

STUDYING ART IN FRANCE: HISTORY AND THEORY

Février 2012

Most programs in the history of art and art theory (covering art, theater, film, and music) are found in the universities, where one can work one's way up the degree ladder in these subjects from the licence to the doctorate. Students desiring a somewhat wider scope for the practice of an art form may prefer a specialized licence professionnelle or professionally oriented master's program.

Occupations for art graduates:

- ◆ Cultural administration and management
- ◆ Teaching
- ◆ Archives and historic preservation
- ◆ Journalism and art criticism
- ◆ The art market
- ◆ Cultural mediation
- ◆ Organization of shows and exhibitions

PROGRAMS AT THE LICENCE LEVEL

HISTORY OF ART

A member of the humanities family, the history of art focuses on works of art and collections of objects of value. At the *licence* level it is often combined with archaeology. As taught primarily in the universities, the curriculum is oriented toward cultural administration, the art market, teaching, and research. A master or higher is required for professional jobs in the field, in museums for instance. When combined with the study of language, history, literature, or law, art history is a vital part of a liberal education.

More than 50 different majors and specializations are currently offered in France, including about 30 at the licence level.

The curriculum at the *licence* level constitutes a survey of the history of the various artistic periods (antiquity, the Middle Ages, modern and contemporary, and so on). To that survey are added methodological and disciplinary studies in cultural history, iconography, and archaeology (protohistory, medieval archaeology, excavation techniques), academic methods, and modern languages.

At the licence level, the following two tracks are the most common:

- ◆ **History of art and archaeology** offers a thorough and diversified exploration of these two fields.
- ◆ **History of art, combined with another academic discipline** (sociology, history, modern literature, philosophy). This track allows students to extend their knowledge of another discipline and to prepare for a wide variety of career options.

THE PLASTIC ARTS

The *licence* in the plastic arts offers students a basic education in several fields of art, including some artistic techniques. Thus it can serve as a springboard into various art education occupations or into the fields of artistic exchange and cross-cultural mediation.

Fifteen different licences in art with a major in the plastic arts are offered in France's universities. These fall into 2 tracks:

- ◆ **Plastic arts:** Practical instruction in technical areas and an introduction to the world of art through the study of theoretical works and exploration of contemporary art. Many graduates eventually become guides, event organizers, teachers, or creative artists.
- ◆ **Applied arts:** In-depth study of theory and technique related to contemporary art and images, visual communication, design (of objects and spaces), digital creation, and infography/signs.

Common to the two tracks are theoretical instruction in the history and philosophy of art, art analysis, and the art-related sciences. Creative workshops and seminars in the visual arts are tailored to each track. These allow students to work on a personal project.

THE PERFORMING ARTS

The term "performing arts" refers to all of the arts that go into a staged performance such as a theatrical work or dance concert. Some program in this field also include film.

The universities offer about **15 different licences** in the performing arts. These programs combine dance, theater, and film in complete academic curricula (history, theory, analysis) and related themes, such as cultural mediation, management of cultural events and programs, production of live shows and exhibitions, archival conservation, and historic preservation.

FILM

Film studies view the cinema as a research subject (focusing on the film's images or its historical, sociological, or economic setting) possessing unique technical, artistic, and professional characteristics (such as specialized camera equipment, editing techniques, and institutional and professional networks). Film programs emphasize the acquisition of knowledge in both technical and socio-professional subjects and thus always comprise a practical dimension.

Ten different *licences* in **Arts or Arts, letters, and languages** offer majors in film (film or film studies) or in film plus other subjects (theater and film, performing and audiovisual arts).

DANCE

Studies in choreography combine theoretical and technical knowledge with practical know-how and experience. The curriculum enables students to achieve mastery of the historic, esthetic, analytic, and technical knowledge needed to analyze

the field of live performance, acquire the tools required for personal research in theater arts, and understand dance in its anthropological and sociological context.

Licence programs in arts allow students to specialize in “dance” or “theater and dance.” Also available are several *licence* professionnelle programs, most of which are in the broad field of physical education and athletics. There are three specializations:

- Training interpretive and creative dancer
- Training entertainers
- Development and management of artistic physical activities (with 3 subspecialties: dance, circus arts, and martial arts)

THEATER

Theater studies include academic training in the performing arts (history, esthetics, dramaturgy, the sociology of representations, and cultural policy), often combined with artistic training in workshops and internships. Programs prepare graduates for the various theater professions (acting, directing, dramaturgy) as well as other occupations related to the theater, such as cultural advocacy, staging amateur and school shows, public and media relations, and journalism.

