Course Title: *Eighteenth-Century European Art and Architecture*

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This course proposal is prepared as part of the project of the ISSSC on Secularism and the Enlightenment. It is intended to be used in teaching the history of art and architecture in the long eighteenth century.

This course idea is based upon a desire to create a philosophical and historical framework that permits the understanding of the dramatic changes in the settings of daily living, the fine arts and architecture that is based in the Enlightenment’s empowerment of the individual. These philosophical ideas along with the associated new respect for empiricism, science and nature (human, organic and inanimate) found expression in a dramatic new emphasis on secular subject matter in art and in new departures in the planning of domestic space in architecture. As the century progressed and Enlightenment individualism made an impact on political philosophy and government, architecture responded with forms and historical quotations of style that expressed republican and democratic values.

The course, to be entitled *Art and the Impact of Secularism on Eighteenth