

Donato Loia
Curriculum Vitae

E: dloia@uchicago.edu

EDUCATION

- 2023 **PhD**, The University of Texas at Austin
Department of Art and Art History
Dissertation: "Beyond the Light: Theaster Gates, Gerhard Richter, Danh Vo, and the Religious Imaginary in Modern and Contemporary Art"
Advisor: Richard Shiff
Committee: John Clarke, Linda Henderson, Tracie Matysik, Sally Promey
- 2012 **MA**, University of Rome "La Sapienza," Italy
Modern and Contemporary Art
Thesis: "Georges Bataille and Surrealism"
- 2011 **Erasmus Program**, Copenhagen University, Denmark
Art History and Cultural Studies
- 2009 **BA**, University of Rome "La Sapienza," Italy
Art History
Honors Thesis: "The Question of the Image between Visible and Invisible in Pavel Florenskij's 'Iconostasis'"

RESEARCH AND TEACHING INTERESTS

Global Art History (19th–21st Century), Methods and Theories of Art History, Art and Religion, Art and Spirituality, Theories of the Secular and the Sacred, Theaster Gates, Found Images, Media Theory, Visual Studies, Continental Philosophy, Critical Theory

PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

- 2025-28 Postdoctoral Researcher and Instructor, The University of Chicago Divinity School
- 2023–25 Visiting Assistant Professor, School of the Art Institute of Chicago

PUBLICATIONS

Books

- 2024 *1095 Short Sentences*. Chicago, IL: B-Side Editions.

Book Chapters

- (In preparation) "The Preachers, The Singers, and the Artist: Arthur Jafa's 'akingdoncomethas'" *The Message Is?: Searching for Spiritual and Religious Meaning in the Work of Arthur Jafa*. Edited by Nathanael Homewood.
- (Forthcoming) "The Possibility and Impossibility of Transcendence in Contemporary Cinema." *The Oxford Handbook of Theology and Film*. Edited by Gerard Loughlin. Oxford University Press.
- 2023 "Theaster Gates and the Good Use of Forgotten Things." *Religion and Contemporary Art: A Curious Accord*. Edited by Ronald Bernier and Rachel Smith. Routledge, 304–311.

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Peer-Reviewed Articles

- (Forthcoming) "A Spiritual Autobiography: On the Persistence of African Arts in Theaster Gates's Work." *African Arts*, Special Issue "Spiritual Repair: Post-Secular Black Atlantic Arts," vol. 59, no. 4 (Winter 2026).
- 2025 "Still Singing in Darkness: Georges Rouault's Poetic Vision in Wartime and Beyond" *Spiritus: A Journal of Christian Spirituality* 25, no. 2 (2025): 345-353.
- 2022 "The Empire Cannot Die: Propaganda and Immortality in 'Top Gun: Maverick.'" *New Blackfriars* 103, no. 1108 (September 2022): 713-729.
- 2020 "Forms of Mediation in Ari Folman's 'Waltz with Bashir.'" *Journal of Literature and Trauma Studies* 7, no. 2 (Fall 2018): 91-114.
- 2019 "Reflections on Gerhard Richter's Cologne Cathedral Window." *Athanos* 39 (2019): 21-35.
- "On the Vaporization and Centralization of the Self: The Notion of the Subject in Western Discourse." *LLIDS: Language, Literature, and Interdisciplinary Studies* 3, no. 1 (Fall 2019): 1-22.
- "Lights of Disenchantment: A Study of Max Weber's Thesis on the Disenchantment of the World from the Perspective of Visual Studies." *Visual Studies* 34, no. 2 (Fall 2019): 182-200.
- "Bildung between Praxis and Theoria: A Philosophical Analyses of an Exemplary Anecdote." *Studies in Philosophy and Education* 38, no. 5 (September 2019): 499-516.
- 2018 "The Multiplicity of a Still: Considerations of a Still from Andrei Tarkovsky's 'Stalker.'" *Mise-en-Scène. The Journal of Film and Visual Narration* 3, no. 2 (Winter 2018): 19-30.

Review Essays

- (Forthcoming) "Introduction," in "Review Essays on Jonathan Anderson's 'The Invisibility of Religion in Contemporary Art.'" *Religious Studies Review* 52, no. 1.
- 2025 "Five Exemplary Books and Approaches to the Study of Art and Religion, 1970s to Today." *Religious Studies Review*, Special Issue: What's Key to My Field: Five Fundamental Books Reviewed, vol. 51, no. 2 (June 2025): 277-285.
- 2023 "Metaphysics after the Critique of Metaphysics: A Review Essay on Works by Giorgio Agamben, Niklaus Largier, and Thomas Pfau." *Religion and the Arts* 27, no. 1-2 (2023): 255-264.
- 2021 "Diverse Paths to the Study of Religion and Spirituality." *Religion and the Arts* 25, no. 4 (September 2021): 509-523.

