

ARTH 344 Fall 2023  
**Faith, Power, Spectacle: Baroque Art of Italy, France, and Spain**  
MW 10:30-11:45 Art and Design L008

Instructor: Dr. Angela Ho  
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Office: Horizon 3143  
Office Hours: Tuesday 2:30 – 4 (in person or virtual)  
Wednesday 12:30 – 2 (in person or virtual)

Please make an appointment on Navigate: <https://gmucampus.eab.com/pal/LV1F64TukI>. If you cannot meet during my office hours, please email me to make other arrangements.

Caravaggio, Bernini, Velázquez—these artists' works embody the dynamism and drama of the Baroque. This course examines the ways in which they and their peers in Italy, France and Spain responded to the political, religious and social transformations in the late 16<sup>th</sup> to the early 18<sup>th</sup> century. The topics we will cover include the developing theories of artistic originality and creation; the creation of a visual culture of the triumphant Catholic Church; the impact of expanding monarchical power on artistic production. We will study how these colliding forces spurred artistic innovations in a period of religious wars and European colonialism. Lectures, discussions, and assignments are designed to help students situate works of art within their historical context and develop the skills of visual analysis, critical reading, and writing. ARTH 344 fulfills the Mason Core requirement in the arts.

### **Course Objectives**

This course is designed to help you not only to gain a familiarity with major monuments and artists of the Baroque period in Catholic Europe, but also to encourage you to consider topics of broader relevance, such as the value and functions of art in society. During the course of this semester, you will:

- Acquire and develop the skills of visual analysis and interpretation;
- Learn to situate the works of art in their social and cultural contexts;
- Learn to read primary and secondary sources critically;
- Develop the skills to present observations and arguments in academic writing.

Lectures, discussions, and reading and paper assignments are designed to help you achieve these learning objectives.

This course satisfies the following learning outcomes specified in the guidelines for Mason Core (Arts) courses:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between artistic process, and a work's underlying concept, and where appropriate, contexts associated with the work.
2. Identify and analyze the formal elements of a particular art form using vocabulary and critique appropriate to that form.
3. Analyze cultural productions using standards appropriate to the form, as well as the works cultural significance and context.
4. Analyze and interpret the content of material or performance culture through its social, historical, and personal contexts.

## Textbook and Readings

There are no required textbooks for this course. All required readings will be posted on Blackboard each week. These include texts on historical context, studies of particular artists, or discussions of methods and viewpoints in art history. We will discuss these texts in class, so please complete the readings assigned for the specific day before coming to class.

## Tech requirements and policy

- 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;
  - 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.

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

- Cell phones must be put on silent.
- Please do not engage in activities that are unrelated to class. Such disruptions show a lack of professionalism and may affect your participation grade.

## Course Requirements

Attendance and Participation	5%
Test 1	10%
Test 2	20%
Paper 1	15%
Paper 2	25%
Final exam	25%

**PLEASE NOTE:** 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 course without completing all requirements.

## 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

## Attendance and participation

It is important that you attend class regularly and on time. Doing the readings is NOT a substitute for coming to lectures, because in class I will synthesize and present information from various sources, and I will often use monuments to explore specific themes. Your starting

attendance/participation grade (i.e., you attend all lectures but do little else) will be a B-. Active, informed participation in discussion will improve that grade. Conversely, more than two unexcused absences, chronic late attendance, or disruptive behavior will negatively affect your grade. If you are unable to attend class because of medical or family emergency, please provide me with documentation as soon as possible.

### **Tests and Final exam**

There will be 2 tests and a final exam. You will be evaluated on your ability to identify and discuss major monuments, as well as your grasp on the themes introduced in lectures and readings. Tests and exams involve identification of slides and short essays in response to guiding questions. I will provide detailed information over the course of the semester.

**NB:** THERE WILL BE NO MAKE-UP TESTS OR EXAMS WITHOUT WRITTEN DOCUMENTATION OF ILLNESS, FAMILY EMERGENCIES, ETC. Please notify me as soon as possible if you have problems.

### **Papers**

There are two paper assignments for this course. The first assignment, due in week 8, will be an analysis of a scholarly article. The second will be a museum exhibition proposal due in week 13. Detailed instructions will be provided later in the semester.

**NB:** In the interest of fairness, papers **MUST** be submitted on time to receive full credit. I will provide instructions on uploading your papers to Blackboard. Students will incur a 3% penalty per day for late papers. Papers more than 10 days late will not be accepted. In cases of medical or other serious problems, please document them and let me know as soon as possible.

### **Religious Holidays**

Please consult the George Mason religious holiday calendar here: <https://ulife.gmu.edu/religious-holiday-calendar/>

If religious observances will require an adjustment to your course schedule, please let me know within the first two weeks of class.

