

Early Masters of Italian Renaissance Painting (V43.9306.001)

Fall 2008 - Course Meetings: Wednesdays, 9:00-11:45 a.m.

Prof. Bruce Edelstein, e-mail: edelstein@nyu.edu

Office, Villa La Pietra, 055 5007246 (office hours, Tuesdays, 3:00-5:00, or by appointment)

Course Description

This course is conceived as a series of selected studies, offering in depth analysis of five great masters of Early Renaissance Italian painting: Giotto, Masaccio, Fra Angelico, Botticelli and Ghirlandaio. These artists have been chosen for the unique opportunity afforded by study in Florence to examine their works in original contexts. 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 earlier precedents (e.g., Cimabue) and those of other contemporary masters (these may include: Duccio, Simone Martini, Paolo Uccello, Filippo Lippi, Mantegna, Veneziano, Castagno, Piero della Francesca, the Pollaiuolo, Verrocchio, Filippino Lippi, etc.). 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.

Requirements

This is an advanced course in art history and has a **PRE-REQUISITE** of at least one course in art history. Regardless of whether the computer has permitted you to enroll in the course, you may not take it without this pre-requisite. If you do not have the pre-requisite to take this course, please do not hesitate to speak to me or to Lisa Cesarani or Jennifer Dronsfield in the Academic Support office for suggestions regarding alternatives.

There is an overnight field trip for this course:

Friday-Saturday, 10-11 October: Padua and Mantua

Since this is an advanced 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, Ferrara, Lucca, Milan, Rome, Sansepolcro, 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 in Villa Ulivi, 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 will affect your final grade for the course. Two unexcused late arrivals at class will be considered the equivalent to one unexcused absence, with the same consequences for your final grade.** 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 15% of your final grade.**

Grades will be based on:

Attendance and Class Participation	15%
Midterm	20%
Term Paper	35%
Final Exam	30%

The main graded assignments for this class are a midterm, a final exam and a term paper. The midterm and the final exam are comprised of image comparisons (2-4 works shown in each comparison). The images for identification and comparison 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.** It is recommended that you keep a folder on ArtStor of images of the works listed on your weekly handouts in order to facilitate studying for the image identification portion of the exams. For each image, you will be required to identify the artist (if known), the name of the work, the city in which it is located, and the date (within five years on either side of the actual date), and then write a well-organized essay, discussing the themes highlighted by the particular comparison and making reference to the assigned readings for the course. 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 Lisa Cesarani or Jennifer Dronsfield in the Academic Support office immediately to insure that we can make proper arrangements for testing.**

Term Papers: The term paper should be a well-organized essay in defense of a thesis statement, approximately 6-10, double-spaced, typewritten pages in length. The term paper is a **research paper**. It must be completed independently and must include references to all sources used, whether assigned readings from this syllabus or sources identified by you on your own or suggested by me. 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.

Your term paper must be on some aspect of one of the following topics:

1. Painting in Siena in the late Middle Ages or Early Renaissance (e.g., Duccio, Simone Martini, and/or the Lorenzetti)
2. Painting for the Papal Court in the Early Renaissance (e.g., Fra Angelico's frescoes in Rome and Orvieto, Filippo Lippi's frescoes in Spoleto, and/or the Fifteenth-Century Cycle in the Sistine Chapel)
3. Painting in Venice or for the North Italian Courts in the Early Renaissance (e.g., the Bellini, Carpaccio, Mantegna, Antonello da Messina or Piero della Francesca)
4. Painting for Female Patrons (e.g., Fina Buzzacarini, Lucrezia Tornabuoni or Isabella d'Este)
5. Graphic Arts in the Early Renaissance (e.g., drawing practice and/or the rise of printmaking)

You must choose your term paper topic by the week before the midterm. For the class prior to the midterm you are required to submit a **term paper proposal**, including your **proposed title and/or thesis statement** and an **annotated bibliography**. For the annotated bibliography, you are required to locate at least three sources relevant to your proposed term paper topic other than the assigned readings on this syllabus (although assigned readings may, of course, be used for the final paper). Your sources may be found among the sources 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 – link in External Links on our Blackboard site). For each source, you are to write a complete bibliographic citation. Under each citation you should write a single paragraph describing the content of the source and why it is relevant to your research topic.

Each student must schedule a meeting with me as soon as possible following submission of the term paper proposal to discuss his or her topic and sources.

