

Quarter/Year	Course Number	Day/Time	Instructor
Winter 2020	ART-HIST 349	TR 9:30-10:50	Swan
Course Title			Degree/Distro Fulfillment
Special Topics in Baroque Art: Early Modern Art: Materiality and Experience			1400-1800



The materiality of art is evident—and central to how art looks, how it means, and how it endures. This new course is intended as an introduction to the materiality of objects and works of art made during the early modern era (c. 1400-1700) and to concepts for understanding and interpreting them. Works in a variety of materials—ivory, wax, woods, feathers, shells and mother-of-pearl, oil paint, lacquer, metal, fresco, stone, porcelain and earthenware—populate a series of case studies drawn from European, Mesoamerican, and East Asian workshops. In addition to learning about what goes into making an early modern work of art, students will trace the geographies of materials, and the ways in which materials, format, and durability all affect the viewer's

experience. Students will read, analyze, and discuss current research on the makings of art, on theories of the materiality of art, and problems in art conservation—and will participate in close examination of works in museum and special collections. Our specific focus is on the materiality of early modern art works, and on what sorts of experiences that materiality represents. How were the materials sourced? acquired? prepared? valued? appreciated? This course will introduce students to some of the central topics in early modern art history as it is practiced by scholars/historians *and* by archaeologists, museum curators, archivists, and conservators. Students will be introduced to a wide data set of objects and art works, and will learn how to analyze, articulate, discuss, and research aspects of their materiality. Rather than focusing on memorization, this course encourages using concepts from a set of assigned readings to reflect on the objects we discuss together. Students will work in small groups and as a class to advance their own vocabulary for and understanding of early modern materiality.

Required Textbooks

No required textbooks; sources not available in the library or online will be provided in the form of PDFs.

Assessments

Short writing exercises on works of art and materials will encourage reflection and analytical skills. A 10-page final paper with scholarly apparatus (footnotes; bibliography; captioned illustrations) will offer the opportunity to demonstrate the critical and historical research skills advanced throughout the quarter.