



CIEE Ferrara, Italy

Course name:	Artists, Patrons and Muses - Women and the Arts in Early Modern Italy
Course level:	AHIS 3001 FEIT / GEND 3001 FEIT
Programs offering course:	Ferrara Liberal Arts
Language of instruction:	Italian
U.S. Semester Credits:	3
Contact Hours:	45
Term:	Fall 2019

Course Description

A journey through western art from the Renaissance to the 18th century, the course introduces students to artists and patrons, models and muses, sibyls, goddesses, martyrs, wives and courtesans. We will explore the social, political and cultural contexts in which women artists lived and worked, and examine how gender bias influenced their careers in a male-dominated world. Students will analyse the ways women artists gradually gained economic, social, and cultural emancipation from male peers. Can we include women artists in art history without isolating them in a separate category? What challenges did women artists face to be considered equal to male artists? Through class discussions, group projects and site visits, the course seeks answers to these questions.

The course is organized chronologically, with special emphasis on early modern artists. Our major case study will be the city of Ferrara with its glorious Renaissance past marked by the powerful Este family. Lectures will combine with visits to palaces and museums such as the Palazzina Marfisa d'Este, Casa Romei, Palazzo Schifanoia, and the Corpus Domini cloister.

An essential part of this course is a field trip to Bologna, to the most important Italian library specializing in women's culture, gender studies and feminism. In Bologna we will visit the basilica of San Petronio, the National Gallery, and the Palazzo Poggi Museum, following in the footsteps of the most famous Bolognese women artists, including the sculptor Properzia de' Rossi, the renowned portraitist Lavinia Fontana, the scientist Anna Morandi Manzolini, and Elisabetta Sirani, founder of the first art school for women in Italy.

Learning Objectives

The course gives students an overview of women's achievements in the visual arts.

Students will:

- Learn to read and use the specific terminology;
- Build a visual vocabulary to understand and describe works of art;



- Analyse masterpieces in their historical and cultural context;
- Deepen their awareness of women's history;
- Interpret the meaning of works of art and their visual symbolism.
- Become intimately acquainted with the city of Ferrara
- Identify the underpinnings of modernism in the Italian Renaissance

A strong emphasis on the resources provided by the city of Ferrara will help students to develop the critical and analytical skills required to do research in the history of art.

Course Prerequisites

A good knowledge of Italian is required in order to actively participate in classroom discussions.

Methods of Instruction

Lectures, seminar sessions, site visits, field trips, research assignments, film screenings.

Online Resources

All required readings, slides, supplemental digital resources and additional information will be available online at Canvas.

Assessment and Final Grade

1. Oral presentation:	10%
2. Midterm exam:	25%
3. Final exam:	25%
4. Term paper:	15%
5. Participation:	25%

Course Requirements

Oral Presentation

Pretend you are a journalist who is able to go back in time. Just like a reporter, you can interview a woman artist, but you only have a limited time to do so.

Compile a list of questions you would like to ask and send them to the instructor by November 10. The oral presentation outline must include at least 2 printed sources chosen among art history essays, books, monographs, or magazines. An annotated



bibliography is fundamental, because it reflects the validity of the source material students intend to use for the oral presentation.

On November 22, present your research to the class (10 minutes) with the aid of a power point.

Midterm Exam

In the first part of the exam, students will be given extracts from critical texts on art already studied in class and will be required to comment on them; in the second part, students will be shown four images already studied during the course. They will identify title, date, name of the artist, and write a brief critical analysis of the work of art in question.

Final Exam

Students will be shown a group of 8 pictures already studied during the course and will identify artist, title, date, place and materials used in each case, then write a critical analysis of the work of art in question.

Term Paper

1. Just like a museum curator, propose and organize an exhibition! Choose a topic among the suggested ones and select artworks and artists that better explain it:
 - Women artists as pupils and teachers
 - The representation of maternity
 - Genre scene: a daily life's mirror
 - Professional challenges
 - Nuns and monastery: vocation, or imposition?
 - Not a job for a woman: the strength of sculptors
 - "God dwells in details": the portraitists
 - Contemporary Muses
 - Heroes and Saints
2. The topic will be determined in discussions with the course instructor during office hours, or in *ad hoc* tutorials. Paper outline must include one-paragraph thesis statement and at least 2 printed sources.
3. All essays must be typed on a computer and double-spaced (c. 1.000 words, excluding footnotes and bibliography). Students are expected to send the paper to the instructor via email by 9 pm, December 7. Late submissions will be penalized one half grade for each day they are late. Extensions are granted only in special circumstances, such as serious illness or bereavement.

