



*Hydria with Herakles, Kerberos and Eurystheus, c. 530 BCE, Musée de Louvre, Paris*

## **THE HISTORY OF WESTERN ART FROM PREHISTORY TO THE PROTO-RENAISSANCE**

ARTH 301 Fall 2015

Friday 10:00AM-12:45PM, HAMC 203

Course Reference No. (CRN): 80174

Instructor: Pierette Kulpa

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Office Hours: Wednesday afternoon by appointment

### **Course description**

This is an Art History survey course covering the periods from Classical through Early Renaissance art, with some attention to non-western cultures. The history of visual arts is discussed using formal aesthetic language, historical and social context. Research and writing are emphasized.

This course condenses 17,000 years of art history into a single semester. This is an intense course, especially since we meet just one day a week. And while it is not meant to give you any mastery over a single area of art, it will provide you with an outline of the chronology of major monuments and moments and acquaint you with basic terminology pertaining to the history of art. It will also teach you about the discipline of art history. You will learn not only facts about major monuments, but also learn the kinds of questions that art historians ask, and the way they go about answering them. This class will whet your appetite about the study of art and teach you ways to go about learning more, if you are so inclined.

### **Student Outcomes**

- To understand the historical context behind artworks produced from prehistory until the early Renaissance.

- To become aware of skills of visual analysis and art historical methodology.
- To create an “object biography” that expresses a critical interest in an artwork from the textbook.
- To understand a chronological timeline of art historical events that helped create the world as we know it, including, for example, the development of art and material culture, the rise of settlements and cities, and the development of empires.
- To research and analyze artwork and to communicate your observations to your peers.

### **Methods of Assessing Student Outcomes:**

- Properly identify artworks and key terms from memory
- Compare and contrast works of art made during the time period covered in the course
- Create a video presentation on a specific object
- Complete numerous reading and writing assignments, and a research paper or project
- Create a portfolio of “Field Notes” on specific artworks that draw on your own observations

### **Instructional Strategies**

This class will utilize small group and individual work in class, full class discussions, lecture, and homework assignments. Readings will largely come from the textbook, be handed out in-class, or be available as a PDF on Moodle course management system.

### **Course Requirements and Grading Policy**

Assignment	Weight
<b>Attendance and Class Participation</b>	10%
<b>Field Note Assignments</b>	25% total (5% each)
<b>Two in class exams</b> Tests will be based on both lectures and readings. The in-class tests are not cumulative.	30% (15% each)
<b>Final exam</b>	15%
<b>Final project:</b> Object Biography Video	20%

### **Required Texts and Materials**

Readings will be assigned from the principal textbook, academic journals, and collections of primary sources and archival documents. All required texts will be available via Moodle for students to either read online or print.

**Required Textbook:** *Gardner's Art through the Ages, The Western Perspective*, 14<sup>th</sup> edition, Volume 1, ISBN: 978-1-285-06499-4. This is available for purchase at the bookstore. It is pricey, as art history survey books have lots of beautiful color pictures in them. The text is also available as a comprehensive volume and as a four-volume backpack edition. You can sometimes find it cheaper on Amazon.

### **Attendance Policy**

Attendance will be taken at each class. Should it be necessary to miss a class, it is the student's responsibility to notify the instructor beforehand and obtain any hand-outs or lecture notes from a classmate. Because we meet just one day a week, more than 2 unexcused absences will result in a lowering of your overall grade by half a letter grade. It is better to be late than it is to miss class entirely, but excessive and/or repetitive tardiness is disruptive and will not be tolerated.

### **In-Class Policies:**

All electronic devices must be put away during class, *this includes your computer, phone and tablet*. The temptation to use these devices for purposes other than aiding your learning is very strong and studies show that you learn more by synthesizing information and writing it down, than by transcribing it in MS Word. For more information on the topic, see this article: Dan Rockmore, "The Case for Banning Laptops in the Classroom," *The New Yorker* June 6, 2014. If you choose to use your electronic device for purposes other than those directly related to this class you will be asked to leave. We will have a 15-minute break and you are welcome to consult your devices then.

No headphones, earbuds, or food allowed in class. All students are expected to arrive prepared to speak out in class, to ask (and to answer) questions, and to participate in class discussions. The classroom should be protected as a safe place for opinions and responses; a courteous and respectful attitude is required.

### **Prim Library Resources**

In this course, you will be expected to utilize the library's resources as you complete your assignments and research. We will hold a class in the library to familiarize yourself with its many resources that will aid you in your "object biography." To start with, the following are excellent resources:

1. Citation Guides:  
<http://libguides.sierranevada.edu/content.php?pid=123799&sid=1063593>
2. Searching for art history articles:  
<http://libguides.sierranevada.edu/content.php?pid=125041&sid=1074248>
3. Finding Images:  
<http://libguides.sierranevada.edu/content.php?pid=125041&sid=1074249>

### **Sanctions for Cheating and/or Plagiarism**

#### **The Honor Code**

The faculty of SNC believes students must be held to high standards of integrity in all aspects of college life in order to promote the educational mission of the College and to encourage respect for the rights of others. Each student brings to the SNC community unique skills, talents, values

and experiences which, when expressed within the community, contribute to the quality of the educational environment and the growth and development of the individual. Students share with members of the faculty, administration and staff the responsibility for creating and maintaining an environment conducive to learning and personal development, where actions are guided by mutual respect, integrity, responsibility and trust. The faculty and students alike must make diligent efforts to ensure high standards are upheld by their colleagues and peers as well as themselves. Therefore faculty and students accept responsibility for maintaining these standards at Sierra Nevada College and are obligated to comply with its regulations and procedures, which they are expected to read and understand.

