

Dr. Paolo Alei
ACCENT Rome Study Abroad Center
palei@utep.edu
Cell +39 334-8353773

Art History 3399
Summer 2026
CRN# ?????

Roma Aeterna II: Renaissance and Baroque Rome

Art History 3399 is a specialized upper-division course exploring papal patronage in Rome in the early modern period and how a renovated *majestas papalis* (papal majesty) had a profound conceptual and physical impact on the form, building and decoration of the Eternal City between 1420 and 1760. From the Renaissance to the Baroque, the popes actualized an ambitious project called the *renovatio urbis*, which aimed at restoring the capital of Christendom on the model of the ancient capital of the Roman Empire. Mainly sponsored by popes and their cardinal nephews, through true nepotistic legacies, and inspired by humanists and orators, who self-fashioned their patrons as ancient heroes or emperors, over the course of three centuries this plan called to Rome Italy's greatest artists, who embraced the challenge of rediscovering, confronting, and surpassing classical antiquity. Focusing in particular on the patronage of Sixtus IV della Rovere, Julius II della Rovere, Paul III Farnese, Paul V Borghese, Urban VIII Barberini, Innocent X Pamphili, Alexander VII Chigi and Clement XII Corsini, students will analyze (particularly with on-site lectures) the most symbolic monuments of the city, including the Campidoglio, the Via Papalis, the main churches built or restored at this time, and especially the Basilica of Saint Peter's and the adjoining Vatican Palace. The inventions of Bramante, Michelangelo, Raphael, Caravaggio, Bernini and Borromini testify to the complex challenge of the continuous revival of classical culture in a Christian society. In the early modern period, Rome revived its ancient *romanitas*, but also the symbolic powers of other ancient capitals such as Troy, Jerusalem, Athens, Constantinople, Alexandria and Babylon. Rhetorical self-fashioning crafted the personifications of the popes around biblical and classical figures. Moses, Peter, Solomon, Hercules, Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar, Augustus, Constantine and many other historical or legendary figures were fused in a complex program of power and sanctity that was captured in Rome's artistic masterpieces.

INSTRUCTOR BIOGRAPHY

Dr. Paolo Alei is an art historian from Rome specialized on Renaissance and Baroque art and architecture. He received his MA from Columbia University, where he specialized in Venetian Renaissance painting with Prof. David Rosand, and his PhD from Oxford University with a dissertation supervised by Prof. Martin Kemp that focuses on a Plinian topos in Renaissance art—the Renaissance heritage of Timanthes' *Sacrifice of Iphigenia*. His articles have appeared in *Artibus et Historiae* and *Venezia Cinquecento* on Raphael and Titian, and he recently published an essay on Caravaggio. In the last fifteen years he has taught numerous courses on Rome between 1400 and 1700 for the most prestigious American academic programs in the city and he has co-organized three conferences on Early Modern Rome (EMR, EMR 2, EMR3, and EMR4). He is a member of the International Association for the Carnival of Venice and has

served as a consultant for studies of the ancient Venetian Carnival. His book *Venice Carnival* appeared in 2002 (London, Artmedia) and in 2019 he published a co-edited volume entitled *Building Family Identity: The Orsini Castle of Bracciano from Fiefdom to Duchy* (Peter Lang). He is currently working on the poetics of terror in Michelangelo's *Last Judgment* and he is curator of the Castello Odescalchi in Bracciano.

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. To acquire a deep appreciation of the artworks of Renaissance and Baroque Rome and an understanding of the diverse historical, socio-political and theological circumstances of their creation.
2. To master the basic art historical terminology of the Renaissance and Baroque periods, especially with regard to the city of Rome, and attain the necessary analytical and critical skills for describing, dating and interpreting Renaissance and Baroque Roman artworks.
3. To understand how Renaissance and Baroque artists in Rome developed innovative methods for communicating meaning and truth, and how their visions and aims evolved over time.
4. To improve one's ability to respond to works of art both analytically and affectively.
5. To build a solid intellectual foundation on which to expand one's knowledge of art history in other specialized upper-division courses.
6. SEMINAR/GRADUATE: To develop advanced critical research skills and apply them in an oral presentation of a medieval work of art and in a substantial research paper.

