

Visual Literacy: Understanding Images across Europe – Past and Present

one-year educational module (4EU+)

13 November 2025 - 11 June 2026

Charles University, University of Milan & University of Warsaw



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What's it all about?

Main goal:

To boost your visual literacy, research skills, and critical thinking — all through a dynamic, one-year journey of seminars, tutorials, and a hands-on field workshop. This module helps you understand how images work — in history, politics, society, and art. You'll explore how visual culture has shaped Europe's past and present, and how it communicates meaning in different times and places.

How we teach:

- Multicultural, multilingual groups
- Blended format: online classes + on-site activities
- Interactive field workshop with curators & artists
- Creative methods, like critical remaking (yes, you will have your hands full (and possibly dirty))

What you'll explore:

- How cultural frameworks shape image perception
- Historical artistic processes through practice
- Visual culture from pre-modern to contemporary times

What you'll gain:

- Tools for analyzing images critically
- Experience in artistic-research collaboration in international groups
- Space for reflection via self-assessments & learning portfolios

Built on experience:

This is the fourth edition of the module, developed and refined since 2021. Each year brings new insights, new themes, and new ways of seeing.



Students' testimonials



How the module works in practice?

Online Classes

- **Seminar-style class** → once a month
 - All students together
 - Topics: related to tutoring programmes
- **Tutorials** → two-three times a month
 - Small, intercultural groups
 - Close work with your tutor

Meeting time: **Thursdays, 5:00–6:30 pm (via Zoom)**

Workshop → five-day workshop in Warsaw, 13-17.04.2026

 Regular rhythm: **monthly class + weekly tutorials + workshop in Warsaw**



Course calendar

Date	Type of the class
13.11.2025	Introduction
20.11.2025	Tutorial
27.11.2025	Tutorial
04.12.2025	Seminar
11.12.2025	Tutorial
18.12.2025	Tutorial
08.01.2026	Seminar
15.01.2026	Tutorial
22.01.2026	Tutorial
29.01. - 16.02.2026 exam session and winter break	



19.02.2026	Seminar
26.02.2026	Tutorial
05.03.2026	Tutorial
12.03.2026	Seminar
19.03.2026	Tutorial
26.03.2026	Tutorial
02.04.2026	— Easter break
09.04.2026	Tutorial
13-17.04.2026	Workshop in Warsaw
23.04.2026	Tutorial
30.04.2026	Dean's hours (no classes on this day)
07.05.2026	Tutorial
14.05.2026	Seminar
21.05.2026	Tutorial
28.05.2026	Tutorial
11.06.2026	Closing meeting: Students' presentations (ca. 4h)



Spring workshop in Warsaw

📍 **April 13–17, 2026 University of Warsaw**

Main Goal:

- Provide a dynamic setting for developing group project ideas through direct engagement with artworks and meaningful dialogue with peers, instructors, and curators.
- Get to know Warsaw's most prominent art institutions.

Programme Highlights:

- Meetings with curators, study visits to galleries and museum,
- Workshops in special collections of UW Library,

Practicalities:

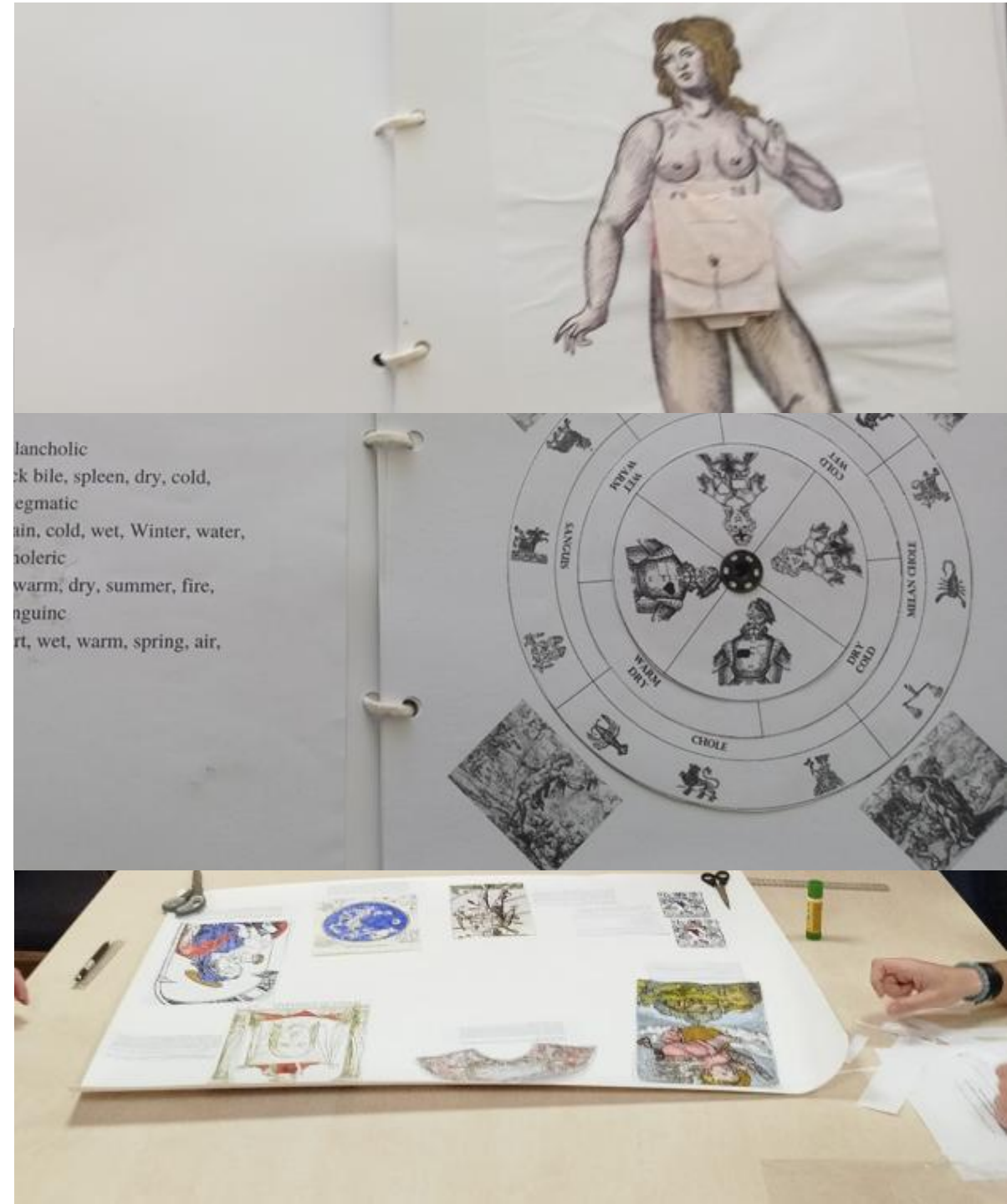
- **Travel and accommodation costs** are covered for students from **Milan and the Czech Republic (daily allowance & travel allowance)**
- **Free tickets to galleries and museum, shared lunches and coffee breaks** are provided throughout the workshop

Final online meeting

Closing session – June 11

During this closing session:

- Presentation of artistic group projects, which address significant research questions
- Each student will receive **individual feedback** from their tutor
- Tutors will discuss students' **learning portfolios** one-on-one



Evaluation and outcomes of the module

- Progress shown in self-assessment
- Individual *portfolios* documenting the creative and research process
- Final group *scientific-artistic projects*
- Active participation in discussions & workshops



You will earn 6 ECTS points and receive an official letter of attendance

Who can join the Visual literacy module?

-  **University of Milan**
For 2nd- and 3rd-year BA students
Department of Cultural Heritage and Environment
→ Recognized as a **workshop or stage activity**
-  **Charles University**
For BA and MA students of Art Education
→ Recognized as an **elective course**
For BA students of Art History
→ Recognized as an **elective course**
-  **University of Warsaw**
For 2nd- and 3rd-year BA students of Art History
→ Recognized as **two conversatory classes**

How to apply?