Fall 2008, Term Paper Alternative: This semester, due to the particularly rich offerings of exhibitions in Florence relevant to our course material, you may choose to write review-essays about three shows currently on in Florence instead of producing a term paper at the end of the course. All three of these shows end before the end of our fall break, so your study of them would have to take place in the first half of the course. The exhibitions are:

- “Giovanni da Milano: Capolavori del Gotico fra Lombardia e Toscana,” at the Galleria dell’Accademia until 2 November
- “L’eredità di Giotto: Arte a Firenze 1340 – 1375,” at the Galleria degli Uffizi until 2 November
- “Firenze e gli antichi Paesi Bassi (1430-1530): Dialoghi artistici da Jan van Eyck a Ghirlandaio, da Memling a Raffaello...,” at the Galleria Palatina, Palazzo Pitti, until 26 October

Each review-essay should be approximately 3-5, double-spaced, typewritten pages in length (total number of pages submitted, approximately 9-15). Your essay should clearly identify the subject of the exhibition, evaluate the clarity with which the thesis behind the exhibition was exemplified by the works shown and discuss critically how the organization and installation of the exhibition improved or detracted from its didactic mission. You should also clearly identify what you learned from viewing the exhibition and how this complemented and/or differed from what you have learned in class and from your readings. You are encouraged to use outside sources such as your text books, The Grove Dictionary of Art (available on-line through our Blackboard site) and other sources available in the Ulivi Library (see bibliography below). However, please be certain to cite your sources properly as described above under the term paper instructions. The three review-essays must be submitted in class no later than the first Tuesday following Fall Break.

Plagiarism: All work executed for this class, discussion questions, journals, 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: Hard copy submission of your assignments is welcome, although 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. Since our Blackboard site is a work in progress, recommendations and requests for it are much appreciated.

Office hours: Office hours will be held on Tuesdays, 3:00-5:00 p.m., or by appointment. 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: **edelstein@nyu.edu**.

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:

- 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"]
- Derbes, Anne and Mark Sandona, eds. *The Cambridge Companion to Giotto*. Cambridge, 2004 [readings on the syllabus from this text are indicated as "D&S"]
- Cole Ahl, Diane, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Masaccio*. Cambridge, 2002. [readings on the syllabus from this text are indicated as "C-A"]

Other assigned readings are to be found online, through links available on our Blackboard site; you will also find links to useful reference works through our Blackboard site under "External Links."

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

Primary Sources:

Jacobus de Voragine. *The Golden Legend: Readings on the Saints*. 2 vols. Princeton, 1993. [hereafter: "Golden Legend"]

Vasari, Giorgio. *Lives of the Painters, Sculptors and Architects*, 2 vols., trans. by Gaston du C. de Vere; intro. and notes by David Ekserdjian. London, 1996.

General Sources:

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.

Blake McHam, Sarah, ed. *Looking at Italian Renaissance Sculpture*. Cambridge, 1998.

Dunkerton, Jill, Susan Foister, Dillian Gordon and Nicholas Penny. *Giotto to Dürer: Early Renaissance Painting in The National Gallery*, New Haven, 1991.

Kent, Dale. *Cosimo de' Medici and the Florentine Renaissance: The Patron's Oeuvre*. New Haven, 2000. [hereafter, "Kent, Cosimo"]

Musacchio, Jacqueline Marie. *The Art and Ritual of Childbirth in Renaissance Italy*. New Haven, 1999.

McHam, ed., Sarah Blake. *Looking at Italian Renaissance Sculpture*. Cambridge, 1998.

O'Malley, Michelle. *The Business of Art: Contracts and the Commissioning Process in Renaissance Italy*. New Haven, 2005.

Randolph, Adrian. *Engaging Symbols: Gender, Politics, and Public Art in Fifteenth-Century Florence*. New Haven, 2002. [hereafter, "Randolph"]

Welch, Evelyn. *Art in Renaissance Italy 1350-1500*. Oxford, 1997.

Monographs on Individual Artists:

Barbera, Gioacchino. *Antonello da Messina*. New York: 2006.

Bolchert, Till-Holger, ed. *Memling's Portraits*. New York: 2005.

Cadogan, Jean K. *Domenico Ghirlandaio: Artist and Artisan*. New Haven, 2000.

Didi-Huberman, Georges. *Fra Angelico: Dissemblance and Figuration*. Chicago, 1995.

Hood, William. *Fra Angelico at San Marco*. New Haven, 1993.

