

Dr. Max Grossman
Fox Fine Arts A460
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ARTH 3305
Spring 2026
CRN# 21161
T/Th 9:00-10:20am
Fox Fine Arts A458

Art of the Roman Empire

No civilization left a greater imprint on the history of Europe and the Mediterranean than the Roman Empire, which in the course of its long existence came to dominate the entire region from Britain to Mesopotamia, and from Morocco to Romania. Its architects, urban planners, sculptors and painters developed a highly sophisticated visual culture that absorbed and adapted the artistic traditions of the many peoples who fell under Rome's sway, particularly the Etruscans, Greeks and Egyptians. This course will treat the artistic production of the ancient Romans from the Late Republic through the Early Christian era, roughly from the birth of Marcus Tullius Cicero (106 BC) through the death of Emperor Constantine the Great (337 AD). Our emphasis will be on the artistic patronage of the Roman state and its leading citizens, and on the historic, social and political context of the artworks they produced. We will focus especially on the use of art for propagandistic and ideological purposes on the part of the emperors and their families, and on the stylistic and iconographic trends in the capital city and the various provinces. Moreover, we will explore what Roman artworks reveal about the complex interconnections among social classes, the relationship between Rome and its subject territories, the role of the military and the official state religion, and the emergence of Christianity and its rapid spread throughout the West.

INSTRUCTOR BIOGRAPHY

Dr. Grossman earned his B.A. in Art History and English at the University of California-Berkeley, and his M.A., M.Phil. and Ph.D. in Art History at Columbia University. After seven years of residence in Tuscany, he completed his dissertation on the civic architecture, urbanism and iconography of the Sienese Republic in the Middle Ages and Early Renaissance. He served on the faculty of the School of Art and Design at San Jose State University in 2006-2009, taught art history for Stanford University in 2007-2009, and then joined the Department of Art at The University of Texas at El Paso, where he is Associate Professor of Art History. During summers he is Director of the Roma Aeterna study abroad program while he conducts research in Italy for his publications. He has presented papers and chaired sessions at conferences throughout the United States, including at the annual meeting of the Renaissance Society of America, and in Europe, at the biennial meetings of the European Architectural History Network. In May 2015, the Italian Art Society sponsored his triple session, "Civic Foundation Legends in Medieval Italian Art," for the 50th International Congress on Medieval Studies in Kalamazoo, Michigan. The following October, he gave a lecture at Humanities West in San Francisco, "Italian Civic Palaces in the Age of the City Republics." In April 2016, at the 62nd Annual Conference of the Renaissance Society of America in Boston, he presented his paper, "The Castle of Bracciano and the Advent of Artillery: Francesco di Giorgio Martini in Latium"; and in November, he chaired a

session on medieval Florentine architecture at the Ladis Trecento Conference in New Orleans. In March 2017, he served as a discussant on a panel at the annual meeting of the Society for Applied Anthropology in Santa Fe. His article “A Case of Double Identity: The Public and Private Faces of the Palazzo Tolomei in Siena” was published in the *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* in March 2013. His conference paper “Sienese Fortifications in the Age of the Guelph Commune” was published in *Investigating and Writing Architectural History: Subjects, Methodologies and Frontiers* (Turin, Italy: Politecnico di Torino, 2014). His article “Saving Downtown: An Architectural Survey and National Register Nomination for El Paso, Texas” appeared in *The Alliance Review* in February 2017. His proposal for a co-edited volume entitled *Condottieri and Courty Culture in Renaissance Latium: The Orsini of Bracciano* has just been published by Peter Lang (August 2019). His book, *El Paso Architecture*, which treats the architectural history of El Paso and the surrounding region from 1659 through 1945 is under contract with Arcadia Publishing and will be published in summer 2019. He has submitted a book proposal stemming from his doctoral thesis, the first synthetic treatment of the total architectural production of an Italian city-state, to Brepols Publishers and it is currently under review. At present, his research focuses on the political iconography of the Sienese commune, as manifest in painting, sculpture, architecture, coinage, seals and manuscripts. In addition, he is studying the development of the Italian civic palace, from its origins in the twelfth century through its final transformations in the quattrocento, with the aim of challenging and revising accepted paradigms while forming a new critical apparatus for interpreting the architecture and urbanism of medieval and Renaissance city-states. Off campus, Dr. Grossman served for several years as Vice-Chair of the El Paso County Historical Commission. He currently serves on the Board of Directors of Preservation Texas in Austin and on the Executive Board of The Trost Society, the only non-profit institution in West Texas focusing on historic preservation. He presides over the group’s Architectural Preservation Committee, whose mission is to formulate and implement strategies for protecting the architectural heritage of El Paso while promoting the economic development of the historic districts of both the City and County. Finally, he is the founder and Director of Operations of the El Paso History Alliance, a virtual cultural community with more than 90,000 followers.