Class Participation



Students are expected to attend regularly and participate actively in class. Quick-write tests will be administered at the beginning of each class session. Students are expected to do the readings and assessments in advance, so as to be familiar with images and artists, and to participate in class discussion.

Students are reminded that plagiarism (presenting another person's work as one's own) is completely unacceptable and will result in the student receiving a FAIL for the term paper. To avoid this, always make sure that references and other people's ideas are cited correctly. If you are unsure about how to cite a reference, check with the course instructor.

Laptops, mobiles and other electronic devices are not allowed in the classroom.

Weekly Schedule

Week 1

Lesson 1

Cluster I: The High Renaissance

Introduction: *Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?*

Approaches to the study of women artists through the analysis and discussion of Linda Nochlin's provocative essay

Reading 1: Nochlin 2014, p. 23-33, 50-58; Fortunati 2007, p. 11-15.

Additional reading: *Lezioni di Arte* 2009, Glossario.

Lesson 2

Art and literature: Vasari's *Vite degli artisti*, Castiglione's *Il Libro del Cortegiano*, and the representation of beauty.

Reading 2: Chadwick 2007, p. 31-33; Ajmar-Wollheim, Dennis 2006, p. 17-18; Sutherland Harris, Nochlin 1979, p. 24.

Additional reading: Castiglione, selected chapters (I 40, IV 27, IV 52).

Week 2

Lesson 3

Illuminated manuscripts: from Christine de Pizan to Caterina Vigri

Reading 3: Chadwick 2007, p. 87-91; Fortunati 2007, p. 26-28; Graziani 2002, p. 221-222; Sutherland Harris, Nochlin 1979, p. 19-21; *I Racconti del Castello / The Castle Talks* 2006, 52-55; Fumagalli (on-line article).

Lesson 4

Visit to the Biblioteca Ariostea

Students will have a unique opportunity to see two manuscripts illuminated by Saint Caterina Vigri, and the first biography of Caterina written in 1463 by Illuminata Bembo

Reading 4: Caraffi 1999, 573-596.

Week 3

Lesson 5

Domestic setting: Renaissance marriage chests and weddings

Reading 5: *Lezioni di Arte* 2009, 122-124, 248; Ajmar-Wollheim, Dennis 2006, 120-121; Welch 2000, 277-289.

Lesson 6

Courtly life: visit to Palazzo Schifanoia and the Palazzina Marfisa d'Este

Reading 6: *Lezioni di Arte* 2009, 90, 102-103, 105; Sassu 2011, 4-6, 10-11, and related chapters about the Hall of the Months.

Task: Students will select a month and a mythological-allegorical female figure that represents it. During the tour, they will present the chosen allegory to the class.

Week 4

Lesson 7

Learned women in portrait medals and their role of patrons: Isabella d'Este, Cecilia Gonzaga, Vittoria Colonna

Reading 7: Ragionieri 2005, p. 52-53, 132-133; Welch 2000, p. 237-239; Welch 2009, p. 253-258; Bonoldi 2015, p. 7-8.

Lesson 8

Visit to Palazzo dei Diamanti, Ferrara

Reading 8: Beltramini, Tura 2016, p. 66, 72, 78, 106, 124, 130, 158, 206.

Week 5

Lesson 9

Group research at the library of Centro Documentazione Donna

Reading 9: Vera Fortunati Pietrantonio, Irene Graziani. *Properzia de' Rossi: una scultrice a Bologna nell'età di Carlo V*. Bologna: Editrice Compositori, 2011, p. 9-25.

Midterm Exam

Lesson 10

Week 6

Lesson 11

Sofonisba Anguissola and Fede Galizia: portraiture and still life

Reading 10: *Lezioni di Arte* 2009, 308; Chadwick 2007, 77-86; Vasari's description of Sofonisba Anguissola in *Lives of the Artists*; Hedges, Wendt 1980, 54-55; Banti 2011, 13-18, 29-32.

