

September 12, 2022

**MEMO**

TO: Sabbatical Committee

FROM: Kevin Muller

Department of Fine Arts and Architecture  
kemuller@marin.edu

RE: Sabbatical Proposal

Attached please find my sabbatical proposal: "Global Interventions in the College of Marin's Art History Survey."

In response to the preliminary questions asked for in the application:

**List of courses current teaching/expected to teach:**

Art 101 History of Western Art: Ancient to Medieval  
Art 102 History of Western Art: Medieval to the Nineteenth Century  
Art 103 History of Western Art: 19th and 20th Centuries  
Art 105 Introduction to Contemporary Art  
Art 107 Art of the United States: A Diverse History  
Art 110 History of Islamic Art  
Art 111 History of Art: A Global Perspective

**Type of Sabbatical Project:** Independent Research Project

Rationale for Independent Research Project: The proposed project does not require institutional support to complete. In fact, the interdisciplinary nature of the project, combined with its artistic, historical, chronological, and geographic breadth, actually mitigate against the usefulness of a specific institutional affiliation. All resources needed to successfully complete it are available through specific digital databases (ARTStor, JStor, Hathitrust, MetMuseum Digital Publications, etc.) and local and national art museums (Fine Arts Museums San Francisco, Metropolitan Museum, NY, etc.).

Sincerely,



Kevin

## **Sabbatical Proposal: Global Interventions in the College of Marin's Art History Survey**

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UPM/MARIN CCD FORM F5.E  
**Sabbatical Leave Application**

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This application form must be submitted to the supervising Vice President by October 1 of the year preceding the fiscal year in which the sabbatical leave will be taken. Refer to Article 5 of the UPM-MCCD collective bargaining agreement for details on application requirements and the application procedure.

Name of Applicant: Kevin Richard Muller

Dates of requested leave: Academic Year 2023-24 (fall 2023 & spring 2024)

Have you taken a District sabbatical leave before?  No  Yes If yes, when? \_\_\_\_\_

Number of consecutive years of full-time service in the District since your last sabbatical leave: \_\_\_\_\_

Notes on calculating years of service:

1. In the event of a split sabbatical leave, the six-year period shall be calculated from the commencement of the first semester of the unit member's last sabbatical leave.
2. No absence from service under a leave of absence other than sabbatical leave shall be deemed to be a break in the continuity of service required by the Education Code for the purpose of qualifying for a sabbatical leave; however, such absence shall not be included as service in computing the six (6) years required for sabbatical leave.
3. Reduced loads below sixty (60) percent in a semester shall, for the purpose of eligibility, be computed on a prorated basis.
4. After employment by the District, a Board-approved leave for service under a nationally recognized fellowship or foundation for a period of not more than one (1) year for research or teaching shall not be considered a break in continuity of service, and shall be included in computing the six (6) years required for sabbatical leave.
5. No service performed prior to the granting and execution of a sabbatical leave of any duration may be used in determining eligibility for a subsequent application for sabbatical leave.

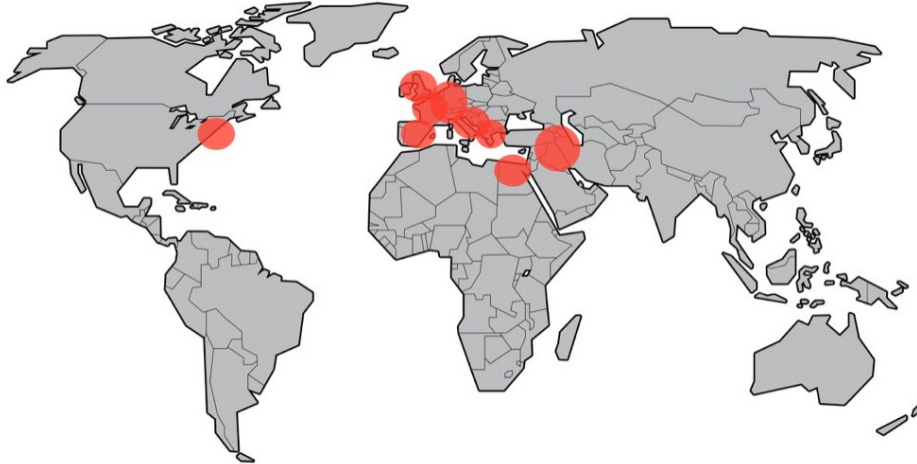
Type(s) of sabbatical leave requested:  Formal Study  Independent Project  Travel

Do you request to use banked units during the period of leave?  No  Yes, I request 10.5 units (up to 1.5 units for a one semester leave; 10.5 units for a two semester leave).

By submitting this application, you understand and agree that you must remain in the employ of the District for two (2) years after return to service, or for leaves of less than one year, twice the period of leave.