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. To acquire a deep appreciation of the artworks of the Roman Republic and Empire, and an understanding of the diverse historical, cultural and socio-political conditions of their creation.
2. To master the basic art historical terminology of the ancient Roman period and attain the necessary analytical and critical skills for describing, dating and interpreting Roman artworks.
3. To understand how ancient Roman artists developed innovative methods for communicating meaning and truth, and how their visions and aims evolved over time.
4. To analyze critically how the Romans employed classicism and other stylistic modes for political or propagandistic purposes.

5. To improve one's ability to respond to works of art both analytically and affectively, and to write clearly, concisely, coherently, and with grammatical correctness.
6. To build a solid intellectual foundation on which to expand one's knowledge of art history in other specialized upper-division courses.

COURSE PREREQUISITES

There are no prerequisites for this course although completion of ARTH 1305 is recommended.

COVID-19 PRECAUTIONS

Please stay home if you have been diagnosed with COVID-19 or are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms. If you are feeling unwell, please let the instructor know as soon as possible, so that he can work on appropriate accommodations. If you have tested positive for COVID-19, you are encouraged to report your results to covidaction@utep.edu, so that the Dean of Students Office can provide you with support and help with communication with your professors. The Student Health Center is equipped to provide COVID-19 testing.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that people in areas of substantial or high COVID-19 transmission wear face masks when indoors in groups of people. The best way that Miners can take care of Miners is to get the vaccine. If you still need the vaccine, it is widely available in the El Paso area, and will be available at no charge on campus during the first week of classes. For more information about the current rates, testing, and vaccinations, please visit epstrong.org.

All faculty, staff, and students are highly encouraged to

- Get vaccinations to protect against COVID-19 infection,
- Wear face coverings when in common areas of campus or when others are present,
- Maintain a minimum separation of six (6) feet between yourself and others, when possible, and arrange spaces to make this possible in almost all circumstances,
- Adhere to room/space limitations on number of occupants, and
- Wash hands frequently.

COURSE FORMAT AND GRADING

All lectures will be accompanied by PowerPoints with images of artworks. In addition to regular readings, students will be required to take two scheduled midterms, write a paper of at least

seven pages on a topic to be assigned in class, and take a cumulative final examination. The final grade will be determined as follows:

Midterm #1	20%
Midterm #2	20%
Term paper	25%
Final examination	25%
Attendance/Participation	10%

Make-up examinations will only be permitted following a documented emergency or illness.

Papers must be submitted at the start of class on the due date or will not be accepted. Unexcused failure to submit the paper on time or to show up for an exam will automatically result in a grade of 0% (F). There will be no extra-credit assignments. All grades will be calculated as follows:

94-100%	A	84-86%	B	74-76%	C	64-66%	D
90-93%	A-	80-83%	B-	70-73%	C-	60-63%	D-
87-89%	B+	77-79%	C+	67-69%	D+	<60%	F

Those students earning a post-curve grade of below 55% on both the first and second tests will be assigned a failing grade (F) for the course and dropped.

