Course Title: Iconic Artworks of the Renaissance  
Course Code: ARTH 162  
Instructor Name and Bio: Diane Zuliani

Diane Zuliani has taught the history of art, photography, film, and museum studies at Chabot College since 2000. Earlier, she was an educator at the J. Paul Getty Museum.

Class Sessions and Recording
Meeting days and times: Mondays, 7:00 – 8:50 pm (PT)  
Meeting location: Zoom (details will be shared with registered students prior to first class meeting)  
The class sessions will be recorded. See “Grade Options and Requirements” below for the live lecture attendance requirements for students taking the course for credit or a grade.

Course Features:
- Live session  
  - Lecture with some Q&A  
- Assignments & Coursework  
  - An assignment for students taking the course for a grade will be posted in Canvas  
  - Instructor will provide feedback on assignments

Course Summary
This is the third course of the four-course Iconic Artwork series. This series includes courses on ancient art (Fall 2021), medieval art (Spring 2022), Renaissance art (Fall 2022), and modern art (Spring 2023). While these courses build upon one another, each course can be taken independently as well. They are meant for everyone; no special preliminary knowledge of art or history is required.

*Please see course page for full description and additional details.*

Grade Options and Requirements
- No Grade Requested (NGR)  
  - This is the default option. Join us and enjoy. No work will be required; no credit shall be received; no proof of attendance can be provided.

Please contact the Stanford Continuing Studies office with any questions  
365 Lasuen St., Stanford, CA 94305  
continuingstudies@stanford.edu  
650-725-2650
• Credit/No Credit (CR/NC)
  o Students must attend a minimum of four live class sessions (i.e. no more than two class sessions viewed via recording).
• Letter Grade (A, B, C, D, No Pass)
  o Students must attend all class sessions.**
  o Students must submit a four-page essay drawing a connection between an iconic Renaissance artwork and some contemporary object or form (art, architecture, media, or otherwise) that you see fulfilling an equivalent or near-equivalent social role.

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

**Please Also Note: If you are a taking the course for a grade and issues pertaining to this requirement constitute a hardship, please contact the instructor directly to discuss options.

Textbooks/Required Materials
This course does not use a textbook. A reliable Zoom connection is all that is required.

Tentative Weekly Outline

Week 1: From Plague to Perspective

Events of the fourteenth century changed Europe forever. Between 1347 and 1351, the Black Death cut Europe’s population nearly in half, and caused a mass exodus of the remaining population away from rural areas into urban ones, weakening the socio-political foundations of feudalism. At the same time, the doctrinaire theology of medieval scholasticism was largely replaced by the philosophy of Humanism, the worldly emphasis of which changed the very purpose of art and culture. The Renaissance grew out of the rich conditions created by these developments, eventually allowing fifteenth century artists such as Leon Battista Alberti and Filippo Brunelleschi to innovate a visual framework that literally put this new perspective on paper, create the visual framework upon which a grand new movement could be built.

Week 2: A New Earthly Presence

To truly understand what was “reborn” in the Renaissance, we must recognize two things: what nourished that new beginning, and what “expired” to make room for it. Tonight’s class is devoted to both topics. What fed the Renaissance was patronage: the widespread sponsorship by private, public, secular, and religious benefactors, who ensured the proliferation of art as well as the rise in the numbers of its educated adherents, defenders, connoisseurs, backers, apologists, and historians.
As for what perished in the shifting worldview, tonight’s class is also a comparison study of the visual models Renaissance artists found inspirational, as well as those they rejected. Beginning with iconic frescoes by Giotto and working our way through the art of Masaccio, Paolo Uccello, Andrea Mantegna and Donatello, we will compare these artists’ aspirations and strategies with those of their medieval and ancient forebears, for an indelible grasp of the visual values we mean when we say “Renaissance.”

**Week 3: The Matter of Man**

Tonight we revel in some of the most iconic achievements of the Italian High Renaissance. Students can expect a visual immersion in the great beauty and complexity of artworks such as Leonardo da Vinci’s *Vitruvian Man*, Michelangelo’s Sistine Chapel frescoes, and Raphael’s *The School of Athens*. We will hear the histories of these masterpieces as well, so we may connect them to their larger contexts of socio-political affairs and the Humanistically-conjoined values of faith and civism. Finally, we’ll consider the case of the world’s newest “Renaissance icon,” the painting *Salvator Mundi*, attributed by some to Leonardo da Vinci. Rediscovered in 2011 and sold in 2017 to the Saudi Crown Prince for the highest auction price ever achieved—only to mysteriously disappear soon thereafter.

**Weeks 4 and 5: Glittering Surfaces**

While Italian artists enjoyed immediate access to the visual models they most desired—namely, the sculpture and painting of the ancient Greco-Roman world—artists of Northern Europe employed different models from which to develop the visual language of their own Renaissance. This Northern European style, famously called “the art of description,” will be our focus over two evenings, as we study the work of supremely gifted masters such as Jan van Eyck, Rogier van der Weyden, Matthias Grünewald, and Albrecht Dürer. While these artists forged an altogether different visual language than was used in Mediterranean regions, our two-evening journey will show it to be just as evocative of the same Renaissance themes and no less breathtaking.

**Week 6: Renaissance Reformed**

The Renaissance occurred because Humanistic Catholicism spurred leaders at all levels—from ambitious municipal managers all the way to Popes—to draw from state and church coffers to subsidize it. However, with the onset of the Protestant Reformation in Northern Europe in the first quarter of the sixteenth century, the relationship between Christian faith and artistic imagery grew fraught with anxiety. Eventually, destructive and widespread episodes of iconoclasm came to reshape the
visual landscape. How Northern Renaissance artists like Pieter Bruegel the Elder, Gerard David, and Hans Holbein the Younger responded to this threat to their livelihood is a story of ambition and ingenuity that resulted not only in iconic artworks, but also the opening of new paths for future artists to follow.