### **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 paper is due. You may also consider consulting the Writing Center (<https://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>).

### **Standards of Academic integrity**

The integrity of the University community is affected by the individual choices made by each of us. Mason has an Honor Code with clear guidelines regarding academic integrity. We need to follow three fundamental principles at all times: (1) all work submitted be your own; (2) when using the work or ideas of others, including fellow students, give full credit through accurate citations; and (3) if you are uncertain about the ground rules on a particular assignment, ask for clarification. Plagiarism is the equivalent of intellectual robbery and cannot be tolerated in the

academic setting. Please consult the Office for Academic Integrity for a full description of the code and the honor committee process.

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.

### **Students with disabilities**

Disability Services at George Mason University is committed to upholding the letter and spirit of the laws that ensure equal treatment of people with disabilities. Under the administration of University Life, Disability Services implements and coordinates reasonable accommodations and disability-related services that afford equal access to university programs and activities. Students can begin the registration process with Disability Services at any time during their enrollment at George Mason University. If you are seeking accommodations, please visit <http://ds.gmu.edu/> for detailed information about the Disability Services registration process. Disability Services is located in Student Union Building I (SUB I), Suite 2500. Email: [ods@gmu.edu](mailto:ods@gmu.edu) | Phone: (703) 993-2474

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.

### **Diversity**

George Mason University values the diversity of its students. The University's Office of Diversity, Inclusion, and Multicultural Education (ODIME) seeks to create and sustain inclusive learning environments where all are welcomed, valued, and supported. Harmful or hateful behavior will not be tolerated.

### **Proper Etiquette for our Course**

Rules of respect and etiquette are important in this course. Some of the material we will deal with in this class may be controversial, and in some cases, politically loaded or difficult. Each student is expected to treat their fellow students and Instructor with respect, and treat all persons fairly and kindly. Our classroom is a safe, open space for the exchange and debate of ideas. Please respect your fellow students and listen to everyone's comments. Please do your part to help us maintain a supportive, amicable and also challenging place for learning.

### **Student Privacy**

Student privacy is governed by Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Students must use their MasonLive email account to receive important University information, including communications related to this class. I will not respond to messages sent from or send messages to a non-Mason email address. For Mason's policy on student privacy, please see <https://registrar.gmu.edu/ferpa/>.

### **Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct, and Interpersonal Violence**

George Mason University is committed to providing a learning, living and working environment that is free from discrimination and a campus that is free of sexual misconduct and other acts of

interpersonal violence in order to promote community well-being and student success. We encourage students and employees who believe that they have been sexually harassed, sexually assaulted or subjected to sexual or interpersonal misconduct to seek assistance and support. Please consult [University Policy 1202: Sexual Harassment and Misconduct](#) for the specifics of Mason's process, the resources, and the options available to students and employees.

*Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual or interpersonal misconduct:* As a faculty member, I am designated as a "Non-Confidential Employee," and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, stalking, sexual exploitation, complicity, and retaliation to Mason's Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1202. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason's confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center (SSAC) at 703-380-1434 or Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance or support measures from Mason's Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing [titleix@gmu.edu](mailto:titleix@gmu.edu).

### **Add-drop deadlines**

Please note the following add-drop deadlines:

August 28	Last day to add a class
September 5	Last day to drop a class (100% tuition refund)
September 12	Last day to drop (50% tuition refund)
September 13 – 26	Unrestricted withdrawal period (NO tuition refund)
September 27 – October 23	Selective 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.

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## **SCHEDULE**

(Advance notice of changes will be provided)

### ***Part I: Classicism and Naturalism in Italian Painting***

#### **Week 1**

August 21      Introduction to the course  
August 23      The Legacy of the 16<sup>th</sup> Century

#### **Readings:**

Neuman, Robert. *Baroque and Rococo Art and Architecture*, 31-40. Boston: Pearson, 2013.

"Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent." In *Italian Art 1500-1600: Sources and Documents*, eds. Robert Klein and Henri Zerner (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1966), 119-22.

Paleotti, Gabriele. *Discourse on Sacred and Profane Images*, 1582, book II, chapter 33. In Klein and Zerner, 124-29.

#### **Week 2**

August 28      Religious Reform and the Reform of Art: The Carracci in Bologna

August 30 Annibale Carracci in Rome

Readings:

Harris, Ann Sutherland. *Seventeenth-Century Art and Architecture*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 23-33. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson/Prentice Hall, 2008.

Bellori, Giovan Pietro. "'Life' of Carracci." In *Italy and Spain, 1600-1750*, eds. Rober Enggass and Jonathan Brown, 69-75. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1970.

