
TOPICS: EROTIC BODIES IN ITALIAN RENNAISANCE PAINTING in Fall 2019 (AH3091A)

Course Code	AH3091A	Professor(s)	Christine Baltay, Marsha Libina
Prerequisites	None	Office Number	C-504
Class Schedule	MW: 13:45-15:05 in C-101 W: 12:10-13:30 in V-1	Office Hours	Mondays 12:45-1:45pm or by appointment
Credits	4	Email	cbaltay@aup.edu, mlibina@aup.edu
Semester	Fall 2019	Office Tel. Ext.	633

Course Description

This course will have you think critically about the concept of the body as an object of desire in art. The concept is as old as human history and as current as the Internet. Images put bodies on display in private and public contexts, involving the viewer in various ways; yet how we interpret and relate to such images varies widely depending on our cultural understandings. Taking the Renaissance as the ground of our inquiry, we will ask: how is eroticism in art a response to its intellectual and cultural environment? And how do we begin to interpret the body in art with critical distance rather than with modern presumptions? To address these questions, this course will explore the forms and contexts in which *Eros* (love) and desire manifested themselves in representations of the human figure in 16th-century Italy.

The aims of this course will be to examine the broader intellectual discourses on eroticism and beauty that existed in the Renaissance and to explore the ways in which painting responded to these on its own terms. Specifically, we will look at painting's relationship to poetry, philosophical queries on the nature of love, the senses and the act of creation, and the role of beauty in inciting religious devotion. Issues of consideration will be gender, sexuality, beauty, spectatorship, tactility and vision, pleasure, and materiality, as they pertain to the works.

Classes:

Each week will be structured around two meetings: Mondays are dedicated to lecture and the analysis of primary sources, that is, images and texts from our period of study; Wednesdays are dedicated to class discussion of the readings, that is, the secondary sources. You are expected to come to class having read the assigned readings for that day and engage in discussion to strengthen your understanding of the material. In particular, as you read, think about how the authors' positions differ or might be put into dialogue with one another. Consider also how the authors analyze and interpret the primary source material. Come prepared to discuss your

ideas. No laptops or smart phones allowed in class (unless we are working on something that requires it). Exceptions will be considered on a case-by-case basis; please come speak to me if you think you will require a computer

Course Learning Outcomes

General Education

[PLEASE EDIT OR REMOVE THE FOLLOWING TEXT AS APPLICABLE]

The general education program at AUP consists of four requirements: Speaking the World, Modeling the World, Mapping the World, and Comparing Worlds Past and Present.

This course can be used to fulfill the [INDICATE THE REQUIREMENT(S) FULFILLED BY THE COURSE] requirement and as such has the following learning outcomes:

[INDICATE THE GENERAL EDUCATION LEARNING OUTCOMES]

Course Outline

CLASS MEETINGS

Week 1. Introduction: Problematizing the Body as an Object of Desire

Mon, Sept 2. Lecture and introduction to the Paradigm of Academic Argument

Read syllabus at home.

Wed, Sept 4. Discussion of reading

Elizabeth Cropper, "The Place of Beauty in the High Renaissance and its Displacement in the History of Art," in *Place and Displacement in the Renaissance*, ed., Alvin Vos (Binghamton: Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 1995), 159-205.

Week 2. The Venetian Nude: Pin-ups or Poetry?

Mon, Sept 9. Lecture

Titian's letter to Philip II.

Wed, Sept 11. Discussion of readings

Charles Hope, "Problems of Interpretation in Titian's Erotic Paintings," in *Tiziano e Venezia: Convegno Internazionale di Studi* (Vicenza: Neri Pozza Editore, 1980), 111-115.

- Refer to the translation of Titian's letter to Philip II for p.114 in Charles Hope.

David Rosand, "Ut Pictor Poeta: Meaning in Titian's Poesie," *New Literary History* 3 (1971-2): 527- 46.

Week 3. Imagery of Dreams and Sleep

Mon, Sept 16. Lecture

Giovanni Boccaccio, *Decameron*, trans., J. G. Nichols (New York: Everyman's Library/Alfred A. Knopf, 2009), 301-304.

Wed, Sept 18. Discussion of readings

Maria Ruvoldt, "Sleeping Beauties" in *The Italian Renaissance Imagery of Inspiration: Metaphors of Sex, Sleep, and Dream* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 90-102.

Stephen Campbell, "Conclusion: The Rise of Mythological Painting in Sixteenth-Century Italy," in *Cabinet of Eros* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 251-264.

Week 4. Sight and Touch: Mirrors that Engage the Senses

Mon, Sept 23. Lecture and discussion of readings

Ovid, "Echo and Narcissus" in *Ovid Metamorphoses*, trans. Stanley Lombardo (Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, 2010), 75-81.

Leon Battista Alberti, *On Painting*, trans., Cecil Grayson. (London: Penguin Books, 1991), 60-62 (#25. and 26.)

