

The Great Masters of the Italian Renaissance

Florence: 5-16 July 2021

SYLLABUS

Course description

The names of Botticelli, Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, Raphael and Caravaggio are associated with some of the most original, appealing and amazing achievements in the visual arts. Each year the works of these famous Italian artists attract millions of visitors to museums and cities in Italy. What drove these versatile artists to reach the pinnacle of perfection and what is it that makes their works so special and appealing even to a modern audience? To answer these questions this course will take the student back to the period of the Italian Renaissance focusing attention not only on the original context for which the works of art by these masters were made but also on the works of art by their peers with whom they often competed. Both the relationship between patron and artist, as well as the special characteristics of the individual artworks (technique, style, visual and literary sources) and the artist's or architect's working methods will be analyzed against the background of the then current views on the visual arts and the guiding principles of the Italian Renaissance as a cultural movement.

Course director: Prof. Michael W. Kwakkelstein, Ph.D.
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Aim of the course

The aim of this course is to introduce the student to the art and architecture of the greatest masters of the Italian Renaissance in its historical context, and in doing so, to make him or her familiar with the origins, nature, and development of the visual arts in Renaissance Italy. Mastery of basic concepts and terminology of art historical studies is another essential aspect of this course.

Class Format

Power-point lectures and virtual site visits (in live streaming)

Form of Assessment

Reading, class participation, and written work are all required of students. Grades will be composed of evaluations based on an assignment and a presentation. The assignment consists of a research paper (c. 3000 words with illustrations). Students receive a list of topics with formatting outlines and criteria well before the beginning of the course.

Required Reading

- *History of Italian Renaissance Art. Painting, sculpture, architecture*. 7th ed., by Frederick Hartt and David G. Wilkins, Prentice Hall, NJ, 2010. Reading assignments will be specified in class.

Suggestions for extra reading

Leon Battista Alberti - *On Painting* (1434) - transl. John R. Spencer, New Haven, 1966

Leon Battista Alberti - *On the Art of Building in ten books* (c. 1450/1486) - transl. Joseph Rykwert et al., Cambridge Massachusetts, 1988

D.A. Brown, *Leonardo da Vinci. Origins of a Genius*, London/New Haven, 1998.

J. Burckhardt, *The civilization of the Renaissance in Italy* (1860). London, 1990

P. Burke, *Culture and Society in Renaissance Italy*, 3rd edition, London 1987.

J. K. Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio: artist and artisan* New Haven/London 2000

S. Campbell and M. Cole, *A New History of Italian Renaissance Art*, London, 2012

B. Cole, *Masaccio and the art of the Early Renaissance*, Bloomington, 1980

L. Feinberg, *The Young Leonardo: Art and Life in Fifteenth-century Florence*, New York 2011.

D. Franklin, *Leonardo, Michelangelo and the Renaissance in Florence*, New Haven/London 2005.

D. Hay, *The Italian Renaissance*, Cambridge 1977.

H. Horne, *Botticelli, painter of Florence*; intro. by John Pope-Hennessy. Princeton, N.J., 1980.

D. Kent, *Cosimo de' Medici And The Florentine Renaissance*, New Haven and London 2000

M. Kemp, *Leonardo da Vinci. The Marvellous Works of Nature and Man*, Oxford 2006.

M. Kemp and G. Pallanti, *Mona Lisa: The People and the Painting*, Oxford, 2017

M. W. Kwakkelstein and M. Plomp, *Leonardo da Vinci. The Language of Faces*, Bussum 2018.

R. Lightbown, *Sandro Botticelli: life and work*, London 1989

H. Langdon, *Caravaggio: a life*, London 1998

A. Manetti, *The life of Brunelleschi* (c.1480). Pennsylvania State University Press, 1970)

S. Nethersole, *Art of Renaissance Florence. A City and its Legacy*, London 2019

L. Partridge, *Art of Renaissance Florence 1400-1600*, Los Angeles & London 2009

J.T. Paoletti and G.M. Radke, *Art in Renaissance Italy*. 4th edition, London, 2011

H. Saalman, *Filippo Brunelleschi: the buildings* (Pennsylvania State University Press, 1993)

A. Schumacher, "The painter Sandro Botticelli: an introduction to his work", in *Botticelli. Likeness, Myth, Devotion*, Frankfurt 2009, pp. 15-55.