Book Reviews

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- (Forthcoming) “Maria Fee’s ‘Beauty is a Basic Service: Theology and Hospitality in the Work of Theaster Gates; Francesca Golia’s ‘Il Cristo inquieto. Ecfraasi del sacro nella modernità letteraria (1857-1972); Jeremy Stolow’s ‘Picturing Aura: A Visual Biography.’” *Religious Studies Review*.
- 2025 “‘Theology, Modernity, and the Visual Arts,’ edited by Ben Quash and Chloë Reddaway; Pasi Väliaho’s ‘Projecting Spirits: Speculation, Providence, and Early Modern Optical Media.’” *Religious Studies Review* 51, no. 1 (March 2025): 160-2.
- “Rosemary Cohane Erpf’s ‘Painting in the 1980s: Reimagining the Medium.’” *Visual Studies* 40, no. 1 (2025): 165-7.
- 2022 “‘Religious Narratives in Contemporary Culture: Between Cultural Memory and Transmediality,’ edited by Maria-Sabina Draga Alexandru and Dragoș Manea.” *Religion and the Arts* 26, no. 5 (2022): 689-700.
- 2020 “Mischa Kuball’s ‘Res.o.nant,’ edited by Gregor H. Lersch and Léontine Meijer-van Mensch.” *Religion and the Arts* 24, no. 4 (October 2020): 443-447.
- “Mauro Carbone’s ‘Philosophy-Screen. From Cinema to the Digital Revolution.’” *Critical Inquiry* 47, no. 1 (Autumn 2020): 178-79.
- 2019 “Eugenio Claudio Di Stefano’s ‘The Vanishing Frame: Latin American Culture and Theory in the Postdictatorial Era.’” *Aztlán: A Journal of Chicano Studies* 44, no. 2 (Fall 2019): 277-81.

Selected Catalog Essays and Interviews

- (Forthcoming) “Before Everything: Per Kirkeby, Late Works.” Michael Werner Gallery.
- 2023 “The Remaining Time: Helen Jones and Ania Safko at Shed-Shows.” *The Remaining Time*. Austin, TX: Shed-Shows, 2023, n. p.
- 2022 “When Something Becomes Something Else: Bill Morrison at the Visual Arts Center.” *Bill Morrison: Cycles & Loops*. Austin, TX: Visual Arts Center, VAC Department of Art and Art History, 2022, 15–87.
- “It is the Job of the ‘Wonderer’ To Find Wonder in the World: A Conversation with Bill Morrison.” *Bill Morrison: Cycles & Loops*. Austin, TX: Visual Arts Center, Department of Art and Art History, 2022, 91–99.
- “Helen Jones.” *Painted Hooves. 2022 Studio Art MFA Thesis Exhibition*. Austin, TX: Visual Arts Center, Department of Art and Art History, 2022, n. p.
- 2021 “Introduction.” *Small Refusals: 2021 Studio Art MFA Thesis Exhibition*. Austin, TX: Visual Arts Center, Department of Art and Art History, 2021, 1–2.
- 2020 “Landscapes of Hesitation: Notes on Glenn Heim’s Paintings.” *Glenn Heim*

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Paintings. San Antonio, TX: Lawrence Markey Gallery, 2020, 13–15.

Journal Articles, Magazines, Interviews, Blogs

- 2025 “Sheep among Wolves.” *The Visual Commentary of Scriptures*, edited by Ben Quash. The Visual Commentary on Scripture Foundation. May 9, 2025. Online.
- 2024-25 Interviews about “1095 Short Sentences.” *Genealogies of Modernity* (Sept. 2024); *Blackbird: An Online Journal of Literature and the Arts* 23, no. 1 (Oct. ’24-June ’25); Plain Reading Podcast (June 2025).
- 2023 “Joseph Masheck’s ‘Faith in Art: Religion, Aesthetics, and Early Abstraction’ (Book Review). *Brooklyn Rail*. Dec. 15, 2023. Online.
- “Studio Visit: Kota Ezawa.” *Blanton Museum of Art*. May 22, 2023. Online.
- 2022 “On Birth.” *Genealogies of Modernity*, Collegium Institute. Aug. 30, 2022. Online.
- “Art’s Progressive Politics: A New Public Sphere? Donato Loia on David Joselit” (Book Review). *Marginalia Review of Books*. July 1, 2022. Online.
- 2021 “Art Museums and the Modern Imaginary” (Book Review). *Genealogies of Modernity*, Collegium Institute. Aug. 24, 2021. Online.
- 2020 “Exterior View: Notes on Pierre Soulages’ Windows in Conques.” *Genealogies of Modernity*, Collegium Institute. June 2, 2020. Online.
- “End Without End: Mourning in the Modern World.” *Genealogies of Modernity*, Collegium Institute. May 8, 2020. Online.
- “St. Peter’s Square, Pope Francis, and the Space In-Between.” *Genealogies of Modernity*, Collegium Institute. April 9, 2020. Online.
- 2019 “Genealogies of Modernity. Spotlight.” *Genealogies of Modernity*, Collegium Institute. June 16, 2019. Online.

