Michelangelo and his World: 1475-1564
Syllabus

Instructor

Dr. Sheryl E. Reiss

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Modality

Remote learning

Quarter: Summer 2023
Start – end date: August 12 and 26, 2023
Session day/time: Saturday, 10:00 am- 4:00 pm
Course Code and Section: HUAS75024, 23U1

Course Overview

This two-day course focuses on Michelangelo Buonarroti (1475–1564). Sculptor, painter, and architect, he was called “Divine” during his lifetime and is arguably the most famous artist in the western tradition. The course explores Michelangelo’s early Florentine and Roman years looking at sculpture including the Vatican Pietà; and the David; his work in Rome for Pope Julius II including the pontiff’s tomb and the Sistine Ceiling; his Florentine projects for popes Leo X and Clement VII at San Lorenzo including the New Sacristy and Laurentian Library; the Sistine Chapel Last Judgment for Pope Paul III; his later sculptures; and his architectural works in Rome, especially, New St. Peter’s. Topics to be considered include Michelangelo’s friends and enemies including Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael, and Sebastiano del Piombo; the patronage that enabled his extraordinary career; the place of drawings in his work; the Counter-Reformation; “non-finito;” and his volatile personality, characterized as “terribilita.”

Class Meetings

This is primarily a lecture course with PowerPoint presentations. During class meetings we will spend significant time analyzing and discussing images and their socio-historical contexts. Due to the remote format of this course, some adjustments will need to be made for asking questions and discussion.

COURSE WEB SITE ON CANVAS, OUTLINES, AND ILLUSTRATIONS OF WORKS DISCUSSED IN CLASS

The Canvas web site will contain links to information including this syllabus; reading assignments and readings; and outlines listing works of art, terms, and names along with occasional announcements.
Outlines listing the works of art and architecture to be discussed in lectures will be posted on the Canvas course website prior to each class meeting. The outlines will also have lists of terms and the names of important persons mentioned in the lectures. Please do bear in mind the following about these outlines, which are provided for your convenience:

- They are not absolutely comprehensive -- they are provided so that you will have basic information about most of the things I will be presenting and names and terms in one place. I often make adjustments to the PowerPoints after posting the outlines.
- Because they are arranged by medium and artist, the order is not always the same as in the PowerPoints.
- Each outline will roll over into the following week.
- Occasionally works of art/architecture and terms will appear on more than one outline.

I will place my PowerPoint presentations on the Canvas course website after each lecture so that you may consult the images. The Canvas website will also contain links to information included in the syllabus; reading assignments; lists of works of art, terms, and names; lecture outlines; along with occasional announcements.

**DISCUSSION**

Substantive questions relevant to the material covered in lectures are always welcome, but due to the remote format of this course, please hold your questions until the designated discussion periods.

**DIFFICULT CONTENT**

Please be aware that this course includes some material that may prove difficult for certain students. Some images and/or texts may include nudity, sexually explicit content, and/or violence. Please consult me before or during the first week of class if you believe that such images and/or texts might be troubling to you.

**RECORDING OF CLASS MEETINGS**

Class meetings will be recorded to be made available to participants in this course. These recordings will be available on Canvas for review and for participants who have to miss class meetings. They should not be shared. They will be available until two weeks after the course ends.

**COURTESY**

Class meetings on Saturdays will begin promptly at 10:00 a.m. Chicago time. I will open the Zoom space five to ten minutes before that time. Please do everything you can to minimize distractions during our synchronous class sessions such as eating and getting up and down if your camera is on. Please silence all phones and close your browser and social media pages. During lectures and
discussions, please try not to interrupt your fellow students when they are speaking. And please dress as you would in an in-person classroom setting.

**Required texts**


PDFs of required readings will be placed on Canvas. Optional readings will be recommended and provided as PDFs on Canvas. There is no obligation to read the optional readings.

Books can be purchased online through the [University of Chicago Bookstore](http://www.chicagobooks.com).

**Lecture and Discussion Topics**

<table>
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<th>Week</th>
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| Week 1 | • Introduction: The Divine Michelangelo  
• Young Michelangelo in Florence, Rome, and Bologna: The Early Works; the Vatican  
*Pietà*; and the *Bacchus* |
Week 1

• In Florence during the Soderini Regime: the *David*; the *Battle of Cascina*, and Domestic Art
• In Rome during the Pontificate of Julius II; The Tragedy of the Tomb and the Sistine Chapel Ceiling

Week 2

• Working for the Medici Popes Clement VII and Leo X: The Façade of San Lorenzo; the New Sacristy; the Laurentian Library; the origins of the Sistine *Last Judgment*
• The Pontificate of Paul III: The Last Judgment and its Reception; The Pauline Chapel Frescoes
• Late Sculptures; The Boboli Slaves; the Florence *Pietà*; the Rondanini *Pietà*
• Architecture in Rome: Palazzo Farnese; the Capitoline; New St. Peter’s

**Accessing remote courses**

Remote courses are taught through our Canvas platform. Approximately two weeks before your class begins, we will add you to your canvas site using the email address you provided at the time of registration. An invitation will then be sent to that email. Click the “Get Started” button in the email to begin the Canvas login process. For step-by-step instructions, please visit [https://grahamschool.uchicago.edu/academic-programs/online/learning-resources/liberal-arts](https://grahamschool.uchicago.edu/academic-programs/online/learning-resources/liberal-arts). Once you’ve created your Canvas account, you can access any Graham School canvas course for which you are registered at: [https://canvas.uchicago.edu](https://canvas.uchicago.edu).

**Accessibility information**

Student Disability Services (SDS) works to provide resources, support and accommodations for all students with disabilities and works to remove physical and attitudinal barriers, which may prevent their full participation in the University community. Students that would like to request accommodations should contact SDS in advance of the first class session at 773.702.6000 or disabilities@uchicago.edu.

**UChicago CARES Statement:**

The University and its faculty are committed to creating a safer and more inclusive learning environment for all students. At the University, all faculty, staff, graduate student instructors, and teaching assistants are considered “Individuals with Reporting Responsibilities” and are required to let the University’s Title IX Coordinator know about any disclosures they receive from students about experiences of sexual misconduct (including sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, stalking, and sexual harassment). This includes
disclosures of experiences that happened before their time at the University. This is to ensure that all students who have experienced sexual misconduct receive support, options, and information about their rights and resources. Students are not obligated to respond to this outreach, and this will not generate a report to law enforcement.

For more information, please see this handout for students as well as the University’s Policy on Harassment, Discrimination and Sexual Misconduct and Policy on Title IX Sexual Harassment. You can also reach out directly for services and support from the Office for Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Support by emailing titleix@uchicago.edu.

If you, or another student you know, wishes to speak to a confidential resource who does not have this reporting responsibility, please contact the Sexual Assault Dean on Call through the UChicago Safe App or at 773.834-HELP.

Questions? Contact Zoë Eisenman at zme1@uchicago.edu.