This course will introduce students to the development of American art during the 19th century. It will explore how visual culture may be understood in relation to the ideological and aesthetic needs of particular social and political groups. Among the central topics to be considered is the role of art in the development of national identity from the signing of the Declaration of Independence (1776), through the antebellum period of the early and mid-1800s, into the era of the Civil War (1861-1865), Reconstruction, and the Gilded Age in the final quarter of the century.

More specifically, we will explore the symbolic functions of landscape painting; the ways in which Native Americans and African Americans were represented; the increasingly cosmopolitan character of American high culture during the Gilded Age; and the emergence of diverse forms of realism, naturalism, and modernism at the end of the century. Attention is given throughout the course to the role of artistic institutions and patronage. Unifying themes include the implications of the geographical and political redefinition of the United States through westward expansion and the significance of the processes of modernization and industrialization that made America the most powerful nation in the world by 1900.

Week 1  October 19th
INTRODUCTION AND THE HISTORIOGRAPHY OF AMERICAN ART

Week 2  October 26th
‘NATURE’S NATION’: THOMAS COLE AND THE HUDSON RIVER SCHOOL

Week 3  November 2nd
MANIFEST DESTINY AND WESTWARD EXPANSION: REPRESENTING THE FRONTIER AND NATIVE AMERICANS
Suggested Reading: Nancy K. Anderson, “‘The Kiss of Enterprise’: The Western Landscape as Symbol and Resource”; and “‘Doomed to Perish’: George Catlin’s Depictions of the Mandan’, Reading American Art, eds. Marianne Doezema and

Monday, November 9th  NO CLASS; Tuesday, November 10th  NO OFFICE HOURS

Week 4
Monday, November 16th  NO CLASS
Tuesday, November 17th
14.30h TERRA FOUNDATION FOR AMERICAN ART LIBRARY, 29 rue des Pyramides, 75001 Paris
Wednesday, November 18th
14.30h MUSÉE D’ORSAY, 1 rue de la Légion d’Honneur, 75007 Paris

Week 5  November 23rd
NATION BUILDING AND THE ART OF DEMOCRACY: GENRE PAINTING IN ANTEBELLUM AMERICA

Week 6  November 30th
RACE, SLAVERY, AND THE PICTURING OF AFRICAN AMERICANS

Week 7  December 7th
‘LUMINISM’ AND THE REFORMULATION OF THE LANDSCAPE

Week 8  December 14th
REALISM AND NATURALISM: THOMAS EAKINS, WINSWOL HOMER, AND PAINTING IN THE GILDED AGE

Week 9  January 4th
INTERNATIONALISM AND MODERNISM AT THE END OF THE CENTURY

Week 10  January 11th
THE ART OF EMPIRE: THE 1876 CENTENNIAL EXHIBITION AND THE 1893 WORLD’S COLUMBIAN EXPOSITION
Suggested Reading: Robert W. Rydell, ‘The Chicago World’s Columbian Exposition of 1893: “And Was Jerusalem Builded Here?”’, All the World’s a Fair: Visions of Empire at
**Week 11  January 18^{th}**

STUDENT PRESENTATIONS

Each student will be asked to select an artwork, preferably one they are able to see and investigate first-hand, and give a 10-minute oral presentation in class. A selection of 19^{th}-century American artworks on view at the Musée d’Orsay will be distributed on the day of our visit. Additionally, students may consult the La Fayette Database in American Art, which includes images and bibliographic citations for works by American artists in French national collections, 1620-1940, and which may be accessed at: http://musee.louvre.fr/bases/lafayette/

This presentation is informal and is intended to encourage students to organize and articulate some of the main themes and issues covered throughout the course. Presentations should include a detailed visual analysis of the artwork and some discussion of the specific historical and cultural context in which the artwork was produced and received.
Bibliography

The corpus of literature on 19th-century American art is now vast. I include here only a selection of sources that deal with issues frequently raised by this course. The Terra Foundation for American Art has an excellent library with an extensive collection of books, monographs, exhibition catalogues, and critical studies on American art, which students will be introduced to during our visit. The database for the Terra collection may be accessed at: http://catalogue.terra.biblibre.com. Students may find the library’s resources particularly helpful in preparing their oral presentation.

Basic Reading on American History


Historiographical Overviews of American Art-Historical Scholarship


General Histories of American Art


**Further Reading**


Alan Wallach, ‘Long-Term Visions, Short-Term Failures’ and ‘The Battle Over “The West As America”, *Exhibiting Contradiction: Essays on Art Museums in the*