Those students who will earn a failing grade (F) in the course no matter how well they perform on the final examination will not be permitted to take the final examination and will be assigned a failing grade (F) for the course.

CLASS ATTENDANCE AND BEHAVIOR

Attendance at all class meetings is absolutely mandatory as well as essential for success in this course since a substantial portion of the material on the midterms and final examination will be discussed only in lectures and will not be available in the assigned readings. Students who do not plan to attend every single lecture (and punctually) are advised to drop the course immediately and re-register in the future, when perfect attendance will not be an issue. Role will be taken at the start of every class. Students are required to arrive on time, refrain from talking, eating, sleeping, kicking up their feet, and using electronic devices; and they must remain for the duration of the class. The following rules are expected to be observed:

1. Students who arrive late must see the instructor after class in order to be marked as present. Arrival in class 30 minutes late or more will be counted as an absence.
2. If a student must leave early and has a documented excuse, the instructor must be informed before the start of class; otherwise the student will be marked as absent. Only serious illness or an actual emergency are legitimate excuses.
3. In the event of an excusable absence requiring missing an entire lecture, the instructor must be notified via email within 24 hours and written documentation of the absence must be sent to him within one week.

Each unexcused absence will result in a 2% reduction of the final grade. Each late arrival will be counted as half an unexcused absence and thus result in a 1% reduction of the final grade. Five unexcused absences will automatically result in a failing grade (F) for the course. Two unexcused absences between the first class and Census Day (February 4) will result in an automatic and permanent drop from the course.

Any student who engages in disrespectful behavior may be expelled from the classroom and marked as absent. In the event of a second offense, that student may be permanently dropped from the course and assigned a final course grade of “F”.

ADDING, DROPPING, WITHDRAWALS, PASS/FAIL, INCOMPLETES

Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about adding and dropping, and for withdrawing from the course in a timely manner if it becomes necessary. The instructor will not add students after the first week of class who failed to attend both the first and second lectures. Students are responsible for understanding that April 2 is the last day to drop the course. An incomplete grade (I) can be assigned at the discretion of the instructor and approval of the department chair; but in order to be granted an “Incomplete”, the student must be passing the course *and* encountering a legitimate emergency beyond his/her control that requires extra time to complete the coursework.

LAPTOP COMPUTERS AND NOTE-TAKING

The use of computers and other electronic devices (including recording devices) are prohibited during class. It is important that students focus their attention on the lectures and projected images without distractions and that they take careful and detailed notes. Students should write down and memorize key terms, phrases and dates. Any student caught using an electronic device during class will be marked as absent and expelled from the classroom.

LIBERAL ARTS HONORS PROGRAM

This class has been designated as a Liberal Arts Honors Program [LAHP] course. It has received this designation because it features at least five of the Honors course criteria, which include student leadership, advanced readings and/or reviews, opportunities for intensive writing, opportunities for intensive research, opportunities to utilize technology, opportunities to make extensive use of campus resources, community-based experiences, pre-professional opportunities, and development of critical thinking. In broader terms, this course is honors-designated because of its creativity and/or intellectual rigor, both of which are integral components of the Liberal Arts Honors Program. No additional coursework is necessary for this course to count towards the LAHP Honors minor. If you are not a member of the LAHP, and are interested in the program, please visit the LAHP website at <https://www.utep.edu/liberalarts/lahp>. If you join the Liberal Arts Honors Program, this course will count towards the LAHP minor!

BLACKBOARD

All files posted on Blackboard are the intellectual property of the instructor and may only be used for Art History 3305, except with his written consent. These include but are not limited to:

- 1) The course syllabus.
- 2) A study sheet listing key artworks in the order in which they appear in the course and textbook. This should be brought to class so that lectures may be followed easily.
- 3) PowerPoint lecture files corresponding to each section of the course. These include all key artworks from the lectures as well as dates, terms, and other information.
- 4) PowerPoint flashcard files containing all the study sheet images that must be memorized for exams.