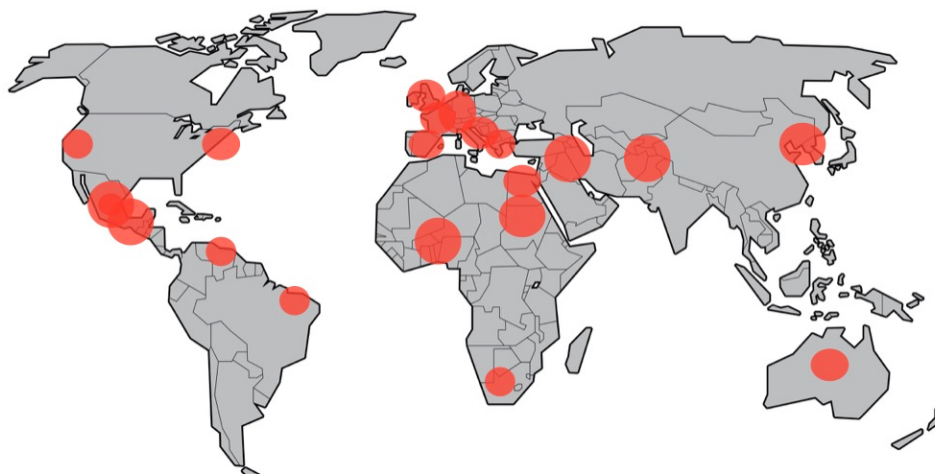
Applicant Signature  Date: 09/12/2022

## Project Overview



Please, if you will, look at the map above. On this map you find several red circles that I have placed over the geographic regions art history survey courses must address to comply with California's C-ID requirements. C-ID outlines serve as the basis of the Transfer Model Curriculum and mandate the content of specific classes so that all lower division art history courses offered at all the California Community Colleges have similar content and therefore transfer in the same way. At the College of Marin, these particular courses have consistently high enrollment, in large part because they satisfy specific requirements for majors *and* breadth requirements for non-majors. Look again at the distribution of the red circles. Notice that the geographic reach is limited to: the Middle East, the northeast of Africa, the western half of Europe, the northeastern United States, and Mexico.

Now compare the first map to the one below. The same red circles found in the first map are still present, but now we also find circles in Asia, Africa, Central and South America, and Australia. *The second map essentially summarizes both the scope of my sabbatical research and the outcome I expect to achieve.* To articulate the project concisely: I will spend the academic year researching various global art history traditions (eight in all), then rebuild my surveys to accommodate this new content, thereby creating a curricular core that is more diverse, inclusive, and equitable.



## Rationale

At the College of Marin, the highest enrolled art history courses are those that comprise what is known as "the survey." The survey can be a two-, three-, or four-semester sequence. Here at the College of Marin, it is a three-semester sequence: Art 101 (History of Western Art: Ancient to Medieval); Art 102 (History of Western Art: Medieval to the Nineteenth Century); and Art 103 (History of Western Art: Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Art). These courses are popular in part due to the subject matter, but also because they satisfy transfer requirements for art history majors, studio art majors, and students looking to satisfy a GE breadth requirement.

In order to transfer to UC and CSU, these courses must adhere to the structure and content of C-ID course outlines. These outlines form the basis of the Transfer Model Curriculum and are designed to establish continuity between courses offered at different institutions. Looking at the C-ID outline for the courses in the art history survey sequence, we find a list of topics organized in chronological order, from the prehistoric to the present.

Example One:

C-ID Descriptor for: Survey of Western Art from Prehistory through the Middle Ages:

This course covers the art and architecture of the following periods:

1. Prehistoric
2. Mesopotamian
3. Egyptian
4. Aegean
5. Greek through Hellenistic
6. Etruscan
7. Roman
8. Early Christian
9. Byzantine
10. Islamic
11. Early Medieval, including Carolingian and Ottonian
12. Romanesque
13. Gothic

Example Two:

C-ID Descriptor for: Survey of Western Art from Renaissance to Contemporary:

This course covers the art and architecture of the following periods:

1. Italian Renaissance and Mannerism
2. Northern Renaissance
3. 15<sup>th</sup> Century Flemish
4. Baroque and Rococo
5. Neoclassicism, Romanticism, and Realism
6. Late 19<sup>th</sup> Century including Impressionism and Post-Impressionism
7. Major movements of the 20<sup>th</sup>-century, including Cubism and Minimalism
8. Globalism in the 21<sup>st</sup> century

The format of the C-ID outlines no doubt looks familiar to you. This format is ubiquitous throughout higher education in matters of curriculum. We use it for the College of Marin's official Course Outlines of Record. Syllabi often adhere to the same framework (not surprisingly since the structure of the course is determined by the course outline of record, which is based on the C-ID outlines for all transfer courses). We also find similar lists of topics in administrative documents, from board policies to master plans. As a result of their sheer prevalence and familiarity, the list-as-outline-of-content appears as an entirely natural way to represent information and structure intellectual endeavors.

But there is nothing neutral about this format. In the case of art history, these C-ID descriptors represent a chronological framework of canonical art formulated over a century ago by Gilded Age elites at Ivy League universities. It was in such universities that the discipline developed a formalist, connoisseur-oriented approach, which privileged the aesthetic that laid the groundwork for a canon of "great" works. This Ivy League model was subsequently institutionalized in public education following the Second World War.<sup>1</sup> However, toward the end of the last century, younger art historians—many of them the intellectual offspring of civil rights movements—challenged and worked to dismantle this framework. In its place they proposed alternatives favoring a thematic approach grounded in global art and visual culture.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> My discussion of the history of art history is drawn from, Vernon Hyde Minor, *Art History's History*, 2nd edition (Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Pearson, 2000).

<sup>2</sup> In 1995 the *Art Journal*, one of the two major journals published by the College Art Association, the professional organization of art historians, devoted an entire issue to new approaches to teaching the survey; see *Art Journal*, no. 3. 1995. More recent discussions include: Dushko Petrovich Córdoba, "Where Should Art History Go in the Future? As Survey Courses Change, the Past Evolves," *ARTnews.Com* (blog), July 28, 2020, <https://www.artnews.com/art-news/news/art->

I have always found it striking that the C-ID ignores those advances, turning the clock back in order to achieve efficiency and productivity. Even more striking is the fact that the content of the C-ID outlines were not determined by the State, but by art history faculty themselves.<sup>3</sup> I do not know who participated in those decisive meetings (their names and institutional affiliations remain obscured). I do not know why they decided on this format. *I do know*, however, that I was not there. *I do know* that I am expected to create a course that adheres to this outline. *And, I do know* that it represents an antiquated genealogy of canonical works of art contrived at an earlier point in history to convey and reify the worldview of the elite white men who created it. Unintentionally (or not), the C-ID perpetuates a similar—if not identical—ideology. If we fail to see the ideological aspect of the C-ID, it is because we forget that its outline is a cultural construction, the product of decisions arising from specific historical circumstances. However, if we denaturalize the outline by visualizing it in spatial terms—as we do with map 1 (page 3)—we are confronted with its stark geographic limitations, which ultimately reveal the paucity of diversity and inclusiveness of its contents.