Jodi Cranston, "Speculum cum macula: Materiality and Desire" in *The Muddied Mirror: Materiality and Figuration in Titian's Later Paintings* (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania University Press, 2010), 21-45.

Wed, Sept 25. **Louvre visit**

Meet in front of the Louvre Pyramid, next to the equestrian statue of Louis XIV at 12:45pm.

Week 5. Mythological Painting: Seduction and Violence

Mon, Sept 30. Lecture

Wed, Oct 2. Discussion of readings

James Lawson, "Titian's Diana Pictures: The Passing of an Epoch" *Artibus et Historiae* 25, No. 49 (2004): 49-59.

Thomas Puttfarken, *Titian and Tragic Painting: Aristotle's Poetics and the Rise of the Modern Artist* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 155-81.

Week 6. Portraiture, Petrarchan Beauty and Strategies of Desire

Mon, Oct 7. Lecture

Sonnet 3, 30, 101, 122, and 127 in *Petrarch's lyric poems: the Rime sparse and other lyrics*, ed., Robert M. Durling (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976), 38-39, 86-89, 204-205, 236-37, 248-55.

Lucretius, *On the Nature of Things*, trans. A.E. Stallings, Book IV (New York: Penguin, 2007), 138-140 (lines 1037-1120).

Wed, Oct. 9. Discussion of readings

Elise Goodman-Soellner, "Poetic Interpretations of the 'Lady at her Toilette' Theme in Sixteenth-Century Painting," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 14, No. 4 (1983): 426-42.

Stephen J. Campbell, "Eros in the Flesh: Petrarchan Desire, the Embodied Eros, and Male Beauty in Italian Art, 1500-1540," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 35, No. 3 (2005): 629-62.

Week 7. Mid-Semester

Mon, Oct. 14. Exam review session and preparation for essay proposal submission

Wed, Oct. 16. **Midterm exam**

Week 8. Museum and Research Trips

Mon, Oct. 21. Louvre visit

Meet in front of the Louvre Pyramid, next to the equestrian statue of Louis XIV at 12:45pm.

Wed, Oct. 23. Research trip to the **German Center for Art History**

Meet in front of the entrance to the research institute (45 Rue des Petits Champs) at 12:45pm.

Week 9. Peer Review

Mon, Oct. 28. Peer review

Paper proposal due at start of class.

Wed, Oct. 30. NO CLASS. Fall Break.

Week 10. Ironic Reversals of Love

Mon, Nov. 4. Lecture

“On the Paintbrush” and “The Onion,” in Deborah Parker, *Bronzino: Renaissance Painter as Poet* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 25 and 31.

Wed, Nov. 6. Discussion of readings

Robert Gaston, “Love’s Sweet Poison: A New Reading of Bronzino’s London Allegory,” in *I Tatti Studies* 4 (1991): 249-88.

Paul Barolsky and Andrew Ladis, “The ‘Pleasurable Deceits’ of Bronzino’s So-Called London Allegory” *Source: Notes in the History of Art* 10, No. 3 (1991): 32-36

Week 11. Combinatory Poetics and Artful Bodies

Mon, Nov. 11. NO CLASS. Armistice Break

Wed, Nov. 13. Lecture and discussion of readings

Horace, *The Art of Poetry: To the Pisos*, trans. by C. Smart, ed. by Theodore Alois Buckley, lines 1-12. Available online in the Perseus Digital Library.

<https://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus:text:1999.02.0065>

Elizabeth Cropper, “On Beautiful Women, Parmigianino, Petrarchismo, and the Vernacular Style” *The Art Bulletin* 58, No. 3 (1976): 374-394.

Week 12. Generative Nature and Pictorial Artifice

Mon, Nov. 18. Lecture and discussion of readings

Michael Cole, “Salt, Composition, and the Goldsmith’s Intelligence,” in *Cellini and the Principles*

of *Sculpture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 15-42.

Wed, Nov. 20. Louvre visit

Meet in front of the Louvre Pyramid, next to the equestrian statue of Louis XIV at 12:45pm.

Week 13. Love, Desire, and the Divine

Mon, Nov. 25. Lecture

Teresa of Ávila, *The Book of Her Life*, in *The Collected Works of St. Teresa of Ávila*, trans. Kieran Kavanaugh, vol. 1 (Washington, D.C.: Institute of Carmelite Studies, 1976), 246-53, especially p.252.

Wed, Nov. 27. Discussion of readings

Marianne Koos, "Dosso's Ambiguity," in *Renaissance Love: Eros, Passion, and Friendship in Italian Art Around 1500*, eds. Jeanette Kohl, Marianne Koos and Adrian W. Randolph (Berlin : Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2014), 45-66.

Christian K. Kleinbub, "To Sow the Heart: Touch, Spiritual Anatomy, and Image Theory in Michelangelo's *Noli me tangere*" *Renaissance Quarterly* 66, No. 1 (2013): 81-129.

