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Northern Renaissance Art

Spring 2003
TTh, 9:40-11:10

Course Objectives and Description

This course will investigate Northern European art of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Students will be introduced to the major artists, subjects, and stylistic developments during this time period. Additional emphasis will be placed on issues such as iconography, stylistic developments, social context, patronage, techniques, and recent developments in the field. Students will also be introduced to current research methods appropriate for art historical inquiry. Students are expected to actively participate in the course through regular attendance, class discussions, outside readings, and completion of all assignments.

Textbooks

- James Snyder, Northern Renaissance Art, New York, 1985.
- Craig Harbison, The Mirror of the Artist: Northern Renaissance Art in Its Historical Context, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1995.
- Additional readings to be assigned.

Grading

Students will be evaluated by the following criteria:

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|---------------------|----------------|
| Class Presentations | 20% (10% each) |
| Research Paper | 30% |
| Mid-term Test | 20% |
| Final Test | 30% |

Notes on Graded Assignments:

Class Presentation

Each student will lead two class discussions based on a reading assignment. One will be presented before mid-term and the other afterwards. Students may choose any article listed on the syllabus. Students should prepare to address the following four issues:

- 1-- What is the subject of the article and why was it written? In other words, why should anyone care to read and discuss this piece in the first place.
- 2-- What are the methods used to address the issue? This is more subtle, but each author has a definite strategy or methodological approach to the material, which you should identify.
- 3-- What are the conclusions reached? What do we learn from the study?
- 4-- What is your critical reaction to the article? This is of crucial importance! Did the article make sense? Do you think the conclusions are valid? What did the author ignore? Could there have been an alternative conclusion? Would a different method have helped? Is this the definitive word on the subject?

Students are required to turn in a 2-3 page synopsis of each presentation. This is due at the same time as the presentation. The grade will be based upon both the oral and written versions.

Note: You may use any notes that you prepare yourself but students will **NOT** be allowed to use the article during the class presentation unless specifically quoting a passage or referring to an image. This is to be your own synthesis of the material.

Paper Assignment

Each student will choose a paper topic in consultation with the instructor. The possibilities are endless and students are encouraged to find a topic that is creative, original, and that they find personally interesting. Papers should be written in a format consistent with MLA guidelines and spelling, grammar, style, etc., will all be taken into account. All sources consulted must be cited, and important visual points should be supported by illustrations.

Important: Students are expected to do independent research and locate their own source material. Many of these sources are listed on the syllabus but students are expected to consult articles and books not listed. Additionally, students are encouraged to consult on-line resources (especially the BHA) and use of these should be clearly noted in the text. Length of paper should be about 8-10 pages with no extraneous filler.

Class Participation

Students are expected to actively participate in class discussions, to raise questions, to complete reading assignments, and generally contribute to class activities. Excessive absences (more than three) will be penalized at a rate of 1/3 letter grade per unexcused absence.

Schedule of Classes

January 16: Introduction to Northern Renaissance Art, The International Style and Illuminated Manuscripts

Discussion of Erwin Panofsky, Early Netherlandish Painting, Its Origin and Character, 2 vols., Cambridge, MA, 1953.

January 21: Techniques and Workshop Practices

*Maryan W. Ainsworth, "Workshop Practice in Early Netherlandish Painting: An Inside View," From Van Eyck to Bruegel: Early Netherlandish Painting in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1998, 205-211.

January 23, 28: Jan Van Eyck and Iconography

Readings:

*Erwin Panofsky, "Jan van Eyck's 'Arnolfini' Portrait," Burlington Magazine, LXIV, 1934, pp. 117-127 (reprinted in, Modern Perspectives in Western Art History, ed. W.E. Kleinbauer, New York, 1971, 193-203).

Lorne Campbell, "Portrait of Giovanni(?) Arnolfini and his Wife," The Fifteenth Century Netherlandish Schools, London, 1998, 174-204.

James Marrow, "Symbol and Meaning in Northern European Art of the Late Middle Ages and Early Renaissance," Simiolus, 16, 1986, 150-169. [and response by Craig Harbison, pp. 170-172.]

Jan Baptist Bedaux, "The Reality of Symbols: The Question of Disguised Symbolism in Jan Van Eyck's Arnolfini Portrait," Simiolus, XVI, 1986, 5-26.

