

**ARTH 101-002: INTRODUCTION TO THE VISUAL ARTS****Fall 2011**

Professor Lisa Passaglia Bauman

Class times: MWF 11:30-12:20

Office: Robinson B 371A

Office hours: W and F 10:30-11:20 or by appointment

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**THE PROMISES OF THIS COURSE:** It is my opinion that this is one of the most important classes you will take in college. Yes, **it fulfills the University General Education requirement**, but, assuming we both do our jobs correctly, it is also the class that you will take with you every time you walk into an art museum, or travel around the world, or take your children down on the Mall. It is not a studio class although we will study different media and techniques; nor is it a survey class although works of art will be presented in their historical context. Rather this class will focus on how art communicates, how to analyze and interpret it, and how we can see it as a cultural product that reveals something about the society that produced it.

By the end of the semester, you will have been exposed to many works of art, various media, and a great deal of new vocabulary. You will also have learned some of the fundamentals of looking at works of art. You will know that interpretation of a work depends on the interpreter, and that you, too, are necessarily an interpreter. That is not to say that all interpretations are equally valid; interpretations can be well- or ill-formed, responsible or irresponsible, useful or useless, etc.; opinion is not interpretation. Naturally, I hope that you conclude this course intrigued by the possibility of art historical study and with the confidence and impetus to continue your engagement with art—and indeed with all aspects of our emphatically visual culture.

I spend a great deal of time thinking about the larger questions of this course, questions like “what should you be able to do intellectually in this discipline at this time? How can I encourage you to develop those abilities?” At any time, however, you too can ask me a big question. Here is the biggest one: “why care?” Any time in this course, with any image, you can ask me “why does this issue matter?” I will stop and try to explain why this material is important and how it relates to larger issues. It may take a few weeks, but I will be able to get you to a payoff. This course is my responsibility; don’t hesitate to come to me if you have a problem or complaint. I can’t promise I’ll fix things, but I will do my best.

**WHAT YOU ARE GOING TO DO TO REALIZE THOSE PROMISES:****1. First, commit to the class—physically and mentally.**

The GMU catalogue reads: “**Students are expected to attend the class periods of the courses for which they register...instructors may use absence, tardiness, or early departure as *de facto* evidence of nonparticipation.**” The decision to take this class is yours. Once you make that decision though, you have responsibilities to everyone else in this community of learners. It is hard to get to know you and each other and continue a line of thought if you are not here. Attendance is worth 10% of the course grade. I will take attendance on an irregular basis—whenever. It could be once a week, it could be every class, we could go a month without an attendance call. Everyone starts with an A and two personal days they can take with no penalty. Three to four absences and you are in the B range. Five to six absences and you are now getting a C. Seven to eight absences is a D; more than that is an F. I am not excusing any absences—that’s why you have the two days--so do not email me to tell me that you can’t make it to class or to explain to me why you weren’t in class. I am not going to answer e-mails that ask what we covered in class today. If you miss a class, get notes from another class member. The first class would be an opportune time to exchange some e-mail addresses with each other. On the other hand, please feel free to email me with questions or if you want to share news or images of relevance.

As for the mental commitment, I am banning all electronic communication during class. No cell phones; no laptops. The first time it happens I’ll remind you to put it away and make a note to myself; the second time I will simply make a note and treat it as if you were not present in class that day. If you have a genuine academic reason to use a computer during class for note-taking or accessibility, please discuss this with me at the beginning of the semester.

**2. Second, commit to memory.**

This class is a lecture format during which I will address ideas, present key works, and define terms. Some of our learning objectives involve mastery of vocabulary, comprehending techniques and materials, and analyzing ideas. I will be using power point presentations, so all terms and images will be clearly labeled, spelled, and emphasized in class. If it’s written down, you should be writing it down. In exams, I will focus on big ideas though which will be emphasized in the readings, not the memorization of artists, titles, and dates of specific images. Those specific details, however, will be useful for you as evidence to support your answers to the big questions, so you should pay attention to them. Our examination schedule is as follows:

- **Exam #1:** – **Friday, September 30.** 10% of your final grade
- **Exam #2:** – **Friday, October 28.** 20% of your final grade
- **Exam #3:** – **Friday, December 9.** 20% of your final grade

You should mark those dates on your personal calendar immediately. Unless you have an incredible reason, I won't give an exam earlier or later than the scheduled slot. Please do not request special favors that cannot be granted to all of your peers. Test make-ups are only given if you have a legitimate written medical excuse or police report, on printed letterhead, with a phone number I can call for confirmation. I mean this seriously. Do not e-mail me with any excuses about car accidents or bad love affairs—even if it's true. **If you miss an exam without a legitimate written excuse, you will receive a 0 for that exam.** Better to take the exam and get an F than to receive a 0.