Video

- 2010-11 *Loris Cecchini* (2010). *Carlos Amorales. Remix* (2010). *Tre Opere di Arcangelo Sassolino* (2011). Agave Film. cargocollective.com/agavefilm

FELLOWSHIPS, GRANTS, AND HONORS

External

- 2025-28 Postdoctoral Fellowship in Art and Religion, University of Chicago Divinity School
- 2023-26 Hong Kong Research Grants Council, Postdoctoral Fellowship Scheme (decl.)
- 2021 Humanities Texas, State affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities, Major Grants Program
- 2019-20 Vivian L. Smith Foundation Fellowship, The Menil Collection, Houston, Texas
- 2019 DAAD, German Academic Exchange Service, Short-Term Research Grant
- 2018 CAA Graduate Student Travel Grant, 107th Annual Conference, New York, College of Art Association
Travel Grant, Association for Interdisciplinary Studies Annual Conference,

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Wayne State University
Scholarship, School of Criticism and Theory, Cornell University
2013-14 Leonardo Fellowship, European Union
2011 Lifelong Learning Program Erasmus, European Union

Internal

2024-25 SAIC Residential Research Fellow, Art Institute of Chicago Research Center
(extended through 2025-26—decl.)
Diversity Infusion Grant, Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, School of
the Art Institute of Chicago
Course Enhancement Grant, School of the Art Institute of Chicago
2023 College of Fine Arts and the Fine Arts Diversity Committee's Student Project
Grant, The University of Texas at Austin
2022-23 Andrew W. Mellon Fellowship in Modern and Contemporary Art, Blanton
Museum of Art, The University of Texas at Austin
Jeanette and Ferris Nassour Graduate Fellowship in Art History, The University
of Texas at Austin
2021 College of Fine Arts and the Fine Arts Diversity Committee's Student Project
Grant, The University of Texas at Austin
Martha Leipziger-Pearce Endowed Scholarship in Art, The University of
Texas at Austin
2020-21 Curatorial Fellowship, Visual Arts Center, The University of Texas at Austin
2019-20 Ann Lacy Crain Scholarship Fund, The University of Texas at Austin
2019 Salome McAllen Scanlan Endowed Graduate Fellowship in Art History, The
University of Texas at Austin
James M. (Jimmy) Malone Endowed Scholarship, The University of Texas at
Austin
2017-18 Professional Development Awards (Awarded travel funding for summer
research, 2 years), The University of Texas at Austin
2016-21 Scholarship, Effie Marie Cain Regents Chair in Art and College of Fine Arts
Students Excellence, Department of Art & Art History, The University of Texas
at Austin

SYMPOSIA, CONFERENCES, AND PUBLIC CONVERSATIONS ORGANIZED —

2022 "Works by Bill Morrison." Essential Cinema Series, Austin Film Society, Austin, Texas:
Guest Moderators and Guest Speakers in Conversation with Bill Morrison: Craig
Campbell, Caroline Frick, Lalitha Gopalan, Joan Neuberger. January 20; January 27;
February 3; and February 10, 2022.

2020 "Contemporary Art and the Presence of the Sacred in the Absence of God." Menil
Collection, Houston, Texas. Invited Speakers: James Elkins, Paul Pfeiffer, Anthony B.
Pinn, Pamela Smart. Symposium and Scholars' Day, April 16-17, 2020 (COVID-19
Cancellation).

SCHOLARLY PAPERS

Refereed Conference Papers

2024 "Spirits and Spirituality in Theaster Gates: Considerations on the Persistence of African
Arts in the Work of an International Art Star," ACASA's 19th Triennial Symposium on
African Art, "Spiritual Repair: Post-Secular Black Atlantic Arts" Panel, Chicago, August
7-11, 2024.

