



Art History II

Iconography and Iconology: In search of Hidden Meanings

ARH 201

Instructor: Roberto Fineschi r.fineschi@sienaschool.org

Office Hours: after class or by appointment

Course Description

This course is an introduction to Italian iconography and iconology by exploring in depth the identification, description and the interpretation of the content of art masterpieces between the 13th and the early 17th centuries. The course offers the students the opportunity to understand the symbolic meaning of objects, persons and events represented in Renaissance art works and the cultural background of the period, especially in Tuscany. The class starts with an introduction to the Italian religious iconography, focusing on the study and interpretation of some of the most important masterpieces by Duccio di Buoninsegna, Simone Martini and Giotto; it then deals with the socio-political use of art and propaganda, investigating the Medici's patronage. The class then analyzes the importance of Renaissance Portraiture and special attention will be given to the symbolism of Love, and Female Iconography, focusing on Botticelli's, Raphael's and Titian's masterpieces. Lastly it deepens Mythology and Allegory from 15th to 17th century.

As the Renaissance works are often still in their original physical settings, during field-studies to museums and churches in Florence and Siena, students will have a unique opportunity to experience the works as their original viewers did and as their creators intended.

Weekly meetings are composed of a series of classes with visual presentation, supplemented each time by thematic visits to churches, buildings and galleries in Siena and Florence. The power point presentation, slides will help in focusing on the subject in class. The field-studies will provide great opportunities to see some of the most important Renaissance works in their original location. Half-day excursions to San Gimignano and Florence (three field-trips).

Prerequisites

The course has no prerequisites.

Course Hours

The course usually meets twice a week for a total of 3 hours a week. Total semester contact hours are 45 (inclusive of field trips). Suggested Credits: 3-4.

Student Learning Expectations

By the end of this course, students gain a thorough knowledge of the Italian Renaissance Iconography, recognizing and defining the most important aspects of Iconology, developing practical perception, understanding the relationship between both historical and artistic events, valuing the importance of patronage, and focusing on primary and secondary sources, as well as bibliography.

Course Outline

Week by Week Description

Week I	<p>Introduction to the course. Iconography and Iconology. Cognitive style. Patrons and artists.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Panofsky, p. 3-16 • Baxandall, p. 1-27 <p>The revival of the classic world 1. Florence Neoplatonism. Botticelli.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dempsey, p. 20-49.
Week II	<p>The revival of the classic world 2. Florence Neoplatonism. Botticelli. Piero di Cosimo. Titian. Tintoretto</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Italian Painting, The Uffizi, p. 234-237, 394-397, 402-405, 406-409 • Panofsky, p. 33-68
Week III	No class
Week IV	<p>Political Iconography 1. Ambrogio Lorenzetti. The Medicis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Norman, p. 145-67. • McHam, p. 32-47. <p><i>Site Visit:</i> Siena, Palazzo Pubblico.</p>
Week V	<p>Political Iconography 2. Santa Maria della Scala.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Norman, p. 237-50. <p><i>Site Visit:</i> Santa Maria della Scala.</p>
Week VI	Review and Midterm Exam
Week VII	<p>Religious Iconography 1. Introduction. Old Testament: Genesis, The Sacrifice of Isaac, Moses, David,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selected Pages from Old Testaments Figures in Art <p><i>Site Visit:</i> Sienese Cathedral.</p>
Week VIII	<p>Religious Iconography 2. Mary. Annutiation, Nativity, Shepards and Magi Adoration, Sant'anna Metterza, Mary and Child, Majesty</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Norman, p. 54-81. • Selected pages from Gospel Figures in Art

	<i>Site Visit:</i> Museo dell'Opera del Duomo.
Week IX	Religious Iconography 3. Jesus. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selected pages from Gospel Figures in Art <i>Site Visit:</i> Tour of a few Sienese Churches.
Week X	Religious Iconography 4. Saints. Gospel Writers, Peter, Paul, John the Baptist, Francis, Dominic, and others. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selected pages from Saints in Art <i>Site Visit:</i> Pinacoteca.
Week XI	Religious Iconography 5. Saints (continuation) and Final Review
Week XII	Final Exam

Assignments:

During every class the student will be assigned some readings, to be prepared for the day indicated. Oral Presentations are also considered an important part of the course.

Textbook and required materials:

selected pages from the following books:

- Baxandall M., *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth Century Italy: A Primer in the Social History of Pictorial Style*, Oxford 1988
- De Capoa C., *Old Testament Figures in Art*, "A Guide to Imagery", J. Paul Getty Museum ed., Los Angeles 2003
- Dempsey C., *The Portrayal of Love: Botticelli's Primavera and Humanist Culture at the Time of Lorenzo the Magnificent* (Princeton, 1992), 20-49.
- Italian Painting. The Uffizi*, Köln, Taschen, 2000.
- Giorgi R., *Saints in Art*, "A Guide to Imagery", J. Paul Getty Museum ed., Los Angeles 2003
- McHam S. B., "Donatello's Bronze David and Judith as Metaphors of Medici Rule in Florence," *Art Bulletin* 83 (2001): 32-47.
- Norman D., "'Love Justice, You Who Judge the Earth': The Paintings of the Sala dei Nove in the Palazzo Pubblico, Siena," in *Siena, Florence, and Padua: Art, Society, and Religion 1280-1400* (New Haven, 1995), 145-67.
- Norman D., *Painting in Late Medieval and Renaissance Siena* (New Haven and London: Yale UP, 2003), 237-50. Norman D., "A noble panel': Duccio's Maestà," in *Siena, Florence, and Padua: Art, Society, and Religion 1280-1400* (New Haven and London: Yale UP, 1995), 2: 54-81.

