

SE u3a Forum Summer School

Monday 7th – Thursday 10th September 2026

University of Chichester



Art History: The Male Gaze

Maximum 12

All aspects of visual culture - painting, sculpture, photographs, cartoons, installations - can delight our aesthetic senses, but additionally, they give us a fabulous insight into the social, cultural, political and religious contexts of their time. As a bonus, they usually shine a spotlight on the personality and character of the artist.

My course will not focus on one art movement or particular period of art history, but rather will explore a topic which runs through centuries of visual culture, and which has only exercised the minds of scholars in recent decades: The Male Gaze. This is the label art historians give to the ways in which women have been, and still are, depicted in art to provide visual pleasure to the male – principally heterosexual – viewer. Feminist art historians argue that the Gaze is driven by notions of gender and power relations. These are wonderfully controversial ideas we can explore together. All that is required is an open mind, a love of art and a good sense of humour!



Titian



Alfred Hitchcock

We will analyse sculpture as far back as the 4th century BC, travelling through time and across continents examining works of art from the Renaissance, Baroque, through Impressionism, Victorian Britain, right up to film stills and photographs in the 20th century. There will be artists you know, some you may not know. We will also discover how female artists, exploiting a variety of strategies, have attempted to 'refuse' the Gaze, that is, to challenge it through their own art. This will be, I hope, a fascinating and enlightening journey, providing food for thought for both male and female art lovers, with plenty of fun along the way.

About the tutor

I fell in love with art history at the age of 50 studying with the incomparable Open University. I've been giving talks to my own u3a group for some years, learning much myself, and encouraging my group to look at art with fresh eyes.

Summer School Course - 2026

Monday pm	Introductions all round
Tuesday am	Exploring and understanding the theory through a variety of illustrations
Tuesday pm	Continuing the journey: Some of the artists we will look at during the day Include Praxiteles, Boticelli, Masaccio, Monet, Renoir, Etty, with a nod to Alfred Hitchcock and Marilyn Monroe.....
Wednesday am	'Refusing' the gaze
Wednesday pm	Perhaps a visit to the Pallant Gallery to look at real art as opposed to slides
Thursday am	Summing up. Perhaps a quiz if people would like.

For further information about the course, please contact the tutor