Four different *licences* in the broad fields of arts and literature / languages allow students to study theater together with dance or film. One *licence* professionnelle leads to a specialized degree in leading theater workshops.

MUSIC

Historically, instruction in music and musicology was separated from instruction in the performing arts, as musical theory was taught as one of the four liberal arts in the medieval *quadrivium* along with arithmetic, geometry, and astronomy. The distinction persists in today's universities. The department or faculty in which music is taught is often separate from the structure under which the other arts are offered.

Although there are few majors at the *licence* level and few concentrations at the master's level—“music and musicology” being the most common at both levels, musicology is appearing in professionally oriented *licence* and master's programs.

The *licence* in musicology delivers historical, theoretical, and analytical instruction on western musical traditions, as well as courses on musical forms that are not part of the European classical tradition, such as popular or commercial music, ethnomusicology, jazz, and so on. The curriculum is rounded out with courses in composition (harmony and counterpoint) and by group performances (chamber music, orchestra, choir, and so on).

3 *licences* professionnelles are available, with third-year specializations in opera-related occupations, music in social institutions, and health, handicaps, and musical programming.

Note: Some universities (Bordeaux 3, Lyon 2, Paris 4) administer an admission test to students wishing to enter the *licence*. The purpose of the test is to ensure that applicants can read music well enough to succeed in their courses.

PROGRAMS AT THE MASTER LEVEL

HISTORY OF ART

Research masters fall into 4 broad themes: (i) history of art-related law and conservation, (ii) philosophy and contemporary cultural criticism, (iii) exhibition and set design, and (iv) the business of art and culture.

Some 15 different professional masters prepare students for careers in historic preservation, archaeology, cultural mediation, publishing, and the dissemination of arts and knowledge.

PERFORMING ARTS AND THEATER ARTS

There are a dozen generalist masters in the performing arts that offer instruction in dance, theater, and film, as well as academic work in history, theory, and analysis.

A professional master in management of cultural events and organizations appeals particularly to students from other fields who use it to build on their existing theoretical, logistical, and law-related knowledge.

THE PLASTIC ARTS

Ten research masters allow students to specialize in various branches of the plastic arts:

- Applied arts, design, architecture
- Visual arts (concentration in plastic arts)
- Visual arts (concentration in multimedia)
- Photography and contemporary art
- Creative industries: media, web, arts
- Teaching occupations (concentration in art education).

7 professional masters focus on image creation. These are divided into two broad groups:

- Digital creation (interactive multimedia and virtual imaging technologies)
- Image and design

FILM

A dozen research masters challenge students to enrich their theoretical knowledge through research. Students may specialize in (i) history, theory, and archives; (ii) history, theory, and esthetics; (iii) esthetics, analysis, and creativity; or (iv) contemporary imagery: art, audience, and heritage; among other themes, alone or in combination.

Some 10 professional masters in film break down into three orientations:

- Film and audiovisual production
- Script and direction
- Film and historic and cultural heritage

DANCE

Master's level academic training in dance is generally limited to the dance components of programs in other forms of art. The only formal specialization in dance is offered as part of the master in music.

Training is also offered in master's programs that combine dance, theater, and film. Dance is also studied through the lens of anthropology in the master's program in ethnology, prehistory, and ethnomusicology with a concentration in ethnomusicology and the anthropology of dance at the universities of Clermont-Ferrand 2 and Paris Ouest Nanterre Défense.

THEATER

There are three major categories of research masters:

- Theater studies: Master with a concentration in theater studies or theater and other arts
- Theater and text: Master in “theater: text and scene” or “Romance studies: language, text, theater”
- Theater and interculturality: Master in “theater and world cultures” or “European theater”

Most of the professional masters in France are offered by the Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Arts et Techniques du Théâtre (ENSATT, national school of theater arts and techniques), which offers 7 masters in theater specialties (playwriting, dramatic arts, lighting, sound, and so on).

A few universities offer professional masters in directing (Université Paris Ouest Nanterre Défense) and theatrical production (Université Paris 3 Sorbonne Nouvelle).

MUSIC

As at the licence level, most research masters related to music are described as offering a concentration in music and musicology, although musicology may also be studied as a specialization of several research masters in arts. A research master in humanities and social sciences with a concentration in ethnology, prehistory, and ethnomusicology and a specialization in ethnomusicology and the anthropology of dance is offered by Université de Paris Ouest Nanterre la Défense.

