Stanford



Alexander Nemerov

Carl and Marilynn Thoma Provostial Professor of the Arts and Humanities and Professor, by courtesy, of English

Art & Art History

Curriculum Vitae available Online

Bio

BIO

A distinguished scholar of American culture, Alexander Nemerov explores our connection to the past and the power of the humanities to shape our lives. Through his empathetic, intuitive research and close readings of history, philosophy, and poetry, Nemerov reveals art as a source of emotional truth and considers its ethical demands upon us in our moment. Revered for his breadth of scholarship and celebrated for his eloquent public speaking, Nemerov inspires audiences with his belief in the affirming and transfiguring force of art.

An instinctive, nuanced author, Nemerov's most recent book is The Forest: A Fable of America in the 1830s presenting tales of a visionary experience in the last years of America as a heavily forested land. His conjuring of a lost world of shade and sun has been praised by Annie Proulx ("deeply beautiful", "astonishingly tender", "one of the richest books ever to come my way") and Edmund de Waal ("moving and shocking and beautiful, an extraordinary achievement").

Previous titles by Nemerov have gained further recognition: Fierce Poise: Helen Frankenthaler and 1950s New York was short-listed for the 2021 National Book Critics Circle Prize in Biography; Summoning Pearl Harbor, was praised by the novelist Ali Smith as "a unifying and liberating meditation"; Soulmaker: The Times of Lewis Hine, was short-listed for the Marfield Prize, a national award in arts writing; Wartime Kiss: Visions of the Moment in the 1940s was named one of Choice's Outstanding Academic Titles in 2013; Acting in the Night: Macbeth and the Places of the Civil War was a Choice Outstanding Academic Book; Icons of Grief: Val Lewton and 1940s America was praised by The New York Review of Books as "superbly original." Nemerov's initial books include Silent Dialogues: Diane Arbus and Howard Nemerov, a meditation on his father, the poet Howard Nemerov, and his aunt, the photographer Diane Arbus; The Body of Raphaelle Peale: Still Life and Selfhood, 1812-1824; and Frederic Remington and Turn-of-the-Century America.

Nemerov, an engaging, eloquent speaker, gave the 2007 Andrew Wyeth Lecture at the National Gallery of Art, and in 2017, he delivered the 66th Andrew W. Mellon Lectures at the National Gallery of Art, becoming the first scholar to deliver them with a focus on American art. He has also published two exhibition catalogues: To Make a World: George Ault and 1940s America, the companion to a National Museum of American Art exhibition of that name and Ralph Eugene Meatyard: American Mystic.

After receiving his B.A. in Art History and English with Cum Laude and Phi Beta Kappa honors from the University of Vermont and his Ph.D. in the History of Art from Yale University, Nemerov began his teaching career at Stanford University in 1992. Returning to Yale in 2001, Nemerov chaired the Department of the History of Art from 2009 to 2012 and in 2010 was named to the Vincent Scully Professorship. Nemerov returned to Stanford in 2012

as the Carl and Marilynn Thoma Provostial Professor in the Arts and Humanities and served as chair of the Department of Art and Art History from 2015 to 2021. The Stanford Daily has named him one of the university's top ten professors.

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

- Professor, Art & Art History
- Professor (By courtesy), English

ADMINISTRATIVE APPOINTMENTS

- Department Chair, Department of Art and Art History, Stanford University, (2015-2021)
- Professor in the Arts and Humanities, Department of Art and Art History, Stanford University, (2012- present)
- Vincent Scully Professor, Department of the History of Art, Yale University, (2010-2012)
- Professor, Department of the History of Art, Yale University, (2001-2010)
- Lecturer, Summer Alumni College, Stanford University, (2000-2000)
- Professor, Department of Art and Art History, Stanford University, (2000-2000)
- Lecturer, Summer Alumni College, Stanford University, (1999-1999)
- Internal Faculty Fellowship, Stanford Humanities Center, (1998-1999)
- Assistant Professor, Department of Art and Art History, Stanford University, (1995-2000)
- Visiting Professor, Department of Art and Art History, Stanford University, (1992-1995)
- Material Culture Fellowship, National Museum of American Art, (1989-1991)

