

ARTH 440/599/HIST 635

Creating Value: Making and Consuming Art in Early Modern Europe

Thursday 1:30-4:15 Robinson B333

Instructor: Dr. Angela Ho
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Office Hours: MW 12-1 pm, or by appointment
Office: Robinson B 334

Course Description

What makes a work of art “valuable”? How does the cultural and social significance of a work relate to its price? How did artists carve out niches in a growing art market by generating distinctive products? This seminar examines concepts of value in the art of Early Modern Europe by addressing these questions. We will examine the historical conditions that made possible for a wider spectrum of the population to purchase works of art. We will then consider how individuals constructed social identities through artistic consumption in this period. We will also investigate how artists such as Mantegna, Raphael, Michelangelo, Titian negotiated the system of patronage in Renaissance Italy. Working for prominent families in the communes and the noble courts, they created works that communicated specific artistic, cultural, and political values to a diverse audience. This period saw the rise of a market for finished works of art in parts of Europe. Focusing on Netherlandish artists such as the Brueghel family, Rembrandt, and Vermeer, we will explore how artists adopted different creative and marketing strategies in an increasingly complex market. This course will also ask how the production of copies, spin-offs, and forgeries can, paradoxically, tell us about the changing value of originality in this period.

Course Objectives

In this course, you will:

- Hone your skills of visual analysis and interpretation;
- Read primary and secondary sources critically;
- Develop your skills in critical thinking, research, and writing;
- Develop an interdisciplinary approach to studying issues of value in art.

Course Format and Requirements

This course will be run as a seminar. I will provide background information or explanations when appropriate, but the bulk of the class sessions will be devoted to critical discussions of assigned readings. Your engagement with ideas presented in classes and readings, and your ability to apply them, will be assessed based on your participation in discussion, blog postings, response papers, and a final research project (oral presentation and research paper).

Students must complete all graded assignments and other requirements listed on the syllabus. Even if your overall average without one of these elements is sufficient for a passing grade, you cannot pass the class without specific, prior permission of the instructor.

Percentage breakdown:

Attendance and participation: 15%

Weekly blog postings: 15%

Response papers: 15%

Presentation: 10%

Draft of final paper: 10%

Final paper: 35%

Grading scale

A+ 97-100 C+ 77-79.5

A 93-96.5 C 73-76.5

A- 90-92.5 C- 70-72.5

B+ 87-89.5 D 60-69.5

B 83-86.5 F < 60

B- 80-82.5

Readings

There are no textbooks for the course; instead weekly readings include articles and book excerpts. In order to get the most out of this course, it is essential that you complete the assigned readings BEFORE you come to class.

Participation

In a seminar, learning happens when we are discussing readings and visual materials. Attendance and informed participation in class discussions are therefore required of all students. Your starting attendance/participation grade (i.e., you attend all class meetings but do not participate in discussions, or do not give any indication that you have done the readings) will be a C+. You build on that grade with informed contributions to class discussions.

If you cannot attend class due to medical reasons or other emergencies, I would be happy to meet with you during office hours to bring you up to date with the course material. Proper documentation, however, must be submitted to me in a timely fashion. Otherwise, after one missed class, each subsequent unexplained absence will lead to a deduction of 10% of your participation grade.

It is important to maintain a positive learning environment and observe rules of classroom etiquette in class sessions. Constructive comments and criticism are welcome, but please be mindful of and respect one another's views.

Blog postings

From weeks 2, 3, 5-7, 9, 11-13, choose at least 6 weeks to submit short responses (around 250 words) to the readings. Please post your response on Blackboard by 1 pm on the day we discuss the relevant topic in class. Please see page 8 for further instructions.

Response Papers

For students registered for ARTH 440: Out of the 6 weekly postings, choose two to expand into longer, more formal response papers. For students registered for ARTH 599 or HIST 635, choose

three to develop into formal papers. Hard copies of response papers are due the week *after* we discuss the relevant topic. Please see page 8 for specific instructions.

Research project

One of the major objectives of this course is to help you develop the skills necessary to write a research paper. Each of you will define a project that explores one or more of the major themes addressed in the course. To help you develop the project step by step, I will ask you to submit a paper proposal, an annotated bibliography and a draft of your paper at various points of the semester. You will also present your hypotheses and findings to the class on April 24 or May 1. A draft of your final paper (10 pages for ARTH 440; 15-20 pages for ARTH 599 and HIST 635) is due by the end of the day on April 19, the Saturday after we meet in week 13. The final version due by the end of the day on May 8. You can submit your draft and final paper electronically to Blackboard.

PLEASE NOTE: In the interest of fairness, papers must be submitted on time to receive full credit. Students will incur a 3% grade penalty per day for late papers. In cases of medical or other serious problems, please document them and let me know as soon as possible.

