

CAS AH 354 IMAGE AND WORD IN VENETIAN RENAISSANCE ART

Prof. Katia Mazzucco

Office Hours: One hour per week, after class (day TBD) or by appointment
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Class Meets: 2 hours, twice a week
Credits: 4
Hub Units: 2 (AEX and WIN)

Course Description

How far did Venetian publishing of the early Cinquecento contribute in building European Renaissance? To what extent did Medieval eastern roots and Western influences act in shaping the unique Venetian visual culture, reflected, for instance, in the so-called byzantine paradigm? During the course students will also learn: how crucial elements of Renaissance art such as knowledge of antiquity, theory of perspective and anatomical studies dialogue with the visual art and architecture of this city where the environment deeply affects the artistic material culture; to what extent the political structure of the Serenissima was mirrored in the architectural and decoration program of Palazzo Ducale; and how far the routes of Venetian trades interact with the processes of artistic production in Venice, such in shaping the type of the casa-Fondaco. Through stylistic analysis, subjects and iconographical identifications, historical and cultural contextualization, this course explores Venetian visual culture and architecture from the Fourteenth century to the end of the Sixteenth century.

The course involves both in-class and on-site lessons. Students will learn to comprehend the complexity of Venetian artistic and cultural life, reconnecting past and present, by experiencing works of art in the physical and historical contexts for which they were originally created – as in the case of the peculiar artistic phenomenon of the Venetian altarpiece, or churches built as a monumental ex-voto. By the end of the course, students will be able to understand as well how Renaissance Venice relates to the modern and global city in relation to mass-tourism, tourism of art, as well as the dislocation of works of art in museums.

To help understand the Venetian case within the broader context of Italy as a whole, influential works of art in other prominent centers such as Florence, Rome and Padua will be discussed and analyzed in class and during site visits.

Prerequisites

Students will need to have successfully completed a First-Year Writing Seminar (e.g., CAS WR 100 or 120) prior to enrolling in this course.

BU Hub Learning Outcomes

This course satisfies the following requirements for the BU Hub:

Aesthetic Exploration (AEX) - Hub Learning Outcomes

1. *Students will demonstrate knowledge and appreciation of notable works in literature and/or the arts, including the cultural contexts in which those works were created, and be able to identify their ongoing significance and relevance.*
2. *Students will demonstrate the reasoning skills and vocabulary necessary to interpret a work of art (literature, music, visual arts, etc.)*
3. *Students will produce evaluative, analytical, or creative works that demonstrate an understanding of the characteristics—such as genres, modes, styles, and cultural history—of at least one literary or artistic medium.*

In order to meet the above AEX Hub learning outcomes, by the end of this course:

1. Students will show knowledge of notable works of Venetian art and architecture from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance (such as the churches of St. Mark and the Pala d'Oro, S. Maria Gloriosa dei Frari and the

Pala Pesaro by Titian, S. Giovanni Crisostomo and the altarpiece by Sebastano del Piombo). Students will demonstrate knowledge of the culture that produced those works and, through class study and site visits, will make comparisons with Renaissance artworks produced in Padua (Giotto's frescos in the Scrovegni Chapel and the Ovetari Chapel painted by Andrea Mantegna), Florence (the church of S. Maria Novella, the Rucellai Palace and other monuments of the Florentine Signoria, artworks exhibited in the Uffizi Galleries) and other cities preserving relevant works of the Italian Renaissance.

2. By using glossaries and through oral and written practice (eg. presentations, taccuino, report papers), students will acquire the skills and the vocabulary that allow them to formulate a critical analysis and an interpretation of the artworks studied.
3. Through a variety of assignments, students will show understanding of Renaissance history of art, genres, techniques, iconography, and cultural history using the appropriate terminology (eg. altarpiece, fresco, *fondaco*, *scuola*, *portico*).

Writing-Intensive (WIN) - Hub Learning Outcomes

1. Students will be able to craft responsible, considered, and well-structured written arguments, using media and modes of expression appropriate to the situation.
2. Students will be able to read with understanding, engagement, appreciation, and critical judgment.
3. Students will be able to write clearly and coherently in a range of genres and styles, integrating graphic and multimedia elements as appropriate.