If you're interested in joining the upcoming edition of the *Visual Literacy* module, here's what you need to do:

1. Choose your tutor

List **three preferred tutors** you'd like to work with during the module.

2. Write a motivational statement

Prepare a short text (approx. **500 words**) explaining:

- Why you're interested in the module
- What you expect to gain from the activities
- Any topics you'd like to explore during tutorials or seminar-style classes

3. Submit your application

Send everything to the module coordinator*

 **karolina.moziewicz@uw.edu.pl**

 **Deadline: Friday, October 24**

Notifications: before November 3

* **Italian students:**

Upload your application to a Unimi platform along with your academic CV and language certificate

Note:

We expect the module to be shaped by the **active involvement of students**, so your ideas and engagement truly matter!

Who are we?

Prof. Davide Colmobo, PhD

Department of Cultural
Heritage and Environment,
University of Milan

Giulia Zompa, PhD

Department of Cultural
Heritage and Environment,
University of Milan

Zuzana Štefková, PhD

Faculty of Arts and
Philosophy, Institute of Art
History, Charles University

Pavla Gajdošíková, PhD

Faculty of Education,
Department of Art
Education, Charles
University

**Monika Czekanowska-
Gutman, PhD**

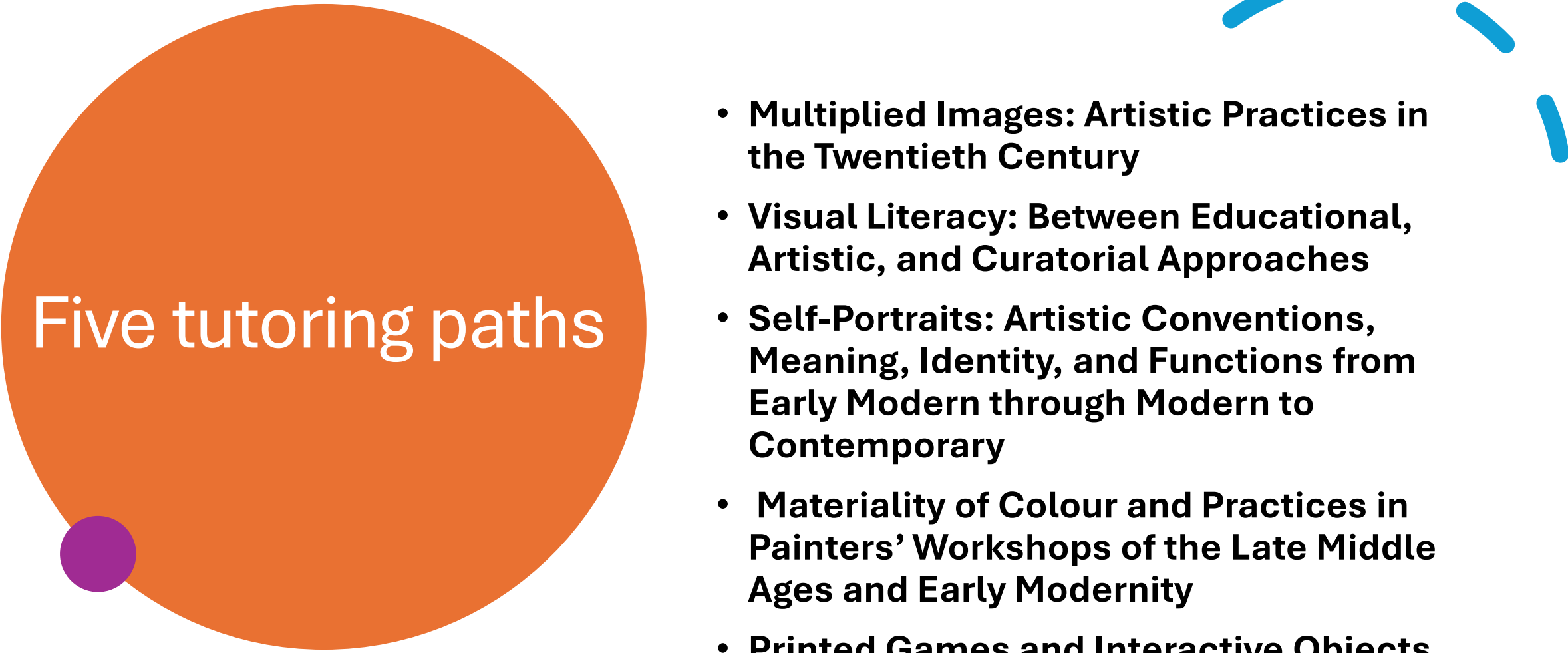
Faculty of Culture and Arts,
Institute of Art History,
University of Warsaw

