History of Art 398
Senior Conference I
Assignment 2
Part I (selection of article) due to Moodle 11:59, Monday, September 22
Part II (essay) due to Moodle 11:59, Monday, October 6

Analysis of an *Art Bulletin* Article

Accessible through multiple electronic pathways in Tripod are the eight most recent issues of *The Art Bulletin*: Vol. 107, No. 1 (March 2025), Vol. 106, No. 4 (December 2024); Vol. 106, No. 3 (September 2024) Vol. 106, No. 2 (June 2024); Vol. 106, No. 1 (March 2024) Vol. 105, No. 3 (September 2023); Vol. 105, No. 2 (June 2023); Vol. 105, No. 1 (March 2023).

Published by the College Art Association in New York, the *Art Bulletin* is described by its editorial board in the following terms:

> *The Art Bulletin* publishes leading scholarship in the English language in all aspects of art history as practiced in the academy, museums, and other institutions. From its founding in 1913 the journal has published, through rigorous peer review, scholarly articles and critical reviews of the highest quality in all areas and periods of the history of art. Articles take a variety of methodological approaches, from the historical to the theoretical. In its mission as a journal of record *The Art Bulletin* fosters an intensive engagement with intellectual developments and debates in contemporary art historical practice.

Your assignment is to survey recent issues of the journal and choose one full-length article (approx. 25-40 pp.) of particular interest to one (or more) of your hypothetical thesis topics proposed in Assignment 1. The *Art Bulletin* article will be the focus of a short, analytic paper (3-4 pages in length) in which you address the points and answer the questions enumerated below.

1. Briefly describe the subject of the article.
2. Define/describe the thesis/argument of the article.
3. Identity and characterize the kinds of sources the author uses to develop his/her argument. Are they primary or secondary? Are they visual, textual, or other kinds? Are they material, historical, critical, theoretical, etc.?
4. How does the author use/organize these sources to develop and sustain their thesis?
5. Select one illustration from the article to serve as a representative example of how the author integrates visual evidence into their argument. Summarize how they accomplish this.
6. Does the author diverge from the thesis and pursue other points? If so, how and what? And, if so, how does the author come back to the main point? If not, where do they go?
7. Can you identify a methodological framework guiding/driving the argument?
8. How does the author conclude?
9. Are you convinced?
10. As you read the article, be sure to read all the footnotes. Identify 2-3 primary or secondary sources cited in the footnotes that pique your interest and that may be of relevance to you as you develop your own thesis topic. List those 2-3 citations at the end of your essay.

The purpose of this assignment is to look closely at how a scholar puts together a successful article, which is, in effect, a long research paper, not unlike an ambitious seminar paper or a Bryn Mawr senior thesis. After breaking an article down into its component parts and thinking carefully and critically about how and with what tools a scholar works, you will have a template both for reading secondary sources and for structuring your own evolving research projects. By selecting an article that resonates with one or more of the hypothetical topics for your senior thesis, you have begun the process of identifying and assessing relevant secondary literature for your project and situating your thesis in relation to the existing scholarship.

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