

# GONZAGA-IN-FLORENCE SYLLABUS

Course: VART 393 Modern Italian Art  
Credits: 3 Credits  
Professor Mercedes Carrara carraram@gonzaga.edu



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## OFFICE HOURS

MTR 9:40-10:40, by appointment, or, simply open door policy.

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course is valid as an elective for a Major/Minor in Italian Studies.

A survey of modern and contemporary Italian art and its most significant movements in painting, sculpture, and architecture from the 1860s to the 1980s. The class is **capped** to eight students. **Many of the field trips** will be held in private homes. The owners have graciously offered to show their homes with their antique furniture and private painting collections, never visited by tourists, to a maximum of eight students.

## COURSE OBJECTIVES

- 1) To show students through field trips and in-class lectures, how Italian Impressionism started ten years **before** the French Impressionists Monet, Renoir, Degas began exhibiting their works as a group in 1874.
- 2) The close link between the *Risorgimento* (Italian unification movement) and the choice of subjects in painting and sculpture, from patriotic paintings to outdoor subjects of the *Macchiaioli* "painters of spots" whose open air works anticipate the French Impressionists.
- 3) Field trips and lectures will illustrate the urban changes when the city walls were removed and Florence became the second capital of the Kingdom of Italy (1865-71).
- 4) The links between the French (Cézanne, Toulouse-Lautrec, Van Gogh) and Italian Post-Impressionists will be evident when visiting the Pitti Palace Gallery of Modern Art in Florence.
- 5) To see Liberty architecture in Florence and relate it to the *Art Nouveau* works of Victor Horta in Brussels, Otto Wagner's and Joseph Ohlbrich's *Jugendstil* in Vienna, *Modernista* architecture in Barcelona with the works of Antonio Gaudí.
- 6) To analyze the various Italian 20<sup>th</sup> century movements, beginning with *Futurism* in 1910 and ending with the *Transavanguardia* of the 1980s. The trends will always be related to the movements that influenced them in Paris, Munich, Berlin, Vienna, and New York.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

Visits to public and private collections in Florence, combined with student's visits to the finest Modern and Contemporary Art Museums throughout Italy and the major European cities, will provide them with a sound and lasting knowledge of all the art trends studied in class. They will be pleasantly surprised to identify works not discussed in class by recognizing the artist's style.

## GRADING AND OTHER POLICIES

Students will be graded on three exams, three-four page written assignments after each field trip, and a final project. Class discussions and attendance are essential to get an A at the end of the course.

#### Grades:

A .....	100 .....	94
A- .....	93.5 .....	89
B+ .....	88.5 .....	85.5
B .....	85 .....	84
B- .....	83.5 .....	79
C+ .....	78.5 .....	75.5
C .....	75 .....	74
C- .....	73.5 .....	69
D+ .....	68.5 .....	65.5
D .....	65 .....	60
F .....	58 .....	0

University policy allows a maximum of six absences for a three credit course. At the seventh absence the student's grade is lowered of a half point grade: from A (100-94) to A-, B+ to B, and so on. There will be **no written make-up tests** without a medical certificate.

#### REQUIRED READINGS

Selected readings on specific areas in these books will be distributed in the classroom. Both books are on reserve in the library.

Eugenia Paulicelli, *Art in Modern Italy: from the Macchiaioli to the Transavanguardia* in *The Cambridge Companion to Modern Italian Culture*. Edited by Zygmunt G. Baranski and Rebecca J. West, pp. 243-263. Cambridge University Press, 1999.

*Italian Art in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Emily Braun. London: Prestel – Verlag and the Royal Academy, 1989.

#### COURSE OUTLINE & SCHEDULE

The course is divided into three parts with an examination at the end of each part. The final is at the end of the third part. Therefore, it is not comprehensive.

