Early Masters of Italian Renaissance Painting (V43.9306.001)
Fall 2011 - Course Meetings: Wednesdays, 9:00-11:45 am
Prof. Guido Rebecchini, e-mail TBA
Office, TBA (office hours, Wednesdays, 2:00-4:00 pm, or by appointment)

Course Description
This course is conceived as a series of selected studies, offering in depth analysis of a few great masters of Early Renaissance Italian painting: Giotto, Masaccio, Fra Angelico, Benozzo Gozzoli and Ghirlandaio, Botticelli, Filippino Lippi, among others. These artists have been chosen for the unique opportunity afforded by study in Florence to examine their works in original contexts, especially the great fresco cycles they created with their workshops. The course is, however, neither limited to the study of these artists nor to the study of painting. Their works will be considered in relation to those of other contemporary masters active in the courts of Central and Northern Italy, including Andrea Mantegna, Piero della Francesca, Cosmé Tura and Leonardo da Vinci. They will also be considered in rapport with other contemporary art forms, especially the sculpture of Ghiberti, Donatello and Verrocchio. In studying original works of art on site, context, function and materials will be considered equal in importance to matters of style. Special attention will be given to the phenomenon of collecting as an active force shaping the development of artistic forms and genres. The study of collecting will bring into consideration intellectual, social, economic and political issues that complicate and enrich our understanding of the work of the early masters of the Italian Renaissance.

Requirements
This is an advanced course in art history and has a PRE-REQUISITE of at least one course in art history. If you do not have the pre-requisite to take this course, please do not hesitate to speak to me or to someone in the offices of Academic Support for suggestions regarding alternatives.

There is one field trip for this course:

**Friday, 21 October:** Ferrara
**Saturday, 22 October:** Mantua

Since this is an upper level course, it is assumed that you will be interested in visiting other cities with significant examples of early Renaissance painting and sculpture on your own (e.g., Arezzo, Lucca, Milan, Padua, Rome, Siena, Urbino, Venice, Verona, etc.), and you are warmly encouraged to do so. Please feel free to ask me for further information and/or recommendations for sites to visit.

Class meetings take place in our assigned classroom unless otherwise noted on the syllabus; when the class takes place on site, please be certain that you know where we are meeting and how to get there well in advance of our meeting time since class begins promptly at 9:00 a.m. Site visits are closely timed and entrance times are frequently reserved in advance; therefore, no exceptions will be made for late arrivals. Attendance is required in class, at all site visits and on the field trips. Absences and repeated late arrivals at class will affect your final grade for the course. Readings are assigned weekly and must be read in advance of the lecture for which they are assigned. Your attendance and preparation are fundamental to your ability to ask questions and participate in class discussion. Site visits and field trips are intended primarily as opportunities to examine works of art in person and for class discussion. Class participation is worth 20% of your final grade.

Grades will be based on:

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<th>Component</th>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance and Class Participation</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<td>Midterm</td>
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Group Presentations/Term Paper  30%
Final Exam          30%

Exams: For the midterm and the final exam you will be shown a series of images to identify and describe (10 works shown for 5 minutes each: 2.5 points per ID; 7.5 points per description). The images for identification will be chosen from among those shown during lecture, seen in your readings or works seen on site: all images seen in the exams will have appeared in at least one of these places. For each image shown, you will be required to identify the artist (if known), the name of the work, its material or materials, its present or original location, and its date (within five years on either side of the actual date). You will then write a brief description of the work in complete sentences, identifying the work’s importance to the history of art as identified in class and/or in your reading. You are expected to cite relevant assigned reading in your responses; answers that do not cite any of the assigned reading will not receive full credit. In this context, it is sufficient to cite the name of the author to whom you are referring. The final is comprehensive, although greater weight is given to material covered in the second half of the course. Both the midterm and the final are carefully timed: if you have a recognized learning disability for which you are entitled to extra time, please see someone in the Academic Support offices immediately to insure that we can make proper arrangements for testing.

