The Arts and Ideas in the Humanities Major in the Residential College at the University of Michigan offers students the ability to construct an interdisciplinary major in the arts and humanities. Students in this major can combine either two humanities disciplines or a humanities discipline with an artistic practice. To major in Arts and Ideas in the Humanities, students combine history and theory courses with visual studies, performance, and studio arts courses. To complete the major, students then construct a program of specialized study in two areas of focus. In the specialized study portion of the Arts and Ideas in the Humanities Major, different area combinations are possible, depending on the interests of the individual student. Possible combinations include: sculpture and film theory; art history and English literature; drama and psychology; musicology and South East Asian studies; history and creative writing; or African-American studies and photography.

Arts and Ideas in the Humanities courses stress interdisciplinary and comparative methodologies. Students investigate how different forms of art relate and respond to one another: how they argue or agree, how they overlap or diverge in form and content. These courses often focus on a specific historical moment or context, encouraging students to examine a particular culture through a broad range of different media. In addition, by combining theory with practice, certain Arts and Ideas courses encourage
students to reflect on the origins of art and to engage in its contexts, whether productive or historical. Unlike a traditional humanities major, the Arts and Ideas major asks humanities students to construct an interdisciplinary specialization. Unlike a traditional arts major, the Arts and Ideas major expects students to undertake more research in the histories, theories and geographies of the various arts.

Twin goals of the major are to train students in close reading and analysis of different expressive media (whether textual, visual, or acoustic) and to combine the study of art with its practice. Through intensive discussion, writing and production, students become more sophisticated analysts, critical producers and historians of culture.
Major Requirements

Requirements for the major are grouped into three categories:

- History and Theory
- Visual Studies, Performance and Studio Arts
- Specialized Study.

I. History and Theory:

Students work in two areas: (A) Historical Perspectives and (B) Issues of Modernity. They must take 2 courses in one area and 1 in the remaining area:

A. Historical Perspectives

- HUMS 309 Classical Sources of Modern Culture: The Heritage of Greece
- HUMS 310 Pagans, Christians, and Barbarians in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages
- HUMS 315 Representations of History in the Literature and Visual Arts of Rome
- HUMS 314 The Figure of Rome in Shakespeare and 16th Century Painting
- HUMS 344 Reason and Passion in 18th Century Europe
- HUMS 354 Race and Identity in Music
- HUMS 373 The Performing Arts in South and Southeast Asia

B. Issues of Modernity

- HUMS 291 Arts and Ideas of the 19th Century
- HUMS 290 Arts and Ideas of the 20th Century
- HUMS 305 Cultural Confrontations in the Arts
- HUMS 308 Arts and Ideas of Modern South and Southeast Asia
- HUMS 318 Critical Approaches to Literature
- HUMS 342 Representations of the Holocaust in
II. Visual Studies, Performance, and Studio Arts:

Students select a total of 2 courses:

A. Film/Video

- HUMS 236 Art of the Film
- HUMS 312 Central European Cinema
- HUMS 313 Russian and Ukrainian Cinema

B. Dance

- HUMS 235 Topics in World Dance
- HUMS 260 The Art of Dance: An Introduction to American and European Dance History
- HUMS 444: From the Mariinsky to Manhattan: George Balanchine and the Transformation of American Dance

C. Studio Arts

- ARTS 268 Introduction to Visual Thinking and Creativity
- ARTS 269 Elements of Design
- ARTS 285 Photography
- ARTS 286 Sculpture
- ARTS 287 Printmaking
- ARTS 288 Introduction to Drawing
- ARTS 289 Ceramics

D. Music

- HUMS 249 Foundations of Music
- HUMS 250 Chamber Music
- HUMS 251 Topics in Music
- HUMS 252 Topics in Musical Expression
- HUMS 253 Choral Ensemble
- HUMS 256 Studying and Playing Southeast Asian Music
- HUMS 258 Afro-Cuban Drumming Styles
- HUMS 259 Musical Improvisation
- HUMS 350 Creative Musicianship
- HUMS 351 Creative Musicianship: Theory Lab
- HUMS 352 Found Instruments
III. Specialized Study

Students who major in Arts and Ideas in the Humanities are expected to elect seven courses divided (4+3) among two upper-level specializations. This requirement provides the opportunity of pursuing sustained study in relevant disciplinary or interdisciplinary areas as well as, possibly, in the advanced practice of a particular art form. Thus, the specializations may be in critical, historical, or theoretical courses of study offered by other departments and programs, whether in the Residential College or in the LS&A (for example, in a particular literature, art history, history, anthropology, psychology, philosophy, religion, women's studies, African and African-American studies) or in the practice of a specific art form (including studio arts such as painting, sculpture, photography, drawing, printmaking or design, as well as other arts such as creative writing, theater, music, dance or video and film making). However, no more than one of the two specializations may be in the practice of an art form.

Cy Twombly
Untitled 1968
Museum of Art,
Rhode Island School of Design