



# Modern & Contemporary Art

History, Curating and Criticism – MSc  
History of Art Department,  
University of Edinburgh

## Study in Scotland for your postgraduate degree.

Offered in one of the largest, oldest and most research-focused art history departments in the UK, set in a culturally rich capital city, the MSc in Modern and Contemporary Art provides in-depth understanding of art and its contexts of interpretation and mediation.

The programme focuses on the period from the 19th to the 21st century, spanning from the historical avant-gardes to the latest trends of contemporary art.

Through two core courses and a wide range of option courses, you will acquire solid knowledge of art in the covered period and of how artworks are mediated to the public through curating, exhibition making and event organising.

Email our Program Director  
with any questions:

Dr Tamara Trodd,  
[Tamara.Trodd@ed.ac.uk](mailto:Tamara.Trodd@ed.ac.uk)





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# Introductions

Dr Tamara Trodd (Tamara.Trodd@ed.ac.uk)

Senior Lecturer in Modern and Contemporary Art History

Programme Director, Modern and Contemporary Art: History,  
Curating, Criticism, MSc



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## A world top 20 university

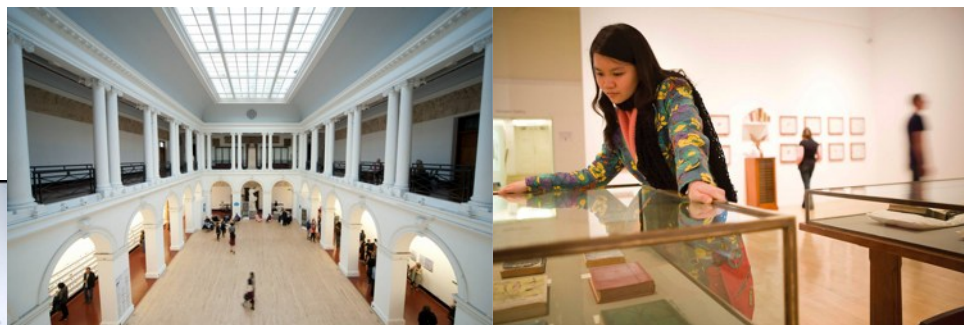







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# STAFF PROFILES

<https://www.ed.ac.uk/people?search-keyword=&search-options=207&more-search-options=All&school=3>


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Menu



**George Agbo**  
Lecturer in the Arts of Africa  
[gagbo@ed.ac.uk](mailto:gagbo@ed.ac.uk)




**Professor Patricia Allmer**  
Professor of Modern and Contemporary Art History  
PGR Director, History of Art  
[Patricia.Allmer@ed.ac.uk](mailto:Patricia.Allmer@ed.ac.uk)  
[+44 \(0\) 131 651 7112](tel:+44201316517112)



**Dr Glaire Anderson**  
Senior Lecturer in Islamic Art  
Founding Director, Digital Lab for Islamic Visual Culture & Collections  
[glaire.anderson@ed.ac.uk](mailto:glaire.anderson@ed.ac.uk)  
[+44 \(0\)131 651 7112](tel:+44201316517112)  
Research interests

- Islamic visual culture in Scottish collections
- Video games and digital cultural heritage



**Dr Jess Bailey**  
Lecturer in Premodern Art  
[Jess.Bailey@ed.ac.uk](mailto:Jess.Bailey@ed.ac.uk)

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- Largest History of Art department outside of London, second largest in the UK
- World-leading research and research-led teaching
- Thriving postgraduate community
  - MSc History of Art, Theory and Display
  - MSc Global Premodern Art: History, Heritage and Curation (\*new\*)
  - MSc Modern and Contemporary Art: History, Curating and Criticism
  - MSc by Research: Collections and Curating Practices

**Staff Profiles:**



# History of Art Research Seminars

<https://www.eca.ed.ac.uk/history-art-research-seminar-series>

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2025/26

18 September 2025 | **Dr Kuang-Yi Ku** | *2025 Spotlight Taiwan Project - Challenging Biomedical Paradigm through Art and Design* | 17:15 - 18:30 GMT | [View event >](#)

