

Medici Patronage (V43.9656.001)

Spring 2009, Course Meetings: Tuesdays, 9:00-11:45

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Office, Villa La Pietra, 055 5007246 (office hours, Tuesdays, 3:00-5:00 p.m.)

Course Description

When speaking of great contemporary patrons of the arts, we often hear someone called "a modern Medici." What exactly does this phrase mean and how did the family name of the principal banking house of Renaissance Florence become synonymous with the sponsorship of cultural endeavors? This course attempts to answer these questions and others by examining the development of Medici patronage from the emergence of the family as a political force at the dawn of the Renaissance to the establishment of the grand ducal dynasty that reigned for almost two centuries in Florence. The commissions of Cosimo the Elder, Piero the Gouty, Lorenzo the Magnificent, the two Medici Popes (Leo X and Clement VII) and the first three Medici Grand Dukes (Cosimo I, Francesco I and Ferdinando I) are given particular emphasis. Issues such as familial *pietas*, the power and influence of Medici women and the varying political climate in Florence and Rome are also considered as fundamental to the development of characteristically Medicean patterns of patronage.

The role of the patron in determining the ultimate appearance of works of art and architecture is given primary consideration here. The Medici are therefore considered as a test case for understanding the importance of patronage for the history of Renaissance art. This may be best examined through the Medici's continued patronage of certain artists over extended periods of time. The works of artists such as Brunelleschi, Michelozzo, Donatello, Fra Angelico, Michelangelo, Bandinelli, Vasari and Buontalenti, all of whom produced significant numbers of works under the aegis of the Medici, are therefore the main focus of the lectures, class discussions and site visits. Comparison of Medici modes of patronage with local would-be rivals or imitators and with great foreign patrons will help to provide a measure of what is both characteristic of all Renaissance patrons and what is unique to the Medici themselves.

Requirements

This course is **not** a survey of the arts of Florence during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. It is, therefore, presumed that you have some familiarity with the works of the principal artists of those periods and the best known themes from classical mythology and the Bible that were the primary subjects of their art (e.g., you should know who Botticelli, Venus and Judith are). Knowledge of the basic techniques of painting, sculpture and architecture and the ability to read architectural plans and elevations are also helpful but not required.

There is an overnight field trip for this course:

Friday-Saturday, 20-21 February: Rome

Students are also warmly encouraged to visit other Tuscan locales to study the works of Medici patronage scattered throughout the region. Please feel free to consult the instructor for suggestions.

Class meetings take place principally on site; three lectures and the midterm, the final review and the final exam will take place in our assigned classroom. 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 question 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%
- Final Exam 30%
- Term Paper 35%

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 identifications (10 works shown for 2 minutes each, 3 points per ID) and an essay question (40 minutes, 70 points). 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, its material or materials, its present or original location, its date (within five years on either side of the actual date), and the member or members of the Medici family who commissioned it. For the essay portion of the exam, you will have a choice of three topics. These are generally broadly construed to allow you to address the larger themes discussed in class and particularly to demonstrate your knowledge of the reading. **You are expected to cite relevant assigned reading in your response to the topic that you choose; an exam essay question that does 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 has the same format and 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. Politics and Patronage: discuss Medici policy and its manifestations in works of art or architecture commissioned by members of the family (e.g., Cosimo I: autocratic rule and the rise of the state portrait; or Cosimo I and Ferdinando I: religious tolerance and the revival of Pisa and Livorno)
2. Female patronage: discuss works commissioned by Medici women and/or consorts of Medici men (e.g., Lucrezia Tornabuoni, Eleonora di Toledo or Maria de' Medici)
3. Papal patronage: discuss works commissioned by Leo X, Clement VII and/or any of the Medici Cardinals
4. Poetry and Patronage: discuss Medici poets and/or literary patrons and the rapport between their texts and the subjects of works of visual arts commissioned by members of the family (e.g., Lucrezia Tornabuoni and Filippo Lippi; Lorenzo the Magnificent, Poliziano and Botticelli; Bronzino, Medici painter and poet)

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, Dutch Institute library, 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 must 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.

Plagiarism: All work executed for this class, including term paper proposals, exams 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:

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: 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. 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, requesting 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:

- Cesari, Franco. *The Medici: Story of a European Dynasty*. Florence, 1999 [hereafter, "Cesati"].
- Parks, Tim. *Medici Money*. London, 2006 [hereafter, "Parks"].

