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# Crynoldebau / abstracts

‘Projecting the Perfect Image: Teaching, Looking, Learning’

Colin Cruise

Art historians are used to images: standing beside (or in front of) them in galleries, scrutinizing them in museum print rooms, illustrating them in their essays and books, and, in the contemporary educational setting, projecting them in Powerpoint presentations. Constantly comparing and contrasting images with each other, and, one hopes, encouraging engagement with them from others, images form a kind of second language for the art historian. The American writer James Elkins notes “Art history is centrally positioned in the emerging field of image studies because it possesses the most exact and developed language for the interpretation of pictures.” (The Domain of Images, Cornell UP, 1999 p.6) However, this language can be borrowed or developed by other disciplines to encourage analysis and deep thinking.

This paper will pose questions about how to look at images with student groups and what can be elicited as a response. It will propose that the concentrated communal focus of a group as a different kind of critical looking from solitary looking in a gallery. It will use the proposer’s own research field - comparative iconographical studies, particularly relating to graphic history - to consider ways of interrogating images with student groups to involve them in what we might describe as ‘knowledge–through-looking’.