**ARTHIST236/336: ARTISTS AND PATRONS IN RENAISSANCE ITALY**

**TUTORIAL PROGRAMME**

Stage 2 and Stage 3 students will be in the same tutorials. Do all the reading before tutorials and be prepared to participate. **There will be no tutorial in the first week of classes. They begin in week 2.**

**Tutorial 1: Why Patronage Matters (14 March)**

Read: Richard Goldthwaite, *Wealth and the Demand for Art* pp.69-148 (this was assigned as reading for lecture 1—it is very important, so make sure you read it closely) AND Martin Kemp, ‘The Framework for Agreements—and Disagreements’, in *Behind the Picture: Art and Evidence in the Italian Renaissance*, pp.32-78.

Bring into class: A photocopy of an Italian Renaissance *artwork or object* for which you have found out the patron and original location. Feel free to go through a book like Paoletti/Radke or Welch’s *Art in Renaissance Italy* for the information. Or be more adventurous and pick some silver, furniture or luxury object from *At Home in Renaissance Italy* or *Objects of Virtue*.

**TUTORIAL 1 WORKSHEET**

*Why patronage matters*

1. You were asked to bring to class a photocopy of an Italian Renaissance artwork or object. Write down the name, artist, date, patron and original location:
2. Goldthwaite speaks of changes in taste, content and context for works of art from the late thirteenth century onwards. List some of the changes in aesthetic sensibilities he identifies:
3. List some of the changes in religious sensibilities he identifies:
4. Goldthwaite shows how the changes in religious sensibilities created a series of ‘new services’ the church was now asked to provide. List some of the ‘new services’ and consider their role in generating art production:

**Tutorial 2: Production and Workshop Practice (21 March)**

Read: You were already exposed to some of these issues in the Martin Kemp reading from last week. Read the excerpts from various primary sources published in *Renaissance Art Reconsidered*: pp. 3-27, 91-98. AND Diana Norman, ‘Making Renaissance Altarpieces’ in Kim Woods, ed. *Making Renaissance Art*, pp.175-188. You will be doing group work, so come prepared to discuss.

**TUTORIAL 2 WORKSHEET**

*Production and Workshop Practice*

From your reading of the excerpts from *Renaissance Art Reconsidered*, discuss the following:

1. Make a list of Leonardo’s recommendations for mastering drawing (it is okay if they appear contradictory):
2. List some features of workshop practice and production suggested by Cennini’s instructions for painting on panel (1.5.2 and 1.5.3)

After reading Norman in Woods, answer the following questions:

1. What were some of the constraints that an artist encountered when ‘making’ an altarpiece?
2. Imagine yourself as a Renaissance patron commissioning an altarpiece. What iconography would you consider to be appropriate and why?

**Tutorial 3: Contracts and the Commissioning Process (28 March)**

Read: O'Malley, M. *The Business of Art: Contracts and the Commissioning Process in Renaissance Italy*. Yale University Press (2005), pp.1-20 and pp.77-96 and pp.251-254 AND the contracts published in *Renaissance Art Reconsidered*, pp.62-65 and pp.98-106 (in coursebook): contracts for the Prato pulpit and Sassetta’s Madonna della Neve altarpiece.Some of this reading will reinforce what you read in the primary sources in last week’s tutorial. This is important reading and will be essential for Stage 3 students in their contract assignment. Stage 2 students will see this material on the final exam. Bring the contracts and your notes on them with you to class.

**TUTORIAL 3 WORKSHEET**

*Contracts and the Commissioning Process*

From your reading of O’Malley answer the following questions:

1. Why are contracts important source documents?
2. What are the limitations of the information that we can glean from contracts?
3. What do you understand from the phrase ‘mutual respect’ and why is it important in our consideration of contracts?
4. Why do verbs often appear in pairs in contracts? Give an example.
5. List the procedures that the artist would undertake for the production of an altarpiece:

**Tutorial 4: Patronage: An Economic Approach (4 April)**

Read: Jonathan K. Nelson and Richard Zeckhauser, *The Patron’s Payoff: Conspicuous Commissions in Italian Renaissance Art* (Princeton, 2008), pp.1-84 (read AT LEAST pp.1-66) (on short loan)

Book summary:

In *The Patron's Payoff*, Jonathan Nelson and Richard Zeckhauser apply the innovative methods of information economics to the study of art. Their findings, written in highly accessible prose, are surprising and important. Building on three economic concepts--signaling, signposting, and stretching--the book develops the first systematic methodology for assessing the meaning of art patronage and provides a broad and useful framework for understanding how works of art functioned in Renaissance Italy.

