

Quarter/Year

Spring 2018

Course Number

ART-HIST 390

Day/Time

TR 12:30-1:50

Instructor

Gunter

Course Title

Art and Empire in the Ancient Near East



Among the most spectacular and celebrated works of art and architecture from any civilization are the monumental sculptures and buildings created to construct imperial identities and consolidate imperial power in the ancient Near East. How did empires in Mesopotamia and Iran harness and administer resources to build and decorate their capital cities? How did they fashion and circulate the king's image, through large-scale stone sculptures as well as tiny seals accompanying official documents that traveled through imperial bureaucracies? How did art commemorate conquest and religious ritual? What do we know about patronage, court workshops, and artisan training? How did empires create and manipulate visual imagery to send messages to particular audiences, both within their empires and beyond their frontiers? This seminar explores the development of royal and imperial imagery with special reference to the great empires of the ancient Near East, including the Assyrian, Babylonian, and Achaemenid Persian empires.

Our course will draw extensively on the world-famous museum collections of Mesopotamian and Iranian art in the Chicago area.

Required Textbooks

Readings will be provided.

Assessments

Participation in discussion of readings, short written assessments of readings, a research paper on an object or group of objects.