

ARTH 324: Hellenistic Art
From Alexander to the Caesars
Professor Christopher A. Gregg

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10:30-11:45, IN 204 email: cgregg@gmu.edu
Office Hours: Robinson 373A, Mondays 3-4pm or by appointment

This course will explore the final phase of Greek art, that of the Hellenistic period (ca. 331-31 BCE). After the military campaigns of Alexander the Great of Macedon, Greek culture was spread throughout the Eastern Mediterranean and the Near East by his successors. Hellenic civilization was profoundly changed by interactions with other cultures, changes marked by a sense of increased diversity and the importance of individualism. These deep societal changes also had a strong impact on art produced in the fourth century BCE and beyond. The resulting Hellenistic period of Greek art has been described as theatrical, intellectual, and emotionally vibrant: works of sculpture and painting seek to draw the viewer into a dramatically charged moment and evoke the sympathies and passions of the observer. Architecture of the period relies on scale and ornament to overwhelm the senses. From the beginnings of Hellenistic style under Alexander, to Cleopatra's Greco-Egyptian home in Alexandria, and beyond to lavish works created in this style under the Caesars of Rome, this course will examine the development of Hellenistic style, the major artists of the period, the variety of monuments and sculptural types that it produced as well as the interplay between Hellenistic culture and the art itself. We will focus on sculpture, painting, and architecture, but also examine metalwork, mosaics, and other media that embody the style of the Hellenistic Age.

Course Goals

- To examine in detail the elements of artistic and architectural style during the Hellenistic period.
- To survey the wide-ranging forms of archaeological and art historical material preserved from this period.
- To gain a greater understanding of the diverse social and political environments of the Hellenistic period.
- To explore the links between society and artistic production.
- To practice analytical skills in reading and clarity in writing.
- To expand your visual and verbal vocabulary for archaeology and art history.

Required Texts

J.J. Pollitt, *Art in the Hellenistic Age* (Cambridge University Press): 2005.

R.R.R. Smith, *Hellenistic Sculpture* (Thames and Hudson): 1991.

Digital readings either hyperlinked to the syllabus, through JSTOR, or uploaded to Blackboard (under Course Content module)

Graded Requirements

Exam 1	Wednesday, October 1 st	25%
Exam 2	Monday, November 3 rd	25%
Exam 3	Consult Final Exam Schedule	30%
Writing Assignments	See daily schedule for dates	20%

Exams

Exams will include slide identifications, architectural diagrams, terms, dates, and essays. Material will come from textbook, lecture, and digital readings. Study guides will be provided a week prior to the exam. You will need bluebooks for each exam.

Note-taking:

Although the readings in your textbooks are critical for the course, class lectures will bring the material together, and it is from the class lecture that substantial portions of each exam will be drawn. You must take thorough notes in order to be prepared for the exams. If there are terms on a slide, include the term, its definition and application in your notes. This is a class based on close reading of images and that means attention to details: most people are not able to retain all of the specific details without studying copious notes taken during lecture. Do not assume that showing up to class and simply “listening” will be sufficient to prepare you for exams.

Written Assignments

Three scholarly articles are listed at the end of the syllabus (all are available through JSTOR). You must write on any two (2) of these three: each has its own due date and papers on that article will not be accepted after its specific due date. The paper itself should be between 500-600 words (absolutely no longer than 700). The purpose of your paper is to review the major ideas presented in the article. See the guidelines laid out at the end of the syllabus for reviewing the article and let me know if you have questions about the process. Furthermore, everyone should read each article even if you do not write on it: exam questions may be drawn from these articles.

Important Notes

- **Attendance at exams is MANDATORY: no make-up exams will be offered without a doctor’s excuse or other official documentation. If you miss an exam, you must contact me within 24 hours to schedule the re-take with valid documentation.**
- **I encourage questions and open discussion in class. Please, however, refrain from “quiet” talking to one another during lectures. It is distracting both to your classmates and to myself. If you persist in this during lectures, I will ask you to leave the classroom.**
- **Please turn off cell phones when class begins. Texting during class will be treated the same as talking during lectures.**
- **Use of electronic devices (including cell phones) during exams will be treated as an honor code violation. At the very least, you will receive a “0” on the exam.**
- **Arrive on time for class. Coming in late is disruptive for everyone. If you have a class prior to ours which causes a problem with arriving on time, please discuss it with me.**
- **Discuss any special academic needs with me at the start of the term. Do not wait until after the first exam or later!**
- **Since the material in this course is based on the art and literature of other cultures, some topics of violence, gender, and sexuality may be contrary to individual beliefs, but we will deal with them in an academic and intellectual manner.**
- **All reading assignments should be completed before class each day. The lengths of these assignments vary so keep pace with the syllabus.**
- **No extra credit assignments are offered in the course.**

- **The schedule and pace of the course may be adjusted as needed. If the need arises, a revised syllabus will be distributed. It is your responsibility to keep up with the most recently distributed version of the syllabus**

Finally, all GMU policies on academic honesty will be applicable in this class. If you are unfamiliar with these policies, please visit <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/> and acquaint yourself with them.

