



Dear Fine Art Fresher,

Congratulations on your admittance to study Fine Art at St Edmund Hall. Full induction sessions will be provided by the college and the Ruskin School of Art when you arrive to begin your course. As the Director of Studies for Fine Art at St Edmund Hall and one of your History & Theory tutors at the Ruskin, I very much look forward to welcoming you to Oxford in October.

The role of the Director of Studies for Fine Art is to provide oversight and support of your artistic and academic progress throughout your degree. We will hold regular meetings at which we can discuss your progress and address any concerns you may have. This does not constitute part of your formal teaching, but it offers a valuable addition to the support provided for you by the college. I will also be able to advise you on matters such as applying for a College Grant to purchase additional materials necessary to your studies (up to £300 a year), opportunities for showing your work in the college, and how to access the appropriate welfare structures in case of need. Since the teaching for Fine Art takes place in the studios, workshops, and seminar spaces at the Ruskin rather than in college, the Director of Studies for Fine Art provides an important point of contact between the college and the Ruskin School of Art.

As preparatory material, we have provided a suggested summer reading list that offer a stimulating and lively introduction to the history & theory of art. Carrying out some of this preparatory reading should also help you to reflect on your own practice as an artist and how it relates to contemporary developments in the visual arts. I would advise you to try to view as much art as you can over the summer, especially work by contemporary artists. This can be difficult if you live away from one of the main city centres, but any exhibitions you are able to view - whether in person or online - will help to provide a context for your own practice and deepen your understanding of contemporary art.

With all best wishes,

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BFA Freshers' Suggested Reading List: History & Theory of Visual Culture 2024

These are not set texts, you are not expected to have read them all before commencing your studies, they are just suggestions of books that contemporary art students often find useful or stimulating.

Author	Title	Publisher
Barthes, Roland	<i>Camera Lucida</i>	Vintage
Chambers, Eddie	<i>Black Artists in British Art</i>	I.B. Tauris
Godfrey, Tony	<i>The Story of Contemporary Art</i>	Thames & Hudson
Jurgenson, Nathan	<i>The Social Photo: On Photography and Social Media</i>	Penguin
Lang, Olivia	<i>Funny Weather: Art in an Emergency</i>	Picador
Kalb, Peter	<i>Art Since 1980</i>	Laurence King
Lorde, Audre	<i>The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House</i>	Penguin
Nochlin, Linda	<i>Why Are There No Great Women Artists? 50th Anniversary Edition</i>	Thames & Hudson
Proctor, Alice	<i>The Whole Picture: the colonial story of the art in our museums and why we need to talk about it</i>	Cassell
Stallabrass, Julian	<i>Contemporary Art, 2nd Edition</i>	Oxford
Tsing, Anna Lowenhaupt	<i>The Mushroom at the End of the World</i>	Princeton

You might also take a look at a couple of excellent series and, following your own interests, choose one work or theme to explore in more depth:

- Afterall's One Work <https://www.afterall.org/books/one.work/>
- Whitechapel/MIT's Documents of Contemporary Art <https://mitpress.mit.edu/books/series/whitechapel-documents-contemporary-art>

It is also well worth reading art magazines like *Frieze* (<https://frieze.com>), *Art Monthly* (<http://www.artmonthly.co.uk>), and *e-flux* (<https://www.e-flux.com>).

There is a useful repository of moving image and sound art, called Ubuweb, at <http://ubuweb.com/>.

The Tate Modern website also has links to articles and videos on contemporary art and artists: <https://www.tate.org.uk/art>.