The Research Master’s program Critical Studies in Art and Culture, specialization of the Humanities Research Master, focuses on the study of current developments in visual arts, architecture, design and media, from a theoretical and historical perspective. In a globalizing cultural world in which art, architecture, design and media are ever more closely integrated and packaged as “creative industries”, disciplinary boundaries need to be questioned and challenged. If you cherish critical attitude and original lines of questioning based on a profound knowledge of your research subject, and wish to develop your research skills, this program will be a perfect choice.

WHY STUDY AT VU AMSTERDAM?
This unique, interdisciplinary program combines art history, media studies, design studies and architectural history. With special emphasis on methodological and theoretical issues, the two-year research master program allows you to acquire knowledge, analytical skills and a capacity to problematize and critically reflect on historical and contemporary developments in the cultural industries.

CAREER PROSPECTS
The research master’s degree will train you as an independent researcher. Many alumni of our program have been awarded PhD grants in the Netherlands and abroad, or have found positions in art and media management, journalism & publishing, research agencies, museums, film or design festivals, art/media archives and government institutions.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS
Applicants must have a Bachelor’s diploma in art, architectural history, media and culture, with an average grade of minimally 7.5, and have a good grasp of academic English.

"The research master’s programme Critical Studies in Art and Culture allowed me to both expand and deepen my research interests, providing the perfect preparation for my current PhD project." Steyn Bergs, alumnus Critical Studies in Art and Culture.
Obligatory for all students of the VU Humanities Research Master
Obligatory for all students of the Critical Studies in Art and Culture specialization
Courses of the MA Arts and Culture
Optional courses: these courses can be freely distributed across the 2 year study period at the student’s choice, in agreement with the program coordinator

Through intensive training and supervision you will learn to write a research proposal for (inter)national science foundations, and learn to design and position an innovative humanities research project.

Students choose two out of four seminars:
• Reading Concepts of Intermediality
• Methods of Design Analysis
• Seminar Architecture
• Seminar Contemporary Art

All research master students enrol with a Humanities National Research School at the start of the first year of their study. Over two years you choose a selection of courses, masterclasses, summer or winter schools of at least 10 EC.

Introduction to the history and philosophy of the Humanities, to the VU research environment and the cross-cutting themes Digital Humanities and Environmental Humanities. How can we connect Humanities research with societal challenges?

The Graduate School of Humanities strongly encourages students to plan an extensive research period at a research institute in the Netherlands or at another university abroad. The School offers financial and practical support for travel expenses.

In this course various theoretical and methodological approaches to the image are traced in close connection with historical and contemporary developments in visual culture. Key texts by modern and contemporary authors on visual culture are critically read and discussed, and applied to cases that are relevant to the students’ budding research agendas. The choice of literature and theoretical focus, meanwhile, is set by the teacher on the basis of his or her current research interests.

This is the first Humanities research design course: you will train to position yourself in the international research field and learn to design and present innovative Humanities research. You will also take active part in the lectures of the Graduate School of Humanities.

A large portion of the study programme is reserved for individual choice. This way you can develop a tailor made study programme together with your mentor. You can base your choice on your own interests and the expertise that you wish to develop.

This seminar addresses the entanglements of space, place and media from a variety of perspectives. Starting point is the spatial turn in media studies and the media turn in cultural geography as these run parallel to the increasing importance of location based media in diverse fields of application: Google navigation, on-site social networking such as Foursquare, geo-tagging in Flickr, the Internet of Things, but also urban games and community activism. How can we interpret these media developments situated in the tensions between power and play?

The Master’s thesis (30 ECTS) that concludes the programme is a substantial study based on independent academic research, in relation to topical research areas and projects of staff members.