25 September 2025 | **Prof. Richard J. Williams** | *The Expressway World* | 17:15 - 18:30 GMT | [View event >](#)

2 October 2025 | **Dr Francesca Berry** | *Atelier-Chambre and Chambre: The Sexual Politics of Intimiste Space* | 17:15 - 18:30 GMT | [View event >](#)

9 October 2025 | **Dr Carly Boxer** | *Pictures of Health: Medicine, the Body and its Image in Late Medieval England* | 17:15 - 18:30 GMT | [View event >](#)

14 October 2025 | **Dr Verónica Uribe Hanabergh** | *The Art in Translation Lecture - Restitution, Repatriation and Return in Latin America: Understanding Multiple Perspectives through National Case Studies* | 17:15 - 18:30 GMT | [View event >](#)

17 October 2025 | **Dr Daisy Black** | *Yde and Olive: A Medieval Love Story* | 17:15 - 19:00 GMT | [View event >](#)

23 October 2025 | **Dr Louise C. De Mello** | *Lessons from Latin America: Weaving Relationships and Reconciling Colonial Legacies through Museum Collections* | 17:15 - 18:30 GMT | [View event >](#)

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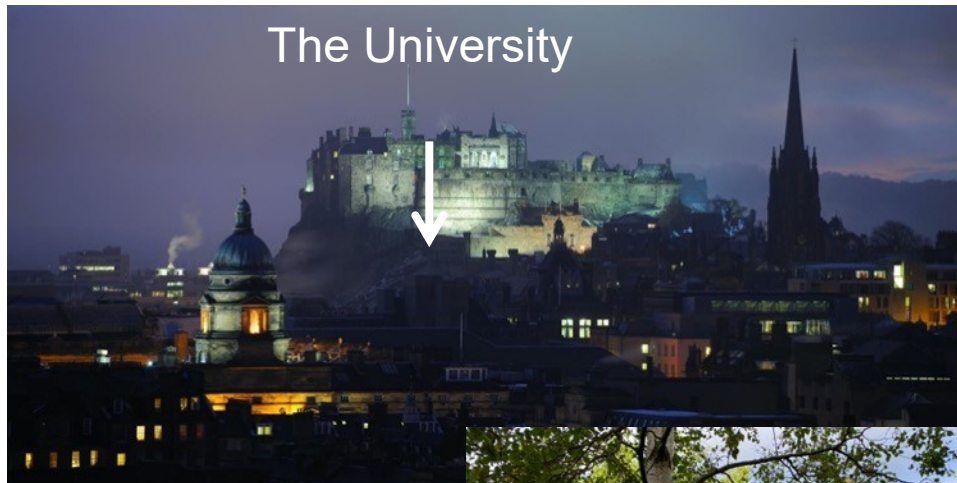
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## The MSc MoCA is offered by the School of History of Art at the ECA Campus





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## University of Edinburgh Special Collections

The Special Collections include also a Contemporary Art Research Collection taking 'Globalisation' as its theme – a theme addressed in MSc MoCA.



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## Talbot Rice Gallery

The University's public gallery. Unique historical context. Collaborations and notable contemporary art exhibitions, including *Borderlines* (2019), *At the Gates* (2019), and showcasing also leading individual artists.

Visit: <https://www.trg.ed.ac.uk/exhibitions>



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# Online Learning Resources

The Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) hosts sites for each course you are enrolled on. These sites contain learning materials, such as reading lists, presentations, lecture recordings and other class-related information. They also contain useful information on student support initiatives and University regulations. Our online resources also enable contact with lecturers and student support staff. The **Institute for Academic Development** offers special postgraduate courses also online to assist students with essay writing and doing their best.