### 3. Do some authentic tasks that embody the kind of thinking and acting expected for life, tasks that challenge you to grapple with ideas, address your existing assumptions, and perhaps rethink them.

This is the written work of the course. There will be two short (1-2 page) written assignments that encourage you to look closely at the visual culture that surrounds you.

**Paper #1 is due Monday, October 3.** 15% of your final grade

**Paper #2 is due Monday, November 21.** 15% of your final grade

I will take written work late but it will be penalized 5 points for every day it is late. Yes, the weekend counts. After one week, I will not take any late papers. Remember that we are in the computer age where Murphy's Law applies with a vengeance. Assume that your computer will break down, that every other student in the school will be trying to print a paper on the same night, and so forth. Plan accordingly! There are no excuses for turning in a late paper. You simply take the point deduction. Also, **I will NOT accept papers via e-mail or turned into my office mailbox.** Why? Too many problems with viruses, with formatting, with accidental deletions, with deadlines or misplacements. In the end, it shifts the responsibility from you to me and in this course these assignments are your responsibility. My job will be to return your work in a timely fashion – exams and written assignments within two weeks.

### 4. Let's hear from you.

The first paper has an oral presentation component. That day I will select students to present the ideas of their papers. When we get to the Italian Renaissance, there will be a second oral presentation opportunity for which I will randomly select students. And finally in the last weeks of the class, students will be selected to comment on one last set of readings about museums. You should be prepared to present at any or all of these times. Remember the selection will be random. This participation portion is worth 10% of your course grade.

## HOW WE CAN UNDERSTAND THE NATURE, QUALITY, AND PROGRESS OF YOUR LEARNING:

I believe a professor has two jobs: to help students learn and to tell society how much learning has been done. I expect ambitious and creative learning and I will work hard to use some strategies that I believe are effective in helping students learn. For the record though, here is my grading policy.

In order to receive a grade in this course, students must complete all assigned work. Grades will not be calculated on the basis of a percentage of work completed. **There are no extra credit projects.** There are often questions about grading and evaluation policies, especially for those who have never taken an art history class before and are concerned about how their work will be evaluated. Grade ranges and a description of the sort of work expected are as follows—please read them carefully.

**A** (90-92 is an A-; 93-96 is an A; 97-100 is an A+) startingly good, exceeding my expectations, and well-written. Must be imaginative; NOT given for simply following directions

**B** (80-82 is a B-; 83-86 is a B; 87-89 is a B+) Good effort with a good result.

**C** (70-72 is a C-; 73-76 is a C; 77-79 is a C+) Perfunctory; or tried but missed the point; or did something well but it wasn't the assignment; or a good idea but careless or sloppy.

**D** (60-69) Warning: accepted under protest

**F** (Below 60) Unacceptable as college-level work; see me immediately if you find yourself in this situation.

Please remember something though. The function of this course is not to enable you to get a good grade easily. Its function is to open you up to intellectual, emotional, and aesthetic skills that you will use for the rest of your lives. All of us, myself included, have taken courses that were FAR from our areas of expertise (for me, Multi-variable Calculus, Baroque Poetry, and Physics), in which we did dreadfully grade-wise (don't ask!). But these were vital courses later and in unexpected ways (in my case, returning to school years later to study Landscape Architecture). No employer ever punished us for bad grades in adventurous courses. That's why you take courses like this. God forbid you should become an art historian—highly unlikely, and I will try to talk you out of it, even though it is the

most fun I have (where the music isn't blasting at 1000 decibels, or involving my children, or husband). You take courses like this to be richer in the important ways.

