History of Artistic Literature

Prof. Alessandro Rovetta; Prof. Alessandra Squizzato

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

The aim of the course is to provide an introduction into an understanding and assessment of historical-critical thought, at various periods in time, of the main phenomena and leading figures in artistic culture. piano di studi The materials used will mainly be of a historiographic-methodological nature. The course will focus on studying texts and examine art work, art centres, leading figures and the ways in which art was circulated.

At the end of the course, students will have a general overview of the historical development of artistic literature. They will be able to address issues related to sourcing and studying literary sources of artistic interest, developing independent critical skills. They will be able to contextualise these sources to encourage wider understanding of the role of artistic phenomena in human culture and the Modern age.

Module 1: *Prof. Alessandro Rovetta*

As part of a general overview, some of the main artistic literature texts in the Humanistic Age and Renaissance will be presented, taking the 'artist' as a leitmotiv in revealing the gradual acknowledgement of individuality in artistic creation and its role as a catalyst in assessing and codifying taste. The most significant cases will be presented placing them in their respective historical and artistic context: Dante, Francesco Petrarca, Leon Battista Alberti, Piero della Francesca, Leonardo, Giorgio Vasari. Single-subject sessions will focus specifically on Vasari and his *Vite.*

Module 2: *Prof. Alessandra Squizzato*

Following the theories of art and aesthetics from the 1500s to the early 1800s, the course will focus on a number of European contexts to further elucidate the relationships between figurative and literary works, criticism and collecting. It will analyse Paolo Giovio’s various artist biographies, drawing on *Elogia* and the collection of artworks from his *Musaeum* on Lake Como as well. The course will examine Giovan Pietro Bellori’s *Vita di Annibale Carracci* as an example of ekphrastic practice and of a new approach to art-history research; the cult of the ancient and the new historical configurations to emerge from the work of writer and archaeologist Johan J. Winckelmann will be explored based on his training at the Court of Dresden, his relationship with Alessandro Albani in Rome and the extraordinary discoveries around Vesuvius; lastly, the Brera Academy from the teachings of Giuseppe Parini to Giuseppe Bossi’s renewed approach to study and museology between Milan and Paris.

***COURSE CONTENT***

Module 1: *Art theorists and historiographers between Humanism and Renaissance.*

Module 2: *On the cult of antiquity:* artistic events and historiographic-aesthetic thinking in Italy between the 16th and the early 19th centuries.

***READING LIST***

For Module 1

J. Schlosser Magnino, *La Letteratura artistica.* *Manuale delle fonti della storia dell’arte moderna,* La Nuova Italia, Florence, 1964, available online from *Heidelberg historic literature – digitized* (parts referred to on the lecturer’s webpage).

M. Nezzo – g. Tomasella, *dire l’arte. Percorsi critici dall’Antichità al primo Novecento*, Il Poligrafo, Padova, 2020.

M. Baxandall, *Giotto e gli umanisti.* *La scoperta della composizione pittorica. 1350-1450,* Jaca Book, Milan, 1994

Leonardo Da Vinci, *Libro di pittura,* edited by C. Pederetti-C. Vecce, Giulti, Florence, 1995.

B. Agosti-S. Ginzburg-A. Nova (edited by), *Giorgio Vasari e il cantiere delle Vite del 1550,* Marsilio, Venice, 2013.

B. Agosti, *Giorgio Vasari.* *Luoghi e tempi delle vite*, Officina Libraria, Milan, 2013.

Anthological course pack of course material containing texts and essays related to topics and protagonists considere in the course.

For Module 2

*Paolo Giovio, Scritti d’arte. Lessico ed ecfrasi*, a cura di Sonia Maffei, “Strumenti e testi”, 5, Scuola Normale Superiore, Pisa 1999.

*L’idea del Bello. Viaggio per Roma nel Seicento con Giovan Pietro Bellori*, exhibition catalogue (Rome, Palazzo delle Esposizioni and former Teatro dei Dioscuri, 29th March-26th June 2000), edited by, Ministero per i Beni e le attività culturali-Comune di Roma, EBS –S. Giovanni Lupatoto (VR) 2000, 2 Vols.

E. Pommier, *Più antichi dellla luna. Studi su J.J. Winckelmann e A. Ch. Qautremère de Quincy*, Urbino Arti Grafiche Editoriali 2000, pp. 29-192.

*Il Tesoro di Antichità. Winckelmann e il Museo Capitolino nella Roma del Settecento*, catalogo della mostra (Roma Musei Capitolini, palazzo Caffarelli e palazzo Nuovo, 7 dicembre 2017-22 aprile 2018), a cura di E. Dodero, C. Parisi Presicce, Roma 2017.

*Milano 1809: la Pinacoteca di Brera e i musei in età napoleonica*, a cura di Sandra Sicoli, Milano Electa 2010.

F. Mazzocca, *Giuseppe Bossi: un inquieto protagonista del neoclassicimo tra Milano e Roma* in *Bossi e Goethe. Affinità elettive nel segno di Leonardo*, a cura di F. Mazzocca, F. Tasso e O. Cuciniello, Milano Officina Libraria 2016, pp. 31-41.

Further more specific material will be provided during lectures. A course pack containing some of the course materials will be available from the UC Copy shop.

***TEACHING METHOD***

Lectures to study and comment on texts and images projected in class. Study visits at museums and monuments related to the program, also coordinated with other courses; seminar meetings with specialized scholars.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

Students will be assessed by means of an oral exam, of reasonable duration, aimed at evaluating their acquisition of the contents covered in lectures and the reading list, both in terms of their accuracy and ability to apply critical thinking. Particular assessment criteria will be: clarity and synthesis of articulation, ability to give relevant answers and use of specialist language.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

*Prerequisites*

Being it an introductory course covering material largely unknown to first- and second-year undergraduate students, the prerequisites are textbook knowledge of medieval and modern art history enhanced by the other courses on the undergraduate degree programme. Any gaps in their knowledge will be identified in lectures and remedied by means of targeted interventions.

Any students wishing to choose this as the subject of their undergraduate dissertation or Master’s thesis must attend Prof. A. Squizzato’s "Art History Research Method" workshop (*Metodologia della ricerca storico artistica*).

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.