Holmes, Megan. *Filippo Lippi: The Carmelite Painter*. New Haven, 1999.

Kanter, Laurence, Pia Palladino et al. *Fra Angelico*. New York, 2005.

Lightbown, Ronald. *Sandro Botticelli: Life and Work*. New York, 1989.

Stubblebine, ed., James H. *Giotto: The Arena Chapel Frescoes: Illustrations, Introductory Essay, Backgrounds and Sources, Criticism*. New York, 1996.

Wood, Jerydene M., ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Piero della Francesca*. Cambridge, 2002.

You will also find links to useful reference works (e.g., Oxford Reference Online or The Grove Dictionary of Art) through our Blackboard site under "External Links." Grove Art is especially useful for general questions about the period, dates, artists' careers, etc.

Readings and Amici degli Uffizi 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 degli Uffizi cards. These cards are invaluable resources both in the classroom and outside. You are required to bring your Amici degli Uffizi 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 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

- 3 September: Introduction: Giotto and the Florentine Proto-Renaissance; the Assisi Masters
Location: Villa Ulivi, Classroom
- 10 September: Giotto: the Scrovegni Chapel and the Chapels in S. Croce
Location: Villa Ulivi, Classroom
Reading: P&R: "The Origins of the Renaissance;" "Rome: Artists, Popes, and Cardinals;" "Assisi and Padua: Narrative Realism," pp. 48-76.
D&S: "Giotto Past and Present: An Introduction," pp. 1-9.
D&S: Maginnis, pp. 10-31.
D&S: Zanardi, pp. 32-62.
D&S: Miller & Taylor-Mitchell, pp. 157-175.
- 17 September: **Site Visit: Santa Croce**
Location: Basilica di Santa Croce (meet on steps, near statue of Dante)
Reading: P&R: "Introduction: Art in Context," pp. 12-45.
P&R: "Florence: Traditions and Innovations," pp. 77-94.
D&S: Cannon, pp. 103-134.
D&S: Cook, pp. 135-156
- 24 September: The Primacy of Sculpture: from the Pisano to Donatello
Location: Villa Ulivi, Classroom
Reading: P&R: "The Cathedral Complex," pp. 94-98.
P&R: "Siena: City of the Virgin:" "The Cathedral;" "The Pulpit;" "The Façade;" "Tomb Sculpture," pp. 99-104; 110-112.
P&R: "Florence: Commune and Guild:" "Sculpture for the Cathedral Complex;" "The Foundling Hospital;" "Brunelleschi's Dome," pp. 204-212; 217-221.
P&R: "Sculptural Commissions Outside Florence;" "The Florence Cathedral Interior;" "The *Gates of Paradise*;" "The Tomb of Leonardo Bruni," pp. 239-250.
C-A: Radke, pp. 40-63.
- 1 October: Site Visit: Bargello
Location: Museo Nazionale del Bargello (meet at entrance)
Reading: P&R: "The Medici and Donatello's Late Work," pp. 267-270.
Helms, "The Materials and Techniques of Italian Renaissance Sculpture," in Blake McHam, pp. 18-39 (Ulivi Library).
Lavin, "On the Sources and Meaning of the Renaissance Portrait Bust," in Blake McHam, pp. 60-78 (Ulivi Library).
Schneider: "Donatello's Bronze David," online article (Blackboard Course Reader, "15th-Century Italian Sculpture" folder).
Sperling: "Donatello's Bronze David and the Demands of Medici Politics," online article (Blackboard Course Reader, "15th-Century Italian Sculpture" folder).
- 8 October: Masaccio: "Giotto Redivivus"
Location: Villa Ulivi, Classroom
Reading: P&R: "Family Commissions;" "The *Trinity* and Single-Point Perspective" pp. 221-233.

P&R: "Civic Imagery," pp. 235-236.

C-A: Molho, pp. 16-39.

C-A: Roberts, pp. 87-104.

C-A: Gordon, pp. 123-137.

10-11 October

Field Trip (overnight): Art for the North Italian Courts: Giotto, Donatello and Mantegna in Padua and Mantua

Location: Departure from Piazza Adua – **to be confirmed**

Reading: P&R: "Padua: The Carrara Court," pp. 185-188.

P&R: "Donatello in Padua" pp. 264-266.

P&R: "Andrea Mantegna," pp. 322-324.

D&S: Tronzo, pp. 63-75.