HONORS AND AWARDS

- Phi Beta Kappa, Phi Beta Kappa Society (1985)
- Winner of a Choice Outstanding Academic Book Award, Yale University Press (1996)
- Dean’s Award, Stanford University (1998-1999)
- Winner of a Choice Outstanding Academic Book Award, Choice (2011)

BOARDS, ADVISORY COMMITTEES, PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

- Chair, Department of the History of Art, Yale University (2009 - 2012)
- Director of Graduate Studies, Department of the History of Art, Yale University (2008 - 2009)
- Director of Graduate Studies, Department of the History of Art, Yale University (2005 - 2006)
- Member, Board of Directors, Stanford Humanities Center (2003 - 2009)

PROGRAM AFFILIATIONS

- American Studies

PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

- Doctor of Philosophy, Yale University , History of Art (1992)
- Master of Philosophy, Yale University , History of Art (1987)
- Bachelor of Arts, University of Vermont (1985)

Teaching

COURSES

2026-27

- How to Look at Art and Why: An Introduction to the History of Western Painting: ARTHIST 1B (Aut)
- Love's Reach: A Visual and Poetic History: ARTHIST 214A, ARTHIST 414A, COMPLIT 214A, COMPLIT 318 (Win)
- Soren Kierkegaard and the Visual Arts: ARTHIST 201A, ARTHIST 401A (Aut)
- The American Civil War: A Ghost Story: ARTHIST 116 (Win)
- The American West: ARTHIST 152, ENGLISH 124, HISTORY 151, POLISCI 124A (Spr)

2025-26

- From the Ruins: Art, Literature, and Thought ca. 1945 and Beyond: ARTHIST 213A, ARTHIST 413A (Win)
- From the Ruins: Art, Literature, and Thought ca. 1945 and Beyond: COMPLIT 187, COMPLIT 387 (Win)
- From the Ruins: Art, Literature, and Thought ca. 1945 and Beyond: GERMAN 213A (Win)
- How to Look at Art and Why: An Introduction to the History of Western Painting: ARTHIST 1B (Aut)
- Soren Kierkegaard and the Visual Arts: ARTHIST 201A, ARTHIST 401A (Aut)
- The Age of Romanticism: Painting, Literature, Politics: ARTHIST 130N (Spr)
- The American West: AMSTUD 124A, ARTHIST 152, ENGLISH 124, HISTORY 151, POLISCI 124A (Spr)

2024-25

- Black Aliveness: AMSTUD 261A, ARTHIST 261 (Aut)
- How to Look at Art and Why: An Introduction to the History of Western Painting: ARTHIST 1B (Aut)
- The American Civil War: A Ghost Story: AMSTUD 116A, ARTHIST 116 (Spr)
- Wonder: The Event of Art and Literature: ARTHIST 274, ARTHIST 474, COMPLIT 274, COMPLIT 374A, JEWISHST 274 (Win)

2023-24

- American Photographs: A Magical History: AMSTUD 285, ARTHIST 285 (Spr)
- Black Aliveness: AFRICAAM 261, AMSTUD 261A, ARTHIST 261 (Aut)
- Dissertation Seminar: ARTHIST 670 (Win)
- How to Look at Art and Why: An Introduction to the History of Western Painting: ARTHIST 1B (Aut)
- The American Civil War: A Visual and Literary History: ARTHIST 116 (Spr)
- The Art of Paul Klee: ARTHIST 435 (Win)
- Why College? Your Education and the Good Life: COLLEGE 101 (Aut)

STANFORD ADVISEES

Doctoral Dissertation Reader (AC)

Harleen Kaur Bagga, J. Makary, Jessica Ryu, Maria Terss

Doctoral Dissertation Advisor (AC)

Caitlin Chan, Emilia Cottignoli, Marco Antonio Flores, Christian Gonzalez Ho, Quyen Nguyen-Hoang, Beatrice Smigas

Doctoral (Program)

Emilia Cottignoli, Ali Dipp, Kennii Ekundayo, Marco Antonio Flores

Publications

PUBLICATIONS

- **A Voice from beyond the Grave: Tintoretto among the Art Historians EPILOGUE** *ICONS OF SOUND*
  Nemerov, A.

