**ARTH 225**

**Intro to Seventeenth-Century Art:**

**Bodies and Power in and beyond Western Europe**

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Fall 2023

Wed/Fri from 13:05 to 14:25 pm in Arts W-215

Prof. Angela Vanhaelen

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**Course Description**:

Visual imagery was mobilized in inventive and forceful ways in the seventeenth century. This course will critically examine the functions and uses of a wide range of visual and material culture in relation to the European and global expansion of absolutism, capitalism, urbanism, colonialism, diplomacy, slavery, missionary activity, and religious strife. Artistic and architectural production will be considered in relation to the body, especially historical understandings of gender & sexuality, race & racism, disability, labour, authority, and social status.

**MyCourses:** All class content including recorded lectures, PDFs of weekly readings, PowerPoint slides, assignment and exam instructions, and a general Q&A forum are housed on MyCourses.

I recommend posting any **general questions** (of relevance for the whole group) on the discussions page of MyCourses where the responses can be seen by everyone. There is also time for questions in each class.

**Method of Evaluation**

Take-home midterm exam **25%** **Fri Oct. 13**

Annotated Bibliography **30% Wed Nov. 8**

Visual Description **10% on or before Oct. 4**

Take-home final exam **30%** TBD

Participation **5%**

**Exams**

Both exams will be take-home exams and can be uploaded to MyCourses (assignments tab). The exams will focus on the issues and themes covered in the lectures, readings, and class discussions. They will require students to write brief essay answers in response to specific questions and images. *You must write both exams to pass the course*. Makeup midterms can be scheduled if the student provides documentation (within 48 hours at the very most). Final exam conflicts are handled by the Faculty of Arts Student Affairs Office. According to McGill regulations, “Instructors are not permitted to grant any special treatment regarding examinations to any student.”

**Visual Description: Montreal Museum of Fine Arts (**due on or before **Wed. Oct. 4**)

*The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts* has a significant collection of 17th-century art (works mainly exhibited on the 2nd, 3rd & 4th floors, Pavilion for Peace). Choose a single work of art—preferably the one that most grabs your attention—and write a short description of it. The description should focus on the visual qualities of the work and address the question: “How does this work of art solicit the viewer’s attention?” No research is required. Focus on describing rather than interpreting the artwork. Examples will be posted on MyCourses.

Length: no longer than **one page**, double spaced.

Include title, artist, and date (as well as the course number, your name, and student id.) The work should be from the 17th century (1600s). If you have taken ARTH 321 with me, then choose a work that is not Dutch.

Admission to the museum is free for ages 20 and younger and discounted for ages 21 and older on Wed nights (<https://www.mbam.qc.ca/en/information/>).

Upload to MyCourses **on or before Oct 4.**

# Annotated Bibliography (upload to MyCourses on or before Wed. Nov. 8)

The assignment will be discussed in detail during the second week of classes. There will be a library orientation session on **Oct. 20** to help you with the research.

Late assignments will be graded down 2% per day. *You must do the annotated bibliography in order to pass the course*. Extensions will be granted if documentation is provided (within 48 hours).

**Note:** Plagiarism is a serious offence, and could result in a failing grade. McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the code of student conduct and disciplinary procedures (see [[**www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/**](http://www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/)](http://www.mcgill.ca/integrity)for more information).

L'université McGill attache une haute importance à l’honnêteté académique. Il incombe par conséquent à tous les étudiants de comprendre ce que l'on entend par tricherie, plagiat et autres infractions académiques, ainsi que les conséquences que peuvent avoir de telles actions, selon le Code de conduite de l'étudiant et des procédures disciplinaires (pour de plus amples renseignements, veuillez consulter le site [www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/](http://www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/)).

**Participation**

The 5% participation grade considers student engagement with the class, course materials, TA, classmates, and instructor.

Inclusive Learning: As the instructor of this course, I endeavor to provide an inclusive learning environment. If you experience barriers to learning in this course, do not hesitate to discuss them with me and the Office for Student Accessibility and Achievement: [access.achieve@mcgill.ca](mailto:access.achieve@mcgill.ca) or (514) 398-6009 (options #1-3). For more information, see their website: <https://www.mcgill.ca/access-achieve/>

Conformément à la Charte des droits de l’étudiant de l’Université McGill, chaque étudiant a le droit de soumettre en français ou en anglais tout travail écrit devant être noté. In accord with McGill University’s Charter of Students’ Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded.

Land Acknowledgment: McGill University is located on unceded Indigenous land, which has long served as a site of meeting and exchange amongst Indigenous peoples, including the Haudenosaunee and Anishinabeg nations.

In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University’s control, the content and/or evaluation scheme in this course is subject to change.