G. J. van der Sman, *Lorenzo and Giovanna. Timeless Art and Fleeting Lives in Renaissance Florence*, Florence 2010.

G. Vasari, *The Lives of the Artists*. Peter Bondanella ed. (Oxford World's Classics), 1998.

R. Wittkower, *Architectural Principles in the age of Humanism*, London, 1962

W. Hood, *Fra Angelico at San Marco*, London/New York, 1993

Note: For images you may wish to consult the material at the Web Gallery of Art (www.wga.hu)

COURSE TIMETABLE

WEEK 1

Monday, July 5

10:00 - PP

Michael Kwakkelstein - Gert Jan van der Sman - Stefano Corazzini - Esther Millenaar - Klaas Tonckens Introduction to the course

1. Michael Kwakkelstein: *the function and use of art in the Renaissance.*

2. Esther Millenaar: *Florence, cradle of the Renaissance*

Readings:

Burckhardt; Burke; Hay

Tuesday, July 6

9:00 PP

1. Michael Kwakkelstein

Leonardo da Vinci: universal genius

Readings:

Hartt and Wilkins; Kwakkelstein and Plomp

2. Klaas Tonckens

Masaccio and Donatello: Originality and innovation in painting and sculpture.

Readings:

Vasari, 101-109; 147-162; Partridge, 22-26, 47-53, 61-62; 87-90; Paoletti and G.M. Radke, 214-223; 246-248; 273-275; Kent, 193-197; 281-286; Cole, 72-107, 148-182

Wednesday, July 7

9:00 PP

1. Gert Jan van der Sman

Botticelli, painter of Florence

Part 1: His life and career

Readings:

Hartt and Wilkins; Schumacher, pp. 15-55.

14:00 PP

2. Klaas Tonckens

Fra Angelico in San Marco

Readings:

Hartt and Wilkins; Vasari, 169-177; Partridge, 53-56; Paoletti and Radke; Kent, 149-159, 251-252; Hood, (pp - to be specified)

Thursday, July 8

9:00 PP

Part 2 Gert Jan van der Sman

The celebration of love (the Primavera and Birth of Venus in context). An examination in close-up of some of Botticelli's most celebrated works (Google Arts and Culture)

14:00 PP

Klaas Tonckens

Leon Battista Alberti - On the Art of Everything

Readings:

Vasari, 178-184; Partridge, 35-36; Paoletti and Radke, 251-253
Alberti - On Painting (1434) - 21-28, 43-59; 75-80; book three ad lib.
Alberti - On the Art of Building, 1, 7-15, 23-24, 189-195, 200-202 (§6)
Wittkower, 1-19, 33-36, 41-47, 55-56

Friday, July 9

9:00 PP

Michael Kwakkelstein

Michelangelo in Florence

Readings

Hartt and Wilkins; Hirst and Dunkerton

11:00 PP

Stefano Corazzini

Giorgio Vasari (the writer of the Lives of the artists).

Readings:

Hartt and Wilkins; Partridge:149-152; 172-179

Saturday, July 10

9:00 - PP

Michael Kwakkelstein

Leonardo, Michelangelo and Raphael in Rome

Readings:

Hartt and Wilkins

WEEK 2

Monday, July 12

9:00 - PP

Michael Kwakkelstein

Drawing ('disegno') in the Italian Renaissance Workshop

Readings:

Chapman and Faietti.

11:00 - PP

Stefano Corazzini

Giorgio Vasari architect and painter of the Medici duke.

Tuesday, July 13

9:00 - PP

1. Gert Jan van der Sman

The early Medici as patrons of the arts

2. Esther Millenaar

Brunelleschi's Renaissance

Readings

Manetti; Saalman; Partridge, 19-21, 28-35

Wednesday, July 14

9:00 - PP

Michael Kwakkelstein and Gert Jan van der Sman

Mannerism

Readings

Hartt and Wilkins.

Thursday, July 15

9:00 - PP

Gert Jan van der Sman

Caravaggio and the revolution of art

Part 1: The road to success

Part 2: "Seeing is believing"

14:00 - PP

Michael Kwakkelstein

Student presentations

Friday, July 16

9:15 - PP

Michael Kwakkelstein

Student presentations

* *Times and sites subject to minor changes*