Presentations and Term Papers: The last portion of this course will be run as a special seminar on collecting in early-Renaissance Italy. Group presentations will serve as the basis for our discussion. These groups will be formed during the first class following the end of the drop/add period, and the topics to be discussed will be assigned. Each group will research and prepare a presentation that will last approximately 30 minutes. Students should arrange to meet with me individually or in groups well in advance of their presentations to discuss sources. Term papers will be the final written version of your portion of the topic presented in your group presentation. The term paper provides an opportunity to make corrections or adjustments to your presentation material in relation to the class discussion that will follow these. The term paper should be a well-organized essay in defense of a thesis statement. The written version should include references to all sources used, regardless of whether they were also assigned readings from this syllabus or electronic resources. Failure to properly cite your sources constitutes plagiarism (see below); if you are uncertain as to how to properly cite sources, please do not hesitate to see me during office hours or to contact me via email.

Group presentations will be on one of the following topics:

1. Collecting Art in fifteenth-century Florence: Cosimo and Lorenzo de’ Medici and the studiolo of Palazzo Medici
2. Collecting Art in Ferrara: Lionello and Borso d’Este and the studiolo of Belfiore
3. Collecting Art in Mantua: Isabella d’Este and her studioli

Should there be more than 15 students in the class, other topics will be assigned.

Sources for your research may be found among those listed on this syllabus, in the Course Reader on our Blackboard site, or any other relevant source available in the Ulivi Library, the British Institute Library, Library of the Dutch Institute, the Library of the Center for Renaissance Studies at Palazzo Strozzi, JSTOR or other database of scholarly articles (i.e., see “articles via databases” on the NYU Libraries site).
Plagiarism: All work executed for this class, including exams, group presentations and term papers, must be completed independently. **PLAGIARISM WILL NOT BE TOLERATED IN ANY FORM AND WILL RESULT UNCONDITIONALLY IN A FAILING GRADE FOR THE COURSE.** To “plagiarize” is defined by the Oxford English Dictionary as to:

> Take and use as one’s own (the thoughts, writings, inventions, etc., of another person); copy (literary works, ideas, etc.) improperly or without acknowledgment; pass off the thoughts, work, etc., of (another person) as one’s own.[Lesley Brown, ed., *The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 2:2231]

You must cite all sources for your work, not just books and articles but also internet and non-traditional media sources. This is especially important in your term paper, which, as a research paper, is meant to be a demonstration of your ability to locate, assemble, analyze and employ sources. Your proper citation of these sources is fundamental for the proper completion of the paper. If you have any doubts or questions about what constitutes plagiarism, please do not hesitate to ask me in class, in office hours or via e-mail.

Submitting your work: Submission of your assignments should be on hard copies. However, whenever this should be impossible, you may submit assignments electronically (e.g., as attachments in Word to e-mail; for all other formats, please see me to confirm their acceptability before submission). If you submit assignments electronically, you must do so **BEFORE 9:00 p.m. OF THE DAY PRIOR TO THE DUE DATE INDICATED ON THE SYLLABUS.** Electronic submissions received after 9:00 p.m. will be considered late. **Late submission of either electronic or hard copy assignments will result in a lower grade or evaluation for them.**

Blackboard: There is a Blackboard site for this course. In order to access Blackboard, you must have an NYU net ID. All non-NYU students are automatically assigned an NYU net ID when they enroll in the program. In order to activate your net ID, please log on to home.nyu.edu (note: there is no “www” in this site address) and follow the instructions to create a password. Once you have a valid net ID and password, you can enter the course’s Blackboard site by logging onto home.nyu.edu; then, from your NYUHome homepage, click on the tab marked “academics” to locate the appropriate hyperlink under “Classes.” Updates and announcements will be posted regularly on the Blackboard site so please check it regularly. You will also find links to some of our assigned readings, to websites and many other useful resources on the Blackboard site. If you are having any difficulty activating your net ID or using Blackboard for this course, please let me know in person or via e-mail. Our Blackboard site is a work in progress; recommendations for it are much appreciated.