**Lectures and Readings:**

**Week 1: Aug. 30 & Sept 1**

Intro: themes, content, method of evaluation; historical intro to 17th-c art and culture

**Part One: Visual Modes of Address**

**Week 2: Sept 6/8**

**Intro: The Renaissance and Reformation of the Classical Body**

**Week 3: Sept 13/15**

**Solicitation**

Pictures as ‘prostitutes’: seductive art for the market

**Conversion**

The unsettling powers and controversies of sensuous religious art

Read: Helen Langdon, “Caravaggio: Biography in Paint,” in *Caravaggio and Paintings of Realism in Malta*. Ed. Keith Sciberras and Cynthia di Giorgio (Valletta, Malta: Midsea Books for the St. John's Co-Cathedral Foundation, 2007), 53-64.

**Week 4: Sept 20/22**

**Violation**

Art and violence; rape culture in the 17th century; the case of Artemisia Gentileschi.

Read: Margaret D. Carroll, “The Erotics of Absolutism: Rubens and the Mystification of Sexual Violence,” *Representations* 25 (Winter 1989): 3-30.

**Week 5: Sept 27/29**

**Spectacle**

Rebuilding Rome: urban planning, the city as theatre, and the spectacle of the papacy

Read: Genevieve Warwick, “Speaking Statues: Bernini’s *Apollo and Daphne* at the Villa Borghese,” *Art History* 27, no. 3 (June 2004): 353-381.

**Week 6: Oct 4**

**Ecstasy**

The erotics of spiritual ecstasy: sculptures of female saints in Rome and Lima, Peru

**Review** **and instructions** for midterm exam

**\*visual description due Oct. 4**

**\*No class on Oct 6 or Oct 11: Fall reading break**

**Part Two: Powers of Art**

**Week 7: Oct 13**

\*Exam due: **Friday Oct 13** (upload to MyCourses)

**Visionary**

Visions of a New Order: the Jesuits in Rome

Read: Mia Mochizuki, “Jesuit Visual Culture in a Machine Age,” in *Oxford Handbook of the Jesuits* (2019), 449-486.

**Week 8: Oct 18/20**

**Missionary**

Global conversion attempts and failures in Asia, Africa, and America. Missions in China, Paraguay, New France, and the Kingdom of Congo

Read: Cécile Fromont, “[Collecting and Translating Knowledge across Cultures: Capuchin Missionary Images of Early Modern Central Africa](http://www.upenn.edu/pennpress/book/14840.html),” in *Collecting Across Cultures: Material Exchanges in the Early Modern Atlantic World*. Ed. Daniela Bleichmar and Peter Mancall (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), 134-54.

**\*library orientation session Oct. 20**

**Week 9: Oct 25/27**

**Subjection: The King’s Body**

The King’s Body as the Body Politic. Theories of absolutism: the practice and representation of power at the court of Louis XIV

**The Queen’s Body**

The Queen’s Body and the problem of picturing female power: Elizabeth I, Marie de Médici, Christina of Sweden

Read: Rose Marie San Juan, “The Queen’s body and its slipping mask: contesting portraits of Queen Christina of Sweden,” in *ReImagining Women: Representations of Women in Culture*. Ed. S. Neuman and G. Stephenson (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), 19-44.

**Week 10: Nov 1/3**

**Painting at Court: Fashioning Aristocratic and Artistic Identities (Part I: England)**

Civility and gender in portraits of monarchs and courtiers. The edges of portraiture: servants, enslaved and disabled persons. Self-portraiture and artistic self-fashioning: Van Dyck and Rubens at the court of Charles I

**Week 11: Nov 8/10**

**Painting at Court: Fashioning Aristocratic and Artistic Identities (Part II: Spain)**

Velasquez at the Spanish court; *Las Meninas* and the colonial labour of indigenous and enslaved peoples

Read: Byron Ellsworth Hamann, “The Mirrors of *Las Meninas*: Cochineal, Silver, and Clay,” *The Art Bulletin* 92: 1/2 (2010): 6-35.

**\*Annotated bibliography due: Wed. Nov. 8 (upload to MyCourses)**

**Week 12: Nov 15/17**

**African People in Spain**

Artists as enslavers; the self-fashioning of Juan de Pareja: from enslavement to artist-gentleman

Read: Tanya J. Tiffany, “Light, Darkness, and African Salvation: Velazquez’s *Supper at Emmaus*,” *Art History* 31, no. 1 (February 2008): 33-56.

**Week 13: Nov 22/24**

**The World as Object: Global Capitalism and Dutch Art**

Read: Roland Barthes, “The World as Object,” in *Critical Essays* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, (1972), 3-12.

**Nov 29**

**Exam review and instructions**

**\*No class Dec. 1 (Prof Vanhaelen at UCLA)**