Magdalena Herman, PhD

Faculty of Culture and Arts,
Institute of Art History,
University of Warsaw

Karolina Mroziewicz, PhD

Faculty of Culture and Arts,
Institute of Art History,
University of Warsaw



Five tutoring paths

- **Multiplied Images: Artistic Practices in the Twentieth Century**
- **Visual Literacy: Between Educational, Artistic, and Curatorial Approaches**
- **Self-Portraits: Artistic Conventions, Meaning, Identity, and Functions from Early Modern through Modern to Contemporary**
- **Materiality of Colour and Practices in Painters' Workshops of the Late Middle Ages and Early Modernity**
- **Printed Games and Interactive Objects in the 15th–18th centuries**

Tutorials

1. Multiplied Images: Artistic Practices in the Twentieth Century

Led by **Prof. Davide Colombo and Giulia Zompa, Phd** (University of Milan), this tutorial examines twentieth-century artistic practices rooted in appropriation, collage, photomontage, found footage, and re-enactment. It explores the role of heterogeneous and non-artistic imagery alongside traditional visual sources. Special attention will be given to the blending of high and low cultural models and the circulation of iconic images and contemporary art within media and popular culture.

2. Visual Literacy: Between Educational, Artistic, and Curatorial Approaches

Led by **Pavla Gajdošíková and Zuzana Štefková** (Charles University), this tutorial focuses on contemporary art, art education, and curating as forms of dialogue and tools for fostering critical thinking. Students will investigate current trends, themes, and “turns” in the contemporary art field, using this research as a foundation to collaboratively develop their own curatorial projects, accompanied by educational activities in art mediation. The course also encourages students to engage in their own artistic practice to better understand the position and perspective of the artist.

3. Self-Portraits: Artistic Conventions, Meaning, Identity, and Functions from Early Modern through Modern to Contemporary

This tutorial, led by **Monika Czekanowska-Gutman, PhD** (University of Warsaw), introduces students to the development of self-portraits in pre-modern, modern, and contemporary visual culture, including painting, photography, graphic arts, and social media. Emphasis is placed on formal, iconographic, iconological, and semiotic methods of analysis, as well as on the cross-cultural reception of images across different traditions (Jewish, Christian, Arabic, and others). These approaches will equip students to analyze self-portraits critically in terms of how they construct identity, express psychological aspects of personality, and negotiate presence and absence, among other issues.

4. Printed Games and Interactive Objects in the 15th–18th centuries

This tutorial, led by **Magdalena Herman, PhD** (University of Warsaw), explores how printed games of the 15th–18th centuries were created, perceived, and functioned as interactive, social, and material artifacts. The course will focus primarily on selected examples of card, board, and book games, examining the relationships between these objects, their creators, and players. We will also consider how games and gameplay were represented, analyzing their role in the early modern iconography and the visual language they themselves embodied.

5. Materiality of Colour and Practices in Painters' Workshops of the Late Middle Ages and Early Modernity

This tutorial, conducted by Karolina Mroziewicz, PhD (University of Warsaw), will explore the physical properties of colours, the economic and cultural value of pigments, their trade routes, and their application in 15th- and 16th-century painters' workshops. Students will engage in hands-on experiments with paint production and reflect on the conditions that rendered the pre-modern colour palette legible, meaningful, and valuable to contemporary viewers. They will also experience first-hand the challenges and limitations of reconstructing late medieval and early modern paint recipes.

Questions & answers



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See: <https://ihs.uw.edu.pl/en/visual-literacy-understanding-images-across-europe-past-and-present-educational-module/>