Office hours: Office hours will be held on Wednesdays, 2:00-4:00 p.m., or by appointment. Please note that my office is in **TBA.** Appointments may be requested in person, via e-mail or by phone; be sure to indicate a telephone number and/or e-mail address where you can be reached.

You will receive an e-mail after the first class meeting, request the following information:

1. Name (if applicable, specify any preferred name or nickname)
2. Telephone number
3. Home institution
4. Year/class
5. Degree program, concentration or other appropriate designation for your field
6. Foreign languages (indicating spoken fluency or reading knowledge)
7. Previous courses in history and art history (use descriptive titles, not course numbers)

If you do not receive an e-mail from me by the second class meeting, please let me know this by sending an e-mail to: TBA

**Texts**

Some assigned readings are to be found in the following texts, available for purchase for this course at the Paperback Exchange, via delle Oche 4/r:

- Baxandall, Michael. *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth-Century Italy: A Primer in the Social History of Pictorial Style*, 2nd ed. Oxford and New York, 1988. [readings on the syllabus from this text are indicated as “Baxandall”]
- Paoletti, John T. and Gary M. Radke. *Art in Renaissance Italy*, 3rd ed., London, 2005. [readings on the syllabus from this text are indicated as “P-R”]
- Rubin, Patricia Lee. *Images and Identity in Fifteenth-Century Florence*. New Haven, 2007. [readings on the syllabus from this text are indicated as “Rubin”]
- Welch, Evelyn. *Art and Society in Renaissance Italy 1350-1500*. Oxford, 1997. [readings on the syllabus from this text are indicated as “Welch”]

The following sources available in the Villa Ulivi library are recommended for term paper research. Some of these texts also contain some of the assigned readings for the course:

**Primary Sources:**

**General Sources:**
- Cole Ahl, Diane, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Masaccio*. Cambridge, 2002. [readings on the syllabus from this text are indicated as “C-A”]

**Monographs on Individual Artists:**


**Texts for Studiolo seminar:**

*At Home in Renaissance Italy,* eds Ajmar-Wolleheim, Marta and Dennis, Flora, London 2006.


Other assigned readings are to be found online. Grove Art (included in Oxford Art Online) is especially useful for general questions about the period, dates, artists’ careers, etc.

Other assigned readings are to be found online, through links available in the “Course Reader” on our Blackboard site. You will also find links to useful reference works (e.g., Oxford Reference Online) through our Blackboard site under “External Links.” Grove Art (included in Oxford Art Online) is especially useful for general questions about the period, dates, artists’ careers, etc.

**Readings and Amici Cards**

Readings are assigned on the syllabus under the week for which they are due; that is, they must be done in advance of the lecture for which they are assigned.

All students at NYU in Florence receive Amici cards. These cards are invaluable resources both in the classroom and outside. You are required to bring your Amici cards with you to all site visits, regardless of whether or not the sites are among those for which the cards provide free access.

You are also required to go on your own to the Uffizi, the Bargello and the Galleria Palatina [Pitti Palace] to see any works which appear in your readings that are in those collections; this is to be done in advance of the lecture for which that reading is assigned.