Lesson 12

Lavinia Fontana: from Bologna to the court of pope Paul V

Reading 11: *Lezioni di Arte* 2009, 182; Banti 2011, 21-25; Fortunati 2007, 30-32; Chadwick 2007, 91-99.

Week 7

Lesson 13

Cluster II: the Baroque

Artemisia Gentileschi: saints, heroines and self-portraits

Reading 12: *Lezioni di Arte* 2009, 266-267; Agnati 2001, p. 21-29.

Suggested reading: Menzio 2004, 135-148.

Deadline for the oral presentation outline

Week 8

Lesson 14

Diana Scultori and Elisabetta Sirani: painter and printmaker

Reading 13: *Lezioni di Arte* 2009, 202; Banti 2011, 35-39; Fortunati 2007, 32-35; Emily Peters (online source).

Lesson 15

Anna Morandi Manzolini and Maria Sibylla Merian: art and science

Reading 14: Fortunati 2007, 40-42; Messbarger 2010, 1-14 (online source); Maria Sibylla Merian & Daughters: Women of Art and Science (online source).

Week 9

Lesson 16

Cluster III: the Enlightenment

Christina of Sweden, Catherine the Great, Madame de Pompadour: great European patrons of the Enlightenment

Reading 15: Anderson, Zinsser 1993, p. 72-73, 78-83, 86-87, 90-95, 118-121.

Oral presentations are scheduled at the end of this class.

Lesson 17-18

Field trip to Bologna
Visit to the basilica of San Petronio, Santuario del Corpus Domini, and Palazzo Poggi Museum.

The day trip is worth 2 lessons: if missed, it will be considered as 2 lessons missed.

Week 10

Lesson 19

Angelica Kauffmann and Rosalba Carriera: artists and travellers

Reading 16: Bortolon 1969 (vol. 3), 43-52; Bortolon 1969 (vol. 8), 51-58

Deadline for the term paper outline

Lesson 20

The French Royal Academy: Elisabeth Vigée Le Brun and Adelaide Labille-Guiard

Reading 17: Rizzatti 1970, 43-54; Vigée Le Brun 1990, 71-75.

Week 11

Lesson 21

The Cult of Beauty: Lady Hamilton between Eros and "Attitudes"

Reading 18: Vigée Le Brun 1990, 83-86; Gough 2016, 6-14

Deadline for the Term Paper

Lesson 22

Final Exam

Readings

Students are provided with a pdf course reader which contains all the weekly reading materials. Students will be expected to do the readings prior to the lecture, in order to be familiar with the images and artists and participate actively in the classroom discussion.

A set of images will be provided before the mid-term and the final exam. The CIEE study centre contains a selection of books, essays and magazines some of which are included in the bibliography below. Students are encouraged to consult this material.

There is also a number of books and articles on Renaissance Ferrara in the various public and university libraries around the city (Ferrara integrated catalogue: <http://opac.unife.it>).

Studying on-site is strongly encouraged. Students are expected to visit some of Ferrara's neighbouring cities such as Mantua, Padua, Modena, Rimini, Florence, Venice, Ravenna, all easily reachable by train.

Books and essays included in the reader

AA.VV. *Caterina di Russia: l'imperatrice e le arti*. Milano: Electa, 1998. Print.

AA.VV. *Cristina di Svezia. Le collezioni reali*. Milano: Electa, 2003. Print.

Agnati, Tiziana. *Artemisia Gentileschi*. Firenze: Giunti, 2001. Print.

Ajmar-Wollheim Marta, Dennis Flora. *At Home in Renaissance Italy*. London: V&A Publications, 2006. Print.

Anderson, Bonnie S., Zinsser, Judith, P. *Le donne in Europa* (3 vol). Bari: Laterza, 1993. Print.

Banti, Anna. *Quando anche le donne si misero a dipingere*. Milano: Abscondita, 2011. Print.

Baillo, Joseph. Salmon, Xavier. *Elisabeth Louise Vigée Le Brun*. Paris: RMN, 2015. Print.