PREPARATION FOR EXAMS

Attendance at all lectures, punctual completion of all assignments, and regular review and memorization of key artworks are essential for earning a passing grade on examinations. The two midterms and final will each consist of four sections:

- 1) Image identifications
- 2) Multiple-choice questions
- 3) Fill-in-the-blanks
- 4) Two short essays

To prepare for the exams, students should use the PowerPoint lectures files along with their notes and textbook to review all the course material very thoroughly. The major artistic periods and themes should be well understood, as well as all chronological sequences and vocabulary terms (in yellow in the PowerPoint lecture files), and other important facts discussed in lectures.

Furthermore, the artworks on the study sheet must be completely memorized: the names of artists (when listed), the titles of artworks or buildings, locations (when listed), dates of execution (within a margin of error of 10 years), and mediums (when listed). The PowerPoint flashcard files are designed to help with memorization.

APPOINTMENTS WITH INSTRUCTOR

The instructor will be available to meet with students online by appointment and can best be reached via his email address: megrossman@utep.edu.

TEACHING ASSISTANT

The teaching assistant for this course is Ean Puhlman. He will assist the instructor with grading exams, provide training on Chicago Manual of Style documentation, and administer make-up exams for students who have permission to take them. His email is ekpuhlman@miners.utep.edu.

REQUIRED BOOKS

Kleiner, Fred S., A History of Roman Art, 2nd ed. (Global New Media, 2017), ISBN-10: 1305885120, ISBN-13: 978-1305885127.

Pollitt, J. J., The Art of Rome, c. 753 B.C. – A.D. 337: Sources and Documents (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), ISBN-10: 052127365X, ISBN-13: 978-0521273657.

Recommended History Texts:

Carcopino, Jérôme, Daily Life in Ancient Rome: The People and City at the Height of the Empire (1941; reprint, Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin Books, 1991).

Garnsey, Peter and Richard Saller, The Roman Empire: Economy, Society and Culture (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1987).

Le Glay, Marcel, Yann Le Bohec, and Jean Louis Voisin, A History of Rome, 2d ed. (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2001).

Sinnigen, William G. and Arthur E. R. Boak, A History of Rome to A.D. 565 (New York: Macmillan, 1977).

Stambaugh, John E., The Ancient Roman City (London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988).

Recommended Writing Aids:

Barnet, Sylvan, A short guide to writing about art, 8th ed. (New York: Pearson/Longman, 2005).

Bernstein, Mashey and George Yatchisin, Writing for the Visual Arts (Upper Saddle River, NJ.: Prentice Hall, 2001).

Chicago Manual of Style, 16th ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010).

Sayre, Henry M., Writing About Art, 5th ed. (Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Pearson/Prentice Hall, 2006).

Strunk, William, Jr. and E. B. White, The elements of style, illustrated by Maira Kalman (New York: Penguin Press, 2005).

Troyka, L. Quitman, Simon & Schuster handbook for writers, 6th ed. (Upper Saddle River, NJ.: Prentice Hall, 2002).

Turabian, Kate L., A manual for writers of term papers, theses, and dissertations: Chicago style for students and researchers, 7th ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007).

THE UTEP LIBRARY AND COURSE RESERVE SHELF

The university's main library is an invaluable resource and contains many relevant books and periodicals. Students are welcome to contact the library staff for assistance with research.

POLICY ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND SCHOLASTIC DISHONESTY

Cheating, plagiarism or collusion on any assignment or test will be reported to the Dean of Students and may result in a failing grade for the course and/or other disciplinary action. All papers must be original to the course (with no recycling of work from another class), meet all the requirements of the assignment, and properly cite all sources, including from the internet. Most importantly, all direct citations must be set in quotations and footnoted. See the [UTEP policy](#) on academic integrity and scholastic dishonesty.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE ESSAY GENERATORS

The use of artificial intelligence essay generators for student papers is cheating and strictly prohibited in this course. Student papers will be analyzed with AI-detection software in order to ensure the content is authentic.

