Roman Architecture:
How Rome was not built in a Day

Wednesdays, 7:00 - 8:50 pm, June 22 - July 27
Preliminary Syllabus and Course Outline

Course Aims:

The old adage: “Rome wasn’t built in a day” is relevant because the distinctive architecture of Ancient Rome wasn’t built overnight but rose out of Greek and Etruscan styles as well as from burgeoning technology and engineering. It evolved over centuries until it produced the structures (e.g., the arch) and materials (e.g., stone, brick, and concrete) that we so often associate with the Roman architectural style. In this course, students will learn what makes Roman architecture Roman and how its features evolved over more than a millennium, from around 800 BCE to around 500 CE.

Some of the structural styles associated with Roman architecture—for example, the temple, theater, bath, and amphitheater—were originally borrowed from Greek and Etruscan predecessors. But the Romans took them and made them their own. Memorable Roman buildings such as the Pantheon, the Colosseum, the Ara Pacis, the Arch of Titus, the Mausoleum of Hadrian, and Pompeii’s urban structures will be studied to demonstrate the evolution of the Roman style. That Roman architecture has survived through the centuries—and was even reused in later eras, including the Renaissance—is a tribute to its well-planned durability and strength. Maybe because Rome wasn’t built in a day, it was also built to last.

Course Requirements:

Students attend the six lecture sessions and complete assigned readings from assigned texts, and supplemental texts as provided. If taken for credit (as undergraduate, MLA or prospective graduate students must fulfill), students complete a brief 10 page critical paper with topic having instructor consent. A weekend museum visit is also planned.
Required Course Text[s]:

(Additional supplemental online readings are assigned from other references, including selected sources where useful and by course instructor.)

**ARC 44 ROMAN ARCHITECTURE: How Rome Was Not Built in a Day**

**Course Outline:**

**6/22**  
*Introduction, How to Tell Greek from Roman Architecture,*  
Republican Rome, The Arch, Types of Structures  
*Reading:* F. Sear, *Roman Architecture*, chs. 1-2  
Vitruvius, *De Architectura* IV, 1-4  
Architectural orders  

**6/29**  
*Augustan Rome, Architectural Composite Materials*  
*Reading:* F. Sear, *Roman Architecture*, chs. 3-4  
Vitruvius, *De Architectura*, II, 3-7  
(begin at chapter 3 continue through chapter 7)  

**7/6**  
*Julio-Claudian Rome, Pompeii (Urban Plans)*  
*Reading:* F. Sear, *Roman Architecture*, chs. 5-6  
*Non Vitruvian? The Basilica at Pompeii*  
([http://www.pompeionline.net/pompeii/](http://www.pompeionline.net/pompeii/))

**7/13**  
*Flavian Architecture, the Colosseum*  
*Reading:* F. Sear, *Roman Architecture*, chs. 7-8  
“Roman Power/ Roman Architecture” SUNY Oneonta  
([http://employees.oneonta.edu/farberas/arth/arth200/politics/roman_architecture.html](http://employees.oneonta.edu/farberas/arth/arth200/politics/roman_architecture.html))  
Vitruvius, *De Architectura* II, 8-9  

**7/20**  
*Trajanic and Hadriamic Rome, The Pantheon, Trajan’s Market*  
*Reading:* F. Sear, *Roman Architecture*, chs. 9-10  
“Roman Concrete in Trajan’s Market” Berkeley Lab UCB-LBL  
P. Hunt, “Imperium in the Pantheon of Rome and Its Pavimentum,” *Philolog* (Stanford) to be provided; P. Hunt,  
“Pantheon”, *Encyclopedia of the Ancient World* 2002, to be provided

**7/27**  
*Provincial Roman Empire, Ephesus and Constantinople*  
*Reading:* F. Sear, *Roman Architecture*, chs. 11-12
“Ephesos: Library of Celsus” Classics, University of Cincinnati

“Constantine’s Constantinople”
(https://legacy.fordham.edu/halsall/ancient/sozomen-constantinople1.asp)

Note: instructor reserves right to amend schedule