

RUSS 120

Russia in Pictures: Exploring a Visual Culture



This course is not just about Russian art or about Russia through its art, it's about the entire visual culture of a country to which widespread literacy came later than in Western Europe. History shows that this situation does not equate to a lack of cultural sophistication -- on the contrary, the visual medium compensates and became the primary mode of communication, and studying such a culture requires a particular ability to 'read pictures'. The course provides a brief cultural history of Russia from the middle ages to the present, through every form of art --from icons to paintings, folk art to embroidery, shop signs to posters -- and includes photographs from the invention of the camera in the early nineteenth century to the invention of color photography (in Russia, by the way) in the early twentieth century.

Spring

2015

5 Credits VLPA

with Prof. James West