In order to meet the above WIN Hub learning outcomes, by the end of this course students will be able to:

1. Improve their writing ability and the knowledge of specific vocabulary of art history by means of a personal notebook that is checked and evaluated by the instructor. In the notebook, students alternate written descriptions and analysis of artworks studied – particularly in person on site visits - including paintings, frescoes or monuments. By doing this, students learn how to classify, organize, memorize and summarize major concepts and contents. The notebook will help the students scaffold their writing for the 2 report papers. All assignments are meant to help build writing toward a final paper. The process of writing in this course will guide and teach students to conduct bibliographic research in order to support their readings of artworks. In addition to scaffolding, the instructor will engage the students in a revision process with essays as a teaching tool and to improve the quality of their writing.
2. Show understanding and appreciation of Renaissance art and architecture by engaging with readings, participating in interactive lectures, and by discussing about different styles and perspectives. Students will be exposed to different approaches to art history and criticism included in class materials, like the biographical approach by Vasari in his seminal work on the *Vite degli artisti*, or the modern contextual approach in Howard's *Architectural history of Venice*. By analyzing these readings, students will learn about forming an argument as a means to inform their own writing and acquire the specific vocabulary necessary to describe, analyze and interpret an artwork.
3. Through a variety of course assignments, students show the ability to use with competence the specific terminology and styles they have studied. They will, for example, write brief reflective papers, a longer and complex research paper, as well as synthetic reflections and classifications in their notebook.

Program Learning Outcomes

BU Global Programs/study abroad learning outcomes for BU Venice Studio Arts Program

<https://www.bu.edu/provost/planning/program-learning-outcomes-assessment/27362-2/#globallo>

- Students show knowledge of written and oral Italian at the beginner's levels, including the ability of interaction with locals in real life contexts.
- Students articulate an individual artistic voice and methodology that reflect their experience in Venice.
- Students develop knowledge with respect to at least one of the following areas: graphic design, painting, printmaking, drawing, glass, and art history.
- Students show an awareness of cultural difference and an understanding of culture's role in shaping beliefs and practices.

Instructional Format, Course Pedagogy, and Approach to Learning

The course is based on an active learning approach, and alternates in-class and on-site lessons, group discussions, and research papers that engage the class in writing as a process. Lessons are not simply to explain and review course content and readings, but also to learn how to organize cultural and aesthetic information and to formulate a critical analysis and interpretation with regard to the artworks studied. In class students will become familiar and make use of glossaries to learn the specific vocabulary of art and architecture and by practicing through oral and written tasks (eg. presentation, taccuino, report papers) they learn the appropriate context in which they must use specific words and concepts.

During on-site lessons students observe, actively identify and reasonably interpret the works of visual art and architecture studied. In addition to this, students explore and understand the different use of materials, colors, shapes, and relate it also to their studio practice.

During class meetings, students will discuss in groups assigned readings showing the ability to apply major aesthetic concepts as well as their critical thinking. Note taking is considered a consistent part of the course activities. Students will have a personal notebook and alternate written descriptions and analysis of artworks studied using sketches, drawings or photos, as appropriate. Using writing and visual media students will learn how to classify, organize, memorize and summarize major concepts and contents of each class.

The assignments are considered as analytical works through which students demonstrate an understanding of the characteristics - genres, modes, styles, media and technique and cultural history - of works of visual art and architecture treated during the course. Students will develop their writing skills appropriately using the specific vocabulary of art and architecture, learn to form well-written arguments informed by lectures and readings and learn how to conduct a reasonable bibliographic research and use the sources appropriately.

Grading and Assignments

Attendance and participation	15%
Sharing material	15%
Taccuino	10%
Midterm exam - slide test	20%
2 report papers	20% (8% + 12%)
Final paper	20%

Participation, attendance (slide identification, readings, timeline) (AEX)

Weekly assignments should be completed before each class. Last 40' of in-class lessons a group of students will discuss previous lessons slides (available on Blackboard) and readings and are required to re-elaborate pictures included in lessons slideshows in chronological order in a visual timeline in progress. All students will participate at the discussion of readings and pictures, and will complete possible lack of contents or contribute with more details.