### **Consequences of Violating the Student Honor Code**

SNC students and faculty share the responsibility for maintaining an environment of academic honesty. Thus, all are responsible for knowing and abiding by the SNC Faculty/Student Honor Code published in the current SNC Catalog. Faculty are responsible for reporting all incidences of academic dishonesty to the Provost. Students are responsible for knowing what constitutes *cheating, plagiarism, and fabrication* and for refraining from these and other forms of academic dishonesty. *Academic dishonesty, such as plagiarism, will result in an F in the course and subject to further disciplinary action by the College.*

1<sup>st</sup> Offense: Student receives a zero for assignment/exam and counseling with faculty on the honor code, consequences for violating the honor code, and the value of academic honesty in learning.

2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: Student fails course and receives counseling with faculty on the honor code, consequences for violating the honor code, and the value of academic honesty in learning.

3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: Student is expelled.

### **ADA Accommodations**

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, students with a documented disability are eligible for support services and accommodations. If a student wishes to request an accommodation, please contact the Director of Academic Support Services, Henry Conover, at (775) 831-1314 x7534, [hconover@sierranevada.edu](mailto:hconover@sierranevada.edu), or visit the office in Prim Library: PL-304.

### **The SNC Email System**

The SNC email system is the official communication vehicle among students, faculty members and administrative staff and is designed to protect the confidentiality of student information as required by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 Act (FERPA). Students should check their college email accounts daily during the school year.

Students have a right to forward their SNC e-mail to another e-mail account (for example, hotmail or gmail). However, confidentiality of student information protected by FERPA cannot be guaranteed for SNC e-mail forwarded to an outside vendor. Having e-mail redirected does

not absolve a student from the responsibilities associated with official communication sent to his or her SNC e-mail account.

### **The Sierra Nevada College Mission Statement**

Sierra Nevada College graduates will be educated to be scholars of and contributors to a sustainable world. Sierra Nevada College combines the liberal arts and professional preparedness through an interdisciplinary curriculum that emphasizes entrepreneurial thinking and environmental, social, economic and educational sustainability.

### **Course Requirements:**

**Attendance and Class Participation:** Come to class prepared and willing to participate in activities, discussions, and lectures.

**Textbook Reading Assignments:** Ideally you should aim to have the readings done before class.

**Field Note Assignments:** To assist you in shaping and modeling your ability to look at images, you will produce five Field Notes throughout the course. Field Notes consist of a rough sketch of an object and a 500 word analysis describing its visual aspect, its possible meaning, and its impact on **you**. Each Field Note will be started in-class and handed in in the following class. *Remember*: These are not polished masterpieces, sketches can be rough and schematic, and writings can be direct and written in the first person. See the rubric for more information.

**Exams:** The tests will have some image identification, a slide comparison essay, a timeline and a map quiz.

- Image ID: you will be shown a picture of an object or monument and you will have to provide the name of the object, and a note about its art historical significance – essentially the latter will answer the question “Why do we study it in this class?”
- Comparison essay: you will be shown pairs of images and be asked to identify them; you will then be asked to compare and contrast them according to important formal, iconographical, or cultural issues raised by the comparison.
- Timeline: you will be given a set of artworks and you must place them in the order in which they were created.
- Map: quiz of the location of the most important cities for monuments, sites, and discoveries.

The best way to study for art history tests is to come to class, stay awake, and make note cards. Putting an image on one side of the note card and the identification on the reverse is a great way to study. Ask and I can show you some examples.

**Object Biography Video Final Project:** As you learn about art objects over the course of the semester, you will notice yourself pulled or drawn to some works over others. Keep track of your interests, for in your final project you will choose one object and make a short video about it. See the Project Description and Rubric for more details.

### **The Core Themes:**

Liberal Arts	Professional Preparedness
Entrepreneurial	Thinking Sustainability

## Class and Reading Schedule (Subject to change)

### Friday August 21<sup>st</sup>:

Introduction to Course, What is Art History?

Begin Paleolithic, Neolithic.

Reading: Gardner, ch.1 and ch.2

**Homework:** pick one of the questions you devised in class for your object and find the answer using your textbook.

### Friday August 28<sup>th</sup>:

Ancient Mesopotamia.

Reading: Gardner, Chapter 2.

**Field Note Assignment:** (Begin in class) *The Standard of Ur* (Gardner page 37).

- Sketch the object.
- Write a basic description of the object and then answer the following questions:
- What might the artist have been saying about Sumerian society through the images and material of this artifact?
- What might the artist have been saying about war and peace?

