

Prof. Victor Coonin  
412 Clough, x3824

## **Art 365: Michelangelo**

Spring 2000  
MWF 10:20-11:20

### Course Objectives and Description

This course will be a rigorous study of the art of Michelangelo Buonarroti. It will be conducted partly as lecture and partly as a seminar through which students develop their own expertise in particular areas of Michelangelo scholarship. Various methodological approaches will be presented, and students will acquire basic research skills necessary for further research in art history. Through lectures, the instructor will acquaint students with an overview of the artist's life and career. Students will supplement these lectures with class presentations on specific works of art. Extensive reading and original interpretation of difficult material is expected.

### Required Textbooks:

- Howard Hibbard, Michelangelo, New York, 1974.
- Giorgio Vasari, Lives of the Artists, trans. G. Bull, London, 1965.
- William Wallace, ed., Michelangelo: Selected Readings, New York, 1999.
- Additional readings to be assigned.

### Grading:

Final grades will be based on the following:

- 2 Class Presentations
- Midterm
- Final

Further instructions on assignments will be provided.

All exams and assignments are to be completed in accordance with the honor code regulations followed at Rhodes College.

## Schedule of Classes

The following is a general outline of the class to which student presentations will be added. However, students will be strongly encouraged to suggest changes and enhancements to the schedule by refocusing discussion on topics of class interest.

### Week 1: Who Was Michelangelo?

Jan 10: Introduction

Jan 12: Sources and Research Methods

H. Hibbard, Michelangelo, 2nd ed., New York, 1985.

P. Barolsky, Michelangelo's Nose, University Park, 1990.

### Week 2: The Biography and Autobiography of Michelangelo

Jan 15: Florence and the Arts in 1475

Jan 17: The Early life of Michelangelo

Jan 19: Discussion of Vasari and Condivi

G. Vasari, The Life of Michelangelo

A. Condivi, The Life of Michelangelo

### Week 3: Michelangelo's "Training," "Influences," and "Artistic Origins"

Jan 22, 24, 26

Hirst, Michael, "Michelangelo and his first biographers," Proceedings of the British Academy, 1997, v. 94, p. 63-84.

### Week 4: The Earliest Controversies

Jan 29, 31, Feb 2

M. Lisner, "The Crucifix from Santo Spirito," Burlington Magazine, CXXII, 1980.

P. Norton, "The Lost Cupid of Michelangelo," Art Bulletin, XXXIX, 1957.

### Week 5: Early Works in Rome

Feb 5, 7, 9

Michael Hirst and Jill Dunkerton, Making and Meaning: The Young Michelangelo, London, 1994.

Articles by K. Brandt and responses

### Week 6: Return to Florence and More Controversies

Feb 12, 14, 16

C. de Tolnay, "Michelangelo's Political Opinions," in Wallace.

F. Hartt, Michelangelo's David: The Original Model Rediscovered, New York, 1987.

### Week 7: Michelangelo vs. Leonardo

Feb 19, 21

J. Wilde, "Michelangelo and Leonardo," Burlington Magazine, XCV, 1953.

J. Wilde, "The Hall of the Great Council of Florence," from Selected Scholarship.

## **February 23: Midterm**

### **Week 8: New Views of the Sistine Chapel (and Its Recent Restoration)**

Feb 26, 28 (no class on March 2)

M. Hirst, et al., The Sistine Chapel: A Glorious Restoration, New York, 1994.  
Videotape of restoration.

J. Beck, "The Final Layer," Art Bulletin, LXX, 1988, 502-3.

F. Hartt, "Letter on L'Ultima Mano," Art Bulletin, LXXI, 1989, 508-9.

D. Cast, "Finishing the Sistine," in Wallace.

### **\*\*Spring Recess\*\***

### **Week 9: Architectural Problems and Projects in Florence**

March 12, 14, 16

C. Elam, "Drawings as Documents: The Problem of the San Lorenzo Facade," in Wallace.

H. Millon, ed., The Renaissance from Brunelleschi to Michelangelo: The Representation of Architecture, Washington, 1994.

### **Week 10: San Lorenzo and the Artist as Entrepreneur**

March 19, 21, 23

William E. Wallace, "A week in the life of Michelangelo," in Sarah Blake McHam, ed., Looking at Italian Renaissance sculpture, Cambridge, 1998, 203-222.