A personal commitment to equity-mindedness demands that I challenge the hegemonic power of this history, even as the State of California demands that I also maintain it. The College defines equity-mindedness as "recognizing the historical and systemic disparities in opportunities and outcomes and providing the resources necessary to address these disparities." Equity-mindedness includes "taking personal and institutional responsibility for the success of students and critically assessing personal practices."<sup>4</sup> In my mind this also means criticizing and challenging practices and protocols generated at the state level with which we (faculty, disciplines, and colleges) are required to comply. I simply cannot wait for the Chancellor's office or those in charge of the Transfer Model Curriculum to realize just how inequitable the Art History C-ID outline actually is. The time act is now, and the place to act is in the classroom.

The goal of my sabbatical project is to produce survey courses that adhere to the C-ID outline, as they must, but also challenge its hegemonic associations, by including carefully chosen artistic traditions from Asia, Africa, and the Americas. Looking again at my second map (page 3), we can see the expanded geographic scope I propose for these revised courses.—Each circle represents a unit devoted to an in-depth analysis of a specific historical artistic tradition, such as architecture of the Maya or Chinese landscape painting. The approach I propose will offer a synthetic account of select global art traditions, in contrast to the more common "diversity by addition" method. Let me explain. The most common solution to diversifying art history survey courses has been to "pepper" a C-ID-based chronology with a sprinkling of non-western art and artists. At times, I myself have adopted this approach. For example, I once included Benin bronzes in the unit on Renaissance art, with the goal of showing similarities and differences between west African and European art. It was a good idea, but it was unsuccessful because it was additive rather than synthetic, superficial rather than analytical. As a result, the hegemony of the western survey remained unbroken. Significantly, I realized after the fact that I simply needed more time to fully and thoughtfully research Benin bronzes—from their

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history-survey-courses-yale-university-1202695484/. See also issues of *Art History Pedagogy & Practice*, a journal founded in 2016.

<sup>3</sup> For the C-ID, see Arineh Arzoumanian, et. al., *Course Identification Numbering (C-ID) System Work Plan*, Sacramento: Academic Senate for California Community Colleges, 2018.

<sup>4</sup> College of Marin, *Education Master Plan, 2019-2025*, p. 18 (<https://prie.marin.edu/sites/prie/files/EMP-SP-Report-2019-2025-e.pdf>)

production to their display to their meaning—in order to successfully incorporate them in the course. Accordingly, a sabbatical will above all offer me the time to research and digest specific topics in an uninterrupted manner, so that when they are included in the revised courses, they facilitate in all students a genuine cross-cultural understanding of global art traditions.

My objective is to research eight new topics (listed next section). Four of these will be added to Art 101 and four to Art 102. I have excluded Art 103 from this project because Modern Art is already more inclusive and diverse, and its styles are not restricted to specific geographics. Also, starting in the twentieth century, artists of color across the world experimented with the styles of modernism (most famously artists associated with Mexican Muralism and the Harlem Renaissance) such that by the end of the century the art world is truly global.

I've decided to call each topic an "Intervention." The word calls to mind the actions of friends and family who intervene in the life of a loved one who has succumbed to addiction and/or suffers from a destructive behavior, and in this case, it is C-ID outline that is sick and highly contagious. My intervention is intended as a corrective measure to prevent this bias from making students sick by perpetuating a white Euro-centric view of the history of art.

For each Intervention, I will research the topic and create a unit that presents the art with the same depth as existing topics (you will find an explanation of my research process in the Research Methodology section below.) These topics and the corresponding works of art will be carefully chosen and strategically positioned in order to facilitate meaningful cross-culture analysis and understanding. These "interventions" will also undermine the hegemonic whiteness of the C-ID by presenting artistic achievements by other cultures on par, as is appropriate with their western counterparts. In turn, students enrolled in these courses will not only learn the history of western art as required by the C-ID, they will also learn of global traditions that will empower them to challenge its hegemony on their own wherever they encounter it outside the classroom.



## Research Topics

The following list identifies and summarizes the eight research topics that comprise the "Interventions" for Art 101 and Art 102. Each summary also includes a brief explanation of what will be gained by including the topic. As research my progresses, these topics will be qualified, modified, and revised. I have also included a representative artwork for each topic.

### Interventions for Art 101 History of Western Art: Ancient to Medieval

#### Intervention #1

#### Prehistoric Art - Global Cave Painting/Rock Art Traditions (35,000 - 1000 BCE)



*Walinynga (Cave Hill), Archaeological Site , Australia, about 40,000 BCE*

The western survey currently begins with prehistoric sculpture and cave painting found in western Europe. Yet, what classifies as prehistoric rock art can be found across the globe. By framing art as a global art tradition, shared by peoples from Africa, Asian, and the Americas, the revised course will underscore that making representations is a fundamentally human impulse, not one developed in a single geographic region by a specific population. (Incidentally, recent research has suggested that Neanderthals [early homo sapiens] did make some form of art, thereby undermining the exclusivity of art making by homo sapien sapiens).

**Intervention #2****Art of Ancient Nubia (2000 BCE - 3rd centuries CE)**

***Prince Arikankharer Slaying His Enemies, Meroitic, beginning of first century AD, sandstone, in the Worcester Art Museum, Worcester, Massachusetts, USA***

Geographically, Ancient Nubia, also called the Kingdom of Kush, extended south of Egypt along the Nile. While artistic exchange existed between the two kingdoms, scholars have increasingly identified distinctive features of Nubian art that set it apart from canonical Egyptian art. The addition of this unit will present art of this ancient African kingdom as equal to the achievements of ancient Egyptians as well as Greeks and Romans. It will also demonstrate to students how artistic traditions come to be shared and modified through intercultural exchange.

