

**ARTH 599-05/HIST 635-002 Fall 2021**  
**Creating Value: Making and Selling Art in Early Modern Europe**  
Thursday 4:30 – 7:10, Art & Design L008

Instructor: Dr. Angela Ho  
Email: aho5@gmu.edu  
Office: Horizon Hall 3143

Office Hours: Monday 12 – 2 (virtual), Tuesday 2 – 3, Thursday 2 – 3

To make an appointment, please sign in to [Navigate Mason](#), find me and select the service “Art History Course Office Hours.” Alternatively, you can use this link:

<https://gmucampus.eab.com/pal/LV1F64TukI>. If you cannot meet during my office hours, please email me for other arrangements.

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 critical thinking skills;
- Develop the skills of historical research and writing;
- Develop an interdisciplinary approach to studying issues of value in art.

### **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. Please check your GMU email regularly, preferably daily, since that is the only way your professors and the university can communicate with you. Otherwise, you may miss out on important information and messages.
- [Blackboard](#) is where you will find most of the course materials, including:
  - Readings and lecture slide shows in weekly folders;
  - Discussion board;
  - Instructions for submitting your work;
  - Grades and feedback on graded assignments.

- It is a good idea to install Microsoft Office, which is available to you through GMU. See [this page](#) for instructions.
- For graduate students, I highly recommend installing and learning to use Zotero (developed right here at the RRCHNM and free!).

### Course Format and Requirements

This course will be conducted as a seminar. In a seminar, learning happens when we are discussing readings and visual materials. Your engagement with the readings and your ability to apply the ideas presented in them will be assessed based on:

- Your participation in discussions, both on the Discussion Board and in class;
- 3 Formal response papers;
- Final project with multi-stage submissions.

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.

### Breakdown of course grade

Discussion board posts	25%
Participation	15%
Response papers	20%
Final project	40%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposal</li> <li>• Bibliography</li> <li>• Draft</li> <li>• Final submission</li> </ul>	

### Grading scale

A+ (97-100)	A (93-96.5)	A- (90-92.5)	Excellent performance
B+ (87-89.5)	B (83-86.5)	B- (80-82.5)	Good to very good
C+ (77-79.5)	C (73-76.5)	C- (70-72.5)	Satisfactory to average
		D (60-69.5)	Below average; marginally acceptable
		F (<60)	Unacceptable

### Readings and Participation

Weekly readings include articles and book excerpts and will be available on [Blackboard](#).

Informed participation on the discussion board and in class sessions are 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 in your discussion board posts) will be a C+. You build on that grade with thoughtful contributions to both the online and in-person forums.

If you cannot attend class or post responses on time 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, should be submitted to me in a timely fashion.

Otherwise, after one missed class meeting, 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 on the discussion board and in class. Constructive comments and criticism are welcome, but please be mindful of and respect one another's views.

### **Discussion Board**

Each week, I will start a forum with questions on the readings. Please submit a post (about 150 – 200 words) by **4:30 on the Wednesday** before we meet to discuss the relevant topic in class. Feel free to respond to one another's posts but, again, please be constructive and respectful in your comments. See page 8 for more details.

### **Response Papers**

From weeks 2 to 11, choose three of your discussion posts to expand into formal response papers (3 to 4 pages). **At least two must be on readings from week 2 to week 8.** Upload response papers to Blackboard by the end of Friday of the week following our discussion of the relevant topic. For example, if you want to write a paper about the readings for week 2, you will submit it by Friday in week 3. Please see page 8 for specific instructions.

### **Final 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. A draft of your final paper (12 – 15 pages is due by the end of the day on November 11. I will provide extensive comments and suggestions for revising the paper. The final revised paper is due by the end of the day on December 9. You can submit your draft and final paper electronically to Blackboard.

PLEASE NOTE: In the interest of fairness, written work 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.

### **Add-drop deadlines**

Please note the following add-drop deadlines:

August 30, 2021	Last day to add a class
September 7	Last day to drop a class with 100% tuition refund
September 14	Last day to drop a class with 50% tuition refund
September 15 – 27	Unrestricted withdrawal period (no tuition refund)

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

### **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.

**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. 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.*

**Standards of Academic integrity**

Strict adherence to the Honor Code as defined in the undergraduate catalogue is expected. Plagiarism, cheating, 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

**Week 1** August 26

### **Introduction and Overview**

Please read this New York Times article before class if you can:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/12/arts/design/titian-isabella-stewart-gardner-museum-review.html?action=click&module=Well&pgtype=Homepage&section=Arts>.