By doing this, students will develop critical approach to readings and both textual and visual class material.

Sharing materials (AEX)

Students use office hours for discussing in advance their out-of-class time visits and trips. Pictures and sketches (or other form of visual notations) from personal experiences in the city, Italy and Europe will be collected and shared (available on Blackboard). Students must also to include sketches and pictures in the timeline file and to discuss in class their findings during "Slide identification, readings, timeline" discussions.

Through this assignment students will integrate class material on Venetian Renaissance within a broader context.

Taccuino (AEX, WIN)

Students will take written and visual notations from class, visits, readings, on a notebook and are encouraged to make use of it to support readings and timeline discussions. The students will meet the instructor at least two times during office hours, discussing the advancement of the work.

Students will learn how to use their notebook as a proper *taccuino* and device for organizing, elaborating, memorizing information.

Mid-term exam – Slide test (AEX, WIN)

The midterm slide test will include: n. synthetic written identifications (short captions); n. short written contextualization (caption, original context, current collocation, synthetic description).

Students will show to be able to make a visual identification, and hold a short written interpretation of selected works studied in class, on-site, included within the readings, as well as the written discussion and contextualization of some works they have never seen before on the basis of their similarity to others studied.

Works to be studied for this exam will be included in the course materials and in the PowerPoint presentations (available on Blackboard).

2 Report papers (AEX, WIN)

For the first report paper (1.5 spacing, 12-point type with 1-inch margins; Chicago manual of style) students will write 2 pages (plus images) on a work of art or monument to be studied on-site. The report paper should have the form of a catalog card, including: 2 pictures (original, where picture-taking is allowed, otherwise 2 sketches); 2 sketches of details; general information (full captions); short description of media and technique, subject, composition, function; short resume of the mentions of the work and/or author and/or workshop included in the class bibliography.

The first report paper will be sent via e-mail as a PDF file not editable within [...].

For the second report paper (1.5 spacing, 12-point type with 1-inch margins; Chicago manual of style) students will write 4 pages (plus images) on the class bibliography. The report paper should have the form of a review, including: short comments on the general content of the two textbooks (Humphrey and Howard) (2 pages, 1+1); a commented list of the different source books mentioned during classes (1 page); a short essay (1 page) on a single work of art or monument both included in the bibliography and studied on-site illustrated with 1 picture (original, where picture-taking is allowed, otherwise 1 sketch) plus sketch of details. The second report paper should include 2 more images of works of visual art and/or architecture included in the bibliography and visited during out-of-class time, plus related full captions (1 original picture, where picture-taking is allowed, otherwise 2 sketches + 2 sketches of details). Outline within [...]; second report paper to be sent via e-mail as a PDF file not editable within [...].

Final paper (AEX, WIN)

The final paper will be the analysis of (part of) one monograph discussed with the instructor; further bibliographic sources must refer to J-stor (via BU website) and to course readings (see Bibliography below). To complete their final paper students will visit one of the university libraries in Venice, and carry out on-site research by visiting and observing, taking notes and pictures, making sketches, specific artistic monuments and then crafting a discussion and analysis of findings. The paper (1.5 spacing, 12-point type with 1-inch margins; Chicago manual of style) should include: cover and title page (with cover image); index; text organized in paragraphs (7-8 pages, footnotes included) including introductory paragraph and 1 to 3 analysis paragraphs; pictures and drawings; bibliography; list of images. Monograph and title within [...]; detailed outline within [...]; final draft within [...]; final paper to be sent via e-mail as a PDF file not editable within [...].

- Students show knowledge of written and oral Italian at the beginner's levels, including the ability of interaction with locals in real life contexts.
- Students articulate an individual artistic voice and methodology that reflect their experience in Venice.
- Students develop knowledge with respect to at least one of the following areas: graphic design, painting, printmaking, drawing, glass, and art history.

