

HIDDEN MEANINGS IN RENAISSANCE ART

ART 320 F

July 2009

Tuesday 4.15-7.00pm

Credit Hours: 3

Course Hours: 48

Additional costs: approx. € 15 (see #10)

Teacher contact/availability: available to see students individually by appointment

1 - DESCRIPTION

This course introduces students to the richness and complexity of Renaissance art, focusing mainly on iconography and iconology. Students will learn how to understand major works of Renaissance art (mainly paintings) within the context of religious, classical, humanistic elements of 15th and 16th Century culture. The course is based on a series of case studies which are investigated weekly, and will include masterpieces by Jan Van Eyck, Piero della Francesca, Sandro Botticelli, Michelangelo and Holbein. The works chosen demonstrate how the system of Renaissance figurative arts, full of symbols and allegories, was meant to be understood by a learned public. Each work will be analyzed with reference to the three levels of meaning involved in an iconographic approach, as defined by Erwin Panofsky: primary or natural subject matter, secondary or conventional, and intrinsic meaning or context.

Preparation through assigned readings, and participation in classes, are essential elements of the course and will impact on the Final Grade.

2 – OBJECTIVES, GOALS and OUTCOMES

By the end of the course students should demonstrate to:

- be able to indentify the subject of the works of art examined in the course;
- be able to recognize most common symbols and allegories in Renaissance art;
- understand the main issues of iconological methodology;
- be aware of the links between religion, literature, classical and humanistic culture in the study of Renaissance works of art.

3 - PREREQUISITES

Students should be highly motivated and should demonstrate their ability to work independently. General knowledge of History and Art History is highly advisable.

The course will be held in English, with some Latin/Greek/German/Italian terminology.

4 - METHOD

The course will be taught through a combination of overview lectures and seminars. Small group work together with full class discussions will facilitate participation.

5 – ASSESSMENT

Individual study of the notes, the readings, the handouts etc. at home is required after every lecture and strictly on a weekly basis.

The writing of a short **paper** (8 typed pages of text body) is mandatory. The paper has to include a bibliography (internet addresses as well, but remember that internet references alone are not enough for a correct elaboration of your work.) Always remember to indicate your sources when reporting somebody else's ideas. Illustrations relevant to the topic investigated are welcome (b/w photocopies are fine). Books or parts of them useful for the papers are listed below ("Suggested Readings") in the present syllabus, and further bibliographical advice will be given to students according to their own needs.

6 - EXAMS

Mid-term exam: this written test will take place in class. The format will be: 1 work to comment in a short essay; 10 questions on themes related to the course.

Final exam: this written test will take place in class, with the format of 2 works to comment in a short essay; 10 questions on themes related to the course.

Should issues of academic dishonesty arise (plagiarism and so on), the teacher will refer to the LdM written policy on such matters.

7 - EVALUATION and GRADING SYSTEM

Final grades will be calculated on the following basis:

Participation	10%
Mid-term test	30%
Paper	30%
Final exam	30%

A = 100 - 93%, **A-** = 92 - 90%, **B+** = 89 - 87%, **B** = 86 - 83%, **B-** = 82 - 80%,
C+ = 79 - 77%, **C** = 76 - 73%, **C-** = 72 - 70%, **D** = 69 - 60%, **F** = 59 - 0%

8 - ATTENDANCE and BEHAVIOUR

Mandatory attendance is a primary requirement for a responsible learning experience at LdM. Please consider that:

if the student misses 20% of the scheduled class hours during this course (generally at the 3rd absence), the **Final grade** will be lowered by one full letter grade.

- If more than 20% of the scheduled class hours is missed (generally at the 4th absence), the final grade will be "**F**" and **NO credits** will be given for this course.

Make-up classes are always mandatory since part of the course program.

If a class occasionally creates conflict with another class, the student is **required to inform in advance both instructors**. The instructors will then share a written excuse for the class going to be missed.

Students are required to **behave** properly within the school premises. Classrooms are to be left in **order and clean**. Students must take **care** of available equipment and materials and promptly report any damage and loss

Academic dishonesty: should issues of academic dishonesty arise (plagiarism and so on), the teacher will refer to the LdM written policy on such matters.