The authors discuss how patrons used conspicuous commissions to establish and signal their wealth and status, and the book explores the impact that individual works had on society. The ways in which artists met their patrons' needs for self-promotion dramatically affected the nature and appearance of paintings, sculptures, and buildings. The Patron's Payoff presents a new conceptual structure that allows readers to explore the relationships among the main players in the commissioning game--patrons, artists, and audiences--and to understand how commissioned art transmits information. This book facilitates comparisons of art from different periods and shows the interplay of artists and patrons working to produce mutual benefits subject to an array of limiting factors. The authors engage several art historians to look at what economic models reveal about the material culture of Italy, ca. 1300-1600, and beyond. Their case studies address such topics as private chapels and their decorations, donor portraits, and private palaces.

**TUTORIAL 4 WORKSHEET**

*Patronage: An Economic Approach*

From your reading of Nelson and Zeckhauser define and explain the following key terms:

1. Game theory:
2. Signaling:
3. Signposting:
4. Stretching:

Provide a good example of these factors in operation in an Italian Renaissance artwork:

**Tutorial 5: The Art of Describing Renaissance Art (11 April)**

Read: Michael Baxandall, *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth-Century Italy* and Alberti, *On Painting*, Cecil Grayson ed. and trans., pp.67-93 (both on short loan)

This tutorial will consider the ways contemporary Renaissance viewers discussed Renaissance art. You should familiarize yourself with the vocabulary (the adjectives as well as subject types and technical terms) used in describing artworks by reading Baxandall, concentrating particularly on pp.109-53 and a section of Alberti’s influential Renaissance treatise, On Painting. Be prepared: you will be given a series of pictures to discuss in ‘Renaissance’ terms.

In addition to becoming acquainted with the actual words used, we will consider the interests that informed the discussion of art. Were viewers’ comments informed by artistic or ideological concerns? Was the way an artwork was described and the viewers’ understanding of it informed by the subject matter and setting for the artwork?

Vocabulary:

Imitatore della natura—imitator of nature

Rilievo—relief

Puro—pure

Facilita—ease

Prospectivo—perspectivist

Gratioso—gracious

Ornato—ornate

Varieta—variety

Compositione—composition

Colorire—colouring

Disegnatore—exponent of design

Amatore delle difficulta—lover of difficulties

Scorci—foreshortening

Prompto—prompt

Vezzoso—blithe

Devoto—devout

**TUTORIAL 5 WORKSHEET**

*The Art of Describing Renaissance Art*

After reading Baxandall, consider the following:

1. What prior knowledge do we the 21st-century viewer bring to an Italian Renaissance work of art?
2. What prior knowledge would an Italian Renaissance patron realistically expect a Renaissance artist to bring to a new commission?
3. What prior knowledge would the patron bring and how might this be different from the artist?
4. Would the audience know and in what ways might this differ from either the patron or artist?
5. List some of the ways Baxandall’s analysis of gesture is reflected in your answers to the above questions:

**Tutorial 6: The Roles and Status of the Artist (2 May)**

Read: Alberti’s *On Painting* (*De Pictura*), ed. and trans. Cecil Grayson, London, 1972, pp.61-67 and *Leonardo On Painting*, ed. Martin Kemp, Yale, 1989, pp.13-46, 144-156, 200-206, 220-222 (both on short loan).

Further reading: Joanna Woods-Marsden, *Renaissance Self-Portraiture*.

Alberti’s *On Painting*, published in Latin in 1435 and Italian in 1436, was the first modern treatise on the theory of painting and became the authoritative guide for Italian painters. Not only did it serve as an authority on painting practices but on the status and nature of the act of painting and painters themselves. And Alberti was truly revered as an authority on these matters. He was regarded as a true genius in his time and worked as a painter, architect and sculptor, but he also mastered music, engineering, mathematics, poetry, drama, and civil and canon law.

The work is divided into three books or parts. Book I presents a mathematical method for constructing perspective. Although some perspectival ideas had previously been used in Italy, Alberti was the first to codify them. Book II treats painterly aspects, including colour, drawing, and figure types. Book III establishes a type of humanist painting.

In Book II, he takes on strong position on the importance of painting, ranking painting with the liberal arts, and correspondingly raises the status of artists with it from craftsmen to creative thinkers. In addition, he participates here in the hot contemporary debate known as the *paragone* in which the relative status of painting vs. sculpture was argued.

Just a generation later, many of these same ideas are vocalized in Leonardo’s treatise *On Painting*.

We will discuss the content of these works as well as what they reveal about Renaissance society and its values. In addition, we will examine a few artists’ portraits and self-portraits and ask whether these images participate in these discussions.

**TUTORIAL 6 WORKSHEET**

*The Roles and Status of the Artist*

1. List the reasons Alberti gives for painting being worthy of ‘our attention and study’:
2. What origins does Alberti identify for painting and sculpture?
3. Name and explain the three parts Alberti divides painting into:
4. List some of the qualities that Leonardo considers necessary for a painter:
5. Compare and contrast Leonardo’s opinions on how a painter should evaluate his own versus how he should react to the opinions of others:
6. Given the other evidence in Kemp, do you think that Leonardo applied this advice to himself? Why or why not?

