HAA 0070: European Visual Traditions

Mondays through Thursday, XX-YY (110 minutes per session), Location.

Room:

**Professor Christopher Nygren**

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*Course Description*:

This class will introduce you to the art of Europe, with a focus on the captivating period when the Middle Ages transformed into the Renaissance, and the Renaissance gave birth to modernity. We will cover the period from about 800 – 1800, during which Europe occupied a unique position of power and wealth. We will also examine the definition of “art” as it was known during this period, and consider the ways in which European artistic production was expanded during the Age of Exploration. Many of the most influential masterpieces of the Western tradition, such as Versailles and the Sistine Chapel, will be discussed in close detail. Beyond examining their aesthetic beauty, however, you will also be asked to think critically about how such monuments functioned within their social contexts and gained fame as objects of devotion, sites of commemoration, or other meaningful producers of social identity. This is a foundation course in art history, so it is not expected that you will have prior knowledge of the art, history, or cultures under consideration.

Course Objectives:

As a result of completing this course, students will:

1. Gain accurate knowledge of major historical events and corresponding artistic phenomena in Europe and the Mediterranean Basin between roughly 300 and 1800.
2. Learn to make precise, accurate, and comprehensive observations about works of art that support an argument or interpretation.
3. Deliberate on how religion, politics, and economics have informed the production of art, culture, and civic society at different moments in European history between about 300 and 1800.
4. Be able to identify broad patterns of categorization within European art produced between about 300 and 1800.
5. Develop an informed way of reading primary sources, considering the ideological assumptions that attend the embedded perspective of the author.
6. Read works of modern art historical scholarship with a critical eye, dissecting their arguments, identifying their weaknesses, appraising their strengths, and extending their insights to other works.

**Evaluation**

* This course will employ “specs” grading, meaning that all assignments will be graded on a complete / incomplete basis. Letter grades will be assigned based on the number of “complete” assignments that a student submits. The grade scale will be explained in detail in the official course syllabus.

**Week 1**

May 6 Introduction (classroom)

May 7 Site Visit: Roman and Imperial Fora

May 8 Charlemagne - Rome Reborn (classroom)

May 9 Site Visit: Santa Sabina, Santa Maria in Cosmedin, Basilica dei Santi Bonifacio e Alessio

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**Week 2**

May 13 – Site Visit: Santa Cecilia in Trastevere, S. Maria in Trastevere

May 14 – Ca. 1300 elsewhere

May 15 – Site Visit: Capitoline Museums

May 16 - Northern Alternatives (classroom)

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**Week 3**

May 20 – site visit: Santa Maria Sopra Minerva, Santi Apostoli (Bessarion Chapel), Santa Maria in Aracoeli (Bufalini Chapel)

May 21 - Republican Rivalries: Florence and Siena (classroom)

May 22 – Site Visit: Musei Vaticani (pinacoteca only)

May 23 Rome, 1500: The Emergence of an Ideal (classroom)

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**Week 4**

May 27 – Site visit: Sant’Agostino, Santa Maria della Pace,

May 28 – Michelangelo, Raphael, and the High Renaissance in Rome

May 29 – Site Visit: Vatican Museums (Sistine Chapel, Apartments, and select works in Pinacoteca)

May 30 - Reactions and Refutations

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**Week 5**

June 3 - Site Visit (San Pietro and the Chiesa Nuova)

June 4 – Defining the Baroque

June 5 – Site Visit: Galleria Corsini at Palazzo Barberini

June 7 – Site Visit: Galleria Borghese

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**Week 6**

June 10 - Site Visit: San Carlino, Sant’Andrea, S.M della Vittoria

June 11 - Questioning Art and Identity: Artemisia Gentileschi (classroom)

June 12 – Site Visit: Il Gesu, San Ignazio, San Girolamo della Carità

June 13 - Ingres and David: Art Between Revolution and Empire