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Office Hours: TTH 12:30-2:00:15
Or by Appointment

Art 356: Michelangelo
Spring 2011
TTH 9:15-10:30

Course Objectives and Description

This course is designed as a rigorous study of the art of Michelangelo Buonarroti (1475-1564). 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 introduced, and students will grapple with the most current issues in Michelangelo studies and 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, independent research, and original interpretation of difficult material is expected.

Note:

sem·inar: 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

Students in this class **MUST** be prepared to do original research, exchange their results articulately, and engage in group discussion.

Required Textbooks:

- Anthony Hughes, *Michelangelo*
- William Wallace, *Michelangelo: The Artist, the Man and his Times*
- *Michelangelo: Life, Letters, and Poetry*, trans. By George Bull and Peter Porter
- Additional readings as assigned.

Optional Books

- Giorgio Vasari, *Lives of the Artists*, any translation of 1568 edition (with important chapter on Michelangelo). Many free versions are available online.
- William E. Wallace, *Michelangelo: The Complete Sculpture, Painting, Architecture* (this useful book is available from discounters very cheaply and is highly recommended).
- John Spike, *Young Michelangelo: The Path to the Sistine: A Biography* (this is an excellent read on the early life and times of Michelangelo. It came out too late to require for this class but is highly recommended.)

Grading:

- Final grades will be based on the following:
- 2 Class Presentations (25% each for a total of 50%)
- Midterm Exam (25%)
- Final Exam (25%)

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. Excessive absences (more than 2) may result in a lowering of the final grade.

A Note on Technology

- It is becoming increasingly easier to use the latest technology to find bibliography and to access basic sources. This is a great thing and as a technophile I encourage it. But...generally speaking, online resources are incomplete. Not all books are readily accessible and not all articles are available online in full text format. Many journals will not allow you to access the most current issues. There are other problems you will encounter if you plan to do everything online. Therefore be prepared to also use the actual library and the physical books and journals contained therein.

Schedule of Classes

The following is the intended schedule. Modifications are usually necessary, especially depending on the choices for student presentations and preferences for discussion topics.

Class Readings: All students must be prepared to discuss these selections

Presentation Topics: All students must choose two presentation topics for which they will become the “expert” in presenting the important issues and leading class discussion. Each student will choose one topic before Spring break and one after spring break. Recommended topics are indicated with a * but students may choose another topic after consultation with the instructor.

January

13 Introduction

Assignment for next class: each student must find a meaningful article about Michelangelo published within the last two years (academic article, magazine story, or newspaper article from any reputable source). Be critical about your source and topic-- please no fluff. Be prepared to present the main issue and why it matters. Prior to next class please send me an email with a reference to your article (if printed) or a link (if online). I need this at least 24 hours before next class.

18 Introduction: Who was Michelangelo and who is he today? (Sources, Historiography, and Current Issues)

Class Readings:

- 1) Paul Barolsky, “The Metamorphoses of Michelangelo”
<http://www.vqronline.org/articles/1992/spring/barolsky-metamorphoses-michelangelo/>
- 2) Johannes Wilde, “Michelangelo, Vasari, and Condivi” [PDF]

20 Florence and the Arts in 1475

Class Readings:

- 1) Hughes, chapter 1
- 2) Please begin the “Life of Michelangelo Buonarroti” by Giorgio Vasari. You should finish reading this biography over the next few classes. There are many free versions online and most bookstores have used versions of Vasari’s Lives of the Artists. We also have copies in the library.

25 The Earliest Works by Michelangelo

Class Readings:

- 1) Hughes, chapter 1
- 2) Wallace, chapter 2
- 3) “Earliest Known Painting by Michelangelo Acquired By the Kimbell Art Museum,”
<https://www.kimbellart.org/News/News-Article.aspx?nid=119>

Presentation Topics

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

The Torment of Saint Anthony (ca. 1487–1488), Kimbell Art Museum, Texas

27 The Earliest Controversies

Class Readings:

- 1) Hughes, chapter 1
- 2) Wallace, chapter 3
- 3) **The Crucifix from Santo Spirito and the Crucifixes of Taddeo Curradi** by [Margrit Lisner](#), *The Burlington Magazine* > [Vol. 122, No. 933](#) (Dec., 1980), pp. 812-819
- 4) “Yes, It’s Beautiful, the Italians All Say, but Is It a Michelangelo?”
<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/04/22/arts/design/22michel.html>

Presentation Topics

- Hercules** (1493), Lost
- ***Crucifix for Santo Spirito** (ca.1492), Casa Buonarroti, Florence
- ***Angel, St Petronius, and St Proclus** (ca.1495), San Domenico, Bologna
- Sleeping Cupid** (ca.1495-6), Lost
- Crucifix**, purchased 2009, Florence

