



A visitor contemplating Jacques-Louis David's *The Emperor Napoleon in his Study at the Tuileries* in the National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.

**HIU11010 History in the Present**

**Co-ordinator Robert Armstrong**

**Credits 5 ECTS**

**Semester Michaelmas Term**

**Assessment** A 1,000-1,500-word assignment (40%), and an in-person exam (60%).

**Description** History confronts us in many ways, not just in books or lecture theatres. This module will involve looking at how events, people, places and objects from the past have taken on a 'history' and at how we encounter it in the present day. This will include looking at how a particular incident has been remembered or commemorated, perhaps in a painting, a monument, a ceremony or even a song, and the kinds of meaning attributed to it over time. It could also mean looking at how a particular location has become a site where the past is encountered, perhaps through exhibitions (including virtual ones), or at objects which are taken to represent past experiences. It may also involve considering how specific events or individuals might be made use of to advance present political claims, whether over contested territory or for the inclusion of excluded communities. The module will make use of case-studies selected from different periods and places. It will also involve looking at how we might understand the multiple ways in which the past can be conveyed and presented to, or participated in by, different audiences. In 2025-6 a thread connecting several of the lectures and tutorials will be questions of national, imperial and colonial pasts.