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

Monographs on the Medici:

- De Roover, Raymond A. *The Rise and Decline of the Medici Bank: 1397-1494*. Beard Books, 1999.
- Eisenbichler, Konrad, ed. *The Cultural Politics of Duke Cosimo I de' Medici*. Aldershot, 2001.
- Eisenbichler, Konrad, ed. *The Cultural World of Eleonora di Toledo, Duchess of Florence and Siena*. Aldershot, 2004 [**hereafter, "Eisenbichler, Eleonora"**].
- Gouwens, Kenneth and Sheryl E. Reiss, eds. *The Pontificate of Clement VII: History, Politics, Culture*. Aldershot, 2005.
- Hale, J. R. *Florence and the Medici*. London, 1977.
- Kent, Dale. *Cosimo de' Medici & the Florentine Renaissance: The Patron's Oeuvre*. New Haven, 2000.
- Kent, F. W. *Lorenzo the Magnificent and the Art of Magnificence*. Baltimore, 2004.
- Langdon, Gabrielle. *Medici Women: Portraits of Power, Love, and Betrayal*. Toronto, 2006.
(*selections available in Ulivi Library course reserves)
- Martines, Lauro. *April Blood: Florence and the Plot Against the Medici*, new ed. London, 2004.
- Tomas, Natalie, R. *The Medici Women: Gender and Power in Renaissance Florence*. Aldershot, 2003.
(*selections available in Ulivi Library course reserves).
- Van Veen, Henk Th. *Cosimo I de' Medici and his Self-Representation in Florentine Art and Culture: From Lofty Ruler to Citizen Prince*. Cambridge, 2006.

Primary Sources:

- Alberti, Leon Battista. *On the Art of Building in Ten Books*. Cambridge, Mass., 1988.
- 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:

- Ackerman, James S. *The Architecture of Michelangelo*, 2nd. ed. Chicago, 1986.
- , *Distance Points: Essays in Theory & Renaissance Art & Architecture*. Cambridge, Mass., 1991
- , *Origins, Imitation, Conventions: Representation in the Visual Arts*. Cambridge, Mass., 2002.
- , *The Villa: Form and Ideology of Country Houses*. Princeton, 1990.
- Beneš, Mirka & Dianne Harris. *Villas and Gardens in Early Modern Italy and France*. Cambridge, 2001.
- Blake McHam, Sarah, ed. *Looking at Italian Renaissance Sculpture*. Cambridge, 1998 [**hereafter, "Blake McHam"**]
- Campbell, Stephen J. and Stephen J. Milner, eds. *Artistic Exchange and Cultural Transmission in the Italian Renaissance City*. Cambridge, 2004.
- Coffin, David. *The Villa in the Life of Renaissance Rome*. Princeton, 1979.

