**ART 394  ARTS OF ITALY  Summer 2019**

8 credits • 6/17 – 7/21 • Prof. Cara Jaye • cara.jaye@wwu.edu • 650-7771

**ROME**  

**FLORENCE**  

**VENICE**

**Arts of Italy** is an intensive course that takes place in Central and Northern Italy. In this class we will explore Italian art and culture focusing on the arts and architecture in Rome, Florence, Tuscany, and Venice. We will cover art and architecture from ancient through early modernity to contemporary, ending the trip at the Venice Biennale.

Students will engage in visual exploration and creative problem solving through a variety of media, tools, and techniques. The class emphasizes drawing, photography, mixed media on paper and other portable methods of art making while traveling. Students are encouraged to keep an open mind as to the possibilities in solving the problems of Art 394, and are expected to challenge themselves.

**PARTICIPATION AND ATTENDANCE** in this course is mandatory. You are required to participate and be on time with the required materials for every class. Each person is accountable for their assignments and materials and must be able to carry or transport their own belongings. More than two unexcused absences will lower your grade by a full letter grade. Six absences for any reason will result in a failing grade. Excessive lateness, early departures and lack of being prepared will be counted as absences.

**GRADING:** Your grade will be determined by the quality of your work, attendance, determination, progress, and participation in class discussions.

- 90-100 A - excellent work, strong in all areas, advancing consistently both formally and creatively.
- 80-89 B - good work, knowledge of the principles, assignments well executed
- 70-79 C - competent work, average output and a basic understanding of the principles.
- 60-69 D - poor work, effort, and attendance, a lack of creative or technical skill.
- 0-59 F - lack of understanding, and/or a failure to complete the required work.

**COURSE OUTCOMES:**
- To understand art in relation to social, political, and historical developments.
- To offer an insight into the historical creation of contemporary values.
- To interpret visual experiences from diverse perspectives, analyzing ideas and assumptions.
- To improve abilities and skills in visual art making.
- To develop the creative thought process through research, exposure and dialog.
- To develop a group of individual and progressively complex art works.
- To develop strong research skills in the context of your own creative practice.
- To present visual information in an intelligent, coherent, and balanced way.

**ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT:** Students are reminded that academic misconduct is a violation of the code of student conduct. Academic integrity is demanded, and academic dishonesty at Western Washington University is a serious infraction dealt with severely. No student shall claim as his or her own, the achievements, work or arguments of others. At Western Washington University, misconduct in research and scholarship is defined as: The intentional fabrication or falsification of data, research procedures, or data analysis; plagiarism; or other fraudulent activities in proposing, conducting, reporting, or reviewing research. You have to cite anytime you take ideas from someone else, not just his or her language.

If you may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability please contact disAbility Resources at www.wwu.edu/drs or stop by Old Main 120.
COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

Canvas assignments and pre-departure responses (10%)
In preparation for the course there will be a selection of videos and readings that you will need to review on Canvas, and respond to accordingly. These are all due in the weeks before we depart for Rome.

Journal / Sketchbook roughly 6” x 9” (10%)
• Use your sketchbook for drawing and as a way of absorbing and recording what you are experiencing. You will make a minimum of one drawing a day. Although some of your recording will be done with photography, drawing is a deeper type of visual recording. Drawings may include collage, photomontage with drawing, or other mixed media pieces. You may also use the sketchbook as a journal or written log of your journey, in addition to the Digital Journal (below).

Digital Journal/Blog (10%)
A written and visual log of your journey. This is very important because things blur very quickly when you are seeing so much in a short period of time. Make entries in the journal each evening and include what you saw during the day. Include descriptions of encounters, experiences and observations. Your blog will naturally accommodate photographs, videos and other interactions.

Studio Assignments:
THEMATIC PROJECT ONE: Mapping the City, A Project in Four Parts (30%)

Part One: Memory Map
The Centro Storico, or the historic center of Rome, in which our hotel is located, is centuries old and made up of a maze of small streets. You should take a map with you when you go out and try to be aware where you are – it is easy to get lost but easy to find your way back with a map. After you get to know the area a little bit, make a drawing of the area as you remember it in your head. DO NOT use a map to make this drawing. Include landmarks you have become familiar with in the area. You may expand it to include other parts of Rome but do not check a map for accuracy until you have finished the drawing. Include in your drawing of the map: images, experiences, feelings, etc., in addition to your chosen landmarks.

Part Two: Grid and Perspective
Noticing the street-level design of an area of Rome, Florence, Siena, or Pienza, situate yourself either lined up with the grid (one-point perspective) or at an angle to the grid (two-point perspective) for 3-4 small sketches in your sketchbook. Using sighting to correct angles and sizes, make freehand perspective drawings of your subject. With each sketch, take notes on experiences, people, encounters, feelings, the weather, food, etc. at each place. You may also take photographs from where you are sitting. These sketches will take about 30 minutes each.

At the monastery of Sant’ Anna near Pienza you will use one of your sketches (and photos of the site if you have them) to make a longer drawings with ink or watercolor washes. Later, incorporate other details that reflect on your personal experiences at the site. You may add text, drawing, collage elements, or zoomed-in details.

Part Three: Assemblage City
Urban organization in Venice is forced into the compressed space of islands. Over centuries the architecture of the city, reflecting an eclectic cosmopolitan trading center, was layered over sinking layers.