F. Hartt, "The Meaning of Michelangelo's Medici Chapel," in Wallace.

### **Week 11: The Tomb of Julius II and the Limits of Interpretation**

March 26, 28, 30

Sigmund Freud, "The Moses of Michelangelo"

J. Schulz, "Michelangelo's unfinished Works," in Wallace.

### **Week 12: Works for Pope Paul III**

**April 2, 4, 6**

Loren Partridge, et al., Michelangelo The Last Judgment: A Glorious Restoration, New York, 2000.

L. Steinberg, "The Line of Fate," Critical Inquiry, VI, 3, 1980, 411-454.

Video of Lecture by Kathleen Weil-Garris Brandt

Class visit by Prof. Gary Radke, Syracuse University

**Thursday, April 5<sup>th</sup>: Special Lecture by Prof. Gary Radke, Hardie Auditorium, 7:30 p.m.**

### **Week 13: Architectural Problems and Projects in Rome**

April 9, 11

H. Millon, ed., The Renaissance from Brunelleschi to Michelangelo: The Representation of Architecture, Washington, 1994.

Nagel, Alexander, "Gifts for Michelangelo and Vittoria Colonna," Art Bulletin, LXXIX, 4, 1997, 647-668, 743.

**\*\*Easter Recess\*\***

### **Week 14: The Florence and Milan Pietà and the Artist's "Late Style"**

April 16, 18, 20

L. Steinberg, "Michelangelo's Florence Pietà: The Missing Leg Twenty Years After," Art Bulletin, LXXI, 1989, 480-505.

Wolfgang Stechow, Joseph of Arimathea or Nicodemus?," in Wallace.

Irving Lavin, "The Sculptor's Last Will and Testament," Allen Memorial Art Museum Bulletin, XXV, 1977-78, 4-39.

### **Week 15: Who was Michelangelo? Part II**

April 23, 25

Complete Poems and Selected Letters of Michelangelo, ed., C. Gilbert, Princeton, 1980.

Walter Pater, "The Poetry of Michelangelo," in Wallace.

James M. Saslow, "Michelangelo: sculpture, sex, and gender," in Sarah Blake McHam, ed., Looking at Italian Renaissance Sculpture, Cambridge, 1998, 223-245.

Kathleen Weil-Garris Brandt, "Michelangelo's monument: an introduction to an architecture of iconography," Architectural studies in memory of Richard Krautheimer, Mainz, 1996, 27-31.

**April 27<sup>th</sup>: Final Exam**

## Presentations

Presentations will follow a seminar format.

**seminar:** a group of advanced students studying under a professor with each doing original research and all exchanging results through reports and discussions

Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 10th edition

Students will be largely responsible for preparing the material for discussion each week. Students will develop the skills necessary to synthesize vast amounts of information and make original constructive use of that material. It will be labor intensive, especially at first, but students will soon acquire increasingly efficient means of preparation and presentation. The course will focus on the life and works of Michelangelo, but keep in mind that the class is as much about methodology and critical analysis as it is about the artist. For the presentations students should cover the general topics that follow:

### **The Issue and Its Significance**

Present the chosen topic and discuss its importance. Though a topic may focus on a single work, one must be able to see the big picture. Do not take anything for granted. In effect, you must justify the validity of your topic. You must be able to answer why we (or anyone else) should be interested in the topic.

### **Historiography**

Students must discuss previous responses to the topic and the adequacy (or inadequacy) of those approaches. For this portion, students will prepare a bibliography as discussed below. In essence, think of this portion as presenting a report on the State of the Research.