- Panofsky E., *Studies in Iconology: Humanistic Themes in the Art of the Renaissance*, Oxford 1972
- Zuffi S., *Gospel Figures in Art*, "A Guide to Imagery", J. Paul Getty Museum ed., Los Angeles 2003

N.B. During site-visits students are kindly advised not to carry bulky backpacks or troublesome objects. Photography, with or without flash, is in general forbidden in Italian museums and churches.

Grading System:

Active Class Participation and Attendance Policy	30%
Presentation of the Looking Assignments	25%
Research Paper 1	15%
Research Paper 2	15%
Research Paper 3	15%

Active Class Participation :

Successful progress of the Program depends on the full cooperation of both students and faculty members: regular attendance and active participation in class are essential parts of the educational process. Attendance at and participation in all class meetings and field-trips are required. The student assumes the responsibility for requesting assistance from faculty members for making up missed work. Lateness (or unexcused absences during class) will be counted as half an absence. Students are required to actively participate to class discussion, to fulfil looking assignments and readings, and to express their thoughts and perceptions about them.

Presentation of the Looking Assignment:

During the course students are asked to do some looking assignments, which are intended to give them the opportunity to look at and to study a work of art independently. Whenever they want, two times before and two times after the midterm, students are requested to visit one site and describe one work in their own words, attempting to be as accurate as possible (the selected work needs to be approved by the teacher) . Any exception will result in a lowering of your grade. Looking assignments will be presented during the fieldtrips.

Research Paper:

Students are asked to produce 3 research paper of 8-10 pages. The topic must deal with the iconography of a few works of one important artist. The paper (8-10 pages, double spaced, Times New Roman 12, standard margins, MS Word), must be approved by professor. It must include footnotes and bibliography. Plagiarism will



result automatically in the grade of “F” and any exception will result in a lowering of your grade.

Course Policy

Academic Integrity:

Effective learning, teaching and research all depend upon the ability of members of the academic community to trust one another and to trust the integrity of work that is submitted for academic credit or conducted in the wider arena of scholarly research. Such an atmosphere of mutual trust fosters the free exchange of ideas and enables all members of the community to achieve their highest potential.

In all academic work, the ideas and contributions of others must be appropriately acknowledged, and work that is presented as original must be, in fact, original. Faculty, students, and administrative staff all share the responsibility of ensuring the honesty and fairness of the intellectual environment at the Siena Art Institute and Siena School for Liberal Arts.

Students with documented disabilities:

Any student who has a documented disability that may prevent him or her from fully demonstrating his or her abilities should contact the instructor as soon as possible to discuss accommodations necessary to ensure full participation and to facilitate the educational opportunity.

Participation and Attendance:

We consider attending class a crucial part of gaining the most from your study abroad experience. For this reason, we allow only **one unexcused absence** per course during the 15 weeks of the program. This means that you are only allowed to miss **one** lesson of each course for unexcused reasons. Reasons for an absence to be considered unexcused include absences related to personal travel (including delays, strikes, missed connections, etc.) or visits from family and friends.

In addition, being late to class on **4** occasions constitutes an unexcused absence. Please also consider that leaving before the end of the lesson or coming back late from a break is the equivalent of an unexcused absence.

Participation and attendance is worth 30% of the overall grade for every class.

Absences due to health-related issues are considered excused if the student informs the professor and office by email or phone before class begins.

No make-up exams or critiques will be considered unless warranted by extreme circumstances [for example, health, family tragedy] supported with proper documentation.

Regular attendance, punctuality at and participation in all class meetings and field-trips are required and mandatory. Students are expected to attend all classes;

absences will affect your course grade. Each lecture will cover a wide range of material and missed information will be difficult to obtain. If you do miss a class for whatever reason, you are responsible for photocopying a fellow classmate's lecture notes.

N.B. During site-visits students are kindly advised not to carry bulky backpacks or troublesome objects. In churches, students are kindly advised not to wear shorts, sleeveless shirts, mini-skirts or baseball caps or flip-flops. Photography, with or without flash, is in general forbidden in museums and churches.

Grading scale

98-100 A+	88-89,99 B+	78-79,99 C+	68-69,99 D+
93-97,99 A	83-87,99 B	73-77,99 C	63-67,99 D
90-92,99 A-	80-82,99 B-	70-72,99 C-	60-62,99 D-
<59,99 F			

Important Reminders

LAPTOP USE:

Laptop computers are not allowed in class.

INTERNET USE:

The element of speed and convenience that makes the Web so tempting should be approached with caution, as it can become all too easy to go adrift in an ocean of information that often proves inaccurate, misleading, and ultimately unreliable. Students should consult with me prior to using any Web site as a research tool for the paper. The following are a few of the trustworthy sites of which students may take advantage:

Grove's *Dictionary of Art* Online (www.groveart.com/shared/views/home.html)

Bridgeman Art Library (www.bridgeman.co.uk/search/quick_search.asp)

Encyclopedia Britannica Online (www.britannica.com)

JSTOR (<http://www.jstor.org/browse#Art+%+Art+History>)

Museum web sites are traditionally very reliable. See, for example:

Florence museums (<http://www.polomuseale.firenze.it/musei>)

Louvre (www.louvre.fr)

National Gallery in London (www.nationalgallery.org.uk)

Retests/make up tests

Students may take the exam on a different date only for justified reasons such as health problems. The course does not allow for retest.