February 1 From Florence to Rome

Class Readings:

- 1) Hughes, chapter 2
- 2) Wallace, chapter 1 and chapter 4
- 3) A Marble in Manhattan: The Case for Michelangelo by Kathleen Weil-Garris Brandt, *The Burlington Magazine*, Vol. 138, No. 1123 (Oct., 1996), pp. 644-659.
Article Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/887141>
- 4) Connoisseurship: A Lost or a Found Art? The Example of a Michelangelo Attribution: 'The Fifth Avenue Cupid' by James Beck, *Artibus et Historiae*, Vol. 19, No. 37 (1998), pp. 9-42. Article Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1483609>

Presentation Topics:

- ***Bacchus** (1496-98), Bargello Museum, Florence
- ***New York Cupid**, French Consulate/MET, New York

3 Rome: Breakthroughs and Other Breaks

Class Readings:

- 1) catch up on all previous readings and finish Vasari
- 2) **Michelangelo's 'Pieta prototype' unveiled in Rome**
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/art/art-news/8177878/Michelangelos-Pieta-prototype-unveiled-in-Rome.html>

Presentation Topics:

- ***Vatican (Rome) Pietà** (1498-1500), St. Peter’s, Rome
- ***The Entombment** (ca. 1500-1501), National Gallery, London
- ***Madonna and Child with St. John and Angels [called the “Manchester Madonna”]** (ca.1497), National Gallery, London
- ***Piccolomini Altar** (1501-04), Siena Cathedral
- ***Bruges Madonna** (1501-04), Notre-Dame, Bruges

8 Florence and Il Gigante

Class Readings:

- 1) Hughes, chapter 3

2) David Summers, "David's Scowl" [PDF]

3) Who Owns Michelangelo's 'David'?

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/09/01/world/europe/01david.html?pagewanted=all>

Presentation Topics:

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

Interpretation

Issues of Commission and Placement

David Model, Private Collection, Switzerland

10 College Art Association Conference (class rescheduled)

15 Three Tondi

Class Readings:

"The Doni Madonna by Michelangelo: An Iconographic Study" by Mirella Levi

d'Ancona, *The Art Bulletin*, Vol. 50, No. 1 (Mar., 1968), pp. 43-50. Article Stable URL:

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/3048510>

Presentation Topics:

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

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

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

17 Michelangelo versus Leonardo

Class Readings:

1) Hughes, chapter 3

2) Wallace, chapter 5

3) Cecil Gould, "Michelangelo: Battle of Cascina" [PDF]

4) Michelangelo and Leonardo by Johannes Wilde

The Burlington Magazine, Vol. 95, No. 600 (Mar., 1953), pp. 65-75+77

Article Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/871016>

Presentation Topics:

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

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

22 The Sistine Chapel: Style and Interpretation

Class Readings:

1) Hughes, chapter 4

2) Wallace, chapter 5

3) David Cast, "Finishing the Sistine," *The Art Bulletin*, Vol. 73, No. 4

(Dec., 1991), pp. 669-684. Article Stable URL:

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/3045836>

Presentation Topics:

***Sistine Chapel Ceiling** (1508-12), Vatican

Style

Interpretation

- 24 Mid-term Exam**
- March 1 The Restoration of the Sistine Chapel**
Class Readings:
 1) Kathleen Brandt, "Twenty-five Questions" [PDF]
 2) Viewing of video on restoration
- 3 The Tomb of Julius II**
Class Readings:
 1) Hughes, chapter 4
 2) Wallace, chapter 5
 3) "Michelangelo's Unfinished Works," by Juergen Schulz, *The Art Bulletin*, Vol. 57, No. 3 (Sep., 1975), pp. 366-373. Article Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3049404>
- Presentation Topics:**
Tomb Projects for Julius II (1505-1545), Unfinished
 ***Rebellious Slave** and **Dying Slave** (ca. 1510-16), Louvre, Paris
- 8 The Tomb of Julius II (cont.)**
Class Readings:
 1) Sigmund Freud on Michelangelo's Moses [PDF]
 2) "Michelangelo's Moses, dal di sotto in sù," by Earl E. Rosenthal *The Art Bulletin*, Vol. 46, No. 4 (Dec., 1964), pp. 544-550
 Article Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3048217>
- Presentation Topics:**
 ***Moses** (1513-1515), San Pietro in Vincoli, Rome
 ***Florence Slaves** (ca.1520-30), Accademia Museum, Florence
 ***Rachel and Leah** (1542-55), San Pietro in Vincoli, Rome
- 10 Forgotten Works**
Class Readings:
 1) Hughes, chapter 5
 2) Wallace, Chapter 6
 3) Johannes Wilde, "Michelangelo's 'Victory'" [PDF]
 4) "The First Version of Michelangelo's Christ for S. Maria Sopra Minerva," Irene Baldriga, *The Burlington Magazine*, Vol. 142, No. 1173 (Dec., 2000), pp. 740-745.
 Article Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/888971>
- Presentation Topics:**
 ***Model for San Lorenzo Façade** (ca.1517), Casa Buonarroti, Florence
 ***Risen Christ** (1519-20), Santa Maria Sopra Minerva, Rome
 ***Victory** (ca.1527-30), Palazzo Vecchio, Florence
- *Spring Recess***
- 22 The Medici Chapel**
Class Readings:

- 1) Hughes, Chapter 6
- 2) Wallace, Chapter 7
- 3) “The Breasts of ’Night’: Michelangelo as Oncologist” by J.J. Stark and J.K. Nelson, *New England Journal of Medicine* [PDF]
- 4) Frederick Hartt, “The Meaning of Michelangelo’s Medici Chapel” [PDF]
- 5) Creighton E. Gilbert, “Texts and Contexts of the Medici Chapel” [PDF]

Presentation Topics:

- ***Medici Chapel Architecture** (1519-34), San Lorenzo, Florence
- ***Medici Chapel Tomb Statues** (1520-34), San Lorenzo, Florence
- Medici Chapel Madonna and Saints** (1524-34) San Lorenzo, Florence

24 Michelangelo and the Medici (cont.)

Class Readings:

- 1) Wallace, Chapter 8
- 2) Charles de Tolnay, “Michelangelo’s Political Opinions” [PDF]

Presentation Topics:

- ***Laurentian Library** (ca.1524-34), San Lorenzo, Florence
- ***City fortifications**, 1528–1529

29 More Forgotten and Controversial Works

Class Readings:

- 1) James M. Saslow, “Michelangelo: sculpture, sex, and gender” [PDF]

Presentation Topics:

- ***Crouching Boy** (ca.1530), Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, Russia
- ***Apollo/David** (ca.1530), Bargello Museum, Florence
- ***Leda**, Lost

31 Michelangelo’s Sexuality and His Great “Loves”

Class Readings:

- 1) Wallace, Chapter 9 & 10
- 2) Hughes, Chapter 7
- 3) Poems: 140-152 (Cavalieri) and 153-157 (Colonna) and Letters: 22-28

Presentation Topics:

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

April 5 The Last Judgment

Class Readings:

- 1) Wallace, Chapter 11
- 2) Michelangelo in Heaven,” Frederick Hartt, *Artibus et Historiae*, Vol. 13, No. 26 (1992), pp. 191-209. Article Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1483439>

Presentation Topics:

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

Style and Restoration

7 Of Popes and Politics

Class Readings:

- 1) Hughes, Chapter 8
- 2) Wallace, Chapter 12
- 3) Charles de Tolnay, “Michelangelo’s Political Opinions” [PDF]

Presentation Topics:

- ***Bust of Brutus** (ca.1539-42), Bargello Museum, Florence
- ***Pauline Chapel Frescos** (ca.1542-50), Pauline Chapel, Vatican

12 Reflections on Death and Dying

Class Readings:

- 1) “Michelangelo's Florentine Pietà: The Missing Leg Twenty Years After” by Leo Steinberg, *The Art Bulletin*, Vol. 71, No. 3 (Sep., 1989), pp. 480-505. Article Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3051139> [skim this article for the main ideas—it is rather difficult but worthwhile.]

Presentation Topics:

- ***Florence Pietà** (ca.1547-55), Museo dell Opera del Duomo, Florence
<http://www.research.ibm.com/pieta/>

14 Michelangelo’s Architecture in Rome

Class Readings:

- 1) Wallace, Chapter 13 & 14
- 2) Hughes, Chapter 9
- 3) recent news: <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/article395936.ece>

Presentation Topics:

- ***Capitoline Hill** (ca.1538), Rome
- ***Porta Pia, Rome** (ca.1561), Rome
Palazzo Farnese
1546
- San Giovanni dei Fiorentini** (1559–1560), Rome
- Santa Maria degli Angeli** (1563-4), Rome
- Sforza Chapel**, Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore (c. 1562-4)

19 St. Peter’s Before, During, and After Michelangelo

Class Readings:

- 1) James S. Ackerman, “Michelangelo’s ‘Theory’ of Architecture” [PDF]

Presentation Topics:

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

Easter Recess

26 More Meditations on Death

Class Readings:

- 1) Wallace, Chapter 15
- 2) Poems: pp. 158-160
- 3) Creighton Gilbert, "Translator's Foreword to the Second Edition" [PDF]

Presentation Topics:

- ***Rondanini Pietà** (1555-1564), Castello Sforzesco, Milan
- ***Late Crucifixion Drawings** (ca.1540-1560)
- Palestrina Pietà**

28 The Final Chapter

Class Readings:

- 1) Hughes, Chapter 10
- 2) Wallace, Chapter 16
- 3) Selections of Michelangelo's Poetry and Letters: 29-51

Presentation Topics:

- Michelangelo's Monument**
- Letters and Poetry of Michelangelo**

Final Exam: Monday, May 2, 1:00 p.m.

Presentations

Presentations will follow a seminar format. Students will be largely responsible for preparing the material for discussion each week. Students will develop the skills necessary to synthesize copious amounts of information and make original constructive use of that material. It will be effort 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.

Presentation Style

I strongly encourage all students to use Powerpoint presentations though there is some room for variation. Preparation and execution will be crucial to your grade. You may choose to work from note cards or no notes at all; you may also choose to read from a script. In any 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.

Images

Excellent images are available on the web and are perfectly appropriate to use for educational purposes. Most images are easily found on the web but students should be prepared to scan select or obscure images on occasion.

Final Copy

After the in-class presentation, each student will submit the Powerpoint presentation to my inbox on the academic volume and a separate written version of their findings. This copy should be professionally written and properly referenced. The content should essentially cover the same material as covered in class with the addition of responses to questions, new ideas, and discussion. In the written version it is

not necessary to illustrate works by Michelangelo if they are included in the Powerpoint. The written copy is due within a week of the oral presentation.

Bibliography

For each presentation the student will also present a bibliography. This will not be lengthy but it should be relevant and current. You will be evaluated on the quality of the bibliography rather than quantity, so do not give filler or extraneous sources. The bibliography should list the most relevant articles and books dealing with the subject. Generally, there should be a combination of books and articles. You will NOT be able to do all your research online. *Art Bulletin* or *Chicago Manual of Style* should be used and incorrect formatting will affect the grade. Please submit this paper to my inbox in the academic volume.

Grading

Grading will be based on the quality of both the oral and written presentations. Professionalism of preparation, quality of content, and articulation of ideas will be crucial determinants of grading.

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*, any translation with Life of Michelangelo.
Ascanio Condivi, *The Life of Michelangelo*, 2nd edition, trans. A.S. Wohl, ed. H. Wohl, Baton Rouge, 1999.
Michelangelo's letters and poems are available in many good translations.

Monographs

James Ackerman, *The Architecture of Michelangelo*, Chicago, 1986.
Howard Hibbard, *Michelangelo*, New York, 1974.
Anthony Hughes, *Michelangelo*, London, 1997.
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 Material

Frederick Hartt, *History of Italian Renaissance Art*, most recent edition.
John Pope-Hennessy, *Italian High Renaissance and Baroque Sculpture*, 4th ed., London, 1996.

Web Sites

There are many excellent web sites for images and information on Michelangelo.
For further for information regarding the use of digital resources see [Guide to Art History Research Using Digital Resources](http://www.rhodes.edu/images/content/Art_Docs/Electronic_Resources_Guide_%283%29.pdf)
http://www.rhodes.edu/images/content/Art_Docs/Electronic_Resources_Guide_%283%29.pdf

Preliminary Research Checklist

This is a MINIMUM checklist to make sure you cover the most basic sources as you begin your research. Remember that this is the starting point, not the ending point. Please make the appropriate checks (✓) or mark not applicable (N/A).

Name _____

Topic _____

I have checked the following basic sources for information regarding my piece:

Vasari _____

Condivi _____

De Tolnay _____

Wallace Readings _____

Hughes (for general context) _____

JSTOR (for full text Bibliography) _____

Additional art history database(s)
([Art Index](#), Wilson, BHA, KHI, etc.) _____

Museum or Church website (if relevant) _____

Barret Library Bookshelves _____

I have found AT LEAST TWO meaningful
Sources published within my lifetime _____

I may have consulted but have not
relied on Wikipedia. _____

I have consulted the following art department website
for information regarding the use of digital resources: _____

[Guide to Art History Research Using Digital Resources](#)

http://www.rhodes.edu/images/content/Art_Docs/Electronic_Resources_Guide_%283%29.pdf