### **Original Analysis**

After reviewing the issue, students should be prepared to make an original contribution to the discussion. In other words, students must develop a thesis, hypothesis, observation, or approach whereby one may further engage with the issue. This need not entail an earth-shattering conclusion, but merely suggesting possibilities for further exploration. Think about where the interested scholar may go from here. Can conclusions be drawn? If not, where are the most exciting avenues for further research? What new methods can be applied? How may new methods change the significance of the issue? How is the big picture affected by changes in approaches to the topic? Ultimately, these are the questions most central to the course and your evaluation.

## **Bibliography**

For each presentation the student will present an annotated bibliography. You will be evaluated on the quality of the bibliography so do not give filler or extraneous sources. The bibliography should list the most relevant articles and books dealing with the subject and a brief statement (just a few words) concerning their relevancy. There should be at least four sources not listed on the essential bibliography sheet. Art Bulletin or MLA style should be used and incorrect formatting will affect the grade. Presenters should bring a copy for each student in class. The professor is able to make these copies if the bibliography is delivered to him 24 hours before the next class. Otherwise, copies are the presenter's responsibility. Any particular images not available in our slide collection should also be included.

## **Presentation Style**

Each student will eventually find a most comfortable style of presentation. The individual method chosen in order to convey information is of little consequence to the grade but the preparation and execution of that method will be crucial. You may choose to work from note cards or no notes at all; you may also choose to read from a script. In either case, the student must be prepared to respond to questions, lead discussion, and otherwise show competency with the material presented. This is a good chance to experiment and try new methods.

## **Grading**

Grading will be based on preparation, content, and presentation.

