History of Western Art: Ancient Mediterranean

AAH 1101-001
M W 4:30-5:45 p.m.
Dr. Tina Bizzarro

Take a virtual journey! Enjoy and contemplate the many and exquisite treasures of western visual culture—from the Cave Art of southern France through the flamboyant and soaring Gothic of the High Middle Ages. We will integrate lecture and discussion—of the architecture, sculpture, painting, and minor arts—of the great civilizations of the Stone Age, the Ancient Near East, Egypt, the Ancient Aegean, Greece, Rome, Early Christianity, and the Middle Ages—with visits to area museums. This course is a treat to the eyes and the intellect, and a course that no well-educated Villanova student should miss! This is a cultural passport to participate in the world at large as a cultured, well-informed citizen of the world.

Attributes: Fine Arts Requirement
This survey of Western Art History covers paintings, printmaking, sculpture, and architecture from the Renaissance period to the present. We will consider questions about how art is created, and its artistic techniques, themes, and styles. Special emphasis will be paid to the effects of social, religious, and political climate on artists and their art production. Through participation in directed discussions, students will examine not only the linear history of art, but also how the church, governments, philosophers, and artists themselves expressed ideas through art, as well as how such imagery has been interpreted by both historical and modern scholars using different methodologies.

Attributes: Fine Arts Requirement

This course will consider a survey of art and artists of the United States, from the founding of Jamestown to the great Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition of 1876. The focus will be on how American art mirrors the many social changes that have taken place in American life during that
same period. Through critical texts we will seek to complicate the history of American Art in order to consider how the work of artists in the past continues to challenge and inspire us today. 

Attributes: Fine Arts Requirement

AAH 1903-001
Internship Elective
TBD
Dr. Timothy McCall
Permission of Chairperson required.

AAH 2002-001
Early Renaissance Art in Italy
T R 2:30-3:45 p.m.
Dr. Tim McCall

This course introduces students to the dazzling art and architecture of the Early Italian Renaissance, covering the lives of artists including Giotto, Masaccio, and Donatello. We will investigate art’s social, political, and stylistic contexts during the period 1300 to 1475, examining a number of important concepts and categories including portraiture, mendicant patronage, material culture, and campanilismo. Artists, works of art, sites of production, materials and techniques, patrons and publics will all be related to specific social, political, economic, and cultural conditions of fourteenth and fifteenth-century Italy. We investigate the ways that art in this period supported authority and was utilized by those in power to remain there. We will think critically about the representation of bodies and related modes of visual narrative. Our focus ranges over the Italian Peninsula, from well-known Venice, Florence, and Rome, to less familiar centers such as Rimini, Ferrara, and Naples. We will direct attention to radiant altarpieces, stunning frescoes, luminous bronzes, and magnificent palaces.

Attributes: Fine Arts Requirement
This course is a survey of the Artistic movements, artists, markets and cultural institutions that comprise the global art world from the 1960s to the present; Pop Art, Minimalism, Neo-expressionism, Graffiti Art, and Performance Art, from Warhol to Basquiat to Cindy Sherman and Ai Weiwei. Through critical texts we will come to appreciate the discursive means used to formulate knowledge and theoretical methods around the creation and appreciation of works of art.

Attributes: Cultural Studies, Fine Arts Requirement

This course will look at the major masters – including Leonardo, Michelangelo, Raphael, and Titian – of the High Renaissance and Mannerist periods, as well as the primary centers – Florence, Rome, and Venice – where their works were produced. Works will be examined for their formal characteristics, but also as expressions of concurrent social, political, economic, scientific, religious, and philosophical developments. Students will be introduced to images and objects in terms of their circumstances of production, cultural context (including political, economic and cultural conditions), style, function, and creator. Over the course of the semester, you will become familiar not only with the works themselves and the characteristics of the major periods of art production, but also with the terminology, methods, and goals of art history, while developing critical thinking skills.

Attributes: Fine Arts Requirement
Since 1970, when Linda Nochlin asked, “Why Were There No Great Women Artists?,” art historians have sought to explore women's place in art and art production. In the past 40 years, feminist art history has evolved from its original goal of rediscovering women artists to include many exciting strategies for thinking about how gender is constructed in art and history, including the intersection of images of gender with race and class. In this course, we learn about how art and artists approach gender by analyzing art and popular culture imagery which expresses ideas about the construction of “maleness” and “femaleness.” We will complement Villanova University GWS curriculum in our exploration of how artistic debate among artists and scholars who focus on gender, sexuality, feminism, and queer studies has been transformed since the 1970s, and how artists create and construct images of gender, race, and social systems. Attributes: Fine Arts Requirement, Diversity Requirement 2, Gender and Women’s Studies
This course is a critical survey of themes and issues relating to the construction of gender and sexuality as visualized, produced, and expressed in and through art and visual culture. We explore the representation, viewing, production, and interpretation of art, while spanning chronological periods and geographic boundaries (focusing primarily, however, on the United States and Europe from the fifteenth century to the present). This course is decisively interdisciplinary in nature; we consider approaches from art history, history, visual studies, film history, and literary criticism. Likewise, the visual materials we investigate cross traditional art historical boundaries, reflecting an expansive conception of visual and material culture. We examine topics including the gaze, feminist art and art history, queer identities and art, and recent controversies involving censorship and art. Not only artists, but also viewers and spectators, will be shown to look and to interpret creatively, even oppositionally, according to and sometimes against various categories of identity. We explore the ways that visual constructions of gender and sexuality are informed historically by constructions of race and ethnicity, and so too the ways they intersect with understandings and experiences of class, status, and privilege (and, equally, marginalization and exclusion). By investigating what is at stake for those rendered artistically and culturally invisible, and by considering artists who increasingly assert the visibility of marginalized identities and experiences, we can perceive crucial connections between power, normativity, and visual representation.

*Attributes: Fine Arts Requirement, Diversity 2, Gender and Women’s Studies*
This course will investigate the visual arts produced in Mexico during the late pre-Columbian and Colonial/Viceregal periods, beginning with the Mexica (Aztec) Empire and continuing through ca 1810, when Mexico gained independence. The confrontation between these two rich cultures – as well as many other Indigenous societies – resulted in the development of an independent identity that was strictly Mexican. Topics to be explored include but are not limited to: Mexica art and culture at the time of the Spanish Conquest; how Europeans used art as a form of evangelization; hybridity, or the blending of Mexica and European artistic styles; and European perceptions and interpretations of New World peoples and culture. A number of themes will extend throughout the course, among them: Issues of competition for power (Indigenous vs. Spanish; mestiza vs. Indigenous vs. Spanish; infighting among the Spaniards; etc.) and its reflection within the visual arts; marginalization and exclusion of conquered peoples who were seen as lesser than their European counterparts and, simultaneously, as exotic and an “Other” to be exploited artistically; an exploration (and critical analysis of) how cultures define and express themselves and one another; cultural and religious appropriation and the political role art can and does play.

AAH 5515-001

Independent Research

Permission of Chairperson required

Restrictions: AAH Majors only

Attributes: Fine Arts Requirement