- Franklin, David. *Painting in Renaissance Florence 1500-1550*. New Haven, 2001.
- Goldthwaite, Richard A. *The Building of Renaissance Florence: An Economic and Social History*. Baltimore, 1980.
- Hall, Marcia. *After Raphael: Painting in Central Italy in the Sixteenth Century*. Cambridge, 1999.
- Heydenreich, Ludwig H. *Architecture in Italy, 1400-1500*. New Haven, 1996.
- Hibbard, Howard. *Michelangelo*, 2nd ed. New York: Harper & Row, 1974.
- Hirst, Michael. *Michelangelo and His Drawings*, 2nd ed. New Haven, 1988.
- Hood, William. *Fra Angelico at San Marco*. New Haven, 1993 [hereafter, "Hood"].
- Hopkins, Andrew. *Italian Architecture from Michelangelo to Borromini*. London, 2002.
- Hughes, Anthony. *Michelangelo*. London: 1997.
- Hunt, John Dixon. *The Italian Garden: Art, design and culture*. Cambridge, 1996.
- Jestaz, Bertrand. *Architecture of the Renaissance: From Brunelleschi to Palladio*. London, 1996.
- Labalme, Patricia H., ed. *Beyond Their Sex: Learned Women of the European Past*. New York, 1980.
- Lazzaro, Claudia. *The Italian Renaissance Garden: From the Conventions of Planting, Design, and Ornament to the Grand Gardens of Sixteenth-Century Central Italy*. New Haven, 1990.
- Lillie, Amanda. *Florentine Villas in the Fifteenth Century: An Architectural and Social History*. Cambridge, 2005.
- Lotz, Wolfgang. *Architecture in Italy, 1500-1600*. New Haven, 1995.
- Mignani, Daniela. *The Medicean Villas of Giusto Utens*. Florence, 1995.
- Millon, Henry A. and Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani, eds. *The Renaissance from Brunelleschi to Michelangelo: The Representation of Architecture*. Milan, 1994.
- Murray, Peter. *The Architecture of the Italian Renaissance*. London, 1986.
- Paoletti, John T. and Gary M. Radke. *Art in Renaissance Italy*, 3rd ed., London, 2005.
- Randolph, Adrian. *Engaging Symbols: Gender, Politics, and Public Art in Fifteenth-Century Florence*. New Haven, 2002.
- Reiss, Sheryl E. and David Wilkins, eds. *Beyond Isabella: Secular Women Patrons of Art in Renaissance Italy*. Kirksville, Mo., 2001.
- Rowe, Colin and Leon Satkowski. *Italian Architecture of the 16th Century*. New York, 2002.
- Shearman, John. *Mannerism*. Harmondsworth, 1990.
- , *Only Connect: Art and the Spectator in the Italian Renaissance*. Princeton, 1992.
- Wallace, William. *Michelangelo at San Lorenzo: The Genius as Entrepreneur*. Cambridge, 1994.
- , ed. *Life and Early Works (Michelangelo: Selected Scholarship in English)*. New York, 1995.
- , ed. *Michelangelo: Selected Readings*. New York: Garland Publishing, 2000.
- Jones, Roger and Nicholas Penny. *Raphael*. New Haven, 1983.
- Talvacchia, Bette. *Raphael*. London, 2007.
- Welch, Evelyn. *Art in Renaissance Italy 1350-1500*. Oxford, 1997.
- Wilde, Johannes. *Michelangelo: Six Lectures*. Oxford, 1978.

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 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

- 20 Jan.: The Rise of the Medici: the origins of the Medici Bank and early Medici involvement in Florentine Politics
Location: classroom
- 27 Jan.: **Site Visit:** Giovanni di Bicci, patriarch and patron: the Basilica of San Lorenzo and the Old Sacristy

- Location: Basilica di San Lorenzo, Piazza San Lorenzo (meet on church steps)
 Reading: Cesati: "Preface" and "Florence before the Medici," pp. 5-17.
 Parks: Chapters 1-2, pp. 1-59.
- 3 Feb.: **Site Visit:** Florence Caput Mundi: the Council of Florence and the Observant Dominican Friary of San Marco; Cosimo *Pater Patriae* as a Patron of the Avant Garde
 Location: Museo di San Marco, Piazza San Marco (meet at museum entrance)
 Reading: Parks, Chapters 3-4, pp. 61-152.
 "Real Presence: The San Marco Altarpiece," in Hood, pp. 97-121 (Ulivi Library).
- 10 Feb.: **Site Visit:** Hospitality for Princes: Cosimo the Elder, Piero the Gouty and the Medici Palace
 Location: Palazzo Medici, via Cavour (meet at SE corner of the palace, corner of via Cavour and via dei Gori)
 Reading: Cesati: "The Dawn of Power" & "The Magnificent Epoch," pp. 19-47.
 Fraser Jenkins, "Cosimo de' Medici's Patronage of Architecture and the Theory of Magnificence," online article (Blackboard Course Reader, "Cosimo the Elder" folder).
- 10 Feb., 5:30-7:00 p.m.: **Make-up class for 17 March:** Prof. Janie Cole, "*In quella maniera che a lei parrà*: Cultural Brokerage and Musical Spectacle in Medici Florence"
 Location: Salone, Villa La Pietra
While this is a required class, you must RSVP to reserve a space as seating in the Salone is limited!
 To reserve a spot, send an email to lapietra.reply@nyu.edu – be sure to include your name and that you are a student in Medici Patronage in the text of your email.
- 17 Feb.: **Site Visit:** Paintings for the Early Medici and their Rivals: the Uffizi
 Location: Galleria degli Uffizi, Piazzale degli Uffizi (meet on group reservation line at Door 2)
 Reading: Parks: Chapters 5-6, pp. 153-247.
 Gilbert, "What Did the Renaissance Patron Buy?," online article (Blackboard Course Reader, "15th Century Medici Patronage" folder).
- 20-21 Feb.: **Field trip (overnight): The Rome of the Medici Popes**
 Location: Departure from Santa Maria Novella train station
 Reading: Goldberg, "Leo X, Clement VII and the Immortality of the Soul," online article (Blackboard Course Reader, "Leo X" folder).
 Perry, "'Candor Illaesvs': The 'Impresa' of Clement VII and Other Medici Devices in the Vatican Stanze," online article (Blackboard Course Reader, "Clement VII" folder).
 White and Shearman, "Raphael's Tapestries and Their Cartoons," online article (Blackboard Course Reader, "Leo X" folder).
- 24 Feb.: **Site Visit:** Sculpture for the Early Medici and their Rivals: the Bargello
 Location: Museo Nazionale del Bargello, via del Proconsolo (meet at entrance)
 Reading: Lavin, "On the Sources and Meaning of the Renaissance Portrait Bust," in Blake McHam, pp. 60-78 (Ulivi Library).
 Paoletti, "Familiar Objects: Sculptural Types in the Collections of the Early Medici," in Blake McHam, pp. 79-110 (Ulivi Library).
Due: Term Paper Proposal
- 3 March: Midterm Examination
 Location: classroom