D&S: Radke, pp. 76-102.

D&S: Kohl, pp. 176-196.

D&S: "Reading the Arena Chapel," pp. 197-220.

D&S: Ladis, pp. 221-238.

Alpatoff, Schorr and Schlegel, pp. 156-202.

Johnson: "Approaching the Altar: Donatello's Sculpture in the Santo," online article (Blackboard Course Reader, "15th-Century Italian Sculpture" folder).

15 October:

Site Visit: Orsanmichele and the Brancacci Chapel

Location: Orsanmichele (meet on via de' Calzaioli side, in front of central niche)

Reading: P&R: "Social Upheaval and Civic Works in Florence;" "Or San Michele," pp. 163-168.

P&R: "Or San Michele," pp. 212-217.

P&R: "The Mercanzia Niche at Or San Michele," p. 272.

C-A: Callmann, pp. 64-86.

C-A: Cole Ahl, pp. 139-157.

C-A: Field, pp. 177-201.

Due: Term Paper Proposal

22 October:

Midterm

29 October:

No class (Fall Break)

5 November:

Marian Devotion: The Madonna on the Altar and in the Home

Location: Villa Ulivi, Classroom

Reading: Goffen: *Nostra Conversatio in Caelis Est: Observations on the Sacra Conversazione in the Trecento*, online article (Blackboard Course Reader, "Renaissance Art-Topics and Theory" folder).

Trexler: *Florentine Religious Experience: The Sacred Image*, online article (Blackboard Course Reader, "Renaissance Art-Topics and Theory" folder).

P&R: "Altarpieces at Mid-Century," pp. 233-235.

Musacchio: Chapter 2, "Caterina di Ser Girolamo da Colle and the Material Culture of Renaissance Childbirth," pp. 34-57 (Ulivi Library).

Due: Review Essays (Term Paper alternative)

12 November:

Site Visit: Museo di San Marco

Location: Museo di San Marco (meet at entrance)

Reading: P&R: "Florence: The Medici and Political Propaganda," pp. 251-264.

Hood: *Saint Dominic's Manners of Praying: Gestures in Fra Angelico's Cell Frescoes at S. Marco*, online article (Blackboard Course Reader, "Fra Angelico and Benozzo Gozzoli Sources" folder).

Kent, *Cosimo*: "Expiation, Charity, Intercession;" "Building 'For the Honor of God, and the Honor of the City, and the Memory of Me'" (partial chapter), pp. 131-59; 161-178 (Ulivi Library).

- 19 November: The Influence of Contemporary Flemish Painting
 Location: Villa Ulivi, Classroom
 Reading: Ames-Lewis: Fra Filippo Lippi and Flanders, online article (Blackboard Course Reader, "Filippo Lippi Sources" folder).
 Ruda: Flemish Painting and the Early Renaissance in Florence: Questions of Influence, online article (Blackboard Course Reader, "Filippo Lippi Sources" folder).
 P&R: "Castagno at Sant'Apollonia;" "Piero della Francesca in Arezzo," pp. 236-238.
 P&R: "Urbino," pp. 349-352.
 P&R: "Portraiture," pp. 278-9.
- 26 November: Site Visit: Rivals and Imitators of the Medici: Santa Maria Novella and Santa Trinita
 Location: Santa Maria Novella (meet in front of main entrance to church)
 Reading: P&R: "Santa Maria Novella in Florence:" "The Bridge of Salvation," pp. 155-163.
 P&R: "The Devotional Image;" "Family Chapels," pp. 272-278.
 C-A: Verdon, pp. 158-176.
 Hall, The Ponte in S. Maria Novella: The Problem of the Rood Screen in Italy, online article (Blackboard Course Reader, "Sacred Space" folder).
 Cadogan: Observations on Ghirlandaio's Method of Composition, online article, (Blackboard Course Reader, "Ghirlandaio Sources" folder).
- 3 December: Site Visit: Domenico Veneziano, Lippi, Botticelli, Antonello da Messina and Memling in the Uffizi
 Location: Galleria degli Uffizi (meet on group reservation line at door 2)
 Reading: P&R: "Classical Antiquity and the Golden Age;" "Antiquarianism;" "Savonarola and Reform," pp. 281-288.
 Randolph: "Spectacular Allegory: Botticelli's *Pallas Medicea* and the Joust of 1475," 193-241.
Due: Submit term papers
- 10 December: **Final Exam** (term papers returned)