**Tutorial 7: Princely Virtue and the Courtly Artist (9 May)**

Read: Alison Cole, ch.1, ‘Art and Princely Magnificence’, pp.17-43 and Baldassare Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier*, Dedication and The First Book, pp.31-104 in the George Bull edition (short loan).

*The Book of the Courtier* belongs to the genre of etiquette books that flourished in Renaissance Europe. Such books responded to the period ideal that members of the social elite should be characterized by graceful behaviour. Unlike most etiquette books that were simply meant to correct crude behaviour and speech, *The Courtier* provided a broader view by offering an idealized picture of court life. As such, this bookestablished the paradigm for modern notions of the lady and gentleman. It was published in 1528 and translated into most western languages by 1600, thus becoming the ‘bible’ of politeness for the courtly elite.

The author was himself a courtier attached to various northern ducal courts and in fact he situates this book at the ducal court of Urbino, presided over by the old Duke and his wife Elisabetta. The book is situated as a dialogue of this Urbino circle, set during an evening in the ducal palace.

Please read the excerpt assigned and take note of those attributes of the perfect character, which we will discuss in class. We will address how this highly influential book both reflects and informs art in Renaissance Italy, particularly portraiture, but also the studied grace of religious figures. The great courtier artist Raphael is especially relevant in this respect.

**TUTORIAL 7 WORKSHEET**

*Princely Virtue and the Courtly Artist*

From the lectures to date and your reading of Cole, explain your understanding of the concept of ‘magnificence’ in regard to Renaissance patronage:

From your reading of Castiglione’s *Book of the Courtier* answer the following questions:

1. What do you consider was Castiglione’s intention in writing this book?
2. Who are the ‘key players’ in the text?
3. List the attributes does Castiglione identify as desirable in the ideal courtier?
4. How are these reflected in Raphael’s portrait of Castiglione and
5. Raphael’s portrait of Agnolo Doni? (Paoletti and Radke, 415 and 395)

**Tutorial 8: Vasari’s Lives of the Artists (16 May)**

Read: Vasari’s *Lives of the Artists* (short loan, though several of these can probably be found on-line) provides a fascinating artist’s perspective on patron-artist relationships. Read thefollowing lives and outline the different patron-artist dynamics. Be ready to compare and contrast them in class, and to assess what Vasari saw as the artist’s and patron’s roles:

Donatello

Leonardo

Michelangelo

Bandinelli

Rosso Fiorentino

Torrigiano

**TUTORIAL 8 WORKSHEET**

*Vasari’s Lives of the Artists*

1. Who was Vasari? What did he achieve as an artist himself?
2. What was his relationship to Cosimo I?
3. Based on your reading of Vasari, what were the benefits of patronage to an artist? Give a specific example from one of the *Lives*.
4. Again, based on your understanding of Vasari, what were the benefits of artworks to patrons? Give a specific example from one of the *Lives.*
5. Discuss the different artist-patron dynamics in the *Lives* that you have read:

**Tutorial 9: Female Models of Patronage: The Example of Isabella d’Este (23 May)**

This tutorial will consider different opportunities and motivations for female patronage, focusing on Isabella d’Este. There will be an exam question on female patronage for both Stage 2 and Stage 3 students.

Read: S. Reiss and D. Wilkins, *Beyond Isabella*, Introduction (pp.1-18), ‘Controlling Women or Women Controlled’, pp.37-50 and ‘Renaissance Husbands and Wives as Patrons of Art’, pp.93-124. AND Jennifer Fletcher, ‘Isabella d’Este, Patron and Collector’ in *Splendours of the Gonzaga*, pp.51-63 and the catalogue entries for the specific portraits of her.

**TUTORIAL 9 WORKSHEET**

*Female Models of Patronage: The Example of Isabella d’Este*

1. What opportunities might a Renaissance woman have for artist patronage?
2. What motivations might she have?
3. What types of artworks and for contexts do we find for female patrons?
4. How did the climate of female mysticism inform artistic patronage by women in the Renaissance?
5. Provide one example of a significant Renaissance artwork that resulted from female patronage and suggest how its appearance and function differs from works commissioned by male patrons.

**Tutorial 10: Exam Preparation and Patronage in Venice (30 May)**

To prepare, make sure you have done all the reading for previous tutorials as well as read the documents in D. Chambers, *Venice a Documentary History*, pp.387-442.

**TUTORIAL 10 WORKSHEET**

*Patronage in Venice*

From your perusal of the documents in Chambers, consider the following:

1. In what ways do Venetians perceive themselves, their city and the climate for artists that it offers as distinct from conditions in other Italian centres?
2. List some of the effects of ‘private collecting’ in Venice and suggest how this differs from other examples of patronage that you have encountered.

*Exam preparation*

* Revisit your work of art/object from the first tutorial and list any new considerations which now inform your understanding of the work on the basis of what you have learned in the course.

What do you understand by the term, ‘patron’s oeuvre’, and how useful is this term when discussing Italian Renaissance artworks?