- 10 March: No class (Fall Break)
- 17 March: **Class to rescheduled: make-up held on 10 Feb., 5:30-7:00 p.m.**
- 24 March: The Medici in Exile and the Election of Pope Leo X: "Enjoying the Papacy"
 Location: classroom
 Reading: Cesati: "Approaching Princedom," pp. 49-69.
 Shearman, "The Florentine Entrata of Leo X, 1515," online article (Blackboard Course Reader, "Leo X" folder).
- 31 March: **Site Visit:** The Medici and Michelangelo at San Lorenzo: the Façade, the New Sacristy and the Laurentian Library
 Location: Cappelle Medicee, piazza della Madonna degli Aldobrandini (behind S. Lorenzo)
 Reading: Wilde, "Michelangelo's Designs for the Medici Tombs," online article (Blackboard Course Reader, "Michelangelo Sources: Michelangelo – Architecture" folder).
 Trexler, "True Light Shining: vs. Obscurantism in the Study of Michelangelo's New Sacristy," online article (Blackboard Course Reader, "Michelangelo Sources: Michelangelo – Architecture" folder).
- 7 Apr.: **Site Visit:** The Creation of the Modern Autocratic State: Cosimo I de' Medici, his Consort and their Heirs in the Palazzo Vecchio
 Location: Palazzo Vecchio, Piazza della Signoria (meet on steps near copy of Michelangelo's *David*)
 Reading: Cesati: "The Family at its Pinnacle" and "Love and Death in the House of Medici," pp. 71-99.
 Van Veen, "Republicanism in the Visual Propaganda of Cosimo I de' Medici," online article (Blackboard Course Reader, "Vasari Sources" folder).
 Edelstein, "Camera Verde," online article (Blackboard Course Reader, "Bronzino, Salviati and Ridolfo del Ghirlandaio Sources" folder).
- 14 Apr.: **Site Visit:** The Last Florentine Republic and Foundation of the Duchy: the changing meaning of sculpture in Piazza della Signoria
 Location: Piazza della Signoria (meet near copy of Michelangelo's *David*)
 Reading: Cesati: "The Age of Ambition," pp. 101-123.
 Bush, "Bandinelli's 'Hercules and Cacus' and Florentine Traditions," online article (Blackboard Course Reader, "Leo X" folder).
 Cole, "Cellini's Blood," online article (Blackboard Course Reader, "Cellini Sources" folder).
- 21 Apr.: **Site Visit:** Mothers, Consorts and Daughters: Medici Women as Patrons of Art and Architecture (Eleonora di Toledo and the Boboli Gardens)
 Location: Giardino di Boboli, Palazzo Pitti, Piazza Pitti (meet at ticket office)
 Reading: Lazzaro, "Gendered Nature & its Representation in Sixteenth-Century Garden Sculpture," in Blake McHam, pp. 246-273 (Ulivi Library).
 Edelstein, "*La fecundissima Signora Duchessa: The Courtly Persona of Eleonora di Toledo and the Iconography of Abundance,*" in Eisenbichler, *Eleonora*, pp. 71-97 (Ulivi Library).
Due: Submit Term Papers
- 28 Apr.: Final Review
 Location: classroom
 Reading: Cesati: "The Twilight of the Dynasty," pp. 125-135.

Prof. Edelstein

Medici Patronage

syllabus, p. 8

5 May: Final Exam (term papers returned)
Location: classroom