

Art and Authenticity

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Humanities Seminars

Fridays, 10:00-12:00

September 6, 13, 20, 27, October 4, and 11*, 2024

(*additional optional museum visit—date TBD)

About this course:

“Is this real?” Museum professionals periodically get this question, where wide-eyed visitors are struck by the reality that they are face-to-face with authentic works of art. But what exactly does it mean for an artwork to be considered real, authentic, or original? Are there certain traits or characteristics that tell us so? What happens to a work of art that is deemed inauthentic? Does it no longer have value? These questions will guide us as we investigate concepts of authenticity and originality related to the visual arts. Using various case studies, we will examine originals, copies, replicas, forgeries, appropriated works and more. Throughout the course we will consider how these objects hold value and the ways in which those value systems are dependent on the type of object, the creator, the culture, and the time period.

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

- Identify and articulate issues related to authenticity and originality
- Situate the concept and value of authenticity within cultural structures
- Consider how matters of authenticity and originality affect market value and “collectability”

Readings:

Readings will be assigned for all classes and should be read in advance of the class session. There are no textbooks to buy. All readings will be posted on the course website.

Schedule:

September 6: Authenticity and Originality: A Background

Readings:

- Walter Benjamin, *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, 1935.
- Zeller, Christoph. “Language of Immediacy: Authenticity as a Premise in Benjamin’s ‘The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility.’” *Monatshefte* 104, no. 1 (2012): 70–85.
- Gilmour, Pat. “On Originality.” *Print Quarterly* 25, no. 1 (2008): 36–50.
- George E. Newman and Paul Bloom, “Art and Authenticity: The Importance of Originals in Judgments of Value,” *Journal of Experimental Psychology*, 2012 Vo. 141, No. 3 558-569.

September 13: Authenticity and Art Attribution

Readings:

- College Art Association, *AUTHENTICATIONS AND ATTRIBUTIONS*, adopted by the Board of Directors on October 25, 2009.
- Bolz, A. (2023). "Fraud, Forgery and Authentication." In: *A Regulatory Framework for the Art Market?. Studies in Art, Heritage, Law and the Market*, vol 7. Springer, Cham.
- Aminatedoleh, Leila, "Are You Faux Real? An Examination of Art Forgery and the Legal Tools Protecting Art Collectors" (May 26, 2015). *Cardozo Arts & Entertainment Law Journal*, Vol. 34, No. 1 (Spring 2016).
- Oliveri, V., Porter, G., Davies, C., & James, P. (2022). "Art crime: the challenges of provenance, law and ethics." *Museum Management and Curatorship*, 37(2), 179–195.
- Kim S, Park SM, Bak S, Kim GH, Kim C-S, Jun J, et al. (2022) "Investigation of craquelure patterns in oil paintings using precise 3D morphological analysis for art authentication." *PLoS ONE* 17(7): e0272078.

Optional Listen:

- <https://artlawpodcast.com/2023/09/06/what-can-artificial-intelligence-offer-art-authentication/>

September 20: Copies, Replicas, and Market Value

Readings:

- Brilliant, Richard. "Roman Copies: Degrees of Authenticity." *Notes in the History of Art* 24, no. 2 (2005): 19–27.
- Isaac, Gwyneira. "Whose Idea Was This?: Museums, Replicas, and the Reproduction of Knowledge." *Current Anthropology* 52, no. 2 (2011): 211–33.
- Mattusch, Carol C. "In Search of the Greek Bronze Original." *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome*. Supplementary Volumes 1 (2002): 99–115.
- Spear, Richard E. "Di Sua Mano." *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome*. Supplementary Volumes 1 (2002): 79–98.
- College Art Association, STATEMENT ON STANDARDS FOR THE PRODUCTION AND REPRODUCTION OF SCULPTURE, adopted by the Board of Directors on February 17, 2013.

September 27: Fakes and Forgeries

Readings:

- Wolz, Stefanie H., and Claus-Christian Carbon. "What's Wrong with an Art Fake? Cognitive and Emotional Variables Influenced by Authenticity Status of Artworks." *Leonardo* 47, no. 5 (2014): 467–73.
- Bowden, Ross. "What Is 'Authentic' Aboriginal Art?" *Pacific Arts*, no. 23/24 (2001): 1–10.

- Justnes, Årstein, Melissa Sayyad Bach, Søren Holst, and Jesper Høgenhaven. "Fake Fragments, Flexible Provenances: Eight Aramaic 'Dead Sea Scrolls' from the 21st Century." In *Vision, Narrative, and Wisdom in the Aramaic Texts from Qumran: Essays from the Copenhagen Symposium*, 14-15 August, 2017, edited by Mette Bundvad and Kasper Siegismund, 131:242–72. Brill, 2020.
- Cohen, Paula Marantz. "The Meanings of Forgery." *Southwest Review* 97, no. 1 (2012): 12–25.

October 4: Appropriation: Inspiration or Infringement?

Readings:

- Young, James O. "Art, Authenticity and Appropriation." *Frontiers of Philosophy in China* 1, no. 3 (2006): 455–76.
- Heyd, Thomas. "Rock Art Aesthetics and Cultural Appropriation." *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 61, no. 1 (2003): 37–46.
- Cohen, Joshua I. "Fauve Masks: Rethinking Modern 'Primitivist' Uses of African and Oceanic Art, 1905–8." *The Art Bulletin* 99, no. 2 (2017): 136–65.
- Eechoud, Mireille van. "Adapting the Work." In *The Work of Authorship*, edited by Mireille van Eechoud, 145–74. Amsterdam University Press, 2014.

October 11: Authenticity in Representation and Display

Readings:

- Aurélie J. Debaene, "The Truthful Portrait: Can Posing Be a Tool for Authenticity in Portraiture?" *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 2021, 79, 440–451.
- Hackforth-Jones, Jos, "'Authentic' Identities: Cross-cultural Portrayals in the Late Eighteenth Century." *Art and Authenticity*. New York: Lund Humphries, 2012. 138-153.
- Braddock, Alan C. and Karl Kusserow, "Introduction," *Nature's Nation: American Art and Environment*. N.p., 2018.
- Kim, David Young, ed. *Authenticity and Art as Object: A Handbook of Terms*, Department of the History of Art: Philadelphia, 2017.

Week of October 14 (date TBD): Optional visit to UA Museum of Art

- Special viewing of fakes, forgeries, posthumous casts, restrikes, and more