

ARTH 440/599 Fall 2012
Originals, Imitations, and Fakes: Rethinking Authorship in Art
Thursdays, 4:30-7:10, Research Hall 202

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Art history textbooks, museum displays and results of art auctions attribute cultural and monetary values to “original” works of art. A closer examination of the theory and practice of art-making suggests, however, that deciding what qualifies as an autograph work can be a complicated matter. This course explores how the definitions of “authenticity” and “authorship” have shifted over time. We will consider how traditional practices in artists’ workshops influence our understanding of “personal styles.” We will also analyze historical treatises and ask how patrons and collectors in different periods regarded copies and imitations. We will examine various forms of appropriation—e.g., copying, emulation, quotation, parody—and how they relate to the functions of works of art. Case studies will be drawn from different periods in the history of Western art. This seminar-style course will be offered as ARTH 440 and 599. Taking the course on the graduate level will require extra work but all students will be expected to fully participate in discussions. Reading and writing assignments, in-class discussions and presentations will help students develop skills in visual analysis, critical reading and art historical research.

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%

PLEASE NOTE: In the interest of fairness, papers *must* be submitted on time to receive full credit. Students will incur a 3% 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.

Readings

There are 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. 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. You will fail the course if you miss more than 50% of the class meetings.

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 week 2 to week 9, choose at least 6 weeks to submit 250-word responses to the readings. These responses must be posted on Blackboard by 3:30 pm on the day we discuss the relevant topic in class. Please see page 7 for further instructions.

Response Papers

Out of the 6 weekly postings, choose two to expand into a longer, more formal response papers. Hard copies of response papers are due the week after we discuss the relevant topic. Please see page 7 for specific instructions.

Research project

One of the major objectives of this course is to help you acquire 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 November 15, November 29, December 6. A draft of your final paper (10-12 pages for ARTH 440; 15-20 pages for ARTH 599) is due on November 8, with the final version due on December 13. You can submit your draft and final paper electronically to Blackboard.

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 grade.

Add-drop deadlines

Please note the following add-drop deadlines:

September 4, 2012	Last day to add a class
	Last day to drop a class with no tuition penalty
September 18, 2012	Last day to drop a class with 33% tuition penalty
September 28, 2012	Final drop deadline with 67% tuition penalty
October 1 to 26	Selective withdrawal (undergraduates only)

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

Tech requirements and policy

All students must activate their e-mail accounts on campus. I will ONLY use your GMU email addresses. If you prefer to use a commercial account, you must activate the forwarder on your GMU account. Readings, course updates, information on assignments and examinations will be available on Blackboard.

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.

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.

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.

Students with disabilities

Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should see me and contact the Office for Disability Services (ODS) at 993-2474, <http://ods.gmu.edu>. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the ODS. If you qualify for accommodation, the ODS staff will give you a form detailing appropriate accommodations for your instructor. Please note that this form must be provided to me at least two weeks before the first test.

SCHEDULE

Readings to be announced in class.

Week 1 August 30

Introduction and overview

Week 2 September 6

Originality, Authorship, Authenticity: Basic Terms and Concepts

Week 3 September 13

Speaking the Language: Conventions and Visual Communication

Week 4 September 20

Changing Status of the Artist in Early Modern Europe

Week 5 September 27

Chronology and Primacy.

*Guest talk (details to follow) first half of class meeting

Week 6 October 4

The Economics of Artistic Production

***Paper proposal due.**

Week 7 October 11

Authorship in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction

***Bibliography due**

Week 8 October 18

Imitation and Invention

Week 9 October 25

Repetition, Emulation, and the Construction of Artistic Identity

Week 10 November 1

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

Week 11 November 8

Authenticity, Appropriation, Forgery: Engaging the Past

***Draft of final paper due**

Week 12 November 15

Student Presentations

Week 13 November 22

Thanksgiving

Week 14 November 29
Student Presentations

Week 15 December 6
Student Presentations

Exam period December 13

***Final paper due. Upload to Blackboard by 11:59 pm.**