

HA980-30 Then and Now: Displaying the Renaissance

21/22

Department

SCAPVC - History of Art

Level

Taught Postgraduate Level

Module leader

Giorgio Tagliaferro

Credit value

30

Module duration

10 weeks

Assessment

100% coursework

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

The module addresses the significance of setting, context and audience for Renaissance works of art – both in the past and today. Museum and exhibition curators have become increasingly exercised by displaying Renaissance objects and works of art in ways that echo practices of display which can be reconstructed within the Renaissance period (*vis-à-vis* lighting, eye-level, ensembles of objects and material that echo documented groupings). Students on this module will consider the evidence for, and the significance of the display of art objects of different mediums and formats within the historical period 1400-1700. Students will also reflect on how modern museum practice seeks to evoke or copy arrangements that have been investigated through academic research.

Module aims

To examine the many ways in which art objects and luxury goods were experienced and consumed in Renaissance and Early Modern Europe, in order to better understand their functions and meanings, and how these have been modified over time as their display changed. To analyse the material and visual culture from which a variety of artefacts and practices to display them originated, by addressing such issues as the relationships between expenditure and ethics, art

market dynamics, patronage and taste, political and social concerns. To consider the development of collecting as a key factor in the production and consumption of works of art; how the dialectic between private and public display has impacted on their perception and appreciation from increasingly larger and more diversified audiences. To discuss how scholars have reconstructed such forms of display and how academic research can shape current museum practice. To evaluate the ethics of reconstructing lost spaces and fragmentary originals, together with the challenges that modern displays pose to traditional divisions between 'high' and 'low' or 'decorative' art.

Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

Recovering devotional and sacred contexts for Renaissance Art

Recovering nuptial and domestic contexts for Renaissance Art

The scholar's study and the origins of the museum in the Renaissance

Expenditure and the Art Markets in the Renaissance

The impact of the European voyages of discovery on display and collecting of artefacts

The Kunst- and Wunder-kammer: Art and Nature compared

Collecting Italian art in Great Britain prior to the nineteenth century

From private collections to public museums

Displaying Renaissance objects in the modern museum

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- Command a knowledge of key elements of art production, consumption and display in Renaissance Europe
- Demonstrate understanding of the social, political and economic significance of art display practices in the historical period 1400-1700
- Display an understanding of key conceptual and theoretical frameworks within which the collecting and display of works of art have been discussed by art and cultural historians
- Demonstrate an ability to interpret differing modes of and approaches to displaying historical objects within current museum practice
- Present an argument, initiate and sustain group discussion through intelligent questioning and debate at an appropriate level
- Ability to undertake research and to write up the results in the form of a well-structured argument at an appropriate level
- Familiarity with essential ICT skills
- Ability to collaborate effectively with others
- Show understanding of diverse viewpoints
- Ability to find, select, organize and synthesize evidence
- Ability to formulate a sustained argument
- Think conceptually and independently at an appropriate level
- Sophisticated visual analysis
- Bibliographical skills at an appropriate level

- Critical analysis of cultural artefacts in their context
- Ability to select and respond to particular methodological approaches when dealing with material and visual evidence

Indicative reading list

Benjamin G. Kohl and Alison Andrews Smith (eds.), *Major Problems in the History of the Italian Renaissance* (Lexington, MA: Heath and Co, 1995)

Paula Findlen (ed.), *The Italian Renaissance: The Essential Readings* (Oxford : Blackwell, 2002)

Richard Goldthwaite, *Wealth and the Demand for Art in Italy, 1300-1600* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993)

Martin Kemp, *Behind the Picture. Art and Evidence in the Italian Renaissance* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1997)

Michelle O'Malley and Evelyn Welch (eds.), *The Material Renaissance* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007)

Guido Guerzoni, *Apollo & Vulcan: The Art Markets in Italy, 1400-1700* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2011)

Dora Thornton, *The Scholar in His Study: Ownership and Experience in Renaissance Italy* (London and New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998)

Luke Syson and Dora Thornton, *Objects of Virtue: Art in Renaissance Italy* (London: British Museum, 2001)

Marta Ajmar-Wollheim and Flora Dennis (eds.), *At Home in Renaissance Italy, exh. cat* (London: V&A Publications, 2006)

Susan M. Pearce, *On Collecting: An Investigation into Collecting in the European Tradition* (London and New York: : Routledge, 1995)

Paula Findlen, *Possessing Nature: Museums, Collecting and Scientific Culture in Early Modern Italy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994)

Edward Chaney, *The Evolution of English Collecting: The Reception of Italian Art in the Tudor and Stuart Periods* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2003)

Sharon Macdonald (ed.), *A Companion to Museum Studies* (Malden, MA, and Oxford: Blackwell, 2006)

[View reading list on Talis Aspire](#)

Subject specific skills

- command a knowledge of key elements of art production, consumption and display in Renaissance Europe
- demonstrate understanding of the social, political and economic significance of art display practices in the historical period 1400-1700
- display an understanding of key conceptual and theoretical frameworks within which the collecting and display of works of art have been discussed by art and cultural historians
- demonstrate an ability to interpret differing modes of and approaches to displaying historical objects within current museum practice
- critical analysis of cultural artefacts in their context
- ability to select and respond to particular methodological approaches when dealing with material and visual evidence

Transferable skills

- present an argument, initiate and sustain group discussion through intelligent questioning and debate at an appropriate level
 - ability to undertake research and to write up the results in the form of a well-structured argument at an appropriate level
 - familiarity with essential ICT skills
 - ability to collaborate effectively with others
 - Show understanding of diverse viewpoints
 - ability to find, select, organize and synthesize evidence
 - ability to formulate a sustained argument
 - think conceptually and independently at an appropriate level
 - bibliographical skills at an appropriate level
-

Study

Study time

Type	Required
Seminars	10 sessions of 4 hours (13%)
External visits	1 session of 2 hours (1%)
Private study	258 hours (86%)
Total	300 hours

Private study description

Required and recommended reading for seminar presentation and research for written assessments

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You do not need to pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Assessment group A

	Weighting	Study time
Written Assignment	100%	

Weighting

Study time

5000 word essay

Feedback on assessment

Written feedback and dedicated feedback tutorials.

Availability

Courses

This module is Optional for:

- Year 1 of TRSA-V1PF Postgraduate Taught Culture of the European Renaissance

This module is Option list A for:

- Year 1 of THAA-V4PJ Postgraduate Taught History of Art and Visual Studies

This module is Option list C for:

- Year 1 of TPHA-V7PN Postgraduate Taught Philosophy and the Arts