

Baroque Rome

Session: Fall 2008

Meetings: Once a week

Professor: Paolo Alei

Professor's Office Hours: before or after class by appointment

Description

This course analyzes the masterpieces of Roman Baroque art and architecture from the end of the 16th century to the beginning of the 18th century. In this period Rome was a leading center of the arts in Europe. Popes, cardinals, nobles, intellectuals and church officials continued to sponsor the Renaissance project of *renovatio urbis*, the restoration and embellishment of the city. While analyzing urbanism, architecture, sculpture and painting by some of the major artists of the period (Caravaggio, Bernini, Borromini, Cortona), we will consider the artistic trends that characterize the patterns of patronage in Counter-Reformation and Baroque Rome. Special attention will be given not only to the literary sources that shaped art theory, practice and criticism, but also to important issues such as propaganda, the viewer's emotional engagement and the artist's social status. The unity of the visual arts, rhetorical effects, artistic rivalry, scenic urbanism, the relation between art and poetry, the use of classical and "bizarre" vocabulary, the concept of pastoral, the representation of ecstasy, and the idealization of death will be some of the themes explored in this course. Each art work, building or urban plan will be studied as a document to understand broader concepts related to politics, religion, music, science, theatre, and philosophy.

Text and Readings

The basic texts for this course are, R. Wittkower, *Art and Architecture in Italy, 1600/1750* and H. Langdon, *Caravaggio*. You are required to read these books and use them as a reference for dates, names, and images. Beside the basic texts you are required to read attentively a series of weekly readings from periodicals, books, and photocopies collected in a reader. All readings are mandatory and will be specifically addressed during the examinations or discussions. For extra readings, you are invited to study at Palazzo Venezia (Biblioteca di Storia dell'Arte).

Grading

Grading will be based on preparation and participation (10%), 2 quizzes (10% each), an oral presentation (15%), a mid-term exam (25%), and a final exam (30%).

Participation

Participation refers to questions, answers, interest, attention, enthusiasm, note-taking, punctuality. Those hoping to get a full "A" should not neglect the participation percentage for it often diminishes the final grade by as much as 10 points. Attendance is mandatory.

Exam

Both exams will be written and will last approximately 2 hours. They will consist of slides' identification, contrast-comparison, unknown, short questions and an essay. Exams are based on the memorization of all the images we have seen, a thorough study of your notes and weekly readings.

Quiz

Each quiz will last about 30 min. A quiz is based on a series of short questions and answers to test that you are taking careful notes and following the readings attentively.

Oral Presentation

An oral report is a 20-30 min speech on a Baroque historical character: for example Giordano Bruno, Beatrice Cenci, Cassiano del Pozzo, Virgilio Spada, Lucas Holstein, Athanasius Kircher, Christine of Sweden, Galileo Galilei or any important historical figures who had an important impact on the art and culture of Baroque Rome. The oral presentation should be based on a bibliographical research and will be released on site in the most appropriate place. For example the report on Christine of Sweden will be released within the courtyard of Palazzo Corsini where she lived during her sojourn in Rome etc etc.

Calendar

Week 1

In-class lecture

Introduction to the Course, the Carracci School and the Young Caravaggio

Readings: R. Wittkower, Art and Architecture in Italy. 1600-1750 (Chapter 1, 2,3); H. Langdon, Caravaggio (Chapter 1, 2, 3, 4)

Week 2

On-site lecture:

Caravaggio in Rome

San Luigi dei Francesi, Sant'Agostino, Santa Maria del Popolo, Piazza del Popolo

Readings: H. Langdon, Caravaggio (Chapter 5,6,7,8), F. Haskell, Patrons and Painters (Chapter 1 and 3)

Week 3

On-site lecture.

Villa Borghese

Sculpture

Readings: A. Bolland, “*Desiderio and Diletto: Vision, Touch and the Poetics of Bernini’s Apollo and Daphne*”, Art Bulletin 82. 2, (June 2000)

Week 4

On-site lecture.

Villa Borghese (first quiz)

Painting

Readings: H. Langdon, Caravaggio (Chapter 9, 10, 11, 15);

Week 5

On-site lecture:

Urban VIII Barberini

Cemetery of the Capuchins, Triton Fountain, Palazzo Barberini

Readings: A. Blunt, Borromini (Chapters 1, 2, 3, 5)

Week 6

On-site lecture.

The Via Papalis and the Churches of the New Orders

Campidoglio, Santi Luca e Martina, Il Gesu', Sant'Andrea della Valle, Chiesa Nuova

Readings: R. Wittkower, Art and Architecture in Italy. 1600-1750 (chapter 7, 8)

Week 7

****Mid Term Exam***

(Fall Break 11-19 October)

Week 8

On-site lesson

Innocent X Pamphili

Piazza Navona, Santa Maria della Pace, Sant'Ivo, Elephant with Obelisk, Sant'Ignazio

Readings: F. Haskell, Patrons and Painters (Chapter 2, 4, 5); R. Wittkower, Art and Architecture in Italy. 1600-1750 (Chapter 9, 10)

Week 9

On-site lecture:

Via Pia and Alexander VII Chigi

Moses Fountain, Santa Susanna, Santa Maria della Vittoria, San Carlino, Sant'Andrea al Quirinale, Piazza del Quirinale, Palazzo Chigi-Odescalchi

Readings: R. Krautheimer, The Rome of Alexander VII

Week 10

In-class lecture and On-site lecture (2 hours in class and 2 hours at Saint Peter's)

The Path Toward Salvation: St. Peter's According to Bernini's Concetto

Readings: T. A. Marder, Bernini and the Art of Architecture, (The Baldacchino, Piazza San Pietro); R. Wittkower, Art and Architecture in Italy. 1600-1750 (Chapter 12)

Week 11

On-site lecture:

Baroque Trastevere

Santa Cecilia, San Francesco a Ripa, San Pietro in Montorio, Fontana Paola, Palazzo Corsini

Week 12

On-site lecture.

Late Baroque Rome and Theatre: Piazza del Popolo, Spanish Steps, San Lorenzo in Lucina, Sant'Andrea delle Fratte, Trevi Fountain

Readings: J. Pinto The Trevi Fountain (Chapters 7, 8)

Week 13

On-site lecture:

Saint John the Lateran and Santa Maria Maggiore (second quiz)

R. Wittkower, Art and Architecture in Italy. 1600-1750 (Chapter 16)

Week 14

Final Exam

The professor reserves the right to change calendar, schedule and organization at any time with advanced notification.