Schedule (Note: readings for a particular date should be read before class on that day)

August

- M 25 Introduction: Course Basics and the Alexander Sarcophagus
Smith: 190-192, 226 (italicized numbers are image numbers, not page numbers)
Pollitt: 38-41
- W 27 Archaic and Classical Art
Blackboard [pdf files under Course Content tab]: Survey of Archaic and Classical style from Marilyn Stokstad, *History of Art*, vol. I pp. 121-129, 132-133, 137, 143-145, 160-164

September

- M 1 Labor Day: No Class
- W 3 Wrap up Archaic and Classical Art
Review previous reading assignment
The Precepts of Hellenistic style in Art and Architecture
Pollitt pp. 1-18
- M 8 Precepts, Styles and Themes in Hellenistic Art
Smith: Bronze Boxer (Terme Boxer) 54, 62
Blackboard: Lucilla Burn, "Themes in Hellenistic Art", Chapter 5, pp. 138-154
Blackboard: Waldemar Heckel, *The Wars of Alexander the Great*, 13-27
- W 10 Macedonia in the 4th century BCE: Rise of the Argeads and The Royal Tombs at Vergina
Blackboard: Manolis Andronicos, *Vergina: The Royal Tombs*
- M 15 Alexander: History, Myth and Image
Blackboard: Heckel, 28-34, 81-89
Pollitt pp. 31-45; 59-78
- W 17 Lysippos and the Court Artists: Image-makers
Pollitt pp. 47-58
- M 22 Pergamon: Attalids, Gauls and the Pergamene "School"
Pollitt, pp. 79-97
Review 1: Faklaris article review due in class, no digital submissions accepted.
- W 24 Pergamon: The Altar of Zeus
Pollitt, pp. 97-110; 230-235

- M 29 Pergamon: The City and the Lesser Attalid Monument in Athens
Blackboard: John Freely, "Pergamum" in *Classical Turkey*, 27-40

October

- W 1 **Exam I (from the start of the semester through all Pergamon material)**

- M 6 Hellenistic City Planning and Sanctuaries: Priene
Blackboard:
Lucilla Burn, "Hellenistic Cities" from *Hellenistic Art*, Chapter 3,
pp. 79-88; 94-99
John Freely, "Priene" in *Classical Turkey*, 62
Pollitt, pp. 230-249

- W 8 Hellenistic Sanctuaries: Didyma and Kos
Blackboard:
J. Freely, 73-77, Temple of Apollo at Didyma in *Classical Turkey*
(Review Pollitt reading from previous class)

- M 13 **Columbus Day: No Class, but...**

- Tuesday 14th** Hellenistic Technology
Download handout from Blackboard (Assignments module) and bring it to class

- M 20 Hellenistic Luxury Arts
Blackboard: Dyfri Williams and Jack Ogden, *Greek Gold: Jewelry of the Classical World*

- W 22 Hellenistic Painting and Mosaics
Pollitt, pp. 185-229
Review Article 2: Villianatos article review due in class, no digital submissions accepted.

- M 27 Hellenistic Sculpture: New and Evolving Physical Forms
Smith (italicized numbers are image numbers; regular font is page number):
Belvedere Torso, 133, *165*
Old Fisherman, 138-139, *178-9*
Sleeping Hermaphrodite, 133-4, *169.1-2*
Barberini Faun, 135, *168*
Pollitt
Mahdia Dwarf, 138
Archaizing Athena, 183-4
Metropolitan Dancing youth
<http://www.metmuseum.org/Collections/search-the-collections/130015912?rpp=20&pg=1&ft=hellenistic+dancing+youth&pos=3>

- W 29 Hellenistic Sculpture: Images of Women and Children
Smith:
Aphrodite of Melos, 79-83, *305*
Aphrodite and Pan Group ("Slipper Slapper"), *314*

“Old Women”, 137-8, 174, 175
Boy with Goose, 136, 170
Bronze Eros, 66, 84
Artemision Horse and Jockey, 54, 58

Pollitt:

Baker Dancer, 270

November

M 3 **Exam 2 (Hellenistic City Planning and Sanctuaries through Women & Children Sculpture)**

W 5 Hellenistic Sculpture, playing with scale: Tanagra Figurines and Groups

Tanagra Figurines:

Web resource: http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/tafg/hd_tafg.htm

Smith:

Hanging Marsyas Group, 106-7, 135

Nike of Samothrace, 77-9, 97

M 10 Alexandria and Hellenistic Egypt

Pollitt, pp. 250-263

W 12 Alexandria and Hellenistic Egypt

Blackboard: “Cleopatra” and “Ptolemaic Egypt” excerpts from *Cleopatra: The Search for the Last Queen of Egypt* edited by Zahi Hawass and Franck Goddio

Review Article 3: Walker article review due in class, no digital submissions accepted.

M 17 The Ptolemaic Dynasty and Cleopatra in Egypt

Pollitt 257-259 (“Tazza Farnese”)

Review Hawass and Goddio selections (Blackboard)

W 19 Gandharan Art and the Fringes of Hellenistic Style in the East

Blackboard: Kurt Berhendt, *The Art of Gandhara*, (“Gandhara and Diffusion” pdf file)

www.nemrud.nl

Under “Tourist Information” tab, Look at “Photos”; “History Kommagene” King Mithridates Kallinikos, King Antiochus Theos, and Art; and “Nemrud Tour”

Pollitt pp. 274-275 (“Nemrud Dagh”)

M 24 **To Be Announced**

Thanksgiving Break November 26-29

December

M 1 Rome and Hellenistic Style in the West

Smith:

Terme Ruler, 19-20, 3

Laocoon, 108-110, 143
Sanctuary at Palestrina (<http://australis.www2.50megs.com/Fortuna/1.html>)

W 3 Rome and Hellenistic Style in the Empire

Smith

Sperlonga, 110-111, 144-147

Farnese Bull Group, 108, 142 and

<http://www.mlahanas.de/Greeks/Mythology/AmphionAndZethus.html>

Final Exams are from December 10th to 17th

Consult Final Exam Schedule for date/time of Exam 3 and make travel plans accordingly

<http://registrar.gmu.edu/calendars/fall-2014/exams/>

Article Review Instructions

The goals of this assignment include increased analytical comprehension and clarity in writing skills. You will write on two of the following three articles (each is available on JSTOR):

1. P.B. Faklaris, "Aegae: Determining the Site of the First Capital of the Macedonians," *American Journal of Archaeology* 98.4 (1994): 609-616. Due September 22nd
2. Evaggelos Vallianatos, "Deciphering and Appeasing the Heavens: The History and Fate of an Ancient Greek Computer," *Leonardo* 45.3 (2012): 250-257. The article is accessible on JSTOR but through a convoluted process; a pdf copy is easily available under Course Content on our Blackboard page. Due October 22nd
3. Susan Walker, "Cleopatra in Pompeii?," *Papers of the British School at Rome* 76 (2008): 35-46, 345-348 (plates). Due November 12th

Basics for each of the two reviews:

500-600 words (include word count, do not exceed 700 words)

Margins: 1.5 inches (left), 1 inch (top, bottom, right)

Double spaced

Follow all standard rules of English grammar and syntax . If you are concerned about your technical skills, visit one of the Writing Centers on campus. They are here to assist you, and they can be very helpful.

Proofread: careless errors will negatively impact your grade.

Hard copies only. No digital submissions will be accepted.

You should read the material in the textbook or on Blackboard directly related to each article before reading the article itself. This material will act as a base-line for your critique of the scholarly ideas presented in the articles.

Below is a suggested organization for your review. You do not have to follow this sequence exactly, but you must cover all of the elements listed below.

Paragraph/section 1: What is the primary argument of the article? Is it a new idea? Modification of an existing idea? What is the "standard" view as presented in text or lecture? How—specifically—does this article seek to change or modify a traditionally held view?

Paragraph/section 2: What is the methodology used in the article? Is there new evidence or a re-interpretation of existing evidence? Does the analysis rely on formal/stylistic characteristics, technical details, or context (historical or literary documentation)? Describe **two** pieces of evidence or lines of argumentation used by the author to make the case. Be as specific as you can given the constraints of the word count.

Paragraph/section 3: Do you accept the author's proposal? Explain why or why not. Be specific in your critique: is the evidence sufficient for the new reading? Is the article well organized? Does it pass the essential test: common sense? Finally, do you think that this is a significant contribution to the scholarship on this topic: why or why not? Note: critiques can be positive or negative, but they are not simply "like/dislike". You must provide substantive analysis to support your view.