UTEP EDGE

Study abroad is a high-impact [Edge](#) experience since it provides students with the opportunity to deepen their educational experience by studying in a foreign country, better preparing them for graduate school and/or a professional career.

COURSE PREREQUISITES

There are no mandatory prerequisites for Art History 3399 although completion of Art History 1306 and/or 3315 is highly recommended. SEMINAR STUDENTS must be declared art history majors with at least junior status; they must have completed at least nine credit hours of ARTH 3300+; and they must have the permission of the instructor.

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

All students will be required to walk long distances in the summer heat during most classes, as much as several miles total. They should wear comfortable shoes and a hat and bring at least 1.5 liters of water and an energy snack.

COURSE FORMAT AND GRADING

This course consists of twelve classes, eight of which will meet on site at various locations throughout the city of Rome. In addition there may be various outside excursions. Students will be assigned regular readings that will prepare them for the class meetings. In addition, they will be required to give a 20-minute in-class oral presentation on a Renaissance or Baroque building or artwork and there will be two general exams. The exams will test students on their knowledge of terminology, lectures, and the assigned readings, and it will consist mostly of essay questions. Students are obliged to attend the excursions listed on the syllabus below.

The final grade will be determined as follows:

Oral presentation	25%
Exam 1	25%
Exam 2	30%
Attendance	10%
Participation	10%

Unexcused failure to show up for the oral presentation, quiz, or exams 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

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. See the [UTEP academic calendar](#). An incomplete grade (I) can be given at the discretion of the instructor and approval of the department chair; 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.

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 final examination will be discussed only in lectures and will not be available in the assigned readings. 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. Moreover, students must dress appropriately and respectfully since most of the classes will meet inside churches or other sacred buildings. Both men and women must have their shoulders and knees completely covered when entering churches, and all hats must be removed while inside.

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 real emergencies, such as serious illness, are legitimate excuses. Each unexcused absence will result in a 5% reduction of the final grade. For each 15 minutes a student is late, 1% will be deducted from the final grade. Three unexcused absences will result in a failing grade (F) for the course. Absence from the first two classes will result in an automatic and permanent drop from the course. In the event of an excusable absence, the instructor must be notified by email within 24 hours and written documentation of the absence must be presented to him within one week.

NOTE-TAKING

It is important that students focus their attention on the artworks without any distractions and that they take careful and detailed notes, which they should review regularly. Students should record and memorize key terms, phrases and dates.

CLASS PARTICIPATION

A portion of the grade will be based upon participation. Students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the assigned readings as well as the material from previous class meetings.

BLACKBOARD

All files posted on Blackboard are the intellectual property of the instructor and may only be used for Art History 3399, except with his written consent. These include but are not limited to:

- 1) The course syllabus.
- 2) Supplemental reading assignments.
- 3) Any additional materials the instructor may post.

OFFICE HOURS AND APPOINTMENTS

The instructor will be available by appointment, and he can best be reached via his university email address palei@utep.edu or by phone at (39) 334-8353773.

REQUIRED BOOKS

No book purchases are required for this course.

*Additional reading materials are posted on the course website.

POLICY ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND SCHOLASTIC DISHONESTY

Cheating, plagiarism or collusion on any test will be reported to the Dean of Students and may result in a failing grade for the course and/or other disciplinary action. See the [UTEP policy](#) on academic integrity and scholastic dishonesty.

COURSE SYLLABUS

The textbook and supplemental readings are intended to complement the lectures. The instructor may announce modifications to the syllabus before or during the course. It is expected that the reading assignments will be completed each week in a timely manner (by the Monday after they are assigned) in order that students are adequately prepared for the corresponding classes as well as the oral presentation and final examination. All classes will meet at 9:00am sharp unless otherwise indicated. Students should bring adequate water and an energy snack, and they should dress appropriately. Moreover, students should bring a minimum of 20 euros at all times.