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## MSc MoCA overview

- Two core courses that focus on research in the field, one in each semester: Research Theories & Methods (Semester 1) and The Cultures and Politics of Display (Semester 2)
- Many electives/option courses (these vary annually)
- Dissertation
- Optional Work Placements in a range of contexts
- Contact time with the Fellow in Contemporary Art Theory and Curating (as part of the Semester 2 core course)
- Excellent resources and research context, including extracurricular Research Seminars and Research Clusters events
- Academic staff: leading researchers shaping the field, many with experience in curating
- Taught courses conclude at the end of March or early April. In the remaining months, students research and write the Dissertation.
- No exams! Assessment is based on essay writing.
- A popular Masters, currently having around 45 students



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# Option courses

**You take two in each semester**

- Contemporary Artists' Film and Video
- Women Artists and Surrealism
- Impressionism and the Third Republic: Culture, Politics & Social Change
- Battleground: 19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> -century African American Portraits
- The Aesthetics of Difference: Postcolonial Perspectives from the 19<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> Century
- Art and Society in the Contemporary World: China
- The Need to Document: Contemporary Art from Performance to Biopolitics
- Art & Digital Culture
- Art, Culture & Inequality
- The Modern Art Museum
- Modern and Contemporary Art of the Black Atlantic Scottish Art since the 1960s
- Work Placement in a cultural institution\* (awarded on a competitive basis. If you take this, you only choose one option course in Semester 2)





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## Work Placements

Our optional Work Placements are a popular feature of our programme. These are limited and offered on a competitive basis, as available placements in the sector vary annually. The primary aim is to introduce students to a working environment related to art and/or art history, or culture more broadly. Placements are arranged in appropriate host institutions in or near Edinburgh.

Students are offered appropriate, academically related tasks, such as cataloguing, indexing, helping to prepare and install an exhibition, drawing up a publicity or education leaflet, or researching conservation case histories. Upon completion of the Work Placement, students write and present an Work Placement Report.



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## Dissertation

15,000 words, based on an original research proposal submitted by you, the student. The proposal/topic *must* relate to the Masters content. The dissertation will be the most exciting part of your programme of study, where you will take control of your research and we will help you achieve your goal. You progress to the supervised dissertation *after* you have completed the taught part of the course.

Our staff having expertise in a range of subjects means you can research an extremely broad range of topics. The dissertation helps many students understand whether they wish to carry on to doctoral research but it also offers a specialism to those who want to opt for a career straight after the Masters.



## What do our students say?

“I couldn't recommend this course enough for anyone with an interest in modern and contemporary art history and its theoretical underpinnings. My experience here over two years of part-time study has been one of careful progression and development, that quickly paved the way for an ever-growing interest in theory, culminating in the desire to take my studies further at PhD level.”

**Norbert Hajas**, part-time student from the UK,

“The wide range of subjects and accompanying lectures is truly incredible and allows students to explore many different directions and interests. Thanks to the highly knowledgeable lecturers, I have a solid theoretical basis with which to embark on my future with confidence.”

**Alina Grehl**, full-time student from Germany



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... and advice if you decide to apply:

- Ensure that your Personal Statement presents your academic background and/or relevant experience; shows an understanding of the MSc; shows that you understand the challenges and benefits of studying at postgraduate level
- Obtain an academic reference in good time

# LIST OF WORK PLACEMENT HOSTS (varies year to year):

- Gallery of Modern Art, Glasgow
- Glasgow's Women's Library
- National Galleries/Portrait
- National Library/Rare Books
- National Museums Scotland
- National Trust/Pollock House
- National Trust/Gladstone's Land
- Royal Scottish Academy
- Talbot Rice Gallery
- The Alasdair Gray Archive
- Fruitmarket Gallery
- *Journal Art in Translation*
- Creative Carbon Scotland



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**THANK YOU!**



Melanie Gilligan, *The Common Sense*, 2015,  
University of Edinburgh Contemporary Art  
Research Collection

**Any Questions?**





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History of Art

Admissions queries: [futurestudents@ed.ac.uk](mailto:futurestudents@ed.ac.uk)



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