Beltramini, Guido, Tura, Adolfo. *Orlando Furioso 500 anni*. Ferrara: Fondazione Ferrara Arte, 2016. Print.

Bonoldi, Lorenzo. *Isabella d'Este. La Signora del Rinascimento*. Rimini: Guaraldi, 2015. Print.

Caraffi, Patrizia. *Christine de Pizan e "La città delle dame"*. Milano: Luni Editrice, 1999. Print.

Castiglione, Baldassarre. *Il libro del cortegiano*. Milano: RCS, 2006. Print.

Centanni, Monica. *L'originale assente. Introduzione allo studio della tradizione classica*. Milano: Bruno Mondadori, 2005. Print.

Chadwick, Whitney. *Women, Art, and Society*. Singapore: Thames & Hudson, 2007. Print.

Della Casa, Giovanni. *Galateo*. Milano: Rizzoli, 2006. Print.

De Pizan, Christine. *La città delle dame*. Milano: Luni Editrice, 1999. Print.

Duby, Georges. *I peccati delle donne nel Medioevo*. Bari: Laterza, 2008. Print.

Elias, Norbert. *La civiltà delle buone maniere*. Bologna: Il Mulino, 2009. Print.

Fortunati, Vera. *L'occhio della donna artista*. Bologna: Editrice Compositori, 2007. Print.

Graziani, Irene. *L'iconografia di Caterina Vigri: dalla clausura alla città*, in Fortunati, Vera. *Vita artistica nel monastero femminile. Exempla*. Bologna: Editrice Compositori, 2002. Print.

Fortunati, Vera. *Italian Women Artists from Renaissance to Baroque*. Milano: Skirà, 2007. Print.

Fortunati, Vera. *Lavinia Fontana (1552- 1614)*. Milano: Electa, 1994. Print.

Gentileschi, Artemisia. *Lettere precedute da «Atti di un processo per stupro»*. Milano: Abscondita, 2004. Print.

Goodman, Elise. *The Portraits of Madame de Pompadour. Celebrating the Femme Savante*. Berkeley: University of California Press. Print.

Hufton, Olwen. *Destini femminili. Storia delle donne in Europa 1500-1800*. Milano: Mondadori, 1996. Print.

Lezioni di Arte 2. Dal Rinascimento al rococò. Milano: Electa, 2009. Print.

Longhi, Roberto. *Gentileschi. Padre e figlia*. Milano: Abscondita, 2011. Print.

Muzzarelli, Maria Giuseppina. *Un'italiana alla corte di Francia. Christine de Pizan, intellettuale e donna*. Bologna: Il Mulino, 2007. Print.

Niccoli, Ottavia. *Rinascimento al femminile*. Bari: Laterza, 2006. Print.

Nochlin, Linda. *Perché non ci sono state grandi artiste?*. Roma: Castelvechi, 2014. Print.

Peters, Emily. *Diana Mantuana. Renaissance engraver*. RIDS website. Online.

Picello, Raffaella. *Donne e arte. La conquista di una identità dal Cinquecento al terzo millennio*. Ferrara: Centro Documentazione Donna, 2006. Print.

Ragionieri, Pina. *Vittoria Colonna e Michelangelo*. Firenze: Mandragora, 2005. Print.

Sassu, Giovanni. Palazzo Schifanoia. Ferrara: Musei Civici Arte Antica, 2011. Print.

Sutherland Harris, Ann. Nochlin, Linda. *Le grandi pittrici 1550-1950*. Milano: Feltrinelli, 1979. Print.

Tasso, Torquato. *Discorso della virtù femminile e donnesca*. Palermo: Sellerio Editore, 1997. Print.

Tinagli, Paola. *Women in Italian Renaissance Art: Gender, Representation, Identity*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997. Print.

Vasari, Giorgio. *Le Vite*. Torino: Einaudi, 1991. Print.

Vigée Le Brun, Elisabeth. *Memorie di una ritrattista*. Milano: Abscondita, 2006. Print.

Welch, Evelyn. *Art in Renaissance Italy*. Oxford: OUP, 2000. Print.

Welch, Evelyn. *Shopping in the Renaissance. Consumer Cultures in Italy, 1400-1600*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009. Print.