## List of Works for Presentations

### Week 3

\***Head of a Faun**, Lost

**Battle of the Centaurs** (ca.1489-92), Casa Buonarroti, Florence

**Madonna of the Stairs** (ca.1489-92), Casa Buonarroti, Florence

### Week 4

**Arca di San Domenico** (ca.1495), San Domenico, Bologna

\***Crucifix for Santo Spirito** (ca.1492), Casa Buonarroti, Florence

\***Hercules** (1491) for Strozzi, Lost

\***Sleeping Cupid** (ca.1495-6), Lost

### Week 5

**Bacchus** (1496-98), Bargello Museum, Florence

\***New York Cupid**, French Consulate, New York

**Vatican Pietà** (1498-1500), St. Peter's, Rome

**Piccolomini Altar and Bruges Madonna** (1501-04), Siena Cathedral and Notre-Dame, Bruges

**Entombment Painting**, National Gallery, London

### Week 6

**David** (1501-4), Accademia Museum, Florence

\***David Model**, Switzerland

**Doni Tondo** (ca.1504), Uffizi Gallery, Florence

**Taddei Tondo** (ca.1504), Royal Academy, London

**Pitti Tondo** (ca.1504), Bargello Museum, Florence

### Week 7

**Battle of Cascina** (1504), Originally for Palazzo Vecchio, Florence

**St. Matthew** (ca.1504-8), Accademia Museum, Florence

**Week 8**

**Sistine Chapel Ceiling** (1508-12), Vatican  
Technique and Style  
Interpretation

**Week 9**

**Model for San Lorenzo Façade** (ca.1517), Casa Buonarroti, Florence

**Victory** (ca.1527-30), Palazzo Vecchio, Florence

**Apollo/David** (ca.1530), Bargello Museum, Florence

**Laurentian Library** (ca.1524-34), San Lorenzo, Florence

**Week 10**

**Medici Chapel** (1519-34), San Lorenzo, Florence

**Medici Chapel Statues** (1520-34), San Lorenzo, Florence

**Medici Madonna** (1524-34) San Lorenzo, Florence

**\*Crouching Boy** (ca.1530), Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg

**Week 11**

**Tomb Projects of Julius II** (1505-1545), Unfinished

**Moses** (1513-1515), San Pietro in Vincoli, Rome

**Bound Slave and Dying Slave** (ca. 1510-16), Louvre, Paris

**Florence Slaves** (ca.1520-30), Accademia Museum, Florence

**Rachel and Leah** (1542-55), San Pietro in Vincoli, Rome

**Risen Christ** (1519-20), Santa Maria Sopra Minerva, Rome

**Week 12**

**Drawings for Tommaso De' Cavalieri and Vittoria Colonna** (ca.1530-49)

**Last Judgment** (1534-41), Sistine Chapel, Vatican

**Bust of Brutus** (ca.1539-42), Bargello Museum, Florence



**Pauline Chapel Frescos** (ca.1542-50), Pauline Chapel, Vatican

**Week 13**

**Capitoline Hill** (ca.1538), Rome

**St. Peter's** (1546-64), Vatican

**Week 14**

**Florence Pietà** (ca.1547-55), Museo dell Opera del Duomo, Florence

**Rondanini Pietà** (1555-1564), Castello Sforzesco, Milan

**\*Palestrina Pietà**

**Week 15**

**The Poetry of Michelangelo**

\*These works (along with those not chosen) will be presented by the instructor, unless there is particular interest by a student.

## Essential Bibliography

The literature on Michelangelo is vast. In fact, there is more written about Michelangelo than on any other artist. These are just a few of the principal sources to get your research started.

### Original Sources

Giorgio Vasari, Lives of the Artists, trans. G. Bull, London, 1965.

Ascanio Condivi, The Life of Michelangelo, trans. A.S. Wohl, ed. H. Wohl, Baton Rouge, 1976.

### Monographs

James Ackerman, The Architecture of Michelangelo, Chicago, 1986.

Howard Hibbard, Michelangelo, New York, 1974.

Charles de Tolnay, Michelangelo, 5 vols., Princeton, 1943-60.

Charles de Tolnay, Michelangelo: Sculptor, Painter, Architect, Princeton, 1975.

William E. Wallace, Michelangelo: The Complete Sculpture Painting Architecture, Hong Kong, 1998.

### Essential Articles

William Wallace, ed., Michelangelo: Selected Scholarship in English, 5 vols., New York, 1995. [Selections from these volumes make up Selected Readings.]

### Contextual and Source Material

John Pope-Hennessy, Italian High Renaissance and Baroque Sculpture, 4<sup>th</sup> ed., London, 1996.

Author:

Lavin, Irving, "Ex uno lapide: the Renaissance sculptor's tour de force," Il cortile delle statue: der Statuenhof des Belvedere im Vatikan: Akten des internationalen Kongresses zu Ehren von Richard Krautheimer, Rom 21-23 Oktober 1992, Mainz, (P. von Zabern), 1998, pp.191-210.

Beck, James H, Three worlds of Michelangelo, New York : London : W.W. Norton, 1999.

Williams, Kim, "Michelangelo's Medici Chapel: the cube, the square and the root-2 rectangle," Leonardo (Oxford), 1997, v. 30, no. 2, p. 105-112.

Wallace, William E., "Michelangelo's Risen Christ," Sixteenth Century Journal, 1997, v. 28, no. 4, winter, p. 1251-1280.

Nagel, Alexander, "Gifts for Michelangelo and Vittoria Colonna," Art Bulletin, 1997, v. 79, no. 4, Dec, p. 647-668, 743.

Brandt, Kathleen Weil-Garris, "Michelangelo's monument : an introduction to an architecture of iconography," Architectural studies in memory of Richard Krautheimer, Mainz, P. von Zabern, 1996, p. 27-31.

Lingo, Estelle, "The evolution of Michelangelo's Magnifici tomb : program versus process in the iconography of the Medici Chapel," Artibus et historiae, 1995, v. 16, no. 32, p. 91-100, 217.

### **List of Works for Presentations**

What is known

What are major critical issues

What is potential for further study