**Intervention #3****Art of Ancient Gandhara (1st century BCE - 3rd centuries CE)**

***Bodhisattva Maitreya, Kushan period 2nd-3rd century CE from the Ancient Region of Gandhara, India-Afghanistan. (Asian Art Museum, San Francisco).***

At its height, the civilization of Gandhara encompassed regions of present-day Pakistan, Afghanistan and India. This region is important for the history of art because it was here that statues of the Buddha were first created (previously the Buddha was not represented in figural form). This change only occurred after Greco-Roman artistic traditions were brought to the region by the conquests of Alexander the Great in the 300s BCE. The addition of this unit to the survey would expose students to an important development in Asian art and alert them to commonalities and differences in the ways figures are used to represent divinity in Egyptian, Buddhist, Greco-Roman, and Christian cultures. It would also enable students to understand how Greco-Roman artistic traditions were modified by local populations, resulting in distinct and compelling visual traditions. Thus, artistic innovations of the West were neither definitive nor fixed, but open to modification and elaboration.

**Intervention #4****Art of the Ancient Maya (3rd - 10th centuries CE)**

***Guatemala, Quiriguà, Stele D, Front, Ruler: Cauac Sky, 766 AD,***

Inclusion of the art and architecture of the ancient Maya will effectively bring the Americas into the first part of the survey. The Maya developed a distinct style and imagery for representing the human figure that is a visually compelling alternative to the Greco-Roman tradition that came to dominate European art. Additionally, monumental architecture of the Maya, notably stepped pyramids, demonstrates how artistic traditions in the ancient Americas equalled those in and around the ancient Mediterranean.

**Interventions for Art 102 History of Western Art: Medieval to 19th Centuries****Intervention #5****Art of The Mali Empire/Djenne Peoples (13th - 17th Centuries)**

***Great Mosque of Djenné, 13th century, rebuilt 1907***

The art of this west African empire included a distinct adobe brick architecture, a notable example of which can be seen in the Great Mosque in the city of Djenné. Inclusion of adobe brick building technologies to create sophisticated forms and spaces will challenge the idea that the most accomplished artforms must of necessity be complex in engineering, form, and decoration (such as French Gothic cathedrals). Additionally, there is figurative sculpture from the region that presents a naturalism similar to European art of the same period. But there is also sculpture that eschews naturalism. When compared to European examples, these sculptures allow students to appreciate and understand how expressivity as well meaning comes from distortion and manipulation of form, composition, and line.

**Intervention #6****Art of the Ottoman Empire (15th - 19th centuries)**

*Interior Suleymaniye Mosque, 1550-1557, Istanbul*

A unit focused on the art and architecture of the Ottoman Empire (founded 1299 CE) would provide a corrective to the overwhelming predominance of Christian artforms associated with the late medieval and early modern European periods. Central to understanding the achievements of Ottoman (and by extension Islamic) architecture are the great mosques patronized by men like Suleyman the Magnificent, which offer the example of an alternative to the Christian approach to creating and decorating sacred spaces. Similarly, the inclusion of Ottoman manuscript painting in this unit would present students with an opportunity to understand how two-dimensional representations that reject illusionism and linear perspective can be visually dynamic and compelling.

**Intervention #7****Chinese Landscape Painting of the Ming and Qing Dynasties (14th c - 19th centuries)**

***Zhao Yuan, Landscape, late 14th century, Handscroll; ink on paper, 10 x 30 in (image here left half of scroll)***

I include Chinese landscape painting as an Intervention because it offers a vivid alternative to the strategies of depicting nature found early modern European art. As the Chinese example proves, the West did not invent landscape painting. Chinese painters adopted and exploited the techniques of traditional calligraphy in order to create scenes which, even as they were based on observation, nonetheless appear generalized so as to create an ideal of nature. Viewers actually "read" these landscapes like a book, as the scrolls upon which they were painted were unrolled before their eyes, creating a meditative journey through a varied natural topography. By comparing the Chinese and European approach to rendering the landscape, students will become aware how two different aesthetic systems encode different conceptions of the relationship between humanity and nature.

## Intervention #8

## Art of the Aztecs (14th - 16th centuries)



**Page from Codex Borbonicus, Showing 13th trecena of the Aztec Sacred Calendar, folded screen amatl (bark) paper total 46.5 ft long.**

While a great deal of Aztec artistic and material culture has been lost, a significant body of sculpture and codices still exist, the latter written by pre-Columbian and colonial-era Aztecs. These objects offer an opportunity to explore the aesthetic systems employed by one of the greatest empires in the Americas. And, because Art 102 focuses largely on European painting, inclusion of the codices will demonstrate to students an alternative way of representing events on a two-dimensional surface. Additionally, students will learn how Aztec art pictured and conveyed the power of rulers, but also presented historical narratives, two dominant features in early Modern European art of the same period.



## Research Methodology

In the section below I explain how I will research each of the Intervention topics.

The goal of my sabbatical project is to revise my western art history survey with carefully chosen "Interventions" that will produce more inclusive and diverse courses. Additionally, these interventions will serve to undermine the Eurocentric nature of the C-ID outline. Rather than pepper the existing course with individual works of art that will only create a superficial inclusiveness, I will research and create new units that have the same depth that the topics currently part of each course. As a result, this will be a research-intensive project, since these topics fall outside my professional training in art of the western tradition.

My research will be based on the interdisciplinary, object-based approach that informs my teaching of the history of art. To understand the complexity of the art of the past and the present, one by necessity must consider how objects function in light of a range of disciplinary perspectives. For example: One cannot understand the rise of illusionist painting in fifteenth-century Florence without understanding the economic forces which shaped artistic production. Without such a contextualized framework for interpretation, the history of art appears lifelessly self-contained.