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“Repositioning ‘Magical’ Objects: The Memory of African Arts in the Work of Theaster Gates.” CAA 2024, “The Art of Magic in the Afro-Atlantic World, 1400-present” Panel, Chicago. February 14-17, 2024.

2020 “Political Spirituality in Theaster Gates and Danh Vo.” CAA 2020, “Aesthetics of the Spiritual in Contemporary Art” Panel, Chicago. February 12-15, 2020.

2019 “Beyond the Light: Visual Reflections on Gerhard Richter’s Cologne Cathedral Window.” 36th Art History Graduate Student Symposium, Florida State University. March 8-9, 2019.

2018 “Disintegration and Re-Elaboration of the ‘Sacred’: Two works by Ellsworth Kelly and Gerhard Richter.” 2018 Association for Interdisciplinary Studies Annual Conference, “Inter/diversities’: Intersecting Race, Gender, Class, Abilities, Theories, and Disciplines,” Interreligious Studies Section, Wayne State University, Detroit. October 11-13, 2018.

“A Philosophical Lesson from a Seven-Year-Old Child Named Vincenzo.” Beijing 2018 XXIV World Congress of Philosophy, “Learning to Be Human,” Aesthetics and Philosophy of Art Section for Contributed Papers. August 13-20, 2018.

“The Multiplicity of a Still in Tarkovsky’s ‘Stalker’ and the Ethics of Spaces In-Between.” 26th Annual “Crossing the Boundaries” Conference, “[pl.]: Exploring the Multiple,” Art History Graduate Student Union, Binghamton University. March 16-17, 2018.

2017 “From Santa Maria Antiqua to the ‘Antiqua’: the ‘palimpsest wall’ as a wandering condition.” Interdisciplinary Graduate Student Conference “An Ending of Sorts? Critical Responses to Disappearance and Disenchantment in Modernity,” Humanities Center, Johns Hopkins University. March 3-4, 2017.

Selected Presentations, Public Conversations, Book Launch, Workshops, and Panels.

2025 Public Discussion of William Blake’s exhibition “Brother’s Bones Beside,” Gallery Victor, Chicago, Il. October 18, 2025.

Public Discussion of Alberto Giacometti’s “Time Passes Too Soon: Family Letters” with translator Alta L. Price. Alliance Française de Chicago. October 16, 2025.

Public Discussion of Glenn Peers’s “Byzantine Media Subjects.” 3rd Online Athens-Edinburgh Byzantine Book Festival. National and Kapodistrian University of Athens & University of Edinburgh. May 30-31, 2025.

SAIC Residential Research Fellows Presentation. Research Center, Art Institute of Chicago. May 5, 2025.

“Spirituality in Art History and Practice: A Conversation with Donato Loia.” Spring 2025 Powell-Edwards Event Series on “Art, Inquiry, and Spiritual Practice.” Virginia Commonwealth University. Richmond, Virginia, April 10, 2025.

Day of Study with Tlingit artist James Johnson, Field Museum curator Christina Friberg, AIC Arts of the Americas curator Andrew J. Hamilton, artists Camille Johnson and Selena Kearney, along with students from the Art and Spirituality course and the Museum Studies course at UIC. February 14, 2025.

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Public Discussion on *Waltz with Bashir* (Ari Folman), as part of the course *Shadows of War* organized by Nora Taylor. Siskel Film Center, Chicago, February 4, 2025.

2024 “1095 Short Sentences” Book Presentations. Sept. 2024 - September 2025.

Work-in-progress meeting. Enchantment in the History of Capitalism, April 11, 2024.

Humanities Symposium. School of the Art Institute of Chicago, March 27, 2024.

2023 Mellon Fellows Celebration. Blanton Museum of Art, Austin, Texas, May 25, 2023.

2022 Introduction and Conversation with Bill Morrison. Texas Performing Arts, Austin, Texas, January 21, 2022.

2021 Presentation of Glenn Peers’s “Animism, Materiality, and Museums: How Do Byzantine Things Feel?” Online Book Launch Event, Albright Institute of Archeology. Jerusalem, April 19, 2021.

Curatorial Workshop. Center Space Project and Visual Arts Center, University of Texas at Austin. March 29, 2021.

Research Fundraising Panel: From the Bank to the Bench. University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas. March 24, 2021.

On Beauty. Day of Study, Austin Institute. Austin, Texas, March 6, 2021.