Submit Friday, Sept 11<sup>th</sup>.

Introduction to Object Biography Project; Listen to Met's Connections:

<http://www.metmuseum.org/connections/eyes>

### Friday, September 4<sup>th</sup>:

"The Cave of Forgotten Dreams" 2010

Reading: Gardner, Ch. 3.

### Friday, September 11<sup>th</sup>:

Ancient Egypt

Reading: Gardner, Ch. 3

**Field Note Assignment:** (Begin in class) *Akhenaten, Nefertiti, and three daughters* (Gardner, p. 78)

- Sketch the object.
- Briefly describe the relief and then answer the following questions:
- Which figures appear to be the most prominently represented?
- What message might Akhenaten have been trying to get across through this work?
- Note your initial response to the relief, and explain how the object would elicit this response, not just from you, but from anyone.

Conclude your Field Note by drawing a sketch of the sculpture.

Submit Friday, September 18<sup>th</sup>.

Watch: Met Connections “Embrace”

[http://www.metmuseum.org/connections/the\\_embrace](http://www.metmuseum.org/connections/the_embrace)

Listen: BBC’s 100 Objects; Mummy of Hornedjitef

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/ahistoryoftheworld/objects/sogITE3FSKStlk12qd2W3w>

### **Friday, September 18<sup>th</sup>:**

Ancient Mediterranean

Reading: Gardner Ch. 4

Listen: BBC’s 100 Objects: Bronze Minoan Bull-leaper

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/ahistoryoftheworld/objects/eU0DV7kOQ5inxmkID\\_YIw](http://www.bbc.co.uk/ahistoryoftheworld/objects/eU0DV7kOQ5inxmkID_YIw)

### **Homework (Begin in class):**

What strikes you as the most important message of the podcast? What did you appreciate about the narrator’s approach?

### **Friday, September 25<sup>th</sup>:**

Ancient Greece & **Exam review**

Reading: Gardner Ch. 5

Listen to Metropolitan Museum of Art “Connections” series on The Olympians.

**Homework (begin in class):** What topics do the two narrators discuss? How are they personally connected to the material?

<http://www.metmuseum.org/connections/olympians#/Feature/>

### **Friday, October 2<sup>nd</sup>:**

Exam

Begin Etruscans

### **Friday, October 9<sup>th</sup>:**

Etruscans

Reading: Gardner, Ch. 6

### **Friday, October 16<sup>th</sup>:**

Ancient Rome

Reading: Gardner, Ch. 7

**Field Note Assignment:** (Begin in class). *A Roman Home, Second Style wall painting of the Villa of Livia*, Prima Porta, Italy, 30-20 BCE. (Gardner 7-20, p.193).

- Sketch the object.
- Write a basic description of the object and then answer the following questions:
- Describe the room in a short paragraph and then answer the following questions:
- What effects does the painter use to give the illusion of three-dimensional space?

- What might the patron have wanted to achieve with a room such as this?

Submit in-class next Friday.

### Friday, October 23<sup>rd</sup>:

Early Christian Art and Architecture and Byzantium

Reading: Gardner Ch. 8

Submit Object Biography project proposal in-class.

(A few paragraphs on what you are going to write about and why).

### Friday, October 30<sup>th</sup>: No Class Nevada Day

### Friday, November 6<sup>th</sup>:

Islamic World and Exam Review

Reading: Ch. 10

### Friday, November 13<sup>th</sup>

Exam

Early Medieval Europe

Reading, Ch. 11

**Field Note Assignment** (Begin in class): *Bronze Doors of St. Michael's*, Hildesheim, Germany, 1015, Gardner 11-24, 11-25 (page 326-7).

- Sketch the object.
- Write a short visual analysis of the bronze doors. Then answer the following questions:
- What techniques has/have the artist(s) used to demonstrate emotion in the figures (especially the "Expulsion of Adam and Eve panel")?
- Note your initial response to the sculpture work on the doors. How might monks viewing this everyday as they went from their rooms to the church relate to the doors composition and content?

Submit Friday, November 27<sup>th</sup> in-class.

### Friday, November 20<sup>th</sup>:

No Class

Happy Thanksgiving!

### Friday, November 27<sup>th</sup>:

Romanesque & Gothic Europe

Reading, Ch. 12 & Ch. 13

**Field Note Assignment** (Begin in-class): *Death of the Virgin*, tympanum of left doorway, south transept, Strasbourg Cathedral, France, ca. 1230, Gardner 13-46, pg. 393.

- Sketch the object.
- Write a paragraph description of the sculpture relief, then answer the following questions:
- How do the figures relate to the architectural frame in which they are set?



- Where might the drapery, expressions, and posture be used to stir an emotional response in the viewer?

Submit on Friday, December 4<sup>th</sup>.

**Friday, December 4<sup>th</sup>:**

Late Medieval Italy

Reading: Ch. 14

Object Biography Videos due, share with class.

**December 8<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>: Finals Week : Exam Schedule to be Announced.**