At the same time, the art object itself remains the foundation of my research and teaching. At first this might seem obvious—of course the art is important. But not all art historians privilege the art object. Some scholars, for example, see a work of art as primarily reflective of the context in which it was made. Often these scholars explain the object by first presenting the context, then explore how the object fits into this context. I find this approach problematic, not least because the art object becomes a passive rather than active agent of culture. In my teaching, I always begin my inquiry with the work of art, whether painting, sculpture, architecture, or other medium. Why? Because all objects (whether artistic or not) convey the worldview of their makers and users through materials, construction, design, and imagery. Furthermore, while the original makers and patrons may have had specific intentions, and these often appear manifest in the subject represented, more often than not worldviews and ideologies of the original artist and patron were unconsciously manifest through choices of design, construction, and the like. Through the materiality of an art object, these values are there for us to discover, and in so doing we gain insight into peoples of the past, and by extension our collective humanity. Explaining how formal qualities of an art object conveys meaning is therefore a critical task of the art historian in the classroom.

Accordingly, my research into the Intervention topics has two components. First, I will familiarize myself with the art objects associated with a specific culture. This step I call the "art object research." At the beginning stage of researching any given unit, I am looking to understand the breadth and depth of artistic production. A key source will be online image databases. The digital image database ArtStor (to which COM subscribes) is a good place to start, as it is global in scope and searchable by specifics of culture, medium, geography, and date. But ArtStor is not comprehensive, nor are all the images of high quality. There are other specific databases that will be useful, such as the Aga Khan Visual Archive (MIT), which focuses on the architecture and urban planning of Muslim societies. I will also view works in specific museum collections that have been digitized and are available online, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, The British Museum and The Louvre as well as other smaller collections, such as the Asian Art Museum in San Francisco. As I am viewing these images, I will be developing my eye for the stylistic specifics and patterns unique to the culture. At the same time

that I am looking at new and unfamiliar works of art, I will be mentally comparing them to works of art that I already include in the survey. The purpose of these ongoing mental comparisons will be to formulate possible comparison to works currently included in the courses. Such comparisons are the foundation of the cross-cultural analysis that is at the heart of this project, and their use will form the basis of my revised survey classes. From this "art object research" I will develop a preliminary set of core objects that I believe will be most useful to include in the new unit. For each topic, I will download and create my own database of images of the object (I've already done this for all topics I already teach).

That said, only so much information can be gathered from photographs. Therefore, at times I will also examine up-close, and in-person works of art in museum collections. I know from experience that it is essential to encounter and examine works of art in-person, because only then is it possible to grasp qualities absent or diminished in photographs, for example scale or texture. I also know that first-hand analysis leads to richer and deeper understanding of construction, design, and imagery, and allows me to more vividly and effectively teach an object. While I hope to visit major museums such as the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York and the Art Institute of Chicago, due to the unpredictability of Covid-19, I am not making a definitive list. At the very least, however, I will make multiple visits to museums here in the Bay Area. The Asian Art Museum has excellent examples of art from Gandhara and Chinese landscape painting. The DeYoung Museum has excellent collections of art of west Africa and the ancient Maya. Other important local collections include the Stanford and Berkeley Art Museums. As a result of this museum-based research, I will be able to more fully explain works of art to students as I will be drawing on first-hand experience, rather than limited exposure gained only through digital reproductions.

This object research will ultimately guide my reading of scholarly texts. For each research topic, there will be two levels of readings. The first includes texts that provide a broad overview of the topic and/or are considered seminal in the field. I will initially rely on sources listed in bibliographies in the Oxford Art Online (formerly the Grove Dictionary of Art), the standard reference tool for art history, to compile short preliminary bibliographies (see the Preliminary Bibliographies section). I cannot know how useful these sources are until I assess them in light of my object research. Accordingly, I will revise the list as I research, and complement these with introductory texts and exhibition catalogs. The second level of readings will consist of essays written by subject specialists, including historians, archeologists, ethnographers, linguistics, and the like, all of whom will provide me with a richer interdisciplinary perspective on specific artistic forms and their meanings. Many of these sources I will access through JSTOR; others through Internet Archive, Hathitrust, and digitized library collections. My selection of articles and essays will be guided by my art object research. Regardless of the topic, I will be seeking to understand how the style and imagery of specific art conveys specific worldviews and values of the original makers and users. As I proceed, I will be able to narrow my focus because I will be keeping in mind themes that are already addressed in the course. For example, many of the art objects currently included in Art 101 were designed to convey the authority and prestige of a king or ruler. With this in mind, I will explore how the Maya stele representing Cauac Sky (see illustration included in Research Topics section) conveys his power in ways unlike ancient Egyptians and Romans portrayed kingly power. Thus, through both general introductory texts and scholarly articles, I will develop an understanding of the breadth and depth necessary to create new lectures.

I will be taking notes throughout my research, and from these notes I will draft new lectures. Because art objects form the foundation of any given class, I generally begin by assembling a

PowerPoint comprised of images of the core objects determined by my art object research. From this PowerPoint I will begin to write lecture content. As I write, I will revise the presentation, adding and deleting images as I work out the flow of the class. In the classroom, I generally avoid reading my notes. But, for some class topics I have somewhat comprehensive lecture notes that I read just before the class session so as to refresh my memory about specific aspects of the subject. For this project I imagine it will be useful to write out some lecture content not only for future reference, but to help me more fully develop the analysis I would want students to learn. From these lecture notes I would then create text slides and insert them that would serve as reminders for me of the more fully explained content in my notes. Finally, I would formulate possible comparisons that would serve as the basis of class discussion. In any given class, I typically have a number of these ready to go, choosing the appropriate one or two depending on the character and dynamic of the class as a whole.

I should note here that even though these appear as somewhat discreet steps, my research process is highly organic. At any point, I will move forward or backward in the process. For example, as I am reading scholarly articles, I might come across a passage that stimulates me to go back to the object research to examine a type of art or specific object I did not initially think important. Or, early in the object research I might skip ahead to see if any articles exist that discuss either a specific art form or concepts related to it. I adopt this flexibility because one cannot predict whether objects, information, and analysis will align. The approach I outline here is not new, this is how I have researched and created lecture content for years. While the process might be fluid and organic, the goal is fixed: revised western survey courses that include new topics that present a more diverse and inclusive understanding of artistic production from this time period, and the inclusion challenges the hegemony of the "traditional" western survey.

