# History of Medieval Art

# Prof. Stefania Buganza

***COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

The main objective of the course is to introduce students to the history of medieval art and to interpreting and contextualising artworks.

MODULE 1

In Semester 1, the course will focus on the history of art from the 4th century to the beginning of the 15th, identifying certain interpretative approaches and key themes in the broad panorama of medieval art. By the end of the module, students will have acquired general knowledge of the cornerstones of medieval art and an initial overview of how to interpret a work of art.

MODULE 2

In Semester 2, the course will focus on a spatially and temporally specific artistic context, as an opportunity to continue developing the ability to interpret works of art, and outline the internal dynamics of artistic phenomena.

In particular, this year the course will be focused on the artistic production – especially in terms of painting - of the first half of the 15th century in the territories of Verona, Vicenza, and Treviso, which, in this historical period, represent the best place for the elaboration of the inspirations coming from Milan and Venice. In fact, during the first decades of the 15th century, the artistic relationships that these centres have been keeping with the eminent international culture of the Duchy of Milan, ruled by the Visconti family, are not interrupted, also because of the diaspora of Lombard artists from Milan and Pavia after the death of Gian Galeazzo Visconti (1402) and the sinister events that followed it. In the meantime, Venice becomes the new political and cultural guiding light of Northern Italy, with a growing influence on the areas that are gradually conquered in the Venetian hinterland. This is also the context of some exceptional figures that will be studied in depth during the course: Michelino da Besozzo, Stefano da Verona, and Pisanello.

At the end of the course, students will be able to develop their knowledge of this important part of the history of Medieval art, and acquire the methodology used in this field of study.

***COURSE CONTENT***

MODULE 1: *An overview of the history of medieval art (4th-15th century)*.

MODULE 2: *Between Milan and Venice: the painting production of the first half of the 15th century in Verona, Vicenza, and Treviso (Michelino da Besozzo, Stefano da Verona, and Pisanello).*

***READING LIST***

MODULE 1

A good art history textbook is required for the general section, covering the period from early Christianity to the International Gothic included: students can find a list of essential topics in the document entitled ‘*AM-argomenti parte istituzionale*’, which can be downloaded from the lecturers’ Blackboard page. Students are expected to look for further material on the topics that are not included in the textbook on their own.

In case of need, students can also study this textbook:

P.L. De Vecchi-E. Cerchiari, *Arte nel tempo,* Vol. I, Tome I (from “*Roma da capitale dell’Impero a capitale del mondo Cristiano*”) and II, Vol. II, Tome I (“*Il Quattrocento ‘internazionale’*), Bompiani, Milan, 1991 (and following reprints).

This textbook is available exclusively online, on the second hand market, or at the UCSC Libraries/Educatt. Since 2020, there has been also a reprint published by Sansoni: P.L. De Vecchi-E. Cerchiari, *Arte nel tempo*.

Further information for the study of the general part of the course will be made available by the lecturer during the first classes.

In addition, students will have to read one of the volumes included in the file “Elenco libri” (list of books) available on Prof. Stefania Buganza’s Blackboard page (the same mentioned above).

MODULE 2

The complete reading list for Module 2 will be made available at the beginning of the course (and uploaded on Blackboard), together with other suggested readings, that are not compulsory. In addition, a course pack will be made available on the lecturer’s BlackBoard page at the beginning of the course.

***TEACHING METHOD***

Lectures with slideshow presentations; educational visits to museums and monuments considered in the lessons of the course; talks from specialist academics.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

Students will be assessed by means of an oral exam of suitable length. The exam will verify that students have learned the content of lectures and of the texts on the reading list. Students may take the exam in two separate parts during the same exam period: MODULE 1 first, followed by MODULE 2. The exams are carried out as follows: assessment of the general part (MODULE 1), based on the images from the textbook used by the student; assessment of the single-subject section (MODULE 2) based on the images shown and commented in class, which will be made available to students in class and on Blackboard at the end of the course. Particularly important assessment criteria are: ability to summarise information, formulate relevant responses and use specific language.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

As this is an introductory course on the history of medieval art, students are expected to have at least textbook-level knowledge of the subject and of medieval history. Any gaps in their knowledge will be verified and remedied by means of specific interventions.

Further information can be found on the lecturer's webpage at http://docenti.unicatt.it/web/searchByName.do?language=ENG or on the Faculty notice board.