Professional master: 2 specializations are possible at Université Paris Sorbonne (Paris 4) in music management and medial music performance.

POETRY

Five programs at the master level offer specializations in poetry in association with literary history, writing, or cultural anthropology. These programs are available at the following universities: Rennes 2, Pau Pays de l'Adour, and Lille 3.

DOCTORAL PROGRAMS

In France, research and scholarship in artistic fields is done in more than 100 teams affiliated with some 30 doctoral departments around the country. Scholarly training through research is therefore available in academic units of various size and scope. Those units can be divided into the following three categories (with several examples of each):

SPECIALIZED UNITS

- Doctoral department 138 on literature, languages, and performance at Université Paris Ouest Nanterre la Défense, and the host team on history of art and representation (EA 4414).
- Doctoral department 433 on concepts and languages at Université Paris Sorbonne (Paris 4) and its host teams Observatoire Musical Français (EA 206, the French musical observatory) and musical heritage and languages (EA 8087).
- Doctoral department 267 on art and media at Université Paris 3 Sorbonne Nouvelle and its institute for research in theater studies (EA 3959).

THEMATIC UNITS

- Doctoral department 124 on history of art and archaeology at Paris Sorbonne (Paris 4) and its host team on “Rome and its Renaissances: arts, archaeology, literature, and philosophy (EA 4081).
- Doctoral department 355 on land, culture, and society at Université Aix Marseille 1 with its Mediterranean center for re-

search on relations among the arts (EA 2422).

- Doctoral department 68 on literature, culture, and science at Université de Caen and its host team on Romance language literature and performing arts (EA 4256).

CROSS-DISCIPLINARY UNITS

- Doctoral department 267 on arts and media at Université Paris 3 Sorbonne Nouvelle and its research workshop on media forms and the performing arts (EA 7172).
- Doctoral department 288, Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, at Université Paris 11 and the research center on arts and language (EA 8566).
- Doctoral department 480, MONTAIGNE Humanités, at Université Bordeaux 3 Michel de Montaigne and the host team LAPRIL, specializing in literature, art, multidisciplinary, representation, imagination, and languages (EA 4198).

All research units and their associated doctoral departments can be found in the doctoral section of the CampusFrance catalog: <http://d.campusfrance.org/tria/edsearch/>

INTERNATIONAL ASPECTS

French thinking about the arts finds its way abroad through institutions that maintain connections with French higher education institutions and their faculty members. French institutions help to set up and maintain academic and cultural partnerships, particularly in the history of art, while learned societies in every area of art theory organize lectures and colloquia around the world, spreading French thought and allowing French thinkers to dialogue with foreign scholars.

◆ French schools abroad

Five French schools abroad participate in international academic and cultural partnerships, with particular emphasis on the history of art and archaeology. The Ecole française d'Athènes, the Ecole française de Rome, the Institut français d'archéologie orientale du Caire, the Ecole française d'Extrême-Orient, and the Casa de Velázquez are public scientific, cultural, and professional institutions operating under the authority of the Ministry of Higher Education and Research. Their mission is to promote research and research training in all disciplines practiced within their geographic ambit.

◆ Scholarly residences

Villa Kujoyama (Kyoto, Japan)

In partnership with the cultural service of the French embassy in Tokyo, the Franco-Japanese Institute of Kansai, and the French Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, the Villa Kujoyama welcomes scholars-in-residence in various disciplines: the visual arts, theater arts, literature, audiovisual arts, the humanities and social sciences, and art theory and criticism.

◆ The IFRE network

The network of 27 Instituts Français de Recherche à l'Étranger (overseas French research institutes) around the world encourage research in the humanities and social sciences in cooperation with local and French research institutions. Several members of the network specialize in the history of art and archaeology, including the French section of the bureau of Sudanese antiquities in Khartoum, the French archaeological delegation to Afghanistan in Kabul, the Maison Française in Oxford, and the French institute of Andean studies in Lima.

◆ The Institut Français

The Institut Français promotes French cultural policy through international artistic exchanges in the performing arts, visual arts, and architecture and through initiatives in the world of books, film, French language, knowledge, and ideas. It is developing a new program on the diffusion of scientific culture.

◆ International associations and learned societies

Scholarly associations and societies organize academic conferences and professional meetings in many countries, thereby encouraging the exchange of ideas among French scholars and their foreign counterparts. There are some 200 scholarly associations connected with the arts in France, according to the directory of the French national institute of art history. Some have a particularly strong international dimension:

Association des Historiens de l'Art Contemporain (AHAC, association of historians of contemporary art)

Among AHAC's missions is to promote contact among historians of contemporary art in Europe and around the world.