## Preliminary Research Bibliographies

Below you will find preliminary bibliographies for each of the Intervention Topics. Most all the sources are selected from Oxford Art Online (formerly Grove Dictionary of Art), the standard reference publication for the discipline of art history. I have culled from much longer bibliographic entries for each topic, selecting sources that seem at this point in my thinking to be most relevant based on author, title or publication.

### PART I: Interventions for Art 101 History of Western Art: Ancient to Medieval

#### Intervention #1

##### Prehistoric Art - Global Cave Painting/Rock Art Traditions (35,000 - 1000 BCE)

#### North America

- P. Schaafsma : *Indian Rock Art of the Southwest* (Albuquerque, 1980)

#### Australia

- R. Layton : *Australian Rock Art: A New Synthesis* (Cambridge, 1992).

#### Africa

- T. A. Dowson: *Rock Engravings of Southern Africa* (Johannesburg, 1992)
- Mitchell, Peter. *African Connections: Archaeological Perspectives on Africa and the Wider World*. African Archaeology 7. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira, 2005.

#### Central and S. America

- Fauconnier, Françoise and Lemaitre, Serge, eds. *Rock Art in the Americas: Mythology, Cosmogony and Rituals: Proceedings of the 2nd REEA Conference, Ritual Americas: Configurations and Recombining of the Ritual Devices and Behaviors in the New World, in Historical and Contemporary Societies*, Louvain-la-Neuve (Belgium), April 2–5, 2008

#### Asia

- E. Neumayer : 'Wheeled Vehicles and Mounted Animals in Prehistoric Indian Rock Art', *Man and Environment* , 16/2 (1991), pp. 39–70

#### Intervention #2

##### Art of Ancient Nubia (2000 BCE - 3rd centuries CE)

- B. G. Trigger: *History and Settlement in Lower Nubia* (Yale, 1965)
- W. Y. Adams: *Nubia: Corridor to Africa* (London, 1977)
- *Africa in Antiquity: The Arts of Ancient Nubia and the Sudan* (exh. cat., ed. S. Wenig; New York, Brooklyn Mus., 1978)
- *Arts of Ancient Nubia*, Boston Museum of Fine Arts, 2018

**Intervention #3****Art of Ancient Gandhara (1st century BCE - 3rd centuries CE)**

Note: sources from Oxford Bibliographies (not Oxford Art Online)

- Nehru, Lolita. *Origins of the Gandhāran Style: A Study of Contributory Influences*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989.
- Rosenfield, John M. *The Dynastic Arts of the Kushans*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1967.
- Zwalf, Wladimir. *A Catalogue of the Gandhāra Sculpture in the British Museum*. London: The British Museum, 1996.

**Intervention #4****Art of the Ancient Maya (3rd - 10th centuries CE)**

- Coe, M. D. and Houston, S. *The Maya*. London and New York, 1966, rev. 9/2015.
- Schele, L. and Miller, M. E. *The Blood of Kings: Dynasty and Ritual in Maya Art*. Fort Worth, 1986.
- Miller, M. and Martin, S. *Courtly Art of the Ancient Maya*. Washington, DC, 2004.
- Houston, S., Taube, K., and Stuart, D. *The Memory of Bones: Body, Being, and Experience among the Classic Maya*. Austin, 2006.
- Miller, M. and O'Neil, M. *Maya Art and Architecture*. London and New York, 2/2014

**PART II: Interventions for Art 102 History of Western Art: Medieval to 19th Centuries****Intervention #5****Art of The Mali Empire/Djenne Peoples (16th - 17th Centuries)**

- P. Maas and G. Mommersteeg: *Djenné: Chef-d'Oeuvre Architectural* (Amsterdam and Paris, 1992)
- R. M. A. Bedaux: *Djenné: Une ville millénaire au Mali* (Leiden, 1994)
- S. P. Blier: *Butabu: Adobe Architecture of West Africa* (New York, 2004)
- J.-L. Bourgeois: 'The History of the Great Mosques of Djenné', *African Arts*, 20/3 (1987), pp. 54–63, 90–92

**Intervention #6****Art of the Ottoman Empire (15th - 19th centuries)**

- G. Goodwin: *A History of Ottoman Architecture* (Baltimore and London, 1971)
- A. Kuran: *Sinan: The Grand Old Master of Ottoman Architecture* (Washington, DC, and Istanbul, 1987)
- G. Goodwin: *A History of Ottoman Architecture* (Baltimore and London, 1971)
- E. Atıl: 'The Art of the Book', *Turkish Art*, ed. A. Atıl (Washington, DC, and New York, 1980), pp. 137–238
- *The Age of Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent* (exh. cat. by E. Atıl; Washington, DC, N.G.A.; Chicago, IL, A. Inst.; New York, Met.; 1987)

**Intervention #7****Chinese Landscape Painting of the Ming and Qing Dynasties (14th c - 19th centuries)**

- J. Cahill: *Parting at the Shore: Chinese Painting of the Early and Middle Ming Dynasty, 1368–1580* (New York, 1978)
- J. Silbergeld: *Chinese Painting Style: Media, Methods and Principles of Form* (Seattle, 1980)
- J. Cahill: *The Distant Mountains: Chinese Painting of the Late Ming Dynasty, 1570–1644* (New York, 1982)
- J. Cahill: *The Painter's Practice: How Artists Lived and Worked in Traditional China* (New York, 1994)
- M. Sullivan: *The Birth of Landscape Painting in China* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1962)

**Intervention #8****Art of the Aztecs (14th - 16th centuries)**

- Townsend, R. F. *State and Cosmos in the Art of Tenochtitlán*, Studies in Pre-Columbian Art and Archaeology, 20. Washington, DC, 1979.
- Moctezuma, E. M., Carrasco, D., and Broda, J. *The Great Temple of the Aztecs: Treasures of Tenochtitlán*. London, 1988.
- Boone, E. H. *Stories in Red and Black: Pictorial Histories of the Aztecs and Mixtecs*. Austin, 2000.
- Brumfiel, E. M. and Feinman, G. M., eds. *The Aztec World*. Chicago, IL, Field Mus. Nat. Hist., 2008. Exhibition catalog.
- Berdan, F. F. *Aztec Archaeology and EthnoHistory*. Cambridge, 2014.