POSTING ASSIGNMENTS ONLINE

Posting papers or assignments online, especially on websites designed for sharing course materials, is strictly prohibited and will be treated as cheating by the university, even after the conclusion of the course.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

All course materials posted on Blackboard are the intellectual property of the instructor and are not to be shared with anyone not enrolled in this course, nor can they be posted online publicly.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Reasonable accommodations will be made for students with limitations due to disabilities provided that they contact the [Center for Accommodations and Support Services \(CASS\)](#) and procure the proper documentation: (tel: 747-5148). Students with disabilities documented by CASS must notify the instructor within the first two weeks of class in order to inform him of any special needs. If particular accommodations are required for the midterms and final examination, the instructor must be informed and presented with the appropriate CASS documentation at least ten days before each scheduled test or no accommodations will be permitted.

SEMINAR/GRADUATE CREDIT

Students who are taking this course as ARTH 4383 in order to satisfy the art history seminar requirement, or as ARTH 5390 or ARTH 5399 in order to earn graduate-level credit, will be assigned additional readings, additional assignments, and a longer research paper (12-15 pages for ARTH 4383 and 15-18 pages for ARTH 5390 or ARTH 5399). These students are expected to meet the instructor a minimum of twice per calendar month.

COURSE SYLLABUS

The instructor may The textbook and supplemental readings are intended to complement the lectures. The instructor may announce modifications to the syllabus during the semester, with fair notice. It is expected that the reading assignments will be completed each week in a timely manner (by the Tuesday after they are assigned) in order that students are adequately prepared for the corresponding lectures as well as the examinations.

Kleiner, chap. 1 (to be read by Jan. 22).

Jan. 20 **Course Introduction**
Jan. 22 **Italy Before the Rise of Rome**

Kleiner, chap. 2.

Pollitt, "Introduction" and "The Period of the Kings: c. 753-510 B.C.,"
xiii-xxii, 3-5.

Jan. 27 **Italy Before the Rise of Rome**
Jan. 29 **From Village to World Capital**

Kleiner, chaps. 3-4.

Pollitt, history of the Republic (509-133 B.C.), 14-17, 22-24, 29-32.

Livy (V, 22, 3-8), on the sack of Veii, 18-19.

Polybius (VI, 53), Pliny (XXXV, 6-7), on portrait sculpture, 53-54.

Feb. 3 **Republican Town Planning and Pompeii**
Feb. 5 **Republican Domestic Architecture and Mural Painting**

Kleiner, chaps. 5-6.

Pollitt, "The Decline of the Republic: 133-31 B.C.," 58-63.

Cicero, (*Verr.* II, IV, *passim*), on Verres, 66-69.

Cicero (*ad Atticum*, passim), on art collecting, 76-79.

Dio Cassius (XLIII, 22-23; XLIV, 4, 4 ff;), on the public works of Julius Caesar, 85-86.

Feb. 10 **From Marcellus to Caesar**
Feb. 12 **The Augustan Principate**

Kleiner, chap. 7.

Pollitt, "The Julio-Claudian Emperors, 27 B.C.-A.D. 68," 99-103.

Suetonius (*The Divine Augustus* XXVIII, 3 ff.; LXXII, 1-3), on the Augustan building program, and on the personal tastes of Augustus, 104-06, 111.

Augustus (*Res Gestae: Monumentum Ancyranum* II, 12), on the accomplishments of Augustus, 118-20.

Feb. 17 **The Augustan Principate**
Feb. 19 **Preparing for the Afterlife during the Early Empire**

Kleiner, chap. 8.

Feb. 24 **MIDTERM #1**
Feb. 26 **The Pax Augusta in the West**

Kleiner, chap. 9.

