

Advocating for Art History

Edited by

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Series on the History of Art



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Abbreviations

“2+2”	Combined undergraduate (Bachelor’s) degree in which the first two years are completed at a different institution than the final two years.
3C	Cross-Cultural Competence (United States Department of Defense).
A-Level	Advanced Level qualification; United Kingdom subject-based high school qualification.
AAH	Association for Art History (United Kingdom).
AAM	American Alliance of Museums.
AAUP	American Association of University Professors.
ACRL	Association of College & Research Libraries.
AHA	American Historical Association (United States).
AHRC	Arts and Humanities Research Council (United Kingdom).
AI	Artificial Intelligence (throughout the volume this refers to generative technologies).
AP	A “College Board” curricular program offering college-level courses and exams for American high school students.
APA	American Philosophical Association.
AQA	The largest UK exam board; formerly “Assessment and Qualifications Alliance.”
APS	Academic Performance Solution.
AVLC	Applied Visual Literacy Curriculum.
BA	Bachelor of Arts undergraduate degree.
BAFA	Bachelor of Arts in Fine Arts.
BLS	Bureau of Labor Statistics (United States).
CAA	College Art Association.
CAS	College of Arts and Sciences.
CAUT	Canadian Association of University Teachers.

CIP	Classification of Instructional Programs.
DEI	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.
DH	Digital Humanities.
DMA	Dallas Museum of Art.
DoD	Department of Defense (United States).
EAB	Education Advisory Board (Educational Consulting Firm).
ECH	“Equated” or “Equivalent” Credit Hours.
ED	United States Department of Education.
FDC	Faculty Development Center.
First Gen	First-generation college student.
GenAI	Generative Artificial Intelligence.
GP	General practitioner (medical professional).
GPA	Grade point average.
HEADS	Higher Education Arts Data Services.
HEI	Higher Education Institutions.
HERD	Higher Education Research and Development Survey.
HERS	Higher Education Resource Services.
HSI	Hispanic-Serving Institution.
IPEDS	Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System.
IR	Institutional Research.
IT	Information Technology.
JSPE	Jefferson Scale of Physician Empathy.
JSE	Jefferson Scale of Empathy.
K-12	Kindergarten through 12th Grade (range of primary school educational levels in the United States).
LGBTQIA+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, Intersex, Asexual, Plus.
MA	Master of Arts graduate degree.
MBA	Masters of Business Administration graduate degree.
MLA	Modern Language Association of America.

MSI	Minority-Serving Institution.
NACE	National Association of Colleges and Employers (United States).
NASA	National Aeronautics and Space Administration (United States).
NASAD	National Association for Schools of Art & Design (United States).
NCA	National Communication Association (United States).
NEA	National Endowment for the Arts (United States).
NECHE	New England Commission of Higher Education.
NEH	National Endowment for the Humanities (United States).
NSF	National Science Foundation (United States).
O*NET	Occupational Information Network.
OSU	Oklahoma State University.
PI	Primary or Principal Investigator.
PSU	Plymouth State University.
R-1	“Research 1: Very High Spending and Doctorate Production.” A Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching “Institutional Classification” defined by research spending and doctoral degrees awarded annually: “On average in a single year, these institutions spend at least \$50 million on research & development and award at least 70 research doctorates.”
REF	Research Excellence Framework (United Kingdom).
ROTC	Reserve Officers’ Training Corps (United States).
SCH	Student Credit Hours.
SNAAP	Strategic National Arts Alumni Project (United States).
SoTL	Scholarship of Teaching and Learning.
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, Math.
SUNY	State University of New York.
TEQ	Toronto Empathy Questionnaire.
THECB	Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

UHD	University of Houston-Downtown.
UHS	University of Houston System.
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.
UTSW	University of Texas Southwestern.
VMI	Virginia Military Institute.
VTS	Visual Thinking Strategies.
WVU	West Virginia University.
WWII	Second World War.

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Rosemarie Trentinella is Associate Teaching Professor of Art History in the Department of Art and Design at The University of Tampa, where she has served on the university-wide general education committee since 2020. She presented at the “Advocating for Art History” panel at the 2023 College Art Association conference, which sparked this project, and has chaired and presented about teaching and learning in art history at several panels at SECAC, CAA, and various (national and international) pedagogical conferences. Her 2025 article in *Transformative Dialogues*, “Toward a Future for SoTL in Art History via Decoding the Disciplines,” exemplifies her deployment of the Decoding the Disciplines framework to advocate for art history in and beyond her classroom.