Association des Professeurs d'Archéologie et d'Histoire de l'Art des Universités (APAHU, association of university-based professors of archaeology and art history):

APAHU is one of the publishers of the semi-annual review *Histoire de l'art*, which publishes work by young scholars as well as renowned specialists.

Centre International de Recherches Interdisciplinaires sur l'Ethnomusicologie de la France (CIRIEF, international center for interdisciplinary research in French ethnomusicology):

CIRIEF's goal is to promote French ethnomusicology at the national and international levels through research, training, and the dissemination of scholarly findings. It stimulates research in French ethnomusicology, promotes teaching and training generally (in universities, associations, and institutions), encourages publication of archives and scientific work bearing on French ethnomusicology, and organizes lectures, seminars, colloquia, and other scholarly gatherings.

Comité Français d'Histoire de l'Art (CFHA, French committee for art history):

The CFHA participates in public debates and discussions of concern to the community of art historians and supports several reviews and scholarly publications, including *La Revue de l'Art*, *Corpus vitrearum*, and *Corpus smaltorum*.

Comité International d'Histoire de l'Art (CIHA, international committee for art history):

CIHA's main missions are to encourage the historical and methodological study of artistic phenomena, to maintain continuous contact among art historians around the world, and to organize international meetings of art historians.

Société Française de Musicologie (SFM, French society of musicology):

The SFM represents individuals interested in research in musical history and science. It publishes the bimonthly *Revue de musicologie*.

Société d'Histoire du Théâtre (SHT, theater history society):

The SHT participates regularly in congresses, colloquia, and exhibitions in France and abroad. It is a founding member of the International Federation for Theater

Research and of the International Institute for Theater Research in Venice.

Société de l'Histoire de l'Art Français (SHAF, society for the history of French art):

SHAF publishes the monthly *Bulletin de la société de l'histoire de l'art français*.

Société Internationale d'Histoire Comparée du Théâtre, de l'Opéra et du Ballet (SIHCTOB, international society for the comparative history of theater, opera, and ballet):

this group studies the milestones in the development of dramatic and operatic heritage, the special contributions of each nation, and their collective contribution to European culture.

◆ CampusArt, an online application website

<http://www.campusart.org>

Gives access to a network of more than 60 French institutions (25 public art schools, 25 private art schools and 10 universities) offering about 200 artistic diplomas on the Licence's and Master's levels. Each student has to fill an application available to all institutions and is able to follow it all the way until pre-registration. In order to apply, each candidate has to :

- Have at least 3 years of experience in an artistic field.
- Have B2 level within the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).
- Publish a portfolio online for consideration by the program director.

LINKS

Capadoce, fonds documentaires des centres de documentation du ministère de la Culture et de la Communication

<http://capadoce.ext.culture.fr>

Centre de documentation de la musique contemporaine, CDMC

<http://www.cdmc.asso.fr>

Centre national des arts plastiques

<http://www.cnap.fr>

Centre National du Théâtre

<http://www.cnt.asso.fr>

Centre Pompidou, Musée national moderne

<http://www.centrepompidou.fr>

Collection du Musée national d'art moderne

<http://collection.centrepompidou.fr>

Cité de la musique

<http://www.citedelamusique.fr>

Institut National d'Histoire de l'Art (INHA)

<http://www.inha.fr>

Institut de recherche et coordination acoustique/musique, Ircam

<http://www.ircam.fr>

Médiathèque de la direction de la musique,

de la danse du théâtre et des spectacles

<http://www.culture.gouv.fr/documentation/malraux/>

Musées de France,

catalogue collectif des bibliothèques des musées nationaux

<http://www.culture.gouv.fr/documentation/doclvr/>

Muséofile, répertoire des musées français

<http://www.culture.gouv.fr/documentation/museo/>

Narcisse, images scientifiques

d'œuvres de laboratoires de musées

<http://www.culture.gouv.fr/documentation/lrmf/pres.htm>

Répertoire des arts du spectacle

<http://rasp.culture.fr>

Réunion des musées nationaux (RMN)

<http://www.rmn.fr>

Société d'Histoire du Théâtre (SHT)

<http://www.sht.asso.fr>

Techniques contemporaines

utilisées dans les monuments historiques, TCMH

<http://www.tcmh.culture.gouv.fr>

CampusFrance, all the information to prepare a study project in France

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