#### Part I - From the “Macchiaioli” to Medardo Rosso. Test – Thursday, February 4

##### January

- 11 Florence in the 1860s, the Macchiaioli group (Giovanni Fattori, Odoardo Borrani)  
Readings:  
Eugenia Paulicelli: *Art in Modern Italy: The Macchiaioli*, pp. 243-247.
- 12 Macchiaioli Silvestro Lega and Telemaco Signorini, Verism in sculpture (Adriano Cecioni, Vincenzo Gemito)
- 14 Post-unification architecture. Students will choose the buildings they want to present during the field trip.
- 18 Field trip to post-unification sites with students as presenters. 11:45-1:45. Pensione box lunches. Three-four page written assignment due **Thursday**, January 21, **at the latest**. Students will comment on the things they saw emphasizing the parts they researched. Pictures of the sites should be included at the end.
- 19 *Scapigliatura* in Milan
- 21 Paris: from Impressionism to Post-Impressionism, 1874-1886. Claude Monet, Auguste Renoir, Edgar Degas, Federico Zandomenighi, Georges Seurat, Paul Cézanne. **Written assignment on the Post-Unification tour.**
- 25 Decadence and Symbolism in France: Paul Gauguin, Vincent Van Gogh, Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec.
- 26 Divisionist and Symbolist painters in Italy: Giovanni Segantini, Gaetano Previati, Giuseppe Polizza da Volpedo, Plinio Novellini.

- 28 Medardo Rosso's Impressionist sculpture and his rivalry with Auguste Rodin. Students will choose the paintings and sculptures they want to present in the Pitti Gallery of Modern Art. Readings:  
 Italian Art in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Anna Maria Damigella, *Divisionism and Symbolism in Italy at the Turn of the Century*, pp.33-39. Jole De Sanna, *Italian Sculpture of the Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century*, pp. 43-46.  
 Eugenia Paulicelli, Art in Modern Italy, *Divisionism*, pp. 247-249.

## February

- 1 Class discussion on readings and power point presentations to review for the test. All students will volunteer to lead the discussion over a movement or an artist that particularly interested them.
- 2 Tuesday field trip (11:45 – 1:45) to the Gallery of Modern Art with students as presenters. Pensione box lunches.
- 4 The exam is divided into three parts.
- The first takes 10 minutes and involves ten slide identifications for a total of 40 points.
  - Students will choose to discuss **four** of the identified slides and all the images in them for a total of 40 points.
  - An essay question (with at least three choices to choose from) for a total of 20 points.

## Part II - From Art Nouveau to Amedeo Modigliani and Elisabeth Chaplin. Test – March 4

### February

- 8 *Art Nouveau* architecture in Brussels (Victor Horta), *Jugendstil* architecture in Vienna (Otto Wagner, Joseph Ohlbrich), *Modernista* architecture in Barcelona (Antonio Gaudí), *Liberty* architecture in Florence (Giovanni Michelazzi and Galileo Chini).
- 9 Field trip of *Liberty* buildings in Florence with students as presenters. Pensione box lunches. Written assignment on the field trip to the Gallery of Modern Art
- 11 Futurism (Giacomo Balla and Umberto Boccioni)  
 Readings:  
*Italian Art in the 20th Century*, Ester Coen, *The Violent Urge Towards Modernity: Futurism and the International Avant-garde*, pp. 50-55.  
 Eugenia Paulicelli, *Art in Modern Italy. The Futurist Movement*, pp. 247-249.
- 15 Futurism continued (Carlo Carrà, Gino Severini, Luigi Russolo, Antonio Sant'Elia)
- 16 The Avant-gardes in Paris and Germany (French and German Expressionism, Cubism). Three-four page written assignment on *Liberty* buildings in Florence emphasizing the researched parts and commenting on other buildings noticed by the students near school the (Via della Robbia, Piazza d'Azeglio, Via Orcagna)
- 18 Class discussion on readings and power point presentations of Avant-gardes and Futurists
- 22 Giorgio de Chirico's Metaphysical paintings, precursors of Dada and Surrealism  
 Readings:  
*Italian Art in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*. Paolo Baldacci, *De Chirico and Savinio: the Theory and Iconography of Metaphysical Painting*, pp. 61-70. Wieland Schmied, *Metaphysical Painting and the International Avant-Garde*, pp. 71-80.  
 Eugenia Paolicelli, Art in Modern Italy. *Metaphysical Painting*, pp. 251-252.
- 23 Metaphysical painting: Carlo Carrà, Giorgio Morandi. Class discussion on readings
- 25 School of Paris: Amedeo Modigliani, a Livornese in the School of Paris,  
 Readings:  
*Italian Art in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*. Carlo Bertelli, *Modigliani, the Cosmopolitan Italian*, pp. 57-60.

