

Syllabus: Introduction to Art History: 1300-2006

Clemente Course in the Humanities™
New Bedford, Massachusetts, 2009-2010
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Required Text: *Gardner's Art Through the Ages*, 2005 (or any other edition)

Course Objectives

The objective of this course is to familiarize students with major works in painting and sculpture from the early Renaissance to the present. We will learn how to see images and to slow down in our looking. We will look at key artists and their works, along with a critical analysis of the ideas that circulated at the time and their bearing on art. The course tracks cultural developments as they move from the Renaissance, to the Romantic period, and to the present when multiculturalism, feminism, gender issues and the body have had a direct effect on the ways in which artists work. We will discuss the works and write about them. Our approach to writing will be consistent with what you learn in Critical Writing and Thinking with Jen Riley.

Each topic in this guide is accompanied by a **Key Work**. We will concentrate on these works as a way of identifying some of the important characteristics of the time in which they were made. We will look at works of art from three points of view:

1. the **formal traits** (what ways the artist used to convey his or her meaning, such as the use of linear or curving line, thick or thin paint) What is it made of? How is it made?
2. the **meaning** (iconography) of the work What is the message of the work? What is the story or text behind it?
3. **context**, the ways in which these works fit into the history of the time (how they document or express tensions within a society.) Who paid for it? What did they want? Did the artist make it for himself or herself?

The Key Works will form the core of what you should know, although we will look at other works of art of the same period.

In addition to the text and the slides presented in lectures, we will occasionally look at films and videos that are related to the period.

Course Outcomes

You will gain methods for analyzing visual material. You will gain an understanding of the development of the history of art, and will gain some tools for analyzing works of art. You will acquire knowledge of the pressures of economics, patronage and the art market.

Assessment

Two brief papers (1-2 pages) including descriptions, analysis of meanings and context of works of art.

One essay (3 pages) on a specific work studied in the course. You select the work and discuss this with the instructor before writing.

Attendance and participation

Come to class prepared to discuss the readings and artwork. Get your work in on time because we will build on your papers from week to week. Speak to me if you have a problem in delivering your work on time.

Lecture List and Reading Guide: 2009

In addition to the topics listed below, there will be visits to galleries and museums. We will use the tools of analysis that we discuss in class to analyze what we see.

How to read the selections from Gardner's *Art Through the Ages*.

1. read the 'green page' which is the introduction to the chapter
2. read on Materials and Techniques in each chapter
3. read the pages noted on the syllabus
4. look at the pictures that are on the syllabus list

Monday October 5 Art History

15th Century Europe: Flanders and Italy

Reading: Ch 20. 545-6; 550 (Public Devotional Imagery: Altarpieces) to 554
Ch 21 573-579

Key Work: Jan van Eyck, *Ghent Altarpiece*, 1432

Key Work: Brunelleschi and Ghiberti, *Sacrifice of Isaac*, 1401-02

Monday, October 12

Art History / Public Speaking

December 13 16th Century Europe: The High Renaissance in Italy

Reading: Ch.22 613-618; 620 (Novel and Lofty Things) to 632

Key Works: Leonardo da Vinci, *Mona Lisa*, 1503-05

Raphael, *The School of Athens*, 1509-11

Michelangelo, *The Sistine Ceiling*, 1508-12

Monday, October 26th

Art History

Public Speaking:

a. Analyze a painting.

b. Present your analysis in a speech presented to the class.

Public speaking assignment due. See assignment sheet for details.

All presentations in class. If we hear all presentations we will look at the following.

If not, the reading below is for next week.

Baroque Europe: Italy and Spain

Reading: Ch 24 689-697; 691-697; 700-705; 710-713; 721-725

Key Works: Bernini, *Ecstasy of Saint Teresa*, 1645-1652

Caravaggio, *Conversion of St. Paul*, 1601;

Artemisia Gentileschi, *Judith Slaying Holofernes*, 1614;

Velazquez, *Las Meninas (The Maids of Honor)*, 1656;

Rembrandt, *The Night Watch*, 1642

Thursday, October 29th

Art History

Practicing Description – Moving Toward Analysis

We will work on a formal, oral description of a painting.