Pollitt:

Vitruvius (V, 1, 1-10), on the forum and the basilica, 123-27.

Suetonius (*Gaius Caligula* XXI-XXII), on Caligula's monuments, 133-35.

Tacitus (*Annals* XV, 38-43), on the Great Fire and the architectural projects of Nero, 140-42.

Suetonius (*Nero* XXXI), on the architectural projects of Nero, 142-43.

Mar. 3 **The Julio-Claudian Dynasty**
Mar. 5 **The Julio-Claudian Dynasty (PAPER ASSIGNED)**

Kleiner, chaps. 10-11.

Pollitt:

“The Flavians,” 150-52.

Josephus (*Jewish War* VII, 5, 132ff.), on the imperial triumph following the sack of Jerusalem, 159.

Statius (*Silvae* IV, 2, lines 18-31), on the Domus Flavia, 161-62.

Mar. 10
Mar. 12

**Civil War, the Flavians, and Nerva
Pompeii and Herculaneum in the First Century A.D.**

Kleiner, chaps. 12-13.

Pollitt, “The ‘Five Good Emperors’ and Commodus.” 165-68.

Ammianus Marcellinus (XVI, 10, 15-16), on the Forum of Trajan, 170.

Historia Augusta (*Hadrian* I, 5; XIV, 8-11; XV, 10, XIX, 9-13), on the personality and tastes of Hadrian, and on his building program in Rome, 174-75.

Dio Cassius (LXIX, 4, 1-5), on Hadrian’s rivalry with the architect Apollodoros, 175-76.

Mar. 24
Mar. 26

**Trajan, Optimus Princeps
Hadrian, the Philhellene**

Kleiner, chap. 14.

Pollitt: Pliny (*Epistulae* II, 17 [to Gallus]), on the villas of Pliny and upper-class life in the Latian countryside during the reign of Trajan, 170-74.

Mar. 31
Apr. 2

**The Antonines
The Antonines**

Kleiner, chap. 15.

Apr. 7
Apr. 9

**Ostia, Port and Mirror of Rome
MIDTERM #2**

Kleiner, chaps. 16-17.

Pollitt, "Late Antiquity" and "The Severans: A.D. 193-235," 189-92.
Dio Cassius (LXXIV, 4, 1ff.), on the funeral ceremony that
Septimius Severus held in honor of Pertinax, 192-93.

Historia Augusta (*Severus* XXI, 11-12; *Antoninus Caracalla* IX, 4-
10), on the public works of Caracalla, 195-96.

Herodian (*Historiae ab excessu divi Marci* V, 5, 6-7), on the exotic
appearance of Elagabalus, 197-98.

Apr. 14
Apr. 16

**Burying the Dead during the High Empire
The Severan Dynasty**

Kleiner, chap. 18.

Pollitt, "The Roman Empire from A.D. 235-337," 201-02, 203-04, 206.

Historia Augusta (*The Two Gallieni* XVIII, 2-5), on the works of
Gallienus, 204.

"Plotinos: c. 205-270," 215; Porphyry (*Life of Plotinos*, 1), 215-16;
and Plotinos (*Enneads* IV, 3, 10 and V, 8, 1), 216-17.

Apr. 21
Apr. 23

**The Severan Dynasty
Lepcis Magna and the Eastern Provinces**

Kleiner, chaps. 19-20.

Pollitt, "The Roman Empire from A.D. 235-337," 210-11.

Zosimus (II, 30-31), on the building of Constantinople, 212-13.

Apr. 28
Apr. 30

**The Soldier Emperors
The Tetrarchy (ART HISTORY SYMPOSIUM 5-7PM, extra credit)**

Kleiner, chap. 21.

Pollitt: Zosimus (II, 30-31), on the building of Constantinople, 212-13.

May 5
May 7

**Constantine, Emperor and Christian Patron (PAPER DUE)
Constantine, Emperor and Christian Patron**

May 12

FINAL EXAM: 10:00am-12:45pm