

ART HISTORY IN CANADA PROJECT

Department Fact Sheet

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University

McMaster University (est. 1887)

Founding Date of Department

1935ⁱ

Names of Department

- Appreciation of Art/Art Appreciation: 1932ⁱⁱ–1934ⁱⁱⁱ (not yet a department)
- Department of Fine Art: 1935^{iv}–1975^v
- Department of Art and Art History: 1975^{vi}–1995^{vii}
- School of the Arts 1995–Present^{viii}

History of Department Composition (i.e., Has art history been taught alone or alongside studio art, humanities, performing arts, etc.?)

- Art History courses required for the “Studio Art 1” B.F.A.^{ix}
- “Art History courses are cross-listed with Classics, Communication Studies, and Multimedia”^x
- Classics: Roman Art is offered (same as Art History 2C3)^{xi}

Degrees and Programs Offered

- Honours Arts & Science and Art History; Honours Art History {2029}; Combined Honours in Art History and Another Subject; B.A. in Art History {1029}; Minor in Art History^{xii}

Is visual culture or visual studies taught in your department? If so, when were tenure-stream faculty in these areas hired?

University Museum or Gallery

- McMaster Museum of Art (previously The University Art Gallery^{xiii} and McMaster University Art Gallery)^{xiv}
- “The University Art Gallery, opened in 1965, ... provides 3,900 square feet of fully illuminated wall and floor space together with all professional facilities required for the presentation of a year-round programme facilities required for the presentation of a year-round programme of exhibitions organized by McMaster or brought to McMaster from sources like the National Gallery of Canada and the Art Gallery of Ontario. It houses the University Art Collection, which consists of

750 examples of painting, sculpture and printmaking, as well as a specialized section containing over 100 German Expressionist prints.”^{xv}

- Art History “tutorials often held in private galleries at the museum.”^{xvi}
- The Art History “program incorporates materials from the McMaster Museum of Art into its curriculum in several courses”^{xvii}

Notable Events

1932 “in the fall of 1932 that the Carnegie Corporation was prepared to make a grant of \$6000 over a three-year period for the purchase of books for the undergraduates’ general reading needs. The most dramatic aspect of the corporation’s interest in the university, however, was its separate provision for a fine arts collection. This collection was designed to serve as the basis for a teaching program already initiated by Dean Carpenter in a special evening class. A substantial collection of nearly two hundred books, some fifteen hundred prints, and many samples of fabrics were purchased with the additional Carnegie funds provided. Augmenting these were the publications of the Prestel Gesellschaft, nearly five hundred reproductions of Old Master drawings in facsimile colour collotypes. All of these acquisitions were assigned to a large room on the main floor of University Hall set aside as the art library.”^{xviii}

1932–38 McMaster receives a \$48,500 endowment from the Carnegie Corporation for a “Program in arts”^{xix}

1933 “Lester D. Longman was appointed as Special Carnegie Lecturer in the history and appreciation of art, bringing with him an additional art collection, including 3 ¼ x 4 inch glass lantern slides. These collections were housed in an “art library”, a large room on the first floor of University Hall. Longman offered extension courses in art history that were open to the general public in Convocation Hall. These lectures, attended by 400-500 people, could be used by McMaster undergraduates as credit toward their academic standing in other disciplines. This developed into a Fine Arts Department”^{xx}

“Although a degree in art history was not possible, McMaster graduates (including scholars such as John R. Martin, Robert H. Hubbard and Stephen Vickers) were successful in obtaining advanced standing in Fine Arts at the graduate level.”^{xxi}

1942 Due to wartime cutbacks, “Arts courses are decreed non-essential”^{xxii} The Fine Arts Department closes due to the war.^{xxiii} “The axe did not fall on the fine arts until the spring of 1942 when an announcement was made to Professor Stanley Hart.”^{xxiv}

1951 The Fine Arts Department is reopened; Naomi Jackson (Groves) is appointed Associate Professor

1996 “McMaster University receives a multimillion-dollar legacy from Herman Levy, including funds for the acquisition of non-North American art.”^{xxv}

2010 The Friends of Art History is founded at **McMaster**^{xxvi}

Their “goal is to promote the appreciation of Art History at McMaster and in its broader community. ... Donations support: a visiting speaker’s series, visiting professionals who foster career development for students of Art History, student research projects, and an informal program of Art History lectures for a general audience.”