“The Venetian eye ... was an eye that appreciated the visual complexity of the pastiche – the collage-like assemblage of ‘borrowed’ fragments.” (Art and Life in Renaissance Venice)
The first part of this project will take place throughout the trip. You will build a collection of found materials along your journey, from small pieces of paper (wrappings, packaging, newspaper, receipts, etc.) to other small objects. Think of these materials as information from another place, like evidence from another planet.

Later, you will create a mixed media work on large paper that includes all items collected. In this work you will introduce a new structure that both displays and re-contextualizes all the items in the collection. Consider the framework of the map, but also other means of organizing such as architecture, gardens, altarpieces, reliquaries, tapestries, etc. Consider texture, color and ornament. Think about strategies for indicating significance: the differences between focal and subsidiary, precious and ordinary, sacred and profane, old and new.

**Part Four:**

Parts of the project will be reviewed at critiques in stages along the trip. Later, when you return, you will organize and combine the three parts of this project to investigate, compare, and contrast the different encounters of a city they express. The parts of this project will become one large composite work. You may need to remake or reconfigure earlier elements onto another surface or surfaces in order to unify the components into a cohesive whole.

Various formats or templates may be utilized, e.g. triptych, the book, layers, fold-out, pop-up, doors and windows, grid-based serial format, containers, 3-d elements, installation. Consider how the information changes depending on different visual approaches and organizing systems. Use text to reflect on order, disorder, and your experience of space. This is a large and significant project that counts for 40% of your final grade.

**Thematic Project Two: The Body as Anatomy – “La Specola” (15%)**

In Florence we will be visiting a museum with life size wax figures of the human body, many of which open to reveal the interior, all formed completely of wax. These figures reveal themselves in layers. Create sketches in your sketchbook at La Specola Museum from the figures, drawings and other specimens on view.

Later, make a piece that relates the body (your body) to this trip in Italy. Think about anatomy, revealing and concealing, layers, and the separation of layers. Consider the fact that your body is always traveling physically through space, you are traveling through Italy, and that various substances are constantly traveling through your body. Make a work that creates a connection between the body and your experience in Italy.

One approach could be to relate this project to the **mapping** project. Maps are a way of locating the body in space. You might think about how anatomical studies are maps of the body. Another approach would to base your composition on one of the **narrative** figure paintings/sculptures that you have studied on this trip, to an iconic religious, mythological, or historical scene. Or you could compose your piece to refer to the tradition of **reliquaries** in altarpieces, to the practice of preserving the bodies or parts of bodies of saints.
**Thematic Project Three: The Stranger and the Journey: Outsider Stories (15%)**

Travel is a primary source of the ‘new’ in history. The displacements of the journey create exotica (‘matter out of place’) and rarities, as well as generating that peculiar species of social being of unknown identity – the stranger.

While you are in Italy you will have encounters with people that make you realize that you are a stranger, the outsider and, in particular, the American. Foreign travel – full of experiences of the strange and new – also allows us to see ourselves in a new way. We become stereotypes for good or ill, exotic and rare or banal and irritating – as more or less interesting, nice, smart, rich, attractive or powerful than we thought we were.

For this project you will create a multi-frame group of works on paper with the central character of yourself as the stranger. This could take the form of a storyboard, cartoon strip, book pages, a cartoon for a painting cycle (as in frescoes), or separate pieces representing successive moments. You may use drawing with or without color, or drawing in combination with collage and photography, or painting for this project.

**Breakdown of Grade Evaluation**

- 10% Canvas Responses and Pre-departure activities
- 10% Sketchbook/journal
- 10% Digital Journal/Blog
- 20% Mapping the City – A Project in Four Parts
- 15% Body as Anatomy Project
- 15% Stranger and the Journey
- 20% Overall Participation: includes lectures, critiques, discussions and exercises
Materials List for Art Workshop in Italy – 2019

Paper 2 commercial sketchbooks: 1 small (about 4”x6”) 1 medium size (about 8” x 10”)
Optional: 1 “prepared” sketchbook with a variety of papers or a roll or folded bundle of drawing paper for larger work when possible

pencils a good selection including colored pencils or pastel pencils

pastels a small set of individual colors, about 8-16

paint watercolor, gouache, or small tubes of acrylic paint

brushes assorted sizes and styles, packed in a small brush holder

markers fine and medium line black markers

gesso small jar (optional)

clear acrylic medium- small jar (optional)

pva or other glue: for collage, small jar

masking tape - wide

small pair of scissors and/or xacto knife – (must be packed in “checked luggage”)

erasers kneadable, white plastic, and clic type

charcoal pencils – various hardinesses, about 6

 glue stick

*Pack everything in large gallon size Zip Lock bags. This will all go in your checked luggage.

**Emphasis on: small size, fold up kits, and a variety of materials that you like to use, and might be willing to swap and share with others in the class.

***Small quantities of glue, acrylic medium, etc. pack and store well in containers.

****There are art supply stores in Rome, Florence and Venice, so you will be able to purchase many things there. This can be great fun!

*****Do not travel with flammables (mineral spirits, combustible paints, etc.) You can purchase these items in Italy if you have to have them.
**READING LIST**

All reading selections will be posted on Canvas before the end of Spring quarter. Print copies before departure to collect in a binder that you can bring OR load electronically onto a device that you will bring.

There will be several discussions during the course with questions for each reading. You will prepare for the discussions in advance in your journal. Take notes on each reading and be prepared to bring issues and reflections to the group. Each student will be asked to speak, so participation is not optional.

Readings are listed below in order of sites and discussions. You should begin the readings before departure in order to keep up.


