

**ROME STUDY CENTER**  
**ART AND CULTURE IN ITALY**  
**PROF. EMILIO DEL GESSO**

Course description

Premise

Several civilizations and cultures have left an impressive collection of unique masterpieces of art and architecture in Italy. The goal of this course is to describe the evolution of culture and aesthetics and their immediate relationship with the production of these works.

Program

This course is structured in six sections that cover the principle periods of the history of Italian art. For each period, there will be a theoretical survey that deals with the specific characteristics of each artistic phase in its historical and ideological development and in its relationship to the city of Rome and its monuments.

- 1) The first part of this course discusses Roman Art. We will focus upon the contrasts and similarities between the Roman and their predecessors (in particular the Greeks, but also the Etruscans). In addition we will discuss the relationship between ancient Rome and how the myth of ancient Rome has been interpreted by modern culture.

For this study, it is suggested that the students learn as much as possible about the areas of the historical center (Trastevere, Campo Marzio, Foro Boario). For within the buildings and streets of modern Rome one can discover the splendor of ancient Rome through the found ruins and remains. Certainly, we will tour the principle monuments of ancient Rome: I Fori, Villa Adriana at Tivoli, il Museo della Civiltà Romana. As the city is rich in ruins of ancient civilization, it is suggested that the student independently explore sites apart from the planned itinerary of this course.

The lessons on Roman Art seek to clarify ideological and cultural premises of Roman Art, and art and Architecture and offers an essential panorama of Roman culture. The lessons are divided into three sections: Introductory Concepts, Philosophy and Aesthetics.

- 2) The second part of this course discusses Early Christian and Medieval art. Once again, it is advised that the student takes advantage of Rome's historical treasures by visiting the many churches and catacombs of this city (Remember

that churches are open from early in the morning, until noon, and late in the afternoon, usually between 5: 00 pm and 7: 00 pm). A discussion concerning the Pagan and Christian temples will explore the common and differing aspects of their construction through a structural and stylistic analysis. It is interesting to note that many Pagan buildings, including the few still existing (Pantheon, La Curia, Il Tempio della Fortuna Virile), were transformed into churches during the Dark Ages in Rome, there no longer exists a building in its entirety from the Middle Ages (with the exception of the medieval churches that have much of their medieval structure intact); the few medieval remains and ruins are hidden or mixed within other structures. This can be noted particularly in Trastevere. The class will visit, together, the churches of S. Clemente and SS. Quattro Coronati.

- 3) The third part of the course discusses the Renaissance. The Renaissance is considered a principle period in the history of art; an age that is generally considered the highest point of genial expression, not only for Italy, but for all of humanity. More so than the preceding periods, the philosophical and ideological premises of the artistic process are of fundamental importance during this age. A theoretical survey will study the premises of Neoplatonism and the Myth of Antiquity.

Today, you can see renaissance buildings as they were originally constructed, as well as certain renaissance buildings that were renovated during the Baroque Age. Studying the original buildings that are fully intact offers a precise understanding of the Roman Aristocratic tastes of the 15<sup>th</sup> and the 16<sup>th</sup> centuries. Examples in Rome include the Villa della Farnesina, Palazzo Spada, Palazzo Farnese and Palazzo Massimo. For the lessons concerning art and architecture, remember that other Italian cities are equally well known for their renaissance works. Therefore, it is of great importance to follow the introductory lessons of the theory of Renaissance aesthetics, as this covers other Renaissance sites than those in Rome.

- 4) The fourth part of this course discusses the Age of Baroque. The city of Rome is rich in monuments from this period. Our study of the churches and squares of Rome, therefore, requires a profound understanding of Baroque aesthetics and style. It is important to understand that Baroque aesthetic include literature, music, theater and the minor arts in addition to architecture, painting and sculpture. The Baroque was an international style, mostly seen in the royal courts and the papacy.
- 5) The fifth part of this course discusses the Age of Romanticism and Neoclassicism in Rome: the city as a city of memories and monuments of the great past.

- 6) The sixth part of this course discusses the period between the end of the Romanticism and the period of Avangard. Futurism for paintings and the rational movement for architecture, under the Fascism left important documents of the art and the culture in Rome. A specific visit will be dedicated to the Modern Art in the National Gallery in Rome (Galleria Nazionale D'Arte Moderna).

#### Course objective and assignments.

The course will provide a general view of Italian Art and culture as it is experienced, first hand, during the visits around Rome and on the tour through Italy.

The lectures serve to introduce an appreciation of the different styles and expression of Italian art and how this has influenced the idea of culture, conceived not only from its artistic approach but from its anthropological and social background.

The course is divided in the followings sections: Antiquity, Middle age, Renaissance, Baroque, Romanticism and Modern. Each section includes:

- 1) A lecture series to frame the artistic and architectural works in their own theoretical background.
- 2) Site visits which complement the lecture series, offering an immediate understanding of the environment generated within a certain cultural context.

#### Texts:

Photocopied packet of articles and excerpts from different books.

#### Final Evaluation is based upon:

- Attendance	10
- Mid Term Exam (Slide identification and short essay questions)	30
- Final Exam (Slide identification and short essay questions)	30
- Critical written work	30

**ART AND CULTURE IN ITALY  
SCHEDULE OF LECTURE AND SITE VISIT  
FALL 2014**

***-Sept 1:***

***Lecture: Introduction to the Roman Art and Architecture- Meeting at Palazzo Taverna at 10.15***

***Site visit: Caracalla baths***

***-Sept 8: Late Empire and Christian Art***

***-Palazzo Taverna at 10.15***

***Site visit: Santa Maria Maggiore Santa Pudenziana-***

***-Sept 15:***

***Lecture: Early Christian architecture -meeting at Palazzo Taverna at 10.15***

***Site visit: Aventine hill and Foro Boario***

***.Sept 22***

***Lecture: The Middle Age -meeting in Palazzo Taverna at 10.15***

***Site visit: - S.Giovanni in Laterano (Saint John in Lateran)***

***-Sept 29:***

***Lecture: Giotto and the Renaissance-Palazzo Taverna at 10.15***

***Site visit: Santa Cecilia in Trastevere***

***-Oct 6: Lecture: Raphael and Michelangelo Palazzo Taverna at 10.15***

***site visit: Villa Farnesina***

***-Oct 13: Lecture: The Counter reformation-Palazzo Taverna at 10.15***

***Site visit: - The church of Gesù and the church of St. Ignatius***

***Oct 27: Lecture: Science and art during renaissance and counter reformation: Leonardo Medicine,Botany and geography Galileo Galilei - Palazzo Taverna at 10.15***

*Site visit: Botanic Garden*

*-Nov 3: Lecture: Baroque Art: an "ideology" of contradictions, life and death– Palazzo Taverna at 10.15*

*Site visit: The crypt of the Capucine monks*

*-Nov 10: Lecture: Caravaggio - Palazzo Taverna at 10.15*

*Site visit: Sant Agostino San Luigi dei Francesi*

*-Nov 17: Baroque painters in Rome Palazzo Taverna at 10.15*

*Site Visit: Palazzo Corsini pictures Gallery*

*-Nov 24: Bernini and Borromini Palazzo Taverna at 10.15*

*Site visit: San Francesco a Ripa in Trastevere*

*–Dec 1: Palazzo Taverna at 10.15*

*Review*

**Dec 15: Palazzo Taverna 10.15**

**Exam**