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At a time when the most enlightened of recent Presidents questioned the usefulness of art history as a subject choice, it is exciting to see a group of early and mid-career art historians painting a striking and nuanced picture that shows why art history is essential in contemporary curricula. Inspired by a love of art and totally committed to their profession, while being hard-headed about realities on the ground and in the social imaginary, they make a clear case for the value of art history these days. They spell out the practicalities of pursuing their vocation at a range of institutions, from R-1 universities to local colleges, with vivid examples of successes and failures, and loads of useful advice. With advocates such as these, art history is in good hands. Join them!

Terry Smith

Slade Professor of Fine Arts, University of Cambridge, 2025-2026
Andrew W. Mellon Emeritus Professor of Contemporary Art History
and Theory, University of Pittsburgh
Emeritus Professor of Art History, University of Sydney
Professor at Large, The Africa Institute,
Global Studies University, Sharjah
Professor in the Division of Philosophy, Art, and Critical Thought,
European Graduate School, Saas-Fee
Faculty at Large, Curatorial Program, School of Visual Arts, New York

This collection of thoughtful essays and case studies makes a strong argument for art history's relevance in difficult times. Attentively engaged with the realities of the discipline—especially its relationships to its enabling institutions and to the broader political climate—the contributing authors bring perspicacious insight from a welcome range of viewpoints concerning why art history counts, how to advocate for it, and where best to act on its behalf. Editors Jennifer P. Kingsley, Cindy Persinger, and Rosemarie Trentinella are to be commended for assembling a volume that is as unafraid to ask tough questions about the status of the discipline as it is to proffer honest answers that locate its value both in and out of the academy, occasionally in surprising places. Of special note, the book avoids abstractions and platitudes about the fraught state of higher education and current politics by diving into the lived intricacies of art history's practice and enactment—as research, as teaching, and otherwise—without forfeiting

theoretical acumen or losing sight of fundamental values. An invigorating and truly helpful text for those who care about art history's role in the world.

Robert Bailey

School of Visual Arts
University of Oklahoma

Original and timely, "Advocating for Art History" is the first organized effort or call to collective action for the vital role of art history at a time when the discipline and the humanities, more broadly, are under increased threat in higher education. Guided by an understanding of the specific institutional structures and dynamics that shape each case study, the volume brings together a wide range of perspectives and methodologies. Contributors share both successful and failed endeavors, while imparting locally responsive advocacy strategies and cultivating belonging to a broader North American art history community.

Izabel Galliera

Department of Media, Art and Design
School of Humanities and Social Sciences
University of Missouri – Kansas City

Cindy Persinger, Jennifer Kingsley and Rose Trentinella's "Advocating for Art History" is a timely publication. The project began in response to the financial pressures that emerged in institutions of higher education because of the COVID-19 pandemic and delves into the ongoing and more recent challenges scholars in the field face at their home institutions. Showcasing a series of effective case studies, the text argues for collective action in support of the discipline of art history rather than continuing to put our energies into institutionally specific advocacy work through the collection and publication of empirical data. "Advocating for Art History" is a must-read for any department chair or dean who oversees art history programs as well as all art historians in the field.

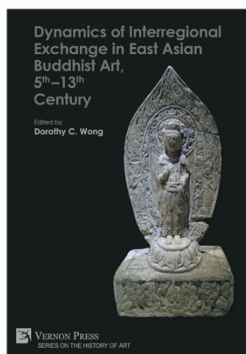
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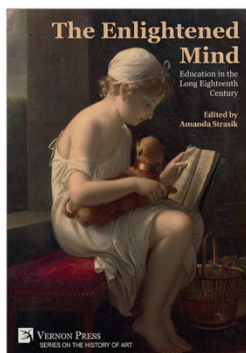
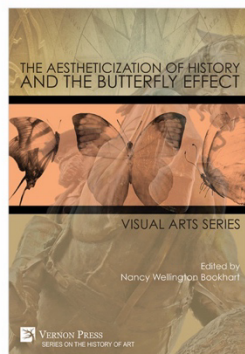
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