Week 14. Peer Review and Conclusion

Mon, Dec. 2. Peer review

Draft of paper due at start of class.

Wed, Dec. 4. Concluding thoughts.

Paper due at start of class.

*I reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus throughout the semester when needed.

Textbooks

This course doesn't have any textbook.

Attendance Policy

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Attendance is mandatory at all visits. Each unexcused absence will result in the deduction of a full letter grade from your participation grade. Three late arrivals count as an unexcused absence. Four unexcused absences will result in an F for the course. Absences will be excused for medical reasons (a doctor's note is required), official AUP study trips, or another important reason confirmed by Students' Affairs. It is up to the student to catch up with the material. In all cases of missed course meetings, the responsibility for communication with the professor, and for arranging to make up missed work, rests solely with the student. The professor may recommend that a student withdraw, if absences have made it impossible to continue in the course at a satisfactory level. Students must be mindful of this policy when making their travel arrangements, and especially during the Drop/Add and Exam Periods.

English Language Proficiency Statement

As an Anglophone university, The American University of Paris is strongly committed to effective English language mastery at the undergraduate level. Most courses require scholarly research and formal written and oral presentations in English, and AUP students are expected to strive to achieve excellence in these domains as part of their course work. To that end, professors include English proficiency among the criteria in student evaluation, often referring students to the university Writing Lab where they may obtain help on specific academic assignments. Proficiency in English is monitored at various points throughout the student's academic career, most notably during the admissions and advising processes, while the student is completing general education requirements, and during the accomplishment of degree program courses and senior theses.

Chosen Names and Personal Pronouns:

Everyone has the right to be addressed by the name and pronouns that correspond to their gender identity, including non-binary pronouns. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.

AUP Statement on Disabilities

AUP provides support for students with learning or physical disabilities ranging from needing extra time for exams to requiring tutoring or mental health support. These services are developed to allow all students the opportunity to study and be evaluated as fairly as possible. The Student Guidance Counselor along with Faculty and the Office of Academic Affairs work together in assisting students with these needs. We are dedicated to helping all students find

academic success.

If you require accommodations for this class, please make an appointment to meet with me to discuss your approved accommodations. For more information, visit:

<https://www.aup.edu/student-life/support/health-wellness/learning-difficulties>

AUP Statement on Academic Integrity

All work you submit must be your own. Any work you submit that is not your own is plagiarism, a serious offense with serious penalties. If you are unsure of the various ways that you can commit academic misconduct, be sure to read the AUP Code of Academic Integrity, included below, and consult the university website: <https://www.aup.edu/academics/academic-and-career-resources/academic-resource-center/academic-integrity>

AUP Code of Academic Integrity

The American University of Paris deplores cheating, lying, fraud, theft and other behaviors that show disrespect for the rights of others and diminish the value of your degree. All academic work submitted at AUP must be the product of the student's own reflection, study and research. The following behaviors are examples of academic dishonesty and are prohibited: cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, obtaining unfair or illegal advantage, multiple submissions of student work, and facilitating academic dishonesty. If you have questions about any point within the code, ask a faculty member, a librarian or a staff member of the Academic Resource Center for guidance. Ignorance of any aspect of the code does not excuse its violation.

Grading Policy

Grading:

Weekly quizzes on the readings (22%): eleven quizzes worth 2% each

Mid-term exam (30%)

Writing Project: Proposal (8%), Paper (30%)

Participation (10%)

All work must be completed to pass the course. There will be no make-up exams without a medical note.

Assessment:

I will evaluate your work by these standards:

Weekly Quizzes

Each week there will be a quiz that will test your comprehension of the assigned readings. The quiz will ask you to summarize one of the two readings for that week. You will know the format and questions on the quiz in advance, but not which reading will be tested. Quizzes will be graded on a scale from 3 to 1. A 3 is assigned to a response that demonstrates high proficiency in the material; a 2 is assigned to a response that has several weaknesses but demonstrates satisfactory understanding of the material; a 1 is assigned to a response that does not demonstrate sufficient understanding of the material or is only partially complete. Missed quizzes receive a zero and cannot be made up. In weeks with a museum visit, the quiz will be due before the start of class on Blackboard.

Writing Project

The writing project builds on the critical thinking and writing skills you practiced in your quizzes and the discussion section of class. You will apply these skills by analyzing a work of art of your choice and evaluating a scholarly argument on the work. The project consists of two parts: (1) a proposal, in which you describe the object and summarize the author's argument, and (2) the body of the paper, which constitutes your sustained evaluation of the scholarly argument and your analysis of the object that seeks to improve on the flaw or shortcoming you identified in the author's thesis.

Midterm Exam

The midterm will be a combination of slide ID, multiple-choice, compare and contrast, and short answer questions. Testable material includes lectures and readings. A study guide will be provided ahead of the exam.

Participation

Attendance and participation are expected at all class meetings. Your participation grade will be based on your active involvement in class discussion. Attendance is key to your success in the course.

Other