PRE-DEPARTURE

Assignment to be read before June 19:

Helen Langdon, *Caravaggio: a Life* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1998).

ORIENTATION

June 18-19 Orientation Schedule TBA

June 19 **PIZZA NIGHT:** Pizzeria Nuovo Mondo, Via Amerigo Vespucci 15, 7:30pm

Sat., June 20 **CASTELLO DI BRACCIANO**

9:37 Departure from Valle Aurelia Station by train. Assignment for train ride: Paolo Alei and Max Grossman, "Introduction,

Building Family Identity: The Orsini of Bracciano from Fiefdom to Duchy (1470-1698), ser. "Court Cultures of the Middle Ages and Renaissance," co-edited with Dr. Paolo Alei (Pieterlen, Switzerland: Peter Lang, 2019), 1-37.

11:30 Tour of Castle of Bracciano (Alei and Grossman)

15:37 Depart from Bracciano by train

WEEK ONE

Mon., June 22 **Introduction to Renaissance and Baroque Rome: ORAL PRESENTATION ASSIGNED**

15:00 Meet at ACCENT

18:00 Finish Lecture

Assignment due June 24:

Loren Partridge, *The Art of Renaissance Rome, 1400-1600* (London, 1996), 9-136.

Tue., June 23 **Villa Farnesina**

10:00 Meet at Fontana Paola, Via Garibaldi (Janiculum)

12:00 Villa Farnesina

14:00 Finish Lecture

Wed., June 24 **Projects by Bramante, Raphael Rooms**

10:00 Meet at ACCENT

13:00 Finish Lecture

Assignment due June 29:

Timothy Verdon, "Pagans in the Church: The School of Athens in Religious Context," in *Raphael's School of Athens*, ed. Marcia Hall (Temple University Press, 1997), 114-30.

Paolo Alei, "'As if we were present at the event itself': the Representation of Violence in Raphael and Titian's Heroic Painting," *Artibus et Historiae* 64 (2011), 221-42.

Fri., June 26 **OSTIA ANTICA**

9:15 Depart Piramide

10:30 Guided Archaeological Tour, Prof. Albert Prieto

14:30 Depart Ostia Antica

WEEK TWO

Mon., June 29 **Michelangelo. Sistine Ceiling, Last Judgment**

10:00 Meet at ACCENT

13:00 Finish Lecture

Assignment due July 6:

Loren Partridge, *The Sistine Chapel Ceiling* (Braziller, New York, 1996), available in the Accent Library.

Ingrid Rowland, "The Intellectual Background of the School of Athens: Tracking Divine Wisdom in the Rome of Julius II," Marcia Hall, ed., *Raphael's 'School of Athens'* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1997), 131-70.

Tue., June 30 **Vatican Museums (organized by ACCENT)**

15:00 Enter Vatican Museums

19:00 Exit

Wed., July 1 **Caravaggio and Baroque Rome**

10:00 Meet at ACCENT

13:00 Finish Lecture

Galleria Borghese, Piazzale Scipione Borghese, 5

16:45 Meet at Galleria Borghese

17:00 Enter Galleria Borghese

19:00 Exit Galleria Borghese

Assignment due July 9:

Andrea Bolland, "Desiderio and Diletto: Vision, Touch and the Poetic of Bernini's Apollo and Daphne," *Art Bulletin* 82 (June 2000), 309-30.

WEEK THREE

Mon., July 6 **EXAM #1: Renaissance Rome**

10:00 Meet at ACCENT

12:00 End exam

Wed., July 8

Rival Geniuses: Baroque Projects of Bernini and Borromini

- 15:00 Meet at Fountain of Moses in Largo Santa Susanna
- 15:30 Santa Maria della Vittoria
- 16:00 San Carlo alle Quattro Fontane
- 16.30 Sant'Andrea al Quirinale
- 17:00 Palazzo Barberini
- 19:00 Piazza del Quirinale, finish lecture

Assignment due July 14:

Michael Hill, "Practical and Symbolic Geometry in Borromini's San Carlo Alle Quattro Fontane," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 72, no. 4 (2013), 555-83.