It is not just the professor though who should be vested in the nature of learning. A student also has a tremendous responsibility here; **you should be able to judge the quality of your own work.** If you cannot assess the quality of what you have produced, then you haven't really learned anything. Here are the **Student Learning Objectives.**

- Analyze the formal elements of a particular art form using vocabulary appropriate to that form
- Demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between artistic technique and the expression of a work's underlying concept
- Analyze cultural productions using standards appropriate to the form and cultural context
- Analyze and interpret material culture in its social, historical, and/or personal contexts
- Engage in critical analysis in writing using reasoned, well-organized arguments with introduction, thesis statement, supporting evidence, and conclusion

At various points in this course, you might want to sit down and ask yourself about your progress and the strategies you are using to understand those learning objectives. Talk to me if you are struggling here.

**TECH SKILLS REQUIRED:** Please activate your GMU e-mail account so that I can communicate with the class at large if necessary.

**TEXT AND READINGS:** The textbook is Mark Getlein, *Living with Art* (Ninth Edition. McGraw-Hill, 2010), and it is available in the University bookstore. It's substantial and it's expensive (retails for \$121, wholesale for \$97), mostly because it has many large and excellent illustrations. If only the words lived up to the illustrations! Getlein is not the most visionary of art historians, and the text has been edited by three dozen art history Ph.D.s who were too mediocre to get real jobs and ended up editors of the textbook division of McGraw-Hill. That being said, this course will follow the general outline of Getlein's text and its structure and illustrations may be useful to some of you.

To supplement the textbook, I have placed relevant articles on either e-reserve, print reserve, or in my Dropbox account. I will email the class the password for e-reserve and the hyperlinks for the articles in Dropbox. These readings are going to be useful as a point of departure for class discussion and as the basis for our exams. Understanding the essential argument of each reading will be crucial to answer the "big questions" in the exams.

1. **Introduction:** Anne D'Alleva, "Introducing Art History," *Look! The Fundamentals of Art History*, (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 2004), pp. 11-22. E-reserve (This article is just for fun.)
2. **What is Art?:** Robin Cembalest, "The Obscenity Trial. How They Voted to Acquit," *Writings about Art*, ed. Carole Gold Calo (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1994), pp. 343-350; **AND** Hilton Kramer, "Is Art above the Laws of Decency?" pp. 351-356. E-reserve
3. **Ancient Greece:** Gisela Richter, "Characteristics of Greek Sculpture," *Readings in Art History*, ed. Harold Spencer, second edition (NY: Scribner's, 1976), volume 1, pp. 35-49. E-reserve
4. **Middle Ages:** Herbert Kessler, "Matter," *Seeing Medieval Art* (Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview Press, 2004) pp. 19-43. E-reserve.
5. **Italian Renaissance:** Martin Kemp, "The Mean and the Measure of All Things," *Critical Perspectives on Art History*, ed. John C. McEnroe and Deborah F. Pokinski (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 2002), pp. 156-160. E-reserve.
6. **Italian Renaissance:** Baptistry competition readings. Dropbox
7. **Baroque:** John Rupert Martin, "The Baroque," *Readings in Art History*, ed. Harold Spencer, second edition (NY: Scribner's, 1976), volume 2, pp. 161-171. E-reserve
8. **19<sup>th</sup> century:** Kirk Varnedoe, "The Artifice of Candor: Impressionism and Photography Reconsidered," *Art in America* (January 1980): 66-78. Dropbox
9. **Cubism:** Robert Rosenblum, "Cubism," *Readings in Art History*, ed. Harold Spencer, second edition (NY: Scribner's, 1976), volume 2, pp. 331-356.. E-reserve
10. **Postwar:** Michael Kimmelman, "The Art of the Pilgrimage," *The Accidental Masterpiece. On the Art of Life and Vice Versa* (New York: Penguin, 2005), 175-209. Print reserve desk @ JC
11. **Museum:** Carol Duncan, "The Art Museum as Ritual," *Critical Perspectives on Art History*, ed. John C. McEnroe and Deborah F. Pokinski (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 2002), pp. 255-260; **AND** Hilton Kramer, "The Assault on the Museums," *Critical Perspectives on Art History*, ed. John C. McEnroe and Deborah F. Pokinski (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 2002), pp. 261-263. E-reserve

**CLASSROOM ATMOSPHERE:** Courtesy and common sense please. We're all adults; sometimes emergencies come up. Chronic chatters and latecomers are disruptive, however. And if you know you will have to leave a few minutes early, please sit closest to the door on the aisle and let me know.

**PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING:** These are not fooling-around offences with me. Your written work is to be the product of your own thinking. Ditto with tests. Be warned: **if you cheat, I will send you and your work on to the Dean of Students.** No excuses, no tears, no "I didn't understand about citing other people's work/talking during an exam" stories. If you are not sure how the University defines plagiarism, please see the Plagiarism Statement in the George Mason University Honor System and Code at <http://mason.gmu.edu/~montecin/plagiarism.htm>.

**DISABILITIES:** If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Resources at 703.993.2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

### **COURSE SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNMENTS:**

Readings are placed at the beginning of each lecture group. For example, on Sept 7 we will begin a series of 5 lectures on *The Visual Elements*. All of the reading for that set of lectures is listed on the first day, September 7.

<b>Monday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
Aug 29 Introduction to the Course  <b>Reading:</b> D'Alleva on Art History, e-reserve	Aug 31 What is art? Style, Form and Content; Iconography; Context  (Text, pp. 2-48) <b>Reading:</b> Cembelast, "Obscenity Trial," and Kramer, "Laws of Decency," e-reserve	Sept 2 What is art? Style, Form and Content; Iconography; Context  (Text, pp. 49-73)
Sept 5 <b>NO CLASS</b>	Sept 7 <i>Formal Analysis or How to Talk about Art: The Visual Elements</i>  (Text, pp. 74-112)	Sept 9 <i>Formal Analysis or How to Talk about Art: The Visual Elements</i>
Sept 12 <i>Formal Analysis or How to Talk about Art: The Visual Elements</i>	Sept 14 <i>Formal Analysis or How to Talk about Art: The Visual Elements</i>	Sept 16 <i>Formal Analysis or How to Talk about Art: The Visual Elements</i>
Sept 19 <i>Formal Analysis or How to Talk about Art: The Principles of Design</i> (Text, pp. 113-137)	Sept 21 <i>Formal Analysis or How to Talk about Art: The Principles of Design</i>	Sept 23 <i>Formal Analysis or How to Talk about Art: The Principles of Design</i>
Sept 26 <i>Formal Analysis or How to Talk about Art: The Principles of Design</i>  <b>Hand out Paper #1</b>	Sept 28 <i>Formal Analysis or How to Talk about Art: The Principles of Design</i>	Sept 30 <b>Exam #1 on the Principles of Design</b>
Oct 3 <b>Paper #1 due</b> <b>Class presentations</b>	Oct 5 <i>Eternal Egypt</i> (pp. 324-330) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carving (pp. 237-238, 243, 247, 249-251))</li> <li>• Load-bearing construction (pp. 280-283)</li> <li>• Post and lintel construction (pp. 283-284)</li> </ul>	Oct 7 <i>The Gods brought down to Earth: Ancient Greece</i> (pp. 332-340) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More post and lintel construction (pp. 283-284)</li> <li>• Lost-wax casting (pp. 240-243)</li> </ul> <b>Reading:</b> Gisela Richter, "Characteristics of Greek Sculpture," e-reserve

