile requirements: An admission to the Specialized Master's Major study program Art History in a Global Context requires 60 ECTS Credits in relevant specialized knowledge of contents of Art History. Candidates without the required knowledge receive restrictions.

#### Application

Fall semester: 1 January – 30 April

Spring semester: 1 July – 30 November

Candidates coming from the University of Zurich need to apply through the UZH Application Portal. Please note the application period for changing study program or moving straight from a Bachelor's to a Master's program inside the University of Zurich:

<https://www.students.uzh.ch/en/administration/subjectchange.html>

### 1.5 Module Groups

The program is structured around two main module groups, "Theories" and "Spaces" of global art history.

#### 1. Module Group: **Theories of Global Art History**

This module group is dedicated to theories and discourses that have been shaping the field of global studies from their early beginning until today. It includes the modules "Elements of Art History in a Global Context", "Current Discourses in Global Art History" and "Transcultural Methods and Post-colonial Theories".

Through the reading and discussion of seminal writings in transcultural studies and postcolonial thinking students examine relevant positions and methodological approaches for the field of global art history in a transhistorical and interdisciplinary perspective. They become acquainted with terminology and key concepts developed in different disciplinary contexts and learn how to test their epistemic potential and limits in relation to art historical analysis.

## 2. Module Group: **Spaces of Global Art History**

The module group complements the first one through the analysis of case-studies and more practice-oriented courses. The group comprises the modules “Area Studies”, “Social and Institutional Contexts”, “Transregional Perspectives” and “Field Study Trip”.

The module group provides insights into both the artistic local production of specific geographical areas examined under thematic focal points and the transcultural interaction of particular geographical sites with other regions. Art historical phenomena are considered in a network of cultural connections than can embrace different epochs and artistic media, with a focus on the mobility of people, materials and ideas and the biographies of artistic artifacts. The module group also includes the study of social political aspects of art and art history as well as the institutionalization of knowledge in museums, collections, exhibitions, archives, books, and educational facilities. Integral part of the module group are also field trips that aim to explore a city or region through the lens of a site-specific problematic and the encounter with original artworks, local cultural production, and architecture.

## 3. Module Group: **Extracurricular Modules**

Among the modules outside the program that can be integrated in the curriculum are language courses or other cross-listed courses from the Institute of Art History and other Institutes of the University of Zurich.

## 4. Module Group: **Final Modules**

The “Final Modules” group comprises a research colloquium and the master thesis. In the research colloquium students have the possibility to present and discuss their independent research together with doctoral candidates, postdocs and professors involved in the program. The Master’s thesis is a written research paper supervised by one of the professors of the Institute of Art History, which covers two semesters.

Further information about the modules can be found in the module catalogue of the Master’s program: [https://www.phil.uzh.ch/de/studium/rechtsgrundlagen/rechtsgrundlagen\\_master.html](https://www.phil.uzh.ch/de/studium/rechtsgrundlagen/rechtsgrundlagen_master.html)

## 1.6 Mobility

During the two years program, candidates have the possibility to strengthen their skills and expand their competences by spending a semester abroad. The collaborations between the program and international universities and institutions provides a starting point for the creation of mobility opportunities.

Further information about programs and funding:

<https://www.khist.uzh.ch/en/studium/mobil.html>

<https://www.uzh.ch/en/studies/mobility.html>

## 2 Contact

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