2020 In Dialogue: Dan Flavin’s Light Sculpture. James Elkins in conversation with Donato Loia. Digital Program, Menil Collection. Houston, Texas, July 29, 2020.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

2025-28 Postdoctoral Researcher and Instructor, The University of Chicago Divinity School

- Introduction to Art, Religion, and Spirituality

2023-25 Visiting Assistant Professor, School of the Art Institute of Chicago

- History of Art History: Methods and Theories of Art History*
- One Black Artist: Theaster Gates*
- Reframing: Survey of Modern to Contemporary Art*
- Topics in Media and Media Studies: Arts of Remediation*
- Art and Spirituality**
- Emptiness: Histories, Theories, and Practices**
- Attention***
- Advanced Survey of Modern to Contemporary Art and Architecture

2022 Lecturer, School of Art and Design, Texas State University

- Introduction to Fine Arts

2021-22 Assistant Instructor, Art & Art History Department, The University of Texas at Austin

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- Introduction to Visual Arts

Spring 2019 Assistant Instructor, Art & Art History Department, The University of Texas at Austin

- Renaissance through Modern Art

2017-18 Teaching Assistant, Art & Art History Department, The University of Texas at Austin

- Ancient through Medieval Art
- Renaissance through Modern Art
- Issues in Visual Culture: Participation

*Graduate Seminars **4000 Level: Graduate/Undergraduate Seminars

***Low-Res Summer Seminar

UNIVERSITY & PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

2025 Co-Leader, International Group, Employee Resource Group (ERG), Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, School of the Art Institute of Chicago

2024- Book Review Editor, Art, Religion and Culture, *Religious Studies Review*

Ad-Hoc Peer-Review: Publications

2024 *MAV/COR: Center for the Study of Material and Visual Cultures of Religion at Yale University*

Journal of Visual Art Practice

2021 *Screen Bodies: The Journal of Embodiment, Media Arts, and Technology*

2019-22 *LLIDS: Language, Literature, and Interdisciplinary Studies*

Graduate Student Judge

2018 Capital of Texas Undergraduate Research Conference, UT Austin

ADDITIONAL RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

2024-25 SAIC Residential Research Fellow, Art Institute of Chicago Research Center

2016-2022 Graduate Research Assistant, Center for the Study of Modernism, The University of Texas at Austin.

July 2019 DAAD Guest Scholar, Kunsthochschule für Medien Köln.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT & WORKSHOPS

Sept-Nov 2018 Advanced Teaching Preparation Certificate, The University of Texas at Austin

Summer 2018 School of Criticism and Theory, Cornell University

Summer 2018 Genealogies of Modernity II, Collegium Institute, University of Pennsylvania

May 2017 Inclusive Classrooms Seminar Certificate, The University of Texas at Austin

SELECTED CURATORIAL EXPERIENCE

2022-23 Andrew W. Mellon Fellow in Modern and Contemporary Art, Blanton Museum of Art, The University of Texas at Austin, September 2022-May 2023
Assisted curators with general curatorial inquiries, and wrote e-museum entries for the time-based media art collection. Worked on a special project focusing on contemporary art and climate change, as well as on a

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curated conversation and filmed studio visit with Kota Ezawa. Also worked on independent curatorial projects.
Curator: *The Remaining Time*, Shed-Shows (May 5 - June 2, 2023)

- 2020-21 Curatorial Fellowship, Visual Arts Center, University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas, September 2020-May 2021
Developed, coordinated, and managed curatorial projects, exhibition catalogs, project fundraising and budgets, curatorial workshops, and educational activities.
Curator: *Bill Morrison: Cycles & Loops* (Jan 28 - March 12, 2022) which traveled to Colby College Museum of Art (August 18 - December 31, 2023)
Curator: *An Unexpected Course: Manik Raj Nakra, Teruko Nimura, Mai Snow* (July 19 - December 10, 2021; extended until June 10, 2022)
Curator: *Real and Imagined Spaces: Brooke Burnside, Brooke E. Frank, and André Fuqua* (January 25 - March 21, 2021)
Catalog Coordinator and Editor: 2021 Studio Art MFA Thesis Show
- 2019-20 Vivian L. Smith Fellow, Curatorial Department, Menil Collection, Houston, Texas, September 2019-May 2020
Developed, organized, and managed the budget of a symposium, scholars' day, and public programs.
- 2013-14 Leonardo Fellow, Curatorial Department, Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art, UK, September 2013-August 2014
Responsible for exhibition research; exhibition didactics; cataloged ceramics, contemporary jewelry, and drawing collections.
Co-Curator: *Objects of Curiosity. Artworks from the Darlington Borough Collection*. Crown Street Art Gallery, in Darlington UK (August 12 - September 4, 2014).

LANGUAGES

Italian (native)
English (fluent)

CITIZENSHIP STATUS

Italian Citizen
United States Permanent Resident (Green Card)