Edwin Hall, The Arnolfini Betrothal: Medieval Marriage and the Enigma of Van Eyck's Double Portrait, Berkeley, 1994.

Video on the Arnolfini Portrait

January 30: Vassar Conference

(Class to be rescheduled)

February 4: Jan van Eyck (except the Arnolfini Portrait)

van Buren, A., "The Canonical Office in Renaissance Painting II: More about the Rolin Madonna," Art Bulletin, 60, 1978, 617-633.

E. Melanie Gifford, "Van Eyck's Washington Annunciation: Technical Evidence for Iconographic Development," Art Bulletin, LXXXI, 1, 1999, 108-116. And Carol J. Purtle, "Van Eyck's Washington Annunciation: Narrative Time and Metaphoric Tradition," Art Bulletin, LXXXI, 1, 1999, 117-125.

February 6: Robert Campin, Rogier van der Weyden, and Religious Imagination

Readings:

Barbara Lane, "Sacred versus profane in early Netherlandish Painting," Simiolus, 18, 1988, 107-115. [and reply by Craig Harbison, "Religious Imagination and Art Historical Method: A Reply to Barbara Lane's 'Sacred Versus Profane,'" Simiolus, 19, 1989, 198-205.]

Meyer Schapiro, "Muscipula Diaboli: The symbolism of the Mérode Altarpiece," Late Antique, Early Christian and medieval Art, New York, 1979, 1-19 (including Postscript).

Cynthia Hahn, "Joseph Will Perfect, Mary Enlighten and Jesus Save Thee: The Holy Family as Marriage Model in the Mérode Triptych," Art Bulletin, 68, 1986, 54-66.

Barbara G. Lane, "'Requiem aeternam dona eis': the Beaune Last Judgement and the Mass of the Dead," Simiolus, 19, 1989, 167-180.

February 11: Dieric Bouts, Petrus Christus**Readings:**

Peter Schabacker, "Petrus Christus's 'Saint Eloy': Problems of Provenance, Sources and Meaning," Art Quarterly, 35, 1972, 103-122.

Hugo van der Velden, "Defrocking St Eloy: Petrus Christus's Vocational portrait of a goldsmith," Simiolus, 26, 1998, 242-276.

February 13: Hugo van der goes, Geertgen Tot Sint Jans**Readings:**

Julia I. Miller, "Miraculous Childbirth and the Portinari Altarpiece," Art Bulletin, 77, 1995, 249-262.

Barbara Lane, "'Ecce Panis Angelorum': The Manger as Altar in Hugo's Berlin Nativity," Art Bulletin, 57, 1975, 476-486.

February 18: Hans Memling, Gerard David**Reading:**

Maximiliaan P.J. Martens, "The Dialogue between Artistic Tradition and Renewal," Bruges and the Renaissance, Bruges, 1998.

February 20: CAA

(Class to be rescheduled)

February 25: Hieronymus Bosch**Readings:**

Larry Silver, "God in the details: Bosch and Judgment(s)," Art Bulletin, LXXXIII, 4, 2001, 626-650.

Laurinda Dixon, "Bosch's Garden of Delights Triptych: Remnants of a 'fossil' science," Art Bulletin, 63, 1981, 96-113.

Morganstern, A., "The Pawns in Bosch's Death of the Miser," Studies in the History of Art, 12, 1982, 33-41.

Virginia G. Tuttle, "Bosch's Image of Poverty," Art Bulletin, 63, 1981, 88-95.

February 27: Bosch (cont.)

March 4: Mid-Term

March 6: France and Germany in the Later 15th Century

Spring Recess

March 18: 15th-century German Sculpture

Readings:

Michael Baxandall, "Functions" and "The Market," in The Limewood Sculptors of Renaissance Germany, 1475-1525, New Haven, 1980, Chapters III & VI, pp. 50-122.

March 20, 25 & 27: Albrecht Dürer

Readings:

Michael Levey, "Dürer and the Renaissance," Essays on Durer, ed. C.R. Dodwell, Manchester, 1973, pp. 1-23.

Erwin Panofsky, The Life and Times of Albrecht Dürer, Princeton, 1943, "Melancholia I," pp.157-171.

