



History of Art

Question

Art historians study buildings, paintings, sculptures, objects – anything made at least partly to be looked at. There are many different ways to approach these objects, but one of the most important questions for an art historian is: why does this thing look the way it does?

Your task is to pick an object, building or artwork from your local area and create a response to this question.

Format

You can choose one of these options for the format of your response:

- Record a five-minute podcast episode or write a script for a five-minute podcast
 - If you're submitting a script, make sure you specify details such as the auditory environment, background noises, sound effects and other non-scripted aspects!
- Write an essay of no more than 1000 words
- Create a presentation, with explanatory notes

Entries will be judged on the quality of their research and expression and their creativity. Please also include an image of your chosen building, artwork or object.

Researching your response

When it comes to finding out more about local buildings or artworks, there are lots of very respectable sources online and in local libraries.

- British History Online
<https://www.british-history.ac.uk/>
- Pevsner Architectural Guides / Buildings of England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland
- Historic England Collections (including Royal Commission of Historical Monuments)
<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/archive/history/>
- [Archive.org](https://www.archive.org/) – the incredible online non-profit library, many publications available for free
- [SmartHistory.org](https://www.smarthistory.org/) – a great resource with free articles on many different artists, artworks and movements across the globe.

Local museums, libraries and archive offices will have more specific information, and their staff will be happy to help if you get in touch!

Art podcasts

It might sound strange to be asked create an audio experience about something visual, but art is a booming area for podcasts. Here are some examples to inspire you:

- Sculpting Lives
A podcast about British women sculptors
<https://podcasts.apple.com/gb/podcast/sculpting-lives/id1502975715>
- Moving Pictures
A long, slow look at some famous, and not so famous, artworks.
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b09mtb0b>
- 99% Invisible
A podcast about the hidden stories of design in our everyday environment.
<https://99percentinvisible.org/>
- PlaceCloud
A series of viewpoints written by different experts focusing on London history
(NB not all of these all are about buildings or artworks!)
<https://open.spotify.com/show/6LhwIfKXs5LbFwuCSpit8M?si=7bef0d6939fa4121>
- The Great Women Artists Podcast
A series of interviews with artists, curators, writers and art lovers about the women artists who inspire them.
<https://www.thegreatwomenartists.com/katy-hessel-podcast>

Designing and recording a podcast

Besides your research into the history of your chosen object or building, you'll need to think about how to present art or architecture in an auditory way. Will you be the sole narrator or will it be a dialogue? Will you record on-site? Will there be other sounds – music, sound effects, background noise?

Some of these resources might help you to think about these issues:

- 'Art really does work on the radio' – Apollo Magazine
<https://www.apollo-magazine.com/art-radio-blood-and-bronze-the-essay-cellini/>
- 'Speaking of Art: Art Histories and the Podcast' – Paul Mellon Centre Seminar
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=apyeEWmVb-g>

From a practical perspective, you can record using your phone's microphone or on your computer using free software such as Audacity. If you're not able to record feel free to still submit a script – but remember to mention those non-scripted details!