

Course Number

ART_HIST 440

Course Title

Studies in 19th Century Art: Materializing Race

Quarter/Year

Spring 2022

Day/Time

R 2p-4:50p

Instructor

Alicia Caticha

Distro Fulfillment

1400 CE-1800 CE



Course Description

Writing in the mid-16th century, Francesco da Sangallo stipulated in a letter that when one spoke of sculpture, one spoke of marble. This ontological connection between sculpture and (white) marble only strengthened over the course of the eighteenth- and nineteenth centuries, at the same that the discipline of Art History came into fruition. Why does this history associate marble exclusively with whiteness, despite the material's many valuable polychrome varieties? Why does this history treat this whiteness as the absence of color, rather than a color with its own host of political, cultural, and racial associations? What are the sculptural implications for other materials, notably porcelain, sugar, and bronze? This course attempts to answer these questions, among others, by tracing the parallel and interwoven histories of eighteenth-century ideas of racial difference and white marble's rise to prominence within the field of Art History.

Students are encouraged to write seminar papers on the political and racial valences of color and materials in art and art historiography across cultural traditions, time periods, and media.

Required Textbooks

All readings will be provided through CANVAS.

Assessments

Class Participation, Paper, Final, Readings, Research Project, Writing Assignments