### **Week 3**

September 4 Labor Day (class does not meet)

September 6 Classicism and the Imitation/Originality Debate

Readings:

TBA

### **Week 4**

September 11 Caravaggio: Understanding "Naturalism"

September 13 Drama and Decorum: Caravaggio's Religious Works

Readings:

Harris, Ann Sutherland. *Seventeenth-Century Art and Architecture*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 33-49. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson/Prentice Hall, 2008.

Bellori, Giovan Pietro. "'Life' of Caravaggio." In *Italy and Spain, 1600-1750*, eds. Rober Enggass and Jonathan Brown, 78-84. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1970.

Varriano, John. "Caravaggio and Religion." In *Saints and Sinners: Caravaggio and the Baroque Image*, ed. Franco Mormando, 191-205. Boston: Charles S. and Isabella V. McMullen Museum of Art, Boston College, 1999.

### **Week 5**

September 18 Caravaggio and Artemisia Gentileschi: Gender, Sexuality and Myth of the Artist

#### ***Part II: Spectacle in Counter Reformation Rome***

September 20 Architectural Innovations: Bernini and Borromini in Rome

Readings:

Salomon, Nanette. "Judging Artemisia: A Baroque Woman in Modern Art History." In *The Artemisia Files*, ed. Mieke Bal, 33-61. Chicago and London: University of Chicago, 2005.

Neuman, Robert. *Baroque and Rococo Art and Architecture*, 115-129. Boston: Pearson, 2013.

### **Week 6**

September 25 Dynamism and Virtuosity: Bernini's Sculpture

September 27 **Test 1**

Readings:

Harris, Ann Sutherland. *Seventeenth-Century Art and Architecture*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 85-91. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson/Prentice Hall, 2008.

### **Week 7**

October 2 Faith and Spectacle: Bernini's "Beautiful Synthesis"

October 4 Miracles Made to Order: Ceiling Frescoes in Rome

Readings:

Warwick, Genevieve. *Bernini: Art as Theatre*, 66-77. New Haven and London: Yale University

Press, 2012.

### ***Part III: Art in 17<sup>th</sup>-Century France***

#### **Week 8**

October 10 France: Visualizing Monarchical Power in Paris and Versailles

October 11 Classicism and Naturalism in French Painting

#### **Paper 1 due**

Readings:

Harris, Ann Sutherland. *Seventeenth-Century Art and Architecture*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 252-263; 270-284. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson/Prentice Hall, 2008.

#### **Week 9**

October 16 Nicolas Poussin: The Artist as Theorist

October 18 The Royal Academy: Art in the Service of the Monarchy

Readings:

Barker, Emma. "The Arcadian Shepherds: A Painting by Poussin," in *Academies, Museums and Canons of Art*, ed. Gill Perry and Colin Cunningham, 25-42. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999.

#### **Week 10**

October 23 Landscape and Genre Painting in France

### ***Part IV: Art in 17<sup>th</sup>-Century Spain***

October 25 Royal Defenders of the Catholic Faith: The Habsburg Rulers of Spain

Readings:

Tomlinson, Janis. *From El Greco to Goya: Painting in Spain 1561-1828*, 9-14; 21-34. London: Laurence King Publishing, 2012.

#### **Week 11**

October 30 Picturing Piety: El Greco and Ribera

November 1 **Test 2**

Readings:

Tomlinson, Janis. *From El Greco to Goya: Painting in Spain 1561-1828*, 34-38; 43-56. London: Laurence King Publishing, 2012

#### **Week 12**

November 6 Naturalism in Seville: Zurbáran and Velázquez

November 8 Velázquez at the Royal Court

Readings:

Tomlinson, Janis. *From El Greco to Goya: Painting in Spain 1561-1828*, 67-73; 86-100. London: Laurence King Publishing, 2012

#### **Week 13**

November 13 Velázquez's *Las Meninas*

November 15 Painting in Spain, 1650-1700; Sculpture in Spain

Readings:

Brown, Jonathan. "On the Meaning of 'Las Meninas'" in *Images and Ideas in 17th Century Spanish Painting*, 87-110. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978.  
Tomlinson, Janis. *From El Greco to Goya: Painting in Spain 1561-1828*, 74-81. London: Laurence King Publishing, 2012

#### **Week 14**

November 20 Imperialism and Evangelism: Spain's Colonization of the Americas

##### **Paper 2 due**

November 22 *Thanksgiving (class does not meet)*

Readings:

Bailey, Gauvin Alexander. *Art of Colonial Latin America*, 4-16. London: Phaidon, 2005.

#### **Week 15**

November 27 Visualizing Colonial Life in Latin America

November 29 Conclusion and Review

Readings:

Bailey, Gauvin Alexander. *Art of Colonial Latin America*, 94-105. London: Phaidon, 2005.

Donahue-Wallace, Kelly. *Art and Architecture of Viceregal Latin America, 1521-1821*, 200-223.

Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2008.

**December 6 Final exam**