### March

- 1 Elisabeth Chaplin, a Parisian in Florence. Class discussion of Bertelli's article on Modigliani.
- 2 Review with students as presenters
- 4 Exam

### Part III From Fascist Art to the Transavanguardia - Final exam date to be posted by registrar March

- 8 Mario Broglio's *Valori Plastici*, Margherita Sarfatti's *Novecento Italiano/Magic Realism* (Carlo Carrà, Mario Sironi, Felice Casorati)
- 9 Novecento Italiano/Magic Realism (Giorgio Morandi and Arturo Martini)  
Readings:  
Italian Art in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Philip V. Cannistraro, *Fascism and Culture in Italy, 1919-1945*, pp. 147-154. Joan M Lukac, *Giorgio Morandi and Modernism in Italy Between the Wars*, pp. 155-164. Emily Braun, *Mario Sironi and a Fascist Art*, pp. 173-180.
- 11 Class discussion on the three articles regarding Fascist art. Italian artists in Paris after Matteotti's murder in 1924 (Giorgio de Chirico, Alberto Savinio, Filippo de Pisis)
- 22 Abstract and figurative art in the 1930s ( Balla, Prampolini, Fontana, Licini, Melotti).  
23 Figurative art in the 1930s. Mario Sironi and Massimo Campigli's Fascist propaganda, Scipione's School of Rome, the Corrente group's criticism of the regime (Guttuso, Manzù), the sculpture of Marino Marini.
- 25 Architecture from the Fascist period to the present day.  
Readings:  
Eugenia Paulicelli, Art in Modern Italy. *Art under Fascism*, pp. 252-256.
- 29 Visit to the Marino Marini Museum. Pensione box lunches. Three-four page written assignment due Thursda
- 30 Class discussion on Paulicelli's *Art Under Fascism*.
- April .**
- 1 The 1950s post-war developments in Milan (Fontana) and Rome (Burri, Accardi, .Vedova) Marino Marini Museum assignment.
- 6 Conceptual Art and Neo-Dada Pop Art in the 1960s ( Piero Manzoni, Giulio Paolini, Pino Pascali, Mimmo Rotella, Mario Schifani, Michelangelo Pistoletto).  
Readings:  
Italian 20<sup>th</sup> Century Art. Germano Celant, *From the Open Wound to the Resurrected Body: Lucio Fontana and Piero Manzoni*, pp. 295-299. Giuliano Briganti, *Cultural Provocation: Italian Art in the Early Sixties*, pp. 301-307.  
Eugenia Paulicelli, Art in Modern Italy. *Artistic experimentation from the 1950s to the present*, pp. 256-263.
- 8 *Arte Povera* and *Transavanguardia*.  
Readings:  
Italian Art in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Caroline Tindall, *Materia: the Context of Arte Povera*, pp. 364-368.
- 12 Visit to Professor DiPalma's studio.  
13 Discussion of readings.  
15 Review with students as presenters. Last possible date to hand in final paper.

### Final Paper

Students will analyze and discuss at least **ten works** (architecture, painting, sculpture) by artists not necessarily covered in class. These works **were not** discussed in class but students have seen them in our class field trips or in their weekend travels. The entries, in journal form, should be done gradually so as to cover works by different artists, admired in various cities and museums. Each entry should be from two to three pages in length.

The Peggy Guggenheim Museum in Venice, the Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam, the Modern Art Museums in Rome, Vienna, Munich, Paris, Barcelona, the French Riviera (to name a few), are ideal for modern and contemporary art. Each entry will be researched and illustrated with pictures, drawings, or postcards. The bibliography should include **books**, not **just websites**. The paper can be handed in as soon as the ten entries are completed. **April 16** is the last possible date to hand in the project.