edited by Pentcheva, B. V.
2021: 206-215

- **The Dead Kitten: Sacrifice in Barry Lyndon** *AFTER KUBRICK*
  Nemerov, A.
  edited by Szaniawski, J.
  2020: 281-293

- **In Conversation Art Is Not the Archive** *ARCHIVES OF AMERICAN ART JOURNAL*
  Lubin, D., Goodyear, A., Coffey, M. K., Burns, E. C., Fagg, J., Boylan, A. L., Getsy, D. J., Wilson, K., Saltzman, L., Barrett, R., Nemerov, A.
  2018; 57 (2): 62–77

- **Dennis Miller Helen Keller Bunker** *MAGAZINE ANTIQUES*
  Nemerov, A.
  2016; 183 (3): 82-89

- **Silent Dialogues: Diane Arbus and Howard Nemerov**
  Nemerov, A.
  Fraenkel Gallery.2015

- **Thomas Cole's hat, or What is it to be an artist?** *MAGAZINE ANTIQUES*
  Nemerov, A.
  2014; 181 (6): 102-109

- **James as Magician: Deception and the Moment of Truth** *HENRY JAMES REVIEW*
  Nemerov, A.
  2013; 34 (3): 213-219

- **Wartime Kiss**
  Nemerov, A.
  Princeton University Press.2013

- **Swimming: Thomas Eakins, JFK, and November 22, 1963** *Hotel Texas: An Art Exhibition for the President and Mrs. John F. Kennedy*
  Nemerov, A.
  edited by Mesley, O.
  Dallas Museum of Art and Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth.2013: 78–91

- **Seeing Ghosts: The Turn of the Screw and Art History** *The Spectralities Reader: Ghosts and Haunting in Contemporary Cultural Theory*
  Nemerov, A.
  edited by del Pilar Blanco, M., Peeren, E.
  London: Bloomsbury.2013: 527–47

- **The Pentimento: Emily Dickinson and Winslow Homer** *Emily Dickinson in Context*
  Nemerov, A.
  edited by Richards, E.
  Cambridge, Mass.: Cambridge University Press.2013

- **Rothko Was Rembrandt: How One Artist Became Another** *Mark Rothko: Paintings from the National Gallery of Art in Washington*
  Nemerov, A.
  edited by Bartelik, M.
  Warsaw: The National Museum in Warsaw.2013: 127–38

- **The Religion of Art and Nothing of Life: Frederick H. Evans's A Sea of Steps** *Edwardian Opulence: British Art at the Dawn of the Twentieth Century*
  Nemerov, A.
  edited by Trumble, A., Rager, A.
  New Haven: Yale University Press.2013: 125–31

- **The Glitter of Night Hauling: Andrew Wyeth in the 1940s** *Wyeth Vertigo*
  Nemerov, A.

