

Lecture Series: 'Selected Themes in Viewing Art at the National Gallery' by Maria Martin for Winter 2020 semester (Jan 16–Feb 20, 2020)

Each week we will gather together at the National Gallery of Canada to view artworks from the collection, and explore a different theme with a light-hearted approach.

'The Winter of our Discontent' – Images of Snow and Summer

Shake off the seasonal 'winter blahs' as we look at the many wonderful ways that snow can be perceived and painted by Canadian artists. We will also look at artworks involving a variety of atmospheric effects, and the techniques that artists used to achieve them. And, as a reminder that 'glorious summer' will eventually return, we will enjoy some artworks set in warmer climates. The lecture will take place in the Canadian and European/American galleries.

Looking at Love

As a Valentine's Day theme, we will visit the Canadian and European/American Galleries at the National Gallery to view artworks that portray and celebrate love in many different ways. We will also see how many Cupids we can discover launching arrows in selected artworks...

War and Peace

Before the invention of photography and cinema, the depictions of historical events could only be understood through oral and visual representations, which were open to the interpretation of storytellers and artists. We will look at paintings such as Benjamin West's famous 18th century history painting, *The Death of General Wolfe*, and other artworks from that period to the present day to see how artists have depicted themes of war and peace.

Contemporary Art

We will visit the Contemporary Art wing at the Gallery to view 20th and 21st century artworks, including larger 'installation' pieces, conceived for larger gallery spaces. In contemporary art we find that artists are often creating works with a larger public in mind, and with a consciousness of the societal context and impact of their art.

Architecture in Art

In this lecture we will look at how artists portray architecture, from the haphazard perspectives of medieval and early Renaissance artists to the precise renderings of Canaletto's Venetian paintings, to contemporary artists' use of architecture and space in their work. This lecture will include a visit to the Rideau Street Convent Chapel, whose architectural interior was preserved and reconstructed within the new National Gallery building when it was completed in 1988.

From Claude to Cézanne: French Landscape Art from the 17th to 20th centuries

In this lecture we will focus on the works of French artists on display in the Gallery's European/American exhibition spaces, from 17th-century classically inspired landscape artists Claude Lorrain and Nicolas Poussin, to 19th and early 20th century Impressionist and Post-impressionist artists such as Claude Monet and Paul Cézanne. We will consider how the portrayal of landscape shifted over the centuries from depicting idealized scenes of antiquity to bold visions of a modern world.