- Students show an awareness of cultural difference and an understanding of culture's role in shaping beliefs and practices.

Course Material and Readings

Textbooks: (see schedule of classes)

Howard, Deborah. *The Architectural History of Venice*. New Haven & London : Yale University Press, 2002
 Humfrey, Peter. *Painting in Renaissance Venice*. New Haven & London : Yale University Press, [1995] 2001

Excerpts from the following books (see schedule of classes)

The Accademia Galleries in Venice, general catalogue, Milan: Electa [2009] 2018
 Patricia Fortini Brown. *Art and Life in Renaissance Venice*, New York: Prentice Hall, 1997
 Giulio Lorenzetti. *Venice and its Lagoon* [1926, 1956], John Guthrie trans., Trieste: Lint, 1975
 John T. Paoletti, Gary M. Radke. *Art in Renaissance Italy*, London: Laurence King, 1997
 Geraldine Johnson. *Renaissance art. A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005
 John Paoletti, Gary Radke. *Art in Renaissance Italy*, London: Laurence King, 1997

Excerpts and/or plates from the following on-line edition of source-books (see schedule of classes)

Jacopo da Varagine, *Legenda aurea – The Golden Legend, or, Lives of the Saints*, as englished by William Caxton [1483], London : published by J.M. Dent and Sons Ld., Aldine House, 1900-

<https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/basis/goldenlegend/>

Sebastiano Serlio, *Trattato di architettura*, IV Libro [Venezia: Marcolini 1537], III Libro [Venezia: Marcoli 1540], Libro I [1545], Libro V [Paris: de Vascosan 1547], Libro Extraordinario [Lyon: de Tournes 1551], Libro VII [Frankfurt am Main: Wechel 1575], Libro VI [MS], [Libro VIII, MS]

<http://architettura.cesr.univ-tours.fr/Traite/Auteur/Serlio.asp?param=>

Giorgio Vasari, *Lives of the Painters, Sculptors and Architects* [1550, 1568], 2 vols., trans. by Gaston du C. de Vere, 1912-14

<http://www.gutenberg.org/browse/authors/v#a9769>

Andrea Palladio, *I quattro libri dell'architettura*, Venice: De Franceschi, 1570

<http://architettura.cesr.univ-tours.fr/Traite/Images/LES1338Index.asp>

Glossary, lexicon, thesaurus

Howard, XIII-XVI

Getty Research Institute, *Art & Architecture Thesaurus*

<http://www.getty.edu/research/tools/vocabularies/aat/>

Class and University Policies

Examinations

All academic commitments must be completed before you leave the site; no incompletes are permitted. Students who do not complete a course on time will be given an F.

Students are required to sit their examinations on the dates, at the times, and in the same classroom as the other students in their class.

If a student is ill or has another extenuating circumstance which causes the student to be absent from a scheduled examination, he/she must provide appropriate documentation and receive approval from the Director.

Attendance

Students should note that attendance will be taken into account by faculty. Boston University Venice students are expected to attend each and every class session, tutorial, on-site class, internship work appointment, and activity

required for the class as indicated in the syllabus. Any student with irregular class attendance may have his/her final grade penalized.

Absences

Unjustified absences from class, and any class related activity, will affect the students' participation grade, which will be lowered by one letter grade for each absence.

Absence for Religious Reasons

According to Chapter 151C of the General Laws, Commonwealth of Massachusetts, any student in an educational or vocational training institution, other than a religious or denominational educational or vocational training institution, who is unable, because of his or her religious beliefs, to attend classes or to participate in any examination, study, or work requirement on a particular day, shall be excused from any such examination or study or work requirement, and shall be provided with an opportunity to make up such examination, study, or work requirement that may have been missed because of such absence on any particular day; provided, however, that such makeup examinations or work shall not create an unreasonable burden upon such school. No fees of any kind shall be charged by the institution for making available to the said students such opportunity. No adverse or prejudicial effects shall result to students because of their availing themselves of the provisions of this section. Students who have questions about practicing their religion while abroad should contact Boston University Study Abroad.