## Timetable for Completion

I have allocated one month to research and complete each Intervention topic. In general, the program for each month looks like this:

### Objectives:

Art Object Research (image databases and possible museum visits)

Create Preliminary Powerpoint based on Art Object Research

Readings and Note-Taking in Select Preliminary Sources

Readings and Note-Taking in Select Specialized Sources

### Goals:

Final Intervention Topic PowerPoint

Lecture/Class/Discussion Notes

- 8/15 - 9/15** Intervention #1  
Prehistoric Art - Global Cave Painting/Rock Art Traditions (35,000 - 1000 BCE)
- 9/15-10/15** Intervention #2  
Art of Ancient Nubia (2000 BCE - 3rd centuries CE)
- 10/15-11/15** Intervention #3  
Art of Ancient Gandhara (1st century BCE - 3rd centuries CE)
- 11/15-12/15** Intervention #4  
Art of the Ancient Maya (3rd - 10th centuries CE)
- 01/15-02/15** Intervention #5  
Art of The Mali Empire/Djenne Peoples (16th - 17th Centuries)
- 02/15-03/15** Intervention #6  
Art of the Ottoman Empire (15th - 19th centuries)
- 03/15-04/15** Intervention #7  
Chinese Landscape Painting of the Ming and Qing Dynasties (14th c - 19th centuries)
- 04/15-05/15** Intervention #8  
Art of the Aztecs (14th - 16th centuries)

## Goals

### I. Achieving Visual Literacy

The stated goal of my sabbatical project is to begin the following academic year with revised Art 101 and Art 102 courses. These courses will include new units that disrupt the Euro-centric narrative mandated by the C-ID by including artistic traditions from Asia, Africa, and the Americas. Once implemented in the classroom, the courses will, I hope, help the Department of Fine Arts and Architecture—and the College itself—achieve goals related to equity, diversity, and inclusion (see below). However, the project also has the objective of empowering all students through visual literacy.

In all my classes, I seek to instill in students a broad cultural awareness and more reliable analytical abilities. To that end, I identify four overarching teaching goals: Students should come away from art history classes with an **awareness** that images and objects speak to us; students should have the ability to successfully **analyze** how the visual arts engage the beholder; students should be able to **articulate** their observations and insights, including how their visual experience is shaped by the formal properties of an object; and finally, students should know how to **draw conclusions** from their analysis. These four broad objectives provide the foundation for how I teach the history of art.

In short, I teach what educational and communication theorists call “visual literacy.” As one scholar explains, “visual literacy refers to a group of largely acquired abilities, i.e., the abilities to understand (read) and use (write) images, as well as to think and learn in terms of images.”<sup>5</sup> Visual literacy is thus an acquired skill, one developed through formal and informal learning. The same author also notes that visual literacy is an “interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary, and multidimensional area of knowledge.” Given the proliferation of images over the past two decades, the need for visual literacy is paramount for our students.

By developing and refining students’ looking skills, Art 101 and 102 provide analytical tools students can use to engage in cross-cultural analysis and thus take significant steps understanding the cultural experiences of others. Art objects directly engage our senses: they ask us to move closer for a better look, to hold them and feel their texture, and in general to respond empathetically to their construction, design, and imagery. In turn, our response to a particular object links us to the values of the artist and his or her patrons and peers because our response will be, to some degree, similar to theirs. The physical and aesthetic qualities of an object thus bring the experience of others closer to us. In turn, our response can be the basis of further understanding the work within the personal, social, and physical milieus in which it was conceived, made, and meant to be seen. My courses cultivate the ability of students to look closely and respond empathetically, and it provides them with the historical knowledge and research skills they need to understand why art objects have been and are meaningful and valuable to people from cultures other than their own.

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<sup>5</sup> Avgerinou, M.D. quoted in “Rune Pettersson—Views on Visual Literacy,” *Journal on Images and Culture*, September 27, 2012, [http://vjic.org/vjic2/?page\\_id=214](http://vjic.org/vjic2/?page_id=214).



## II. Support Fine Arts & Architecture Department objectives and goals:

### A. This sabbatical project supports the Program Review objectives and goals for the Department of Fine Arts and Architecture.

In Spring of 2021, The Fine Arts and Architecture Department completed a comprehensive Program Review.

Based on an analysis of the data, it was noted:

A. In terms of enrollment over the past 6 semesters, art classes had the following trends:

- More white students than College average.
- Lower Hispanic than College average.
- Same or slightly lower African-American students than College average.

B. Completion/retention as well as success rates were:

- Equal to College among White, Hispanic, Asian, and Native American student.
- Lower for Black/African-American students.

Based on our reading of the data, and Department-wide reflection, we formulated the following goal:  
*"To increase completion and success rates among African-American students."*

Objectives for achieving this goal included:

- "Developing course content with an emphasis on the African-American experience in, and contribution to, the artworld."
- "Ensuring the images we use, both educationally (in course content) and supplementally (as Canvas page headers or other types of graphic placements) show African-American faces in affirmative, positive roles, to help ensure students in this group know they belong and are 'seen.'"<sup>6</sup>

My proposed revisions to Art 101 and Art 102 will support these specific objectives, and the Department-wide goal of eliminating success, retention, and completion gaps.

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<sup>6</sup> All quoted statements from Department Fine Arts and Architecture Program Review, Spring 2021.

**B. This sabbatical project also serves to better align the art history survey courses with Department and College student demographics.**

Our 2021 Program Review noted:

- Majority of students enrolled in art classes are white.
- Art courses enrolled fewer Hispanic students than College average.
- Art course he same or slightly lower African-American students than College average.
- Over the last 6 semester increased enrollment among Hispanic and multi-racial students.

