

# Syllabus of Record

**Program:** CET Florence

**Course Code / Title:** (FL/ARTH 258) Renaissance Art and Architecture

**Total Hours:** 45

**Recommended Credits:** 3

**Primary Discipline:** Art History

**Language of Instruction:** English

**Prerequisites/Requirements:** None



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## Description

During the 15th century the city of Florence witnessed a period of incredible growth, and important innovations took place in the visual arts: in architecture, sculpture and painting. How did it happen that one city contributed so much to the course of arts? Why should so many of the city's artworks and buildings have played such a major role in the history of the visual arts? This course is designed to answer some of these questions and to examine the circumstances that made Florence in the 15th century the birthplace and important focal point of the Renaissance. The careers and achievements of many figures from this period are examined: Giotto di Bondone, Taddeo Gaddi, Masaccio, Masolino, Gentile da Fabriano, Lorenzo Monaco, Brunelleschi, Michelozzo, Donatello, Leon Battista Alberti, Fra Beato Angelico, Filippo Lippi, Botticelli, Ghirlandaio, Filippino Lippi, Leonardo da Vinci, early Michelangelo, early Raphael (while he was still living in Florence). Emphasis is placed on works of art and architecture with which the student can have a direct visual (and tangible) experience: most discussions are conducted in front of the original paintings and sculptures, and inside the works of architecture.

## Objectives

During this course, students gain knowledge of some of the most important painted, sculpted and constructed works of Florentine art. Emphasis is also placed on the formation of conceptual thinking. To that end, students examine and develop solid understandings of the following:

- Basic concepts from the Renaissance system of symbols and allegories (both religious and profane)
- Problems of proportions and universal harmony in architecture
- Connections between music and architecture
- 15th century visual arts research in the representation of space and its most important results (crushed relief in sculpture and one/point perspective in painting)
- Mysticism and visual arts
- The "moralizing landscape" device in painting

Also, to contribute to students' comprehensive critical approach, they study and gain a preliminary understanding of the relevant technical aspects of art—of painting, painting on wall, stone sculpture and bronze cast sculpture.

## Course Requirements

Students must complete all reading assignments before coming to class, participate actively in class discussions, and take thorough notes during lectures. Readings average 15-20 pages for each class.

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Student progress in this course is assessed in a variety of ways:

- Comprehensive written exams: Midterm and final examinations consist of three sections - -slide identifications, short answer questions, and longer essay question.
- On-site visits worksheets: Students are required to complete a worksheet for each on-site visit.
- On site presentation: Each student presents a work of art among those viewed during an on-site visit.
- Essays (4): Consisting of 500 words each

### Grading

The final grade is determined as follows:

Midterm exam	20%
On-site worksheets (4 @ 5%)	20%
On-site presentation	10%
Final exam	20%
Essays (4 @ 5%)	20%
Class participation	10%

### Primary Readings

Paoletti, John and Gary Radke, *Art in Renaissance Italy*, Prentice Hall; 3rd edition, 2005.

Hartt, Frederick, *History of Italian Renaissance Art: Painting, Sculpture, Architecture*. Prentice Hall; 4th edition, 1994.

### Supplementary Readings

G.Brucker, *Renaissance Florence*. University of California Press, 1983.

A.R.Turner, *Renaissance Florence: The Invention of a New Art*. New York, Abrams ed., 1997.

E.Welch, *Art in Renaissance Italy*. Oxford University Press, 2001.

*Hall's Dictionary of Signs and Symbols*. Richard D Irwin ed., 1985.

G.Vasari, *Lives of the Artists*. Oxford University Press, 1998.

M.Levey, *Florence: A portrait*. Harvard University Press, 1998.

### Outline of Course Content

Note: Fall/Spring students cover approximately 1 topic per week. During the summer, when class periods are longer, students cover approximately 2 topics per week.

Topic 1 - Words and images

Knowledge, immediacy, and directness in visual arts. Symbols and allegories in Italian art, parallels across cultures.

Topic 2 - Early Renaissance architecture: architecture as a language

The Baptistery. Filippo Brunelleschi and his sources of inspiration. Error of his judgement. The San Lorenzo church in Florence: Old Sacristy, proportional planning, philosophy of universal harmony. Pythagoras.

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Donatello's contribution to the Old Sacristy. Later disaster: Brunelleschi against Donatello and Michelozzo. Donatello's sculpture in San Lorenzo (the so-called pulpits). Santa Maria degli Angeli (Brunelleschi): Brunelleschi's concern with words and perception of harmony in this work. The Foundling hospital (Ospedale degli innocenti): Brunelleschi and his ratios in architecture. Intelligibility and color in architecture. The church of SS. Annunziata (tribuna, L.B.Alberti).

Topic 3 - The three bronze doors of the Baptistery (Pisano, Ghiberti, Ghiberti)

The Duomo/Cathedral of Florence: Brunelleschi's dome. Alberti and Duffay in 1439: music and architecture in the Duomo. Or San Michele (Donatello, Nanni di Banco, Ghiberti). The church of SS. Apostoli (11th cent., source for Brunelleschi). The church of Santa Maria Novella in Florence: Giotto, Brunelleschi, Masaccio, Ghirlandaio.

Topic 4 - S. Maria del Carmine: Brancacci chapel (Masaccio, Masolino, Filippino Lippi)  
Progressive and regressive trends in Italian art till 1460.

Topic 5 - Giotto and his murals in the Cappella Bardi and Cappella Peruzzi

The Master of the Bardi chapel: St. Francis, his genuine and his manipulated life. Dante. Taddeo Gaddi. Donatello. Brunelleschi's Cappella Pazzi. Domenico Veneziano. Michelangelo. Museo dell' Opera del Duomo: Pisano, Donatello, Nanni di Banco, Ghiberti, Lucca della Robbia. Brunelleschi. Michelangelo.

Topic 6 - Renaissance palaces in Florence

Palazzo Medici, Palazzo Davanzati, Palazzo Strozzi, Palazzo Bartolini-Salimbeni, Palazzo Rucellai.

Topic 7 – Piazza Pitti

Galleria Palatina. Afterwards the church of Santo Spirito, Piazza Santo Spirito (if open for visitors).

Topic 8 - Piero della Francesca and his contributions to art

Topic 9 - Cappella dei Magi (Benozzo Gozzoli)

San Marco Monastery, Piazza San Marco (Fra Beato Angelico; mysticism and art). Cenacolo di San Apollonia (Andrea del Castagno).

Topic 10 - Piazza degli Uffizi

Topic 11 - Michelangelo's David

Michelangelo's so called "Captives". Finished-unfinished in Michelangelo. The New Sacristy in the church of San Lorenzo in Florence (if open).

Topic 12 - Pre-Renaissance and Renaissance sculpture (15th and 16th century)

The collection of the Museo Nazionale Bargello, Via del Proconsolo.