**Schedule of Lectures**

7 September: I. Introduction: *The Renaissance, Florence and the Antique*

   Location: TBA

14 September: II. Site Visit: *Giotto and Early Renaissance art in Santa Croce and in the Cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore*
Prof. Rebecchini  
Early Masters of Italian Renaissance Painting  
syllabus, p. 6

Location: Meet in Piazza Santa Croce in front of the façade.
Reading:

1. P-R.: XXX

21 September:  
III. Site Visit: The Primacy of Sculpture: Orsanmichele and the Museo del Bargello

Location: Meet in front of Orsanmichele on via de' Calzaioli.
Reading:

3. Sperling: "Donatello's Bronze David and the Demands of Medici Politics," online article (Blackboard Course Reader, "15th-Century Italian Sculpture" folder)

28 September:  
IV. Site Visit: Masaccio and Brunelleschi: the Brancacci Chapel and the Church of Santo Spirito

Location: Meet in front of the Chiesa di Santa Maria del Carmine
Reading:

1. P-R: XXX

5 October:  
V. Site Visit: The patronage of Cosimo de’ Medici: The Medici Palace, the Church of San Lorenzo and the Convent of San Marco

Location: Meet in front of the main door of the Medici Palace on the Via Cavour.
Reading:

1. P-R: XXX
4. William Hood: “Saint Dominic’s Manners of Praying: Gestures in Fra Angelico’s Cell Frescoes at S. Marco,” online article (Blackboard Course Reader)

12 October:  
VI. Site Visit: Rivals and Imitators: Santa Maria Novella; Palazzo Rucellai; San Pancrazio and the Holy Sepulchre; Santa Trinita

Location: Meet in front of the façade of Santa Maria Novella.
Reading:

P-R.: XXX
C-A: Chapter 9: Field, “Masaccio and Perspective in Italy in the Fifteenth Century,” pp. 177-201
C-A: Chapter 8: Verdon, "Masaccio’s Trinity: Theological, Social, and Civic Meanings,” pp. 158-176

19 October:  
VII. Art at the Courts of Central and Northern Italy: Urbino, Ferrara, Mantua, Milan (Piero della Francesca, Andrea Mantegna, Cosmé Tura, Leonardo da Vinci)

Location: TBA
Reading:

1. P-R, XXX

21 October:  
Field Trip: Mantua (Palazzo Ducale; Church of Sant’Andrea; Palazzo Te)
22 October: **Field Trip: Ferrara (Palazzo Schifanoia; Castle; Palazzo dei Diamanti)**  
Location: TBA  
Reading:  
1. *Courts and Courtly Art: Chapters on Ferrara and Mantua*, pp. XXX  

26 October: **VIII. Midterm**

2 November: **IX. No class (Fall Break)**

9 November: **X. Site Visit: Uffizi: Painting of the Fifteenth Century in Florence and Central Italy**  
Location: Uffizi (meet on group reservation line at door 2)  
Reading:  

16 November: **XI. Style, Functions and Techniques in Late Medieval and Early Renaissance Works of Art in the Acton Collection, Villa La Pietra**  
Location: Villa La Pietra (meet at entrance)  
Reading:  

23 November: **XII. Florence and Rome: Politics, Diplomacy and Artistic Exchanges**  
Location: TBA  
Reading:  
1. P-R, XXX  
2. Welch, "Rome and the Republics", pp. 241-247

30 November: **XIII. Studiolo Seminar, I**  
**Antiquarianism, Collecting and the Culture of the Studiolo**  
Group Presentations:  
1. Collecting Art in fifteenth-century Florence: Cosimo, Piero and Lorenzo de’ Medici and the *studiolo* of Palazzo Medici  
2. Collecting Art in Ferrara: Lionello and Borso d’Este and the *studiolo* of Belfiore  
Location: TBA  
Reading: Welch, "The Domestic Setting", pp. 277-311  
Refer to bibliography on Studiolo seminar above. Further bibliography will be individually recommended.

7 December: **XIV. Studiolo Seminar, II**  
**Antiquarianism, Collecting and the Culture of the Studiolo**  
Group Presentation:  
3. Collecting Art in Mantua: Isabella d’Este and her *studioli*  

**Final Review**  
Location: TBA
Due: Submit term papers for *Studiolo Seminar*

14 December: XV. **Final Exam**
Due: Submit term papers (*Studiolo Seminar* term papers returned)