**Week 2** September 2

### **Value(s) and Price**

- Igor Kopytoff, “The Cultural Biography of Things: Commoditization as Process” (excerpts), in *A History of the Western Art Market: A Sourcebook of Writings on Artists, Dealers, and Markets*, ed. Titia Hulst (Oakland: University of California Press), 32-38.
- Michael Hutter and Richard Shusterman, “Value and Valuation of Art in Economic and Aesthetic Theory” (excerpts), in *A History of the Western Art Market: A Sourcebook of Writings on Artists, Dealers, and Markets*, ed. Titia Hulst (Oakland: University of California Press), 40-42.
- Olav Velthuis, “Symbolic Meanings of Prices” (excerpts), in *A History of the Western Art Market: A Sourcebook of Writings on Artists, Dealers, and Markets*, ed. Titia Hulst (Oakland: University of California Press), 51-54.

**Week 3** September 9

### **Wealth, Status, and Art in Renaissance Italy**

- Richard Goldthwaite, *Wealth and the Demand for Art in Italy, 1300-1600* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1993), 1-9.
- 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), 17-35.

**Week 4** September 16

### **The Patronage Game: Players and Rules**

- 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.
- Rembrandt’s letters to Constantijn Huygens, c. 1639 (excerpts), in *A History of the Western Art Market: A Sourcebook of Writings on Artists, Dealers, and Markets*, ed. Titia Hulst (Oakland: University of California Press), 176-179.

**Week 5**            September 23

**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), 67-109.
- 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**            September 30

**Library session**

**Rise of the Art Market in Northern Europe**

- John Michael Montias, "Cost and Value in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Art," *Art History* 10 (1987): 455-66.
- Eric Jan Sluijter, "Determining Value on the Art Market in the Golden Age: An Introduction," in *Art Market and Connoisseurship*, ed. Anna Rummens and Koenraad Jonckheere (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2008), 7-28.

**Week 7**            October 7

**Paper proposal due**

**Taste and Distinction**

- Elizabeth Honig, *Painting and the Market in Early Modern Antwerp* (New Haven and London: Yale University, 1998), 196-209.
- Angela Ho, *Creating Distinctions in Dutch Genre Painting: Repetition and Invention* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2017), 38-51.

**Week 8**            October 14

**Bibliography due**

**Authorship and Identity**

- Josua Bruyn et al, *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1982), vol. 1, ix-xx.
- Jeffrey Muller, "Measures of Authenticity: The Detection of Copies in the Early Literature on Connoisseurship," *Studies in the History of Art* 20 (1989): 141-149.
- Larry Silver, "Second Bosch: Family Resemblance and the Marketing of Art," in *Peasant Scenes and Landscapes: the Rise of Pictorial Genres in the Antwerp Art Market* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), 133-159.

**Week 9**            October 21

**Multiples, Knock-offs, and Fakes**

- 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*, ed. Neil de Marchi and Hans van Miegroet (Turnhout: Brepols, 2006), 237-62.

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

**Week 10**      October 28

*Class does not meet (instructor at conference)*

**Week 11**      November 4

**The Gift Economy**

- Elizabeth Honig, “Art, Honor, and Excellence in Early Modern Europe,” in *Beyond Price: Value in Culture, Economics, and the Arts*, ed. M. Hutter and D. Throsby (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 89-105.
- 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.

**Week 12**      November 11

*Draft of final paper due*

Student presentations

**Week 13**      November 18

Student presentations

**Week 14**      November 25

*Thanksgiving break*

**Week 15**      December 2

Student presentations

**December 9, 11:59 pm      FINAL PAPER DUE**

ARTH 440/ARTH 599/HIST 635 Fall 2021  
**Weekly Readings, Discussion Board and Response Papers**

Participation in the weekly discussion board is an important component of this seminar. The purpose of this exercise is to help you develop critical reading skills, which in turn will enable you to understand art historical methods.

Reading critically does not mean gathering facts 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:

- What are the author's major arguments?
- 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?

**Discussion board**

I will post guiding questions for each week's readings on the discussion board in Blackboard. Respond to these questions in a post of about 150 – 200 words. This is an informal writing assignment; what I am looking for is not perfection but your active engagement with the readings. Demonstrate your understanding of the readings by identifying the main arguments, but feel free to ask your own questions about the parts that you find particularly difficult or provocative.

**Response papers**

ARTH 440 are required to write two longer, more formal response papers on the readings (about 3 – 4 pages). ARTH 599 and HIST 635 students, please submit three. Turn in the response paper on Friday of the week following our discussion of the relevant topic. For example, if you want to write a paper about the readings for week 2, you will submit it on Friday in week 3. One of the papers for ARTH 440 and two for ARTH 599 or HIST 635 must be on readings for weeks 2 to 8.

The response paper is a formal written assignment. You are expected to go into greater detail in this paper than in your informal post, and the class discussion should help you refine or adjust your initial ideas. The paper should be proofread, with proper citations.

If you draw on your classmates' posts 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.