

The History of Art in Cambridge Collections

Cambridge has been a cultural centre of Europe for 800 years. Its art collections are among the best in the world. From the Museum of Classical Archaeology to the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, the Fitzwilliam Museum to Kettle's Yard, they hold significant artworks and artefacts that illustrate the history of western civilisation. This course will survey the history of art by drawing on Cambridge's rich collections. As far as possible, discussions will take place in those collections in front of the artworks themselves. The overview will cover sculptures from classical antiquity, illuminated medieval manuscripts, Renaissance paintings, Impressionist masterpieces, modern landmarks, and non-western art. No previous knowledge of art history is required. Teaching will be based on objects, so some standing and walking will be required.

Course structure:

1. Lecture: An Introduction to the History of Art through Cambridge Collections
2. Visit: Classical Art, 2000BCE–300CE: Museum of Classical Archaeology
3. Visit: Middle Ages to Impressionism, 1450–1830: Fitzwilliam Museum
4. Visit: The Art of the Book, 1450–1830: Cambridge University Library OR Non-Western Art and Artefacts: Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology
5. Visit: Modern and Contemporary Art: Kettle's Yard

NB: The order of collection visits is subject to change, depending on availability.

Elizabeth Savage took her PhD in History of Art at King's College, Cambridge and now is a Lecturer at the University of London. Her research explores how medieval and renaissance prints were made and used, but she is passionate about the history of art in all of its forms. She lectures and publishes widely, and her publications and research have won international awards.