Baroque Europe: Italy and Spain

Reading: Ch 24 689-697; 691-697; 700-705; 710-713; 721-725

Key Works: Bernini, *Ecstasy of Saint Teresa*, 1645-1652

Caravaggio, *Conversion of St. Paul*, 1601;

Artemisia Gentileschi, *Judith Slaying Holofernes*, 1614;

Velazquez, *Las Meninas (The Maids of Honor)*, 1656;

Rembrandt, *The Night Watch*, 1642

Monday, November 9

Art History

We will work on description of a painting.

Europe and America in the 18th Century: The Enlightenment, Neo Classicism and Romanticism

Reading Ch. 28 797-804; 812-813; 816-817; 826-827; 832-834

Key Works: Watteau, *Return from Cythera*, 1717-19; Chardin. *Woman in the Kitchen*.

Copley, *Paul Revere*, 1768-70;

David, *Oath of the Horatii*, 1784;

Ingres, *Grande Odalisque*, 1814;

Gericault, *The Raft of the Medusa*, 1818-19

Monday, November 23 Art History

Europe and America: 1850-1900: The Rise of Modernism

Assignment 2 due: Describe Chardin's painting. 1-2 pages. See assignment sheet for further details.

Reading Ch. 29 853-857; 860-861; 863-864; 869-873

Key Works: Courbet, *The Stonebreakers*, 1849

Manet, *Luncheon on the Grass*, 1863;

Manet, *Olympia*, 1863;

Winslow Homer, *Veteran in a New Field*, 1865;

Monet, *Saint-Lazare Train Station*, 1877

Monday, December 7 Art History / Writing

Writing on Meaning in Literature and Art: Degas' *Laundress* and Boland, *Laundresses*

Post-Impressionism and Symbolism

Reading Ch. 29 (cont.) 879-886; 889-890

Sections on Van Gogh, Gauguin, Seurat, Cezanne and Munch

Seurat: Key Work: *A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte*, 1884-86;

Van Gogh, *Starry Night*, 1889;

Cezanne, *Mont Sainte-Victoire*, 1902-04;

Degas. *The Laundress*. Compare to "Degas' *Laundresses*" by Boland

Monday, December 14 Art History

Europe and America: Modern Art 1900-1945

Reading Ch 33 964-966; 971-975; 978-979; 980-983: Fauvism, Cubism, Dada and Futurism) **Assignment 3 due: Discuss Degas' painting in the context of women's work. See assignment sheet for further details.**

Key Works: Matisse, *Open Window, Collioure. 1905* and the *Red Studio*, 1911;

Picasso, *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon*, 1907; *Still Life with Chair Caning*, 1912;

Monday, December 21 Art History

Dada and Surrealism

Reading: Ch 33 980-993; 996-1002(Sections on Dada and Surrealism)
Key Works: Duchamp, *Fountain*, 1917;
Dali, *The Persistence of Memory*, 1931;
Frida Kahlo, *The Two Fridas*, 1939.

Monday, January 14 Art History

American Regionalism

Reading: 1023-1026
Hopper, *Nighthawks*, 1942;
Wood, *American Gothic*, 1930

Monday, January 21 Art History

From the Modern to the Postmodern and Beyond (late 20th century)

Reading Ch 34 1031-1032; 1037-1039; 1051-1057; 1073-1076
Key Works: Jackson Pollock, *Autumn Rhythm. 1950*;
De Kooning, *Woman I*, 1950-52.
Warhol, *Marilyn Diptych*, 1962;
Johns, *Flag*, 1954-55;
Smithson, *Spiral Jetty*, 1970;
Kruger, *Your Gaze Hits the Side of My Face*, 1981.

Monday, February 1 PORTFOLIO DAY for Art History

Workshop art history portfolio papers in class

Have your art history essay ready for final review and submission. Final draft of Art History papers is due.