Lateness

Students arriving more than 10 minutes after the posted class start time will be marked as late. Being late three times is equivalent to missing one class.

Late Assignments

Students are expected to turn in all course assignments on time as stated in each course syllabus. Late assignments will not be accepted and missed assignments will automatically be awarded an F. Please note that all coursework must be completed by the end of the program.

Plagiarism

Simply stated, plagiarism is taking another's work and presenting it as you own. Definitions of plagiarism frequently include terms such as 'theft' or 'steal'. Plagiarism is, in fact, intellectual theft. It is one of the most serious forms of academic misconduct. Plagiarism committed by a student will certainly result in course failure and may result in suspension or dismissal. For more details please see Boston University's Code of Student Responsibilities: <http://www.bu.edu/lifebook/universitypolicies/policies-code.html>

Disability accommodations

If you are a student with a disability or believe you might have a disability that requires accommodations, please contact the Disability and Access Services office (DAS) at 617-353- 3658 to coordinate any reasonable accommodation requests. For more information, please visit: <http://www.bu.edu/disability>

Interruption of program or early departure

Only in serious cases – mostly related to medical emergencies – the Director will allow a student to take a significant break during the program or to leave before its official conclusion. Official written approval must be received by the Director.

Academic Advice

The Director and Assistant Academic Director serve as the head of the faculty and as academic advisors. The Director/Assistant Academic Director is available on an appointment basis to assist students with academic issues. For academic advice regarding students' home institutions' policies and transfer credit information, non-Boston students should also contact their school's academic advisors.

Tutorials

BU faculty are available by appointment for students who may need support in the learning process. We strongly encourage you to take advantage of this resource. Students in the past found it very useful to succeed. Students who receive a C on a test must seek support from faculty.

Schedule of Classes and Assignments

Class 1

In-class lesson: Visual elements of the myth of Venice: introduction to the course content, readings, assignments

Readings

Howard, chapter 1; Humfrey, Introduction

Class 2

On-site lesson: The Byzantine and Gothic Piazza San Marco: the Basilica, the exterior of the Ducal Palace

Readings

Howard, chapters 2 (pp. 6-8, 14-28), 3 (56-64), 4 (90-96)

Fortini Brown (26-33)

Class 3

In-class lesson: East, West, Byzantine, Gothic: theorizing elements of the question of geography, periodization and style of art in Venetian *exempla* (Torcello, San Marco, Palaces of the Canal Grande)

Readings

Howard, *Glossary*; chapters 2 (pp. 8-13, 31-38), 4 (75-85)

The Getty Research Institute, *AAT: Art & Architecture Thesaurus® Online*, s.v. *Byzantine (culture and style)*; *Early Christian*; *Gothic (Medieval)*

Sharing material

Readings and timeline discussion (up to class 2 included)

Class 4

On-site lesson: Giotto, Mantegna and the antique in Padua: proto-renaissance, early Renaissance, ruins as source of the Renaissance. Students will visit: Scrovegni Chapel and Giotto's frescos; Andrea Mantegna and the Ovetari Chapel, Donatello.

Readings

Paoletti Radke, 72-77; 262-264; 354-355

Vasari, "Life of Giotto"

<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/25326/25326-h/25326-h.htm#img189>

Jacopo da Varagine, "Life of S. Christopher"

<https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/basis/goldenlegend/GoldenLegend-Volume4.asp#Christopher>

Class 5

In-class lesson: Theorizing the Renaissance (key-concepts): the patron and the artist; the challenge of nature; the Antique; theory and practice of perspective, proportions, anatomy. The works of artists and intellectuals like Alberti, Brunelleschi, Mantegna, Giorgione, Leonardo will be analyzed.

