

northwestern university
DEPARTMENT OF ART HISTORY

Quarter/Year	Course Number	Day/Time	Instructor
Spring 2020	ART-HIST 395	F 1-3:50	Miller
Course Title			Degree/Distro Fulfillment
Chicago Object Study Initiative Undergraduate Seminar: Medieval Art and the Decorative Arts			390/395; pre-1400



The objects at the core of the Art Institute’s collection of medieval art fall under the aegis of the “minor” or “decorative” arts. Yet this post-medieval and frequently pejorative term is at odds with medieval categories and methods of valuation. This seminar, taught primarily on-site at the Art Institute of Chicago and focused on objects in the museum’s collection, investigates the value and limitations of the category of “decorative art” to the study of medieval art. It will also consider the category’s role in forging the

modern legacy of these objects, especially their preservation, collecting history, and impact on modern art. Along the way, investigations into medieval materials and craft process will reveal the power of traditional technical analysis, emerging scientific techniques, modern craft knowledge, and experimental archaeology to offer new insights into these often-neglected objects.

Required Textbooks	Assessments
None.	Attendance and Participation Final Presentation Short writing assignments Term Paper