A note about presentations: this is an opportunity for you to get feedback from your colleagues before you finalize the paper. It will also give all of you a chance to learn from each other. Attendance at all presentations is mandatory. For each presentation you miss, you will incur a 2% penalty out of the 35% allotted to the final paper. So if you miss an entire session with 5 presentations, 10% will be deducted from your final grade.

English as a second language

If English is not your first language, feel free to discuss with me any concerns you have about the writing assignments. Please, however, give me plenty of notice (at least a week) before the due dates. You may also consider consulting the Writing Center. Be sure to plan ahead, because the Writing Center is very busy near the end of the semester.

Tech requirements

I will ONLY use your GMU email addresses. If you prefer to use a commercial account, you must activate the email forwarder on your GMU account. Readings, course updates, and instructions for assignments and examinations will be available on Blackboard. Please also note that you will be expected to give a power point presentation of your research project.

Please be respectful of your peers and your instructor when using electronic devices.

- Do not use cell phones in class.
- Do not engage in activities that are unrelated to class. Such disruptions show a lack of professionalism and may affect your participation grade.

Add-drop deadlines

Please note the following add-drop deadlines:

Jan 29, 2014	Last day to add a class
	Last day to drop a class with no tuition penalty
Feb 11, 2014	Last day to drop a class with 33% tuition penalty

Feb 21, 2014 Final drop deadline with 67% tuition penalty
Feb 24 – Mar 28, 2014 Selective withdrawal period

It is your responsibility to observe the add-drop deadlines to ensure that you are properly registered for specific courses.

Students with disabilities

Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss your specific needs. Please note that requests for accommodation must be provided to me at least two weeks before the due date of the first assignment. For further information and documentation please contact the Office of Disability Services, Student Union Building I (SUB), Room 4205, Telephone: (703) 993-2474, TTY: (703) 993-2476.

Standards of Academic integrity

Strict adherence to the Honor Code as defined in the undergraduate catalogue is expected. Plagiarism, cheating on examinations, and all other instances of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Honor Committee, and may result in a failing grade for the course. Please consult the Office for Academic Integrity for a full description of the code and the honor committee process.

SCHEDULE

(You will be notified in advance of any changes)

Week 1 January 23

Introduction and Overview

Week 2 January 30

Art and Money in Early Modern Europe

Evelyn Welch, *Shopping in the Renaissance: Consumer Cultures in Italy 1400-1600* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2005), 1-15.

Richard Goldthwaite, *Wealth and the Demand for Art in Italy, 1300-1600* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1993), 176-214.

Elizabeth Honig, *Painting and the Market in Early Modern Antwerp* (New Haven and London: Yale University, 1998), 1-18.

Week 3 February 6

The Patronage Game: Players and Rules

Michael Baxandall, *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth Century Italy* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 3-27.

Jonathan K. Nelson and Richard J. Zeckhauser, *The Patron's Payoff: Conspicuous Commissions in Italian Renaissance Art* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2008), 37-65.

Rose Marie San Juan, "The Court Lady's Dilemma: Isabella d'Este and Art Collecting in the Renaissance," *Oxford Art Journal* 14 (1991): 67-78.

Week 4 February 13

CAA conference—class cancelled

Week 5 February 20

Style as Signal: the Concept of Magnificence in Italy

Jonathan K. Nelson and Richard J. Zeckhauser, *The Patron's Payoff: Conspicuous Commissions in Italian Renaissance Art* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2008), 67-84.

Louis Green, "Galvano Fiamma, Azzone Visconti, and the Revival of the Classical Theory of Magnificence," *Journal of Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 53 (1990), 98-113.

Mary Douglas and Baron Isherwood, *The World of Goods: Towards an Anthropology of Consumption* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 36-47.

Optional:

Patricia Rubin, "Magnificence and the Medici," in *The Early Medici and their Artists*, ed. Francis Ames-Lewis (London: Birkbeck College, 1995), 37-49.

Week 6 February 27

Rise of the Art Market: Northern Europe

John Michael Montias, "Cost and Value in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Art," *Art History* 10 (1987): 455-66.

Filip Vermeulen, "The Commercialization of Art: Painting and Sculpture in Sixteenth-Century Antwerp," in *Early Netherlandish Painting at the Crossroads: A Critical Look at Current Methodologies*, ed. Maryan Ainsworth (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2002), 46-61.

Eric Jan Sluijter, "On Brabant Rubbish, Economic Competition, Artistic Rivalry, and Growth of the Market for Paintings in the First Decades of the Seventeenth Century," *JHNA* 1 (2009).