Readings

Humfrey, chapter 1 (71-111)

Sharing material

Readings and timeline discussion (up to class 4 included)

Class 6

On-site lesson: The Polyptic, *Sacre conversazioni* and narrative painting at the Venetian *Scuole* in the Accademia Galleries collection. Particular attention is given to Lorenzo Veneziano's *Polittico Lion*, Vittore Carpaccio's *Il ciclo di Sant'Orsola*)

Readings

Humfrey, chapter 1 (40-71), section *Biographies* (Bellini, Carpaccio, Cima)

The Accademia Galleries, introduction

Class 7

In-class lesson: Early Renaissance architecture in Venice: themes, types, elements of the language of classical architecture in the courtyard of Palazzo Ducale and in the Piazza San Marco, in the Arsenale, on the canal Grande (Bartolomeo Bon, Antonio Rizzo)

Howard, chapter 5 (117-132)
Sharing material
Readings and timeline discussion (up to class 6 included)

Class 8

Trip to Florence

Masterworks of the Uffizi Galleries; Giotto in Santa Croce; Santa Maria Novella, architecture and 'treasures'. Walking through Renaissance Florence: Palazzo Medici Riccardi and San Lorenzo; Santa Maria del Fiore and the Baptistery; from the Uffizi to Palazzo Pitti; Rucellai monuments: a different Renaissance.

Readings and assignment TBA according to the planned trip

Class 9

On-site lesson: Early Renaissance Architecture in Venice and the Venetian altarpiece: Santa Maria dei Miracoli, Santa Maria Formosa, San Giovanni Crisostomo

Readings:

Howard, chapter 5 (132-159)
Humfrey, section *Biographies* (Vivarini, Sebastiano del Piombo)
Johnson, chapter 2

Class 10

Mid-term exam– slide test

Class 11

On-site lesson: Gothic ecclesiastical architecture and the art of Renaissance altarpiece: the Church of S. Maria Gloriosa dei Frari

Readings

Humfrey, chapter 2 (113-149); Howard, chapter 4 (73-90)

Class 12

In-class lesson: The Artist of the Renaissance: Leonardo, Michelangelo, Raphael and the Venetian masters

Readings

Radke, Paoletti, 362, 371-75, 376-78, 396, 401-413, 421-423, 424, 451-60, 468-73
Sharing material
Readings and timeline discussion (up to class 11 included)

Class 13

On-site lesson: Venetian high Renaissance painting at the Accademia: the *Cinquecento*. Giorgione, Tiziano, Tintoretto

Readings

Humfrey, chapter 2 (149-176), chapter 3 (198-212), section *Biographies* (Giorgione, Tiziano, Tintoretto)

Class 14

On-site lesson: Jacopo Sansovino and the Roman Renaissance in Venice: renovating the Piazza San Marco

Readings

Howard, chapter 6 (161-190)
Serlio, plates from the *Quarto Libro*
First report paper due

Class 15

In-class lesson: Andrea Palladio in Venice: Church Architecture

Readings

Howard, chapter 6 (190-208)

Palladio, plates from *I quattro libri dell'architettura*
Sharing material
Readings and timeline discussion

Class 16

Trip to a major Renaissance city relevant to the course.

Readings and assignment TBA according to the planned trip

Class 17

On-site lesson: Spirituality and Dynamism: Jacopo Tintoretto and the Renaissance *fabbrica* of the Scuola Grande di San Rocco

Readings

Howard, chapter 5 (149-159)

Humfrey, chapter 3 (188-198, 223-238), section *Biographies* (Tintoretto)

Class 18

On-site lesson: Ceiling Painting by Paolo Veronese at San Sebastiano

Readings

Humfrey, chapter 3 (212-223, 238-55), section *Biographies* (Veronese)

Class 19

On-site lesson: Into the Doge's Palace: from San Teodoro to the late Renaissance and the experiment of the Mannerism with particular attention to paintings of artists like Tintoretto, Veronese, Palma il Giovane.

Readings

Humfrey, chapter 3 (255-67), section *Biographies* (Palma)

Fortini Brown (65-89)

Second report paper due

Class 20

Final paper review; course evaluation

Sharing material

Readings and timeline final discussion (up to class 18 included)

Class 21

final paper due