



Course details

Course title

Art Appreciation: The Invention of Photography and its Impact on Early Modern Painting

Course code

Q00021436

Course date

Start: 09/05/25

End: 09/05/25

Number of classes

1 sessions

Timetable

Fri 9th May, 9:30 to 12:30

Tutor

Caroline Levisse

Fee range

Free to £11.10

How you'll learn

You'll join a small group of fellow learners for classes online in video meetings and materials will be provided in our virtual learning environment.

Got it!

Online

Venue

Online

Level of study

Beginners

Course overview

In this thought-provoking session, we will look at the links that can be drawn between the invention of photography around 1839 and the emergence of modern painting that a decade later. We will consider how painters used photographs, and how they felt challenged by this new type of images. You will learn about the invention of photography, around the inventions of Niepce, Daguerre and Talbot. We will examine early photographs by Nadar, Le Gray and many unknown photographers. Many paintings will also be studied, by artists such as Delacroix, Degas, Monet, Renoir, and Caillebotte.

Course description

This three-hour session explores how the invention of photography, from the 1830s, reshaped artistic practice, particularly influencing the Impressionist painters. We will begin with a brief history of early photographic techniques, from Niépce's heliographs to Daguerreotypes and Talbot's calotypes, examining their impact on visual culture.

The discussion will then focus on how photography challenged traditional painting, prompting artists to rethink composition, perspective, and subject matter. Impressionist painters, including Monet, Degas, and Renoir, responded by embracing looser brushwork, capturing fleeting moments, and experimenting with light and movement—qualities reminiscent of photographic snapshots. Degas in particular incorporated photographic framing techniques, cropping figures in ways that mimicked spontaneous photographic compositions. Also, these artists focused on something the photograph could not do then: bright colours.

We will consider whether photography liberated painters from the need for realism or introduced new artistic constraints.

What financial support is available?

We don't want anything to stand in your way when it comes to bringing Adult learning within reach so if you need anything to support you to achieve your goals then speak to one of our education experts during your enrolment journey. Most of our courses are government funded but if you don't qualify or need alternative financial help to access them then let us know.

What other support is available?

All of our digital content, teaching and learning activities and assessments are designed to be accessible so if you need any additional support you can discuss this with the education experts during your enrolment journey and we will do all we can to make sure you have optimal access.

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