July 9-13

VENICE, FLORENCE, SIENA *Bring passports!

- 7/9 8:55 Depart from Roma Termini (Italo)
- 12:55 Arrive Sta. Lucia, Venezia
- 13:15 Arrive Hotel Al Sole, Santa Croce, 134-136. 041-2440328

- 7/10 9:30 Visit S. Maria Gloriosa dei Frari
- 10:30 Walk to Piazza San Marco

- 7/11 9:00 Burano/Torcello (optional)
- 16:05 Depart Venezia S. Lucia (Italo)
- 18:20 Arrive Firenze-Santa Maria Novella
- 18:45 Arrive hotel

- 7/12 9:00 San Marco Museum
- 11:00 Cappella dei Magi
- 15:00 Galleria degli Uffizi

- 7/13 9:00 Depart Stazione di Firenze (bus)
- 10:15 Arrive Siena
- 11:15 Palazzo Pubblico
- 12:30 Lunch, Antica Trattoria Papei
- 14:00 Museo dell'Opera del Duomo
- 16:00 Depart Stazione di Siena (bus)
- 17:15 Arrive Florence (retrieve bags from hotel)
- 18:30 Depart Florence-Santa Maria Novella
- 20:15 Arrive Roma Termini

WEEK FOUR

Tue., July 14 **The Kircherian Mile: Baroque Projects of the Campus Martius, Piazza and Basilica of S. Pietro**

10:00 Video Lecture, review of Bernini and Borromini
13:00 End Video Lecture

15:30 Meet at the central fountain of the Piazza Navona (side of Church of Sant' Agnese)
17:00 Sant'Ivo alla Sapienza
18:00 Santa Maria Sopra Minerva
19:00 Sant'Ignazio
19:30 finish lecture Via del Corso

Assignment due July 20:

Ingrid Rowland, "'The United Sense of The Universe': Athanasius Kircher in Piazza Navona," *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome* 46 (2001), 153-81.

Francis Haskell, *Patrons and Painters* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980), chap. 1, "The Mechanics of Seventeenth-Century Patronage," 3-23; chap. 2, "Pope Urban VIII and His Entourage," 24-62.

Wed., July 15 **Basilica of S. Pietro**

15:00 Meet at ACCENT
18:00 Finish lecture

WEEK FIVE

Mon., July 20 **Video Lecture of Piazza and Basilica of S. Pietro**

10:00 Video lecture of Piazza San Pietro and Basilica to listen directly on site individually
13:00 Finish Tour

ORAL PRESENTATIONS ON CARAVAGGIO

14.30 Meet at ACCENT
18:30 Finish Lecture

Assignment due July 21:

Tod A. Marder, "The Baldacchino" and "Piazza San Pietro and the Rome of Alexander VII" in *Bernini and the Art of Architecture* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1998), 27-45, 123-67.

Tue., July 21 **Baroque Art after Bernini and Borromini**

15:30 Meet at Piazza del Popolo
16:00 Spanish Steps
17:00 Trevi Fountain
18:00 Campidoglio
19:30 End of lecture

Assignment due July 24:

James Ackerman, *The Architecture of Michelangelo* (University of Chicago Press, 1986), 136-70.

John Pinto, "Salvi's Design for the Trevi" and "Salvi's Iconographical Program for the Trevi," in *The Trevi Fountain* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), 190-219, 220-35.

Thur., July 23 **EXAM #2: Baroque Rome**

15:30 Meet at ACCENT
17:30 End exam

Fri., July 25 **FINAL BANQUET: Cascio e Pepe, Via Giuseppe Avezzana, 11, 7:30pm**