My proposed changes to Art 101 and Art 102 will mean:

- A. Students of color will see themselves and/or some aspect of their cultural/artistic heritage celebrated within a more globalizing historical account.
- B. All students to understand the contributions of people of color to global art history.
- C. This project hopefully contributes to more Latinx and Black students enrolling in art history courses.

**III. Support College-wide objectives and goals:**

**A. This project supports the College's Vision Statement.**

The Vision Statement says:

"College of Marin will be a premier educational and cultural center that provides programs of the highest caliber to meet the needs of an increasingly interconnected global society (emphasis added)."<sup>7</sup>

Although art history classes focus primarily on the historical past, traditionally the past has been presented as chronology of artistic achievement that leads to the present. It has been both implicitly and explicitly a narrative of progress, the story of the triumphant West (and within that context that of heterosexual white men). By including artistic traditions from other cultures in a manner that engenders deep cross-cultural analysis, as proposed here, these courses will connect our present-day to global society to a historical past that was at times similarly connected through intercultural artistic exchange.

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<sup>7</sup> For Vision Statement, see Educational Master Plan, 2021-25, p.10.

## **B. This project supports the College Mission Statement.**

According to the Mission Statement, the College is committed to:

"educational excellence ... rooted in providing equitable opportunities and fostering success for all members of our diverse community."

The Mission is achieved through:

- preparation for transfer to four-year colleges and universities
- associate degrees and certificates
- lifelong learning
- community and cultural enrichment<sup>8</sup>

Proposed changes to Art 101 and Art 102 will have a deep impact across a wide range of students when identified by academic objectives, because these courses are taken by:

- Students fulfilling a GE requirement for transfer to UC and CSU.
- Students seeking an ADT in Art History.
- Students seeking AA in Art.
- Students enroll for the purposes of life-long learning and personal enrichment.

## **C. This project supports specific goals and objectives of the Educational Master Plan.**

Focus area of Equity in the EMP, Goal 1 states that the college will work to:

"Decrease toward elimination of existing racial equity gaps at the College, with the goal of eliminating gaps by the conclusion of the EMP in 2025."<sup>9</sup>

To achieve this goal, Strategic Plan Objective EQ1.2 identifies as an objective:

"Data-informed, equity-minded, ongoing professional development expands faculty, staff, and administrator capacity and capability to meet Equity Goal 1."<sup>10</sup>

Additionally, Strategic Plan Objective EQ1.3 identifies as an objective:

"All academic programs identify and carry out data-informed, equity-minded, program-specific changes through the program review process toward Equity Goal 1 attainment."<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> For Mission Statement, see *Ibid.*, p. 10

<sup>9</sup> For Equity, Goal 1, see *Ibid.*, p. 18

<sup>10</sup> For Objective EQ1.2, see *Ibid.*, p. 19

<sup>11</sup> For Objective EQ1.3, see *Ibid.*, 19

The project outlined here is based on data gathered and analyzed as part of the Department of Fine Arts and Architecture's recent Program Review. As noted above, the changes in these courses will disrupt the white, Euro-centric nature of the survey, contributing to the realization of these two objectives, and thus toward the goal of reducing and eliminating racial equity gaps in the Department and the College.

## Conclusion

### Final Product:

I will submit to the Sabbatical Committee the following as my evidence of having completed this proposed research project.

For each of the eight "Interventions:"

- Written synopsis of lecture content
- PDF of completed PowerPoint
- Bibliography of sources consulted

### Sharing with Colleagues:

- I will share my research with my colleagues within the Fine Arts and Architecture Department. Most all studio faculty also teach historical art topics at some point so as to provide context to style and media (for example, Japanese ceramic traditions may be presented in a Pottery class). As part of our regular Department meetings, we have begun sharing with each other different pedagogical strategies and topics. I will contribute to this discussion.
- I have been a long-time guest lecturer in HUM 101. I would certainly share my knowledge with faculty and students in this program.
- I would certain guest lecture for any course as well.
- I would offer to share with art history colleagues around the Bay Area as part of Bay Area Art History Advisory Group - a discipline-specific discussion group currently in the planning stages (to be formed by a colleague at another CCC).

### Value of Sabbatical:

In the foregoing document, I have explained how the product of my sabbatical project will be of value to myself, the district, and my students. To synopsise my explanation, this project will be valuable to myself:

- more in-depth understanding of global artistic traditions

This project will be valuable to the District:

- supports the College's stated vision for itself
- supports the College's stated mission for itself
- supports the goals and objects of the College's Education Master Plan
- supports the goals and objects of the Department of Fine Arts and Architecture

This project will be valuable to my students:

- by providing a more global experience of the history of art in which more students will be able to recognize the cultural legacy they themselves are meant to inherit
- by meeting the needs and desires of our increasingly interconnected global population

**Addressing Equity and Inclusion of Nontraditional Student Populations:**

Again, to summarize the foregoing document: The final product of my sabbatical project will be a series of eight new units—"Interventions"—I will add to Art 101 and Art 102. These units will present carefully chosen artistic traditions from Asia, Africa, and the Americas. As a result, it is my hope that students of color will see themselves and/or some aspect of their cultural/artistic heritage celebrated within a more globalizing historical account. These Interventions will also mean that all students will develop an awareness of the contributions of people of color to global art history. Additionally, the inclusion of these new art works will generate cross-culture analysis and understanding among all students and further develop every student's visual literacy and raise their awareness of our common humanity. Finally, when presented as deliberate Interventions into a well-established narrative, these units will undermine the hegemonic whiteness of the C-ID by presenting artistic achievements by other cultures as equal to those of the West. Students enrolled in the courses will not only learn the history of western art as required by the state-mandated C-ID, they will also learn of global traditions that will empower them to challenge its hegemony on their own wherever they encounter it outside the classroom.