



## SYLLABUS

Spring Quarter

### **PICTURING PEOPLE – ITALIAN ART AND SOCIETY DURING THE RENAISSANCE**

**Instructor: Piergiacomo Petrioli**

**Contact Hrs: 45**

**Language of Instruction: English**

**SIENA, ITALY**

#### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The portrait is one of the most interesting topics of the Italian Renaissance art. The main goal of this course is to use the portrait art as a key to discover the Italian culture and history from XIV to XVI century.

In fact, by their portraits artists produced not only beautiful artworks, but also precious documents concerning contemporary life and society in Italy. The history and development of the Italian “Rinascimento” lives again through the faces of its protagonists and common people too. Renaissance artists with their portraits have recorded social changes and historical developments by picturing different fashion and various costumes.

We can understand Italian Renaissance society from the bust of the Florentine politician Niccolò da Uzzano, from the bronze monument of the mercenary Erasmo da Narni by Donatello or in many classically refined profiles by Agostino di Duccio in Rimini, just to talk about sculpture. Painting in Central Italy (specially in Florence and Siena) offers also beautiful examples of portrait masterpieces: from the XV century with Masaccio, Filippo Lippi, Pollaiuolo, Piero della Francesca, to the apotheosis of XVI century with Botticelli, Domenico Ghirlandaio, Leonardo, Raphael, Giovanni Bellini, Titian, Vasari, Bronzino, etc.

#### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

By the end of this course, students will gain knowledge of Medieval and Renaissance portraiture art in Italy, and its historical, social and cultural background. Students will acquire critical tools that will allow them to recognize and appreciate the most important portraits produced during Renaissance. By discussing ideas, opinions on the main topics, covered during the course, we generate debates on the Renaissance idea of Portrait in Art and Society.

#### **INSTRUCTIONAL METHODOLOGY**

Students will be familiar with Renaissance Italian portraiture painting and society, by lectures in class and visits to the main churches and museums in Siena and Florence.

#### **METHOD OF EVALUATION (GRADING)**

20% Attendance and Participation

30% Writing Assignment

20% Oral Presentation

30% Final Exam

100% Course Grade

Writing Assignment and Oral presentation:

Students will be asked to write a 600 words essay about an artwork on an artist or an artwork analysed during classes and to give an oral presentation of 10 minutes about a chosen portrait.

Assignments have to be on different topics.

The students will be asked to write a research (6-8 pages, bibliography included) and short oral presentation (10-15 minutes).

Paper and oral presentation will be on different topics

Final:

the Final exam will be oral:

\* Slide identification of 3/4 pictures from the list (the list can be downloaded from the website).

**N.B.** Excursions are fundamental part of this course and they have to be considered classes in every respect. Students are required to take notes and to take an active participation.

The students are required to be punctual and not to bring food in the classroom.

**COURSE OUTLINE**

*(two classes per week of 2h each)*

The Idea of the Portraiture. Introduction to Medieval and Renaissance Italian History an Society. (Johnson).

The Patron. (Pope Hennessy, related pages)

The *Comune*: visit to Palazzo Pubblico in Siena. Meeting point in Campo square. Please, take notes in class.

People of XV century. (Pope Hennessy, related pages)

People of XVI century. (Pope Hennessy, related pages)

Visit to the Santa Maria della Scala Museum. Meeting point in the Duomo square. Please, take notes in class.

The “Signore”. (Pope Hennessy, related pages)

The Couple. (Pope Hennessy, related pages)

The Woman 1. (Tinagli, related pages)

The Woman 2. (Tinagli, related pages)

The Warrior. (Pope Hennessy, related pages)

Oral presentation.

The Pope. Visit to the Piccolomini Library in Siena. (Pope Hennessy, related pages)  
The first part of the class will be in class at the AHA, the second one inside the Duomo.  
Please, take notes in class.

The Man of Letters. The Craftsman. (Pope Hennessy, related pages)

The Medici family. (Handout “The Medici of Florence”)

The Artist. (Frances Ames-Lewis, pp. 208-243) Paper due

Written self-portraits from Ghiberti to Cellini. (Pope Hennessy, related pages). Discussion about passages from Ghiberti and Cellini

Caravaggio and the Baroque Portrait Art.

FINAL

**COURSE READINGS**

Required Readings:

Ames-Lewis, Frances (2002) *The Intellectual Life of the Early renaissance Artist*, Yale Univ. Press, pp.208-243.

Johnson, Geraldine (2005). *Renaissance Art*, Oxford Univ. Press, pp.61-75.

Hennessy, John Pope (1966). *The portrait in the Renaissance*, Princeton Univ. Press.

Paola Tinagli, (1997). *Women in Italian Renaissance Art*, Manchester Univ. Press, pp.1-120;

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Adjunct Bibliography:

Brown, David Alan (2001). *Virtue and Beauty: Leonardo's Ginevra de' Benci and Renaissance Portraits of Women*, Princeton University Press.

Pallanti, Giuseppe (2006). *Mona Lisa revealed*, Skira.

Woods-Marsden, Joanna (1998). *Renaissance Self-Portraiture*, Yale University Press.

Strehlke, Carl Brandon (2004). *Pontormo, Bronzino and the Medici. The transformation of the Renaissance Portrait in Florence*, Philadelphia Museum of Art.

**N.B.** All the course materials (PDF version of all the textbooks; PowerPoint Presentations of all the Classes; Final Slides; PDF books of extra materials) can be downloaded from a password protected website that will be distributed in class.