Week 7 March 6

Paper proposal due

Artists as Creators and Entrepreneurs

Neil de Marchi and Hans J. van Miegroet. "Art, Value, and Market Practices in the Netherlands in the Seventeenth Century," *Art Bulletin* 86 (1994): 451-64.

Celeste Brusati, "Natural Artifice and Material Values in Dutch Still Life," in *Looking at Dutch Art: Realism Reconsidered*, ed. Wayne Franits (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 144-57.

Svetlana Alpers, *Rembrandt's Enterprise: The Studio and the Market* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 88-122.

Week 8 March 13

Spring break

Week 9 March 20

Annotated bibliography due

Value of the Gift

Sean Roberts, *Printing a Mediterranean world: Florence, Constantinople, and the Renaissance of Geography* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2013), excerpt.

Michael Zell, "The Gift among Friends: Rembrandt's Art in the Network of his Patronal and Social Relations," in *Rethinking Rembrandt*, eds. Alan Chong and Michael Zell (Zwolle: Waanders, 2002), 173-93.

Irma Thoen, *Strategic Affection? Gift Exchange in Seventeenth-Century Holland* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2006), 9-30.

Week 10

Individual meetings with students in lieu of class. Please sign up for half-hour appointments to discuss your research project.

Week 11 April 3

Taste and Distinction

Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, trans. Richard Nice (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984), selections.

Elizabeth Honig, *Painting and the Market in Early Modern Antwerp* (New Haven and London: Yale University, 1998), 189-209.

Krzystof Pomian, *Collectors and Curiosities: Paris and Venice, 1500-1800*, trans. Elizabeth Wiles-Portier (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990), 7-44.

Optional:

Woodruff Smith, *Consumption and the Making of Respectability 1600-1800* (New York and London: Routledge, 2002), 1-24.

Week 12 April 10

Mechanical Reproduction

Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," in *Illuminations*, ed. Hannah Arendt (New York: Schocken, 1988), 217-51.

Lisa Pon, "Prints and Privileges: Regulating the Image in Sixteenth-Century Italy," *Harvard University Art Museums Bulletin* 6 (1998): 40-64.

Nadine Orenstein, "Prints and the Politics of the Publisher: the Case of Hendrick Hondius," *Simiolus* 23 (1995): 240-50.

Week 13 April 17

Fakes and Knock-offs

Larry Silver, "Second Bosch: Family Resemblance and the Marketing of Art," *Nederlands kunsthistorisch jaarboek* 50 (1999): 31-56.

Maria H. Loh, "Originals, Reproductions, and a 'Particular Taste' for Pastiche in the Seventeenth-Century Republic of Painting," in *Mapping Markets for Paintings in Europe 1450-1750*, eds. Neil de Marchi and Hans van Miegroet (Turnhout: Brepols, 2006), 237-62.

Mark Jones et al, *Fake? The Art of Deception* (London: British Museum, 1990), selections.

Draft of final paper due April 19, 11:59 pm.

Week 14 April 24

Students presentations

Week 15 May 1

Student presentations

May 8, 11:59 pm FINAL PAPER DUE

ARTH 440/599/HIST 635 Spring 2014

Weekly Readings, Blog Postings, Response Papers

Each week I will provide some questions to guide you through the assigned readings. Please post your responses and observations on the readings to Blackboard by 1 pm on the day we discuss that particular topic in class. The goal of this assignment is to help you develop the skills of critical reading.

Reading critically does not mean gathering information from a text, or simply reading it through once from beginning to end. Critical reading is active reading. Underline or highlight the main points and note down your thoughts and questions. When you have finished a reading, go back over your notes and highlights, and consider the following:

- Is it a primary or secondary source? When was the text written? How would the date of the text affect the way you approach it?
- What are the author's major arguments? Bear in mind that most readings, even those presented as narratives or biographies, contain an argument.
- You will often find a lot of data and details in the texts; how does the author marshal this information as evidence to support his/her arguments?
- Do you find the argument effective? Why or why not? How do the conclusions compare with other readings you have encountered?
- Do you detect any assumptions or biases underlying the author's conclusions?

Blog postings

Gather your thoughts and observations into a 250-word essay and post it to Blackboard. Identify the main arguments of a reading and—if appropriate—pose questions about the parts that you find particularly difficult. From weeks 2, 3, 5-7, 9, 11-13, post at least 6 responses to the readings.

Response papers

For two of those weeks (three for graduate students), you are asked to write a longer, formal response paper on the readings (4-5 pages). Turn in the response paper one week after we discuss the readings in class. For example, if you decide to write a 4-5 page paper on the topic for week 2 ("Art and Money"), you will submit the paper in week 3. If you draw on your classmates' postings on Blackboard, you must acknowledge your sources. It goes without saying that your response must reflect your own critical engagement with the text, and should not be a mish-mash of your classmates' postings.