

Italian Renaissance Humanism

Humanities 311

Section: D100

Term: 2012 Fall

Instructor: Emily O'Brien

Discussion Topics: The Italian Renaissance is a period well known for its revival of classical culture and for the related intellectual movement known as humanism. In this course, we will explore the impact of these cultural and intellectual transformations on one dimension of Renaissance society: the world of the artist. How and why did the artists of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Italy embrace the ideals of ancient Greece and Rome? In what way were Renaissance artists intellectuals? How did these cultural shifts affect the artists' social standing, training and process of creation? Interdisciplinary in nature, our course will answer these and other questions using a wide range of written primary sources, including artists' contracts, correspondence and handbooks; treatises of artistic theory; and literary works such as biography, poetry and epitaphs. A central place will also be given to visual sources: architecture, paintings, drawings and sculpture and to scholarship on the specific topics we investigate.

Grading: 20% - Class participation

20% - Midterm exam

15% - Film analysis

45% - Final Exam

Required Texts: Leon Battista Alberti (trans. John R. Spencer), *On Painting*. Revised edition (Yale, 1967).

Francis Ames-Lewis, *The Intellectual Life of the Early Renaissance Artist* (Yale, 2002).

Michael Baxandall, *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth-Century Italy: A Primer in the Social History of Pictorial Style*. 2nd edition (Oxford, 1988).

Ross King, *Brunelleschi's Dome* (Vintage, 2008).

These texts will be available for purchase at the SFU bookstore.

Additional readings, as well as copies of the above texts, will be on reserve at the WAC Bennett Library.

Recommended Texts:

Materials/Supplies:

Prerequisite/Corequisite: 45 units

Notes: This course is designated B-HUM and meets the Breadth-Humanities undergraduate degree requirements.

This course outline was accurate at the time of publication but is subject to change. Please check your course requirements carefully when your class starts.

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