

## A Statement from the UWM Department of Art History concerning our continuing commitment to our principles

In the aftermath of the 2016 elections, the UWM Department of Art History wishes to reaffirm its unwavering commitment to our students and to the department's stated mission: to foster an appreciation of art in its myriad forms and, in so doing, increase sensitivity to cultural diversity and to the ways in which the past has shaped the present. The visual analysis skills that students master in our courses are foundational to agile and creative thought; they are intended to bolster empathetic understanding of identity and its diversities, to include matters of culture, race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation. We remain committed to a campus and classroom environment unimpeded by prejudice, bigotry, and hate. The faculty and instructional staff unequivocally condemn unjust rhetoric that targets the most vulnerable on our campus and in our community, and indeed all racist, xenophobic, Islamophobic, homophobic, sexist, and other hate speech and acts. In keeping with the principles of the Wisconsin Idea, we reassert our fundamental commitment to academic freedom, the search for truth, and the improvement of the human condition.

***In the coming weeks, the Department of Art History will be organizing conversations on campus to discuss how visual culture impacts, engages, and transforms the world around us. If you are interested in taking part in these discussions - we are looking for artists, art historians, or anyone interested in the place of art in our society - please contact Professor Sarah Schaefer (schaefes@uwm.edu).***