Joseph Leo Koerner, "The Artist as Christ," The Moment of Self-Portraiture in German Renaissance Art, Chicago, 1993, 63-79.

A. Hayum, "Dürer's Portrait of Erasmus and the Ars Typographorum," Renaissance Quarterly, 38, 1985, 650-687.

Carl C. Christiansen, "The Four Apostles as Reformation Painting," in Art and the Reformation in Germany, Detroit, 1979.

March 27: Evening Class

Moss Lecture (details TBA)

April 1: Sculpture and the Reformation

Readings:

Jeffrey Chipps Smith, "Art or Idol?," German Sculpture of the Later Renaissance c.1520-1580, Princeton, 1994, Chapter 2, pp. 31-45.

April 3: Prints and the Graphic Arts

Readings:

Yvonne Bleyerveld, haste, obedient and devout: biblical women and patterns of female virtue in Netherlandish and German graphic art, ca.1500-1750," Simiolus, 28, 2000-2001, pp.219-250.

Keith Moxey, "The Function of Secular Woodcuts in Nuremburg of the 16th Century," New Perspectives on the Art of Renaissance Nuremburg, J.C. Smith, ed., Austin, Texas, 1985.

Keith Moxey, "Festive Peasants and Social Order," Peasants, Warriors and Wives: Popular Imagery in the Reformation, Chicago, 1989, 35-100.

April 8: Discussion of The Mirror of the Artist

Required Reading:

Craig Harbison, The Mirror of the Artist: Northern Renaissance Art in Its Historical Context, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1995. Individual chapters will be assigned for discussion.

April 10: Matthias Grünewald, Albrecht Altdorfer, and Hans Baldung Grien

Readings:

A. Hayum, "The Meaning and Function of the Isenheim Altarpiece," Art Bulletin, 59, 1977, 501-517.

Larry Silver, "Nature and Nature's God: Landscape and Cosmos of Albrecht Altdorfer," Art Bulletin, LXXXI, 2, 1999, 194-214.

C. Talbot, "Baldung and the Female Nude," Hans Baldung Grien Prints and Drawings, exh. Cat., Washington, 1981, 19-37.

Dale Hoak, "Art, Culture, and Mentality in Renaissance Society: The Meaning of Hans Baldung Grien's Bewitched Groom," Renaissance Quarterly, 119, 1987, 488-510.

April 10: Evening Class

Ruffin Lecture 7:00p.m. (details TBA)

April 15: Lucas Cranach and Hans Holbein the Younger

Readings:

Michael Carter, "Cranach's Women: A Speculative Essay" [Not easily available. Use my copy of article.]

Joseph Leo Koerner, "Death as Hermeneutic," The Moment of Self-Portraiture in German Renaissance Art, Chicago, 1993, 292-316.

Joseph Leo Koerner, "The Crisis of Interpretation," The Moment of Self-Portraiture in German Renaissance Art, Chicago, 1993, 317-362.

S. Foister, A. Roy, and M. Wyld, Making and Meaning: Holbein's Ambassadors, London, 1997, "Part I," 14-57.

Video on Holbein's Ambassadors

Easter Recess

April 22: Jan Gossart, Lucas van Leyden, and Maerten van Heemskerck

Eric Jan Sluijter, "Emulating sensual beauty: representations of Danaë from Gossaert to Rembrandt," Simiolus, 27, 1999, 4-45.

Bart Cornelis and Jan Piet Filedt Kok, "The taste for Lucas van Leyden prints," Simiolus, 26, 1998, 18-86.

April 24: Pieter Bruegel the Elder

Readings:

Svetlana Alpers, "Bruegel's Festive Peasants," Simiolus, VI, 1972-3, 163-176.

Ethan Matt Kavaler, "Custom, Costume, and Community: Celebrating a Marriage," Pieter Bruegel: Parables of Order and Enterprise, Cambridge, 1999, 149-183.

Ethan Matt Kavaler, "Invitation to the Dance: The *Peasant Kermis*," Pieter Bruegel: Parables of Order and Enterprise, Cambridge, 1999, 184-211.

April 29: Classes Cancelled Campus-wide for Awards Convocation and Undergraduate Research Symposium

May 1: Final

*Note that the schedule may be modified during the semester to accommodate a museum visit and other special opportunities.