Inaugural lectures are given by Professor McQueen in Sep. 2010 (Rembrandt) and Jan. 2011 (Van Gogh)^{xxvii}

Bibliography

Carrie L. Vassallo, "The Early Years of Art History in English-Speaking Canada: McMaster, Toronto and Queen's Universities, ca. 1930-1945," MA Thesis, UWO, 2001.

See also notes.

ⁱ *McMaster University Calendar of the Faculty of Arts, 1935–1936*, 77.

ⁱⁱ *McMaster University Calendar of the Faculty of Arts, 1932–1933*, 90; *McMaster University Calendar of the Faculty of Arts, 1933–1934*, 90.

ⁱⁱⁱ *McMaster University Calendar of the Faculty of Arts, 1934–1935*, 71.

^{iv} *McMaster University Calendar of the Faculty of Arts, 1935–1936*, 77.

^v *McMaster University Calendar of the Faculty of Arts, 1975–1976*, 168.

^{vi} *McMaster University Calendar of the Faculty of Arts, 1975–1976*, 168.

^{vii} *McMaster University Calendar of the Faculty of Arts, 1995–1996*, 63.

^{viii} "Art History," *McMaster University, School of the Arts*, http://sota.mcmaster.ca/undergraduate/art_history.html.

^{ix} "Studio Art 1," *McMaster University Undergraduate Calendar 2014–2015 (Fall/Winter)*, http://academiccalendars.romcmaster.ca/preview_program.php?catoid=7&poiid=4069&returnto=563.

^x "Art History," *McMaster University, School of the Arts*.

^{xi} *McMaster University, Arts, Science and Engineering Calendar, 1976/78*, 71.

^{xii} "Art History," *McMaster University, School of the Arts*.

^{xiii} *McMaster University, Arts and Science/Engineering Calendar, 1974–1975*, 382

^{xiv} "About," *McMaster Museum of Art*, <https://museum.mcmaster.ca/about/overview/>.

^{xv} *McMaster University, Arts and Science/Engineering Calendar, 1974–1975*, 382.

^{xvi} "Art History," *McMaster University, Faculty of Humanities*, https://www.humanities.mcmaster.ca/undergraduate/art_history.html.

^{xvii} "Art History," *McMaster University, School of the Arts*.

^{xviii} Johnston, *McMaster University*, 52.

^{xix} Stephen H. Stackpole, *Carnegie Corporation of New York: Commonwealth Program 1911-1961* (New York, 1963), 44.

^{xx} "Lyons New Media Centre—About Us and Some History," *McMaster University Library*, <https://library.mcmaster.ca/lyons/about/history>.

^{xxi} "Lyons New Media Centre," *McMaster University Library*.

^{xxii} "History of McMaster," *McMaster University Alumni*, <http://alumni.os.mcmaster.ca/s/1439/index.aspx?sid=1439&gid=1&pgid=525>.

^{xxiii} "Lyons New Media Centre," *McMaster University Library*.

^{xxiv} Johnston, *McMaster University*, 84.

^{xxv} Robert J. Belton, "Important Moments in Canadian Art History," *University of British Columbia, Faculty of Creative and Critical Studies*, <http://fccs.ok.ubc.ca/about/links/resources/canadian-art-history/1968-to-present.html>.

^{xxvi} "Art History," *McMaster University, School of the Arts*.

^{xxvii} "The Friends of Art History at McMaster," *McMaster University*, <http://www.humanities.mcmaster.ca/~ajmcq/Friends%20of%20Art%20History.pdf>.