In this course, we will explore the world-famous achievements of Italian artists.

ITALIAN RENAISSANCE ART

with

Stanford Assistant Professor Emanuele Lugli

Live online
Thursdays 7 - 8:50 pm (PT)
January 13 - March 17, 2022
In this course we will explore the world-famous achievements of Italian artists and architects during the so-called Renaissance (1420-1520). Among our investigations will be the origin of perspective in Florence and the revolutionary modeling of Donatello and Masaccio; the graceful Madonnas of Fra Angelico, Filippo Lippi, and Sandro Botticelli; the construction of imposing palazzi and spectacular domes; Giovanni Bellini's reinvention of the altarpiece in Venice; and the development of refined court cultures in Urbino, Milan, and Naples. We also will examine the careers of such heavyweights as Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, and Raphael, whose death in 1520 is often taken to mark the end of the Renaissance and the beginning of a style known as Mannerism. While studying these well-known figures and many of their artworks, we will look at aspects that often remain in the margins of art history, such as the careers of female artists, the rise of theatrical sculpture, and the impact of printing on panel painting.

**Further information**

This is a course for beginners. You don’t need to know anything about the Italian Renaissance in advance. You will learn it all during the lectures, which will take you to an advanced level of visual analysis and historical knowledge in a short period. Classes will be immersive and feature videos, photographs, and diagrams to explore at every meeting more than fifty artworks, sculptures, and architectural sites (including all the illustrations in the Continuing Studies Winter Catalog!). While fast-paced and content-rich, each lesson will also be accessible.

For those of you who may want more background information, I recommend these three books:

- Christopher Duggan, *A Concise History of Italy* (1994) [also available online]
- Evelyn Welch, *Art and Society in Italy, 1300-1500* (1997)
We will not directly engage with any of these texts, but they provide names, dates, places, artworks, book titles, and historical events that we will encounter during the course.

In the “Weekly Outline” section, below each class title, you will find an optional reading that you may prepare before each meeting. All readings will be available on Canvas as pdfs: you don’t have to purchase anything. More recommended readings will be offered at the end of each class.

Note About Live Attendance and Recording

These class sessions will be recorded. While I understand how busy lives can get and that some students may have a conflict one week, especially as the pandemic is still not over, nothing can substitute the thrills of engaging with the material live. Attend, do not be afraid of asking questions, and share your observations. They are always welcome. Art history is as much about learning about artists’ oeuvres as honing your capacity to identify visual patterns.

Grade Options and Requirements
- No Grade Requested (NGR)
- Credit/No Credit (CR/NC): Students must attend or watch all class sessions

If you require proof that you completed a Continuing Studies course for any reason (for example, employer reimbursement), you must choose the Credit/No Credit option. Courses taken for NGR will not appear on official transcripts or grade reports.

Weekly Outline

1. Beginnings: The Florence of Masaccio, Donatello and Fra Angelico, 1420s-1460s

Reading: Michael Baxandall, *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth-Century Italy* (1972), ch. 1 “Conditions of Trade, pp. 1-27
2. **Lorenzo the Magnificent and Sandro Botticelli, 1469-1492**


3. **Court Culture (Mantua, Ferrara, and Naples) and Print Culture**

Reading: Evelyn Welch, “Painting as Performance in the Italian Renaissance Court,” in *Artists at Court: Image-Making and Identity, 1300-1550* (2004), pp. 19-32

4. **The Venice of the Bellinis**

Reading: Peter Humfrey, *The Altarpiece in Renaissance Venice* (1993), selection

5. **Parallel Lives: Leonardo in Milan/Michelangelo in Rome**


6. **Raphael’s Invention of Grace**


7. **Before and After the Sack of Rome, 1527**


8. **The Women Painters of Italy**

Reading: Babette Bohn, *Women Artists, Their Patrons, and Their Publics in Early Modern Bologna* (2021), ch. 2 ‘Beginnings’
9. On Renaissance Architecture, from Churches to Palladian Villas

Reading: Rudolf Wittkower, “Principles of Palladio’s Architecture,” *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institute* 7 (1944), 102-22

10. Giorgio Vasari’s History of Italian Renaissance Art and the Birth of Mannerism