9 - READINGS and SOURCES

A booklet, with selected passages from the following works, must be purchased in order to successfully complete the course. It is available at the copystore "Centro Stampa" (via degli Alfani 103 R, tel. 055 238 12 32; have course title and instructor name with you):

- -E. Panofsky, *Early Netherlandish Painting. Its Origins and Character*, Cambridge (Ma.) 1953
- -E. Hall, *The Arnolfini betrothal. Medieval Marriage and the Enigma of Van Eyck's Double Portrait*, Berkeley 1994
- -C. Ginzburg, *The Enigma of Piero. Piero della Francesca*, London 2000
- -E. Gombrich, "Botticelli's Mythologies. A Study in the Neoplatonic Symbolism of this Circle", in *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, VIII, 1945, pp. 7-60
- -M. Levi d'Ancona, *Botticelli's Primavera, A Botanical Interpretation, Including Astrology, Alchemy and the Medici*, Florence 1983.
- -G. Magherini, A. Paolucci, A. Tempestini, *The Terrace of Mystery. Giovanni Bellini's Sacred Allegory*, Firenze 2001
- -A. Hayum, "Michelangelo's Doni Tondo. Holy Family and Family Mith", in *Studies in Iconography*, 7/8, 1981/1982, pp. 209-251
- -G. Bonsanti, "Michelangelo as a painter before the Sistine ceiling", in *The genius of the sculptor in Michelangelo's work*, Montreal, 1992, pp. 279-306
- -E. Verheyen, *The Paintings in the Studiolo of Isabella d'Este at Mantua*, New York, 1971
- -S. Settis, *Giorgione's Tempest. Interpreting the Hidden Subject*, Cambridge 1990
- -R. Goffen, "Titian's Sacred and Profane Love and Marriage. Individuality and Sexuality in a Renaissance Marriage Picture", in J Manca (ed.), *Titian 500. Proceedings of the Symposium* (National Gallery of Art, Washington 27-27 October 1990), Hanover 1993, pp. 121-144.
- -C. Hope, "Bronzino's Allegory in the National Gallery", in *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, XLV, 1982, pp. 239-243

- -M. Levey, *National Gallery. The German School*, London 1959
- -J. Rowlands, *Holbein. The Paintings of Hans Holbein the Younger. Complete Edition*, Oxford 1985

Suggested Readings

- -J. Hall, *Dictionary of Subjects & Symbols*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1979. [AH 17 B G]
- -J. Hall, *Dictionary of Subjects & Symbols in Art*, Harper & Row [AH 17 G]
- (This is a guide for those of you who are unfamiliar with Christian subject matter or classical mythology, useful for your paper).
- -E. Panofsky, *Renaissance and Renascences in Western Art*, New York 1972 [AH 4B R]
- -E. Gombrich, *Norm and Form*, in *Gombrich on the Renaissance*, vol. 1, London 1986 [AH 38 R]
- -E. Gombrich, *Symbolic Images*, in *Gombrich on the Renaissance*, vol. 2, London 1986 [AH 38B R]
- -K. Clark, *The Art of Humanism*, New York 1983 [AH 50 R]
- -M. Baxandall, *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth Century Italy*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1991. [AH 6 BR]
- -P. & L. Murray, *The Art of the Renaissance*, , London 1963 [AH 8 R]
- -A. Chastel, *Art of the Italian Renaissance*, London 1984 [AH 2 R]
- -B. Cole, *Art in the Italian Renaissance Courts*, London 1995. [AH 1 ARC]

10 – ADDITIONAL COSTS

Photocopied booklet (see point 9): approx. € 13.

Headphones: € 1.80.

11 - VISITS and TRIPS

Uffizi Gallery (Free Entrance – July 21)

12 - MATERIALS

None required.

13A- CLASS SCHEDULE

Please consider that the contents of individual classes may be changed throughout the course according to the class's progress.

WEEK 1

- 1) June 29 Introduction:
(introduction to course; outline of syllabus; introduction to main themes and issues; aims, methods and expectations)
- 2) June 30 Jan Van Eyck, *The Arnolfini Portrait*, London National Gallery
- 3) July 1 Piero della Francesca, *Flagellation*, Urbino, Galleria Nazionale delle Marche
- 4) July 2 Sandro Botticelli, *Primavera*, Florence, Uffizi

WEEK 2

- 5) July 6 Giovanni Bellini, *Allegory*, Florence, Uffizi
- 6) July 7 Andrea Mantegna, *Minerva Chases the Vices from the Garden of Virtue*, Paris, Musée du Louvre
- 7) July 8 Michelangelo Buonarroti, *Tondo Doni*, Florence, Uffizi
- 8) July 9 Summing up and review for mid-term exam

WEEK 3

- 9) July 13 MID-TERM TEST
- 10) July 14 Giorgione, *The Tempest*, Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia
- 11) July 15 Tiziano Vecellio, *Sacred and Profane Love*, Rome, Galleria Borghese
- 12) July 16 Agnolo Bronzino, *Allegory*, London, National Gallery

WEEK 4

- 13) July 20 Hans Holbein, *The Ambassadors*, London, National Gallery
- 14) July 21 **Visit:** Uffizi Gallery (Res. Nr. 504190. **Meeting 4.00 pm in front of entrance n.1 of the Uffizi Gallery**)
- 15) July 22 Summing up and review for final exam
- 16) July 23 FINAL EXAM

13 B - ALTERNATIVE LESSON

Should the instructor be indisposed or otherwise unable to attend, a substitute teacher will conduct the scheduled or a pre-prepared alternative lesson at the regular class time.