# Principles of Art History

## Prof. Francesco Tedeschi

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

The course aims to provide students with the key competences that are necessary to study art history from a chronological point of view, meaning from its medieval period to modern and contemporary times; this will be accomplished thanks to a methodological approach and to the study of selected documents. The course will therefore concentrate on the fundamental aspects of a discipline based on the consideration of the works and their history, of the artists’ theoretical and aesthetic intentions, of the protagonists’ stylistic features and the different schools and trends, of its relationship with the context, as well as of the evolution of area studies.

At the end of the course, students will be able to identify the main features of the different styles of each period considered, and to develop critical processes on a work of art from a formal and iconographic point of view; in addition, students will learn how to contextualize different artists and themes explained during the course, therefore developing a certain degree of autonomy in the study of the historical and artistic field.

***COURSE CONTENT***

The course takes off with an introduction to study methodologies for art history including theoretical position while the second part of the course (wider) will focus on themes, art works and authors throughout the three main: the Middle Age, the Modern and the Contemporary Eras. In addition to basic information on each period, research on single authors, situations and artistic production centres, representing key moments of the history of Italian and international art from the medieval times to the Twentieth century.

For the academic year 2023-2024, the course will adopt a perspective based on the analysis of some art commission and production centres, from the cathedrals of the Middle Ages to Renaissance courts (Urbino, Ferrara, Mantua...), to the main art centres between the 19th and the 20th century (Paris, Vienna, Milan, Rome, New York), with a focus on the relationship between historical realisations and the contact with places, collections, museums in both a historical and contemporary dimension.

***READING LIST***

1. For an essential methodological orientation, a textbook on history of art that covers from the Middle Age to the end of the 20th century (i.e. P.L. De Vecchi-E. Cerchiari, *Arte nel tempo*, Bompiani, Milan, vol. II and III. or C. Bertelli, G. Briganti, A. Giuliano, *Storia dell’arte italiana*, Electa, Milan, vol. 2, 3, and 4, only some parts selected by the lecturer and related to the topics explained, in order to set them in their background).

2. For an in-depth study of the methodological part, the scanned copies of some chapters of the following essays will be made available by the lecturer

G.C. Argan, *La storia dell’arte*, in *Storia dell’arte*, *n. 1-2* (1969), p. 5-36 (a scanned copy will be made available by the lecturer).

G.C. Sciolla, *Studiare l’arte. Metodo, analisi e interpretazione delle opere e degli artisti*, UTET, Turin, 2010.

H. Focillon, *Vita delle forme*, Einaudi, Turin, 2002 (first edition 1972).

G. Kubler*, La forma del tempo.* *La storia dell’arte e la storia delle cose*, Einaudi, Turin, 2002 (first edition 1972).

V.I. Stoichita, *L’invenzione del quadro*, Il Saggiatore, Milan, 2001.

E. Crispolti, *Come studiare l’arte contemporanea*, Donzelli editore, Rome, 1997.

3. For an in-depth study of the topics explained in class, a specific reading list will be made available for students, including information on art history textbooks and a selection of essays that can help them contextualise the authors and the problems under analysis.

***TEACHING METHOD***

During classes, students will examine different works of art and carry out analysis considering their theoretical, critical and documentary context. All the teaching material will be available on Blackboard.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

Assessment consists of an oral exam in the official calendar of the exam sessions.

During the exam students will be assessed on their basic knowledge of historical periods, their ability to read and interpret some works of their choice from those studied in class and their knowledge on research topics; the final assessment aims to evaluate not only the student’s key competences obtained during the course, but also their critical thinking skills, as well as their ability to make reflections on fundamental and specific issues.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

There are no prerequisites for attending the course. However previous knowledge of the subject (e.g. high school competences in art history) may be a useful starting point. It is highly recommended to consult an art history textbook for the whole duration of the course, even if this is not specified in the reading list for the exam.

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.