Shelburne, Vermont: Shelburne Museum.2013: 72–79

- **Weightless History: Faulkner, Bourke-White, and Eisenstaedt** *Fictions of Art History*
  Nemerov, A.
  edited by Ledbury, M.
  Williamstown, Massachusetts: Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute.2013: 3–20
- **The glitter of Night Hauling Andrew Wyeth in the 1940s** *MAGAZINE ANTIQUES*
  Nemerov, A.
  2012; 179 (3): 146-155
- **Judy Garland's Face** *ENGLISH LANGUAGE NOTES*
  Nemerov, A.
  2012; 50 (1): 83-86
- **Ghosts and Sculpture: Harriet Hosmer and Patricia Cronin** *Patricia Cronin: All Is Not Lost*
  Nemerov, A.
  ew Orleans: Newcomb Art Gallery, Tulane University.2012: 27–30
- **Blood Shed in This War: Civil War Illustrations by Captain Adolph Metzner, 32nd Indiana** *Indiana Magazine of History*
  Nemerov, A.
  2012; 108: 186-187
- **The Madness of Art: Georgia O'Keeffe and Virginia Woolf** *Anglo-American: Artistic Exchange between Britain and the USA*
  Nemerov, A.
  edited by Corbett, D. P., Monks, S.
  London: Wiley Blackwell.2012: 196–215
- **The Forest of the Old Masters: The Chiaroscuro of American Places** *Behold America! Art of the United States from Three San Diego Museums*
  Nemerov, A.
  San Diego Museum of Art.2012: 97–114
- **The Madness of Art: Georgia O'Keeffe and Virginia Woolf** *ART HISTORY*
  Nemerov, A.
  2011; 34 (4): 818-837
- **WHEN DID ART BECOME MEANINGLESS?** *YALE REVIEW*
  Nemerov, A.
  2011; 99 (2): 94-103
- **The Rattlesnake: Benjamin Henry Latrobe and the Place of Art in America** *Knowing Nature: Art and Science in Philadelphia, 1740-1840*
  Nemerov, A.
  edited by Meyers, A.
  Yale University Press.2011
- **A World Too Much: Democracy and Natural History in the Work of Godman and Audubon** *Knowing Nature: Art and Science in Philadelphia, 1740-1840*
  Nemerov, A.
  Yale University Press.2011: 356–75
- **To Make a World: George Ault and 1940s America**
  Nemerov, A.
  Smithsonian American Art Museum, in association with Yale University Press.2011
- **Acting in the Night: Macbeth and the Places of the Civil War**
  Nemerov, A.
  University of California Press.2010
- **Photography and Literature** *CAA Reviews Online*
  Nemerov, A.

2010

- **Describing Is Descending** *Catalogue to the exhibition, Moby-Dick*
  Nemerov, A.
  San Francisco: Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts.2009: 117–26
- **Ground Swell Edward Hopper in 1939** *AMERICAN ART*
  Nemerov, A.
  2008; 22 (3): 50-71
- **Seeing Ghosts: The Turn of the Screw and Art History** *What Is Research in the Visual Arts?: Obsession, Archive, Encounter*
  Nemerov, A.
  edited by Holly, M. A., Smith, M.
  Williamstown, Mass.: Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute.2008: 13–32
- **Albert Bierstadt, Yosemite Valley, Glacier Point Trail** *Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness: American Art from the Yale University Art Gallery*
  Cooper, H., Nemerov, A.
  New Haven: Yale University Press.2008: 315–17
- **Whitman's Moment** *PN Review*
  Nemerov, A.
  2007; 176: 30-33
- **Archive Style: Photographs & Illustrations for U. S. Surveys, 1850-1890** *CAA Reviews Online*
  Nemerov, A.
  2007
- **Newell Convers Wyeth (1882-1945): Illustration for "Drums," c. 1928** *The Collections of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art: American Paintings*
  Nemerov, A.
  Kansas City, Mo.: The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art.2007: 545–548
- **Interventions: The boy in bed: The scene of reading in N. C. Wyeth's 'Wreck of the "Covenant"' - The author replies** *ART BULLETIN*
  Nemerov, A.
  2006; 88 (1): 61-68
- **Interventions: The boy in bed: The scene of reading in N. C. Wyeth's 'Wreck of the "Covenant"'** *ART BULLETIN*
  Nemerov, A.
  2006; 88 (1): 7-27
- **Morris Louis: Court Painter of the Kennedy Era** *Morris Louis Now: An American Master Revisited*
  Nemerov, A.
  Atlanta: High Museum of Art.2006: 21–38
- **Frederic Remington and the American Civil War: A Ghost Story**
  Nemerov, A.
  Stockbridge, Mass.: Norman Rockwell Museum.2006
- **Looking askance: Skepticism and American art from Eakins to Duchamp (Book Review)** *ART BULLETIN*
  Book Review Authored by: Nemerov, A.
  2005; 87 (4): 731-734
- **The flight of form: Auden, Bruegel, and the turn to abstraction in the 1940S** *CRITICAL INQUIRY*
  Nernerov, A.
  2005; 31 (4): 780-810
- **Icons of Grief: Val Lewton's Home Front Pictures**
  Nemerov, A.
  University of California Press.2005
- **Coming Home in 1945: Reading Robert Frost and Norman Rockwell** *American Art*
  Nemerov, A.

2004; 18: 59-79

- **The Pleasure of Conversation** *The Original Work of Art: What It Has to Teach*
  Nemerov, A.
  2003: 40-45
- **Haunted Supermasculinity: Strength and Death in Carl Rungius's Wary Game** *Nineteenth-Century Art Worldwide*
  Nemerov, A.
  2003; 2
- **Burning Daylight: Remington, Electricity, and Flash Photography** *Frederic Remington: The Color of Night*
  Nemerov, A.
  edited by Anderson, N.
  Washington, D. C.: The National Gallery of Art.2003: 78–95
- **The Victorians and the visual imagination (Book Review)** *ALBION*
  Book Review Authored by: Nemerov, A.
  2002; 34 (2): 333-335
- **Peak Viewing** *Tate*
  Nemerov, A.
  2002; 28: 34-39
- **The Dark Cat: Arthur Putnam and a Fragment of Night** *American Art*
  Nemerov, A.
  2002; 16: 37-57
- **Mammoth Scale: The Anatomical Sculptures of William Rush**
  Nemerov, A.
  Philadelphia: Wistar Institute.2002
- **The Body of Raphaelle Peale: Still Life and Selfhood, 1812-1824**
  Nemerov, A.
  University of California Press.2001
- **Behold the hero: General Wolfe and the arts in the Eighteenth century (Book Review)** *ALBION*
  Book Review Authored by: Nemerov, A.
  1999; 31 (1): 116-117
- **Haunted Supermasculinity: Strength and Death in Carl Rungius's Wary Game** *American Art*
  Nemerov, A.
  1999; 13: 2-31
- **Art of the gold rush (Book Review)** *CALIFORNIA HISTORY*
  Book Review Authored by: Nemerov, A.
  1998; 77 (3): 187-189
- **The ashes of Germanicus and the skin of painting: Sublimation and money in Benjamin West's 'Agrippina'** *YALE JOURNAL OF CRITICISM*
  Nemerov, A.
  1998; 11 (1): 11-27
- **The Frederic Remington studio (Book Review)** *GREAT PLAINS QUARTERLY*
  Book Review Authored by: Nemerov, A.
  1998; 18 (1): 75-76
- **Vanishing Americans: Abbott Thayer, Theodore Roosevelt, and the Attraction of Camouflage** *American Art*
  Nemerov, A.
  1997; 11: 50-81
- **Frederic Remington, Moonlight, Wolf** *Addison Gallery of American Art: 65 Years—A Selective Catalogue*
  Faxon, S., Nemerov, A.

New York: DAP Press.1996: 454–5

- **Frederic Remington and Turn-of-the-Century America**
  Nemerov, A.
  Yale University Press.1995
- **A Stirring and Crawling of the Yeasty Thing': Evolution and Misogyny in the Art of Frederic Remington** *Redefining American History Painting*
  Nemerov, A.
  edited by Burnham, P., Giese, L.
  Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.1995: 82–100
- **MODELING MY FATHER + THE POETRY OF NEMEROV,HOWARD** *AMERICAN SCHOLAR*
  Nemerov, A.
  1993; 62 (4): 551-561
- **Thomas Moran and the Surveying of the American West** *Gateway Heritage*
  Nemerov, A.
  1993; 14: 69-70
- **Projecting the Future: Film and Race in the Art of Charles Russell** *American Art*
  Nemerov, A.
  1993; 8: 71-89
- **"More Bark Than Bite: Thoughts on the Traditional— And Not Very Historical—Approach to Western Art** *Journal of Arizona History*
  Nemerov, A., Truettner, W.
  1992; 33: 311-24
- **N. C. Wyeth's Theater of Illustration** *American Art*
  Nemerov, A.
  1992: 37-57
- **What You See Is Not Necessarily What You Get: New Meaning in Images of the Old West** *Montana: The Journal of Western History*
  Nemerov, A., Truettner, W.
  1992; 42: 70-76
- **Frederic Remington: Within and Without the Past** *American Art*
  Nemerov, A.
  1991: 37-59
- **Doing the Old America': The Image of the American West, 1880-1920** *The West as America: Reinterpreting Images of the Frontier, 1820-1920*
  Nemerov, A.
  edited by Truettner, W.
  Smithsonian Institution Press.1991: 285–343