<p>Oct 10 <b>NO CLASS</b></p> <p><b>Class is on TUESDAY, OCT 11, at the usual time instead</b></p> <p><i>Ancient Greece</i>, cont. <i>To Conquer Space: Ancient Rome</i> (pp. 340-344)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Round arch and dome (pp. 286-288, 290-292)</li> </ul>	<p>Oct 12 <i>The Rise of Spirituality: Early Christianity</i> (pp. 345-351)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>mosaic</li> </ul> <p><b>Reading: Baptistry competition now in Dropbox. Link sent via email. Be prepared to be selected.</b></p>	<p>Oct 14 <i>The Spiritual Pilgrimage: The Middle Ages</i> (pp. 351-358)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tempera (pp. 159-161)</li> <li>Stained glass (pp. 265-266)</li> <li>Round vault (pp. 287-288)</li> <li>Pointed arch and vault (pp. 288-289)</li> </ul> <p><b>Reading:</b> Kessler, "Matter," e-reserve.</p>
<p>Oct 17 <i>The Middle Ages</i>, cont.</p>	<p>Oct 19 <i>The Age of Humanism: Italian Renaissance</i> (pp. 359-374)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Drawing: Silverpoint, graphite pencil (pp. 141-146)</li> <li>Fresco (pp. 157-158)</li> <li>Woodcut, engraving (pp. 174-179, 181-182)</li> </ul> <p><b>Baptistry competition presentations</b></p>	<p>Oct 21 <i>Italian Renaissance</i>, cont.</p>
<p>Oct 24 <i>Italian Renaissance</i>, cont</p>	<p>Oct 26 <i>Italian Renaissance</i>, cont.</p>	<p>Oct 28 <b>Exam #2 on Egypt to Italian Renaissance</b> (20% of course grade)</p>
<p>Oct 31 <i>God is in the Details: Northern Renaissance</i> (pp. 374-380)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Oil painting (pp. 161-165)</li> </ul> <p><b>Hand out Paper #2</b> <b>You might want to do the museum readings before you do this paper since we will be discussing your experience visiting the National Gallery.</b></p>	<p>Nov 2 <i>Northern Renaissance</i>, cont.</p>	<p>Nov 4 <i>Art and Propaganda: 17<sup>th</sup>-century Baroque</i> (pp. 381-397)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Etching (pp. 184)</li> </ul> <p><b>Reading:</b> Martin, "The Baroque," e-reserve</p>
<p>Nov 7 <i>17<sup>th</sup>-century Baroque</i>, cont.</p>	<p>Nov 9 <i>The Intimate Encounter: 18<sup>th</sup>-century Rococo</i> (pp. 397-403)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>chalk, pastel (pp. 147-149)</li> </ul>	<p>Nov 11 <i>Art and Revolution: 19<sup>th</sup>-century</i> (pp. 403-406, 467-470)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>lithography, monotype (pp. 186-189, 191-92)</li> <li>photography (pp. 195-199)</li> <li>Balloon-frame construction (pp. 299)</li> <li>cast-iron construction (pp. 295-296)</li> </ul>
<p>Nov 14 <i>19<sup>th</sup>-century</i>, cont.</p>	<p>Nov 16 <i>The Modern World: Impressionism</i> (pp. 471-479)</p> <p><b>Reading:</b> Varnedoe, "Artifice," Dropbox</p>	<p>Nov 18 <i>The Modern World: early 20<sup>th</sup> c</i> (pp. 479-487)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>collage (pp. 169-171)</li> <li>pictorialism (pp. 201-204)</li> <li>cubism</li> </ul> <p><b>Reading:</b> Rosenblum, "Cubism," e-reserve</p>

<p>Nov 21 <i>Utopia and Dystopia: the 20<sup>th</sup>-century</i> (pp. 487-495)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• straight photography, formalism, realism (pp. 200-201)</li> <li>• steel cage construction (pp. 297-298)</li> <li>• cantilever and reinforced concrete (pp. 308-309)</li> <li>• Bauhaus</li> </ul> <p><b>Paper #2 due</b></p>	<p>Nov 23 <b>NO CLASS</b></p>	<p>Nov 25 <b>NO CLASS</b></p>
<p>Nov 28 <i>20<sup>th</sup>-century</i>, cont.</p>	<p>Nov 30 <i>Art, the spirit world, and the inner mind: the postwar world</i> (pp. 496-535)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International style (pp. 298-299)</li> <li>• Acrylic (pp. 167-168)</li> <li>• Screenprinting (pp. 189-190)</li> <li>• Assembling (pp. 244-247)</li> <li>• Earthworks and installations (pp. 253-260)</li> </ul> <p><b>Reading:</b> Kimmelman, "Pilgrimage," print reserve @JC</p>	<p>Dec 2 <i>postwar world</i>, cont.</p> <p><b>Museum discussion</b></p>
<p>Dec 5 <i>postwar world</i>, cont.</p>	<p>Dec 7 <i>The Last Lecture</i> or "Now what do I do when I go to an art museum?"</p>	<p>Dec 9 <b>Exam #3 on Northern Renaissance to Now</b> (20% of course grade)</p>