Quick Tips—Art Databases

Advanced Search
Offers a wide range of options for easy searching. Specify as many as few parameters as you wish. You don’t have to fill in every line.

Choose the search field from this list. Among the most useful fields are:

**All-Smart Search**: The easiest way to search! Just type in any word or phrase and the results will be returned, ranking the most important at the top. Records are ranked by the importance of the field the word is found in, with the Subject field (meaning an indexer has said the article is about this topic) getting the highest ranking.

**Artist**: Use this to search for articles that include a work of art. You can find the name of the artist and often title of the work in this field.

**Materials and technique**: Use this to find Art Reproductions of works created using any specific materials or techniques.

**Title**: This field will retrieve any records that contain your words in either the Title of the article; or in the title of an illustration as listed in the Artist field. You can also limit your search to full-text articles, peer-reviewed articles, or records featuring PDF page images.

Samples of Advanced Searches in *Art Index Retrospective* and *Art Full Text*

Looking for articles containing an image of Starry Night by Vincent Van Gogh? Type: VAN GOGH STARRY NIGHT and choose the Artist field from the drop-down list. This would retrieve records that include an image of Vincent Van Gogh’s painting Starry Night. (If you used All-Smart Search instead, you would have gotten records about the painting, but not necessarily containing an image of the painting).

Want to find reproductions with George Washington in them? Type: GEORGE WASHINGTON and select Title from drop-down list. Select Art Reproduction from the Document Type list.

Want reviews of the film Cold Mountain? Type: COLD MOUNTAIN in All - Smart Search and select Film review from the Document Type. This will retrieve only film reviews (if you had simply searched on the word “cold mountain” without choosing Film Reviews, you get several hundred records).

Document Type
There is a pick list for various types of documents included in the database. Of particular use for the Art Databases are:

**Art Reproduction**: to find records that contain a reproduction of a work of art.

**Exhibit**: to find reviews of exhibitions.

**Film review**: to limit your search to film reviews.

**Book review**: to find reviews of art-related books.

**Feature Article**: to find any journal article related to your search terms.
The Thesaurus is a tool for taking your broad search terms and focusing your search on specific topics of interest, by showing the relationships between Broader and Narrower Subject terms.

Want to find Patterns for sewing/needlework in Art Full Text, for example? In thesaurus type in patterns. Patterns (Sewing) comes up with 24 narrower terms. Click on this and find articles that have patterns for doing work from beading to tatting.

Want to find articles about Political Art, but are not sure of the exact topic to search? In Advanced Search type: political art. In All-Smart Search. You will get thousands of hits; however, if you view the Full record to see the Subject terms, you can then click on any of the subjects to see its related terms.

One of the Subjects listed in some articles is “Art and Politics”; clicking on that takes you to the Thesaurus, where you can see the list of about 28 Narrower terms, such as “Capitalism and Art” and “Photography and Politics,” and 3 broader terms, such as “Art and Society.”

Browse is a tool for finding an alphabetical list of subjects and other topics such as Journal Name. For example: If you are not sure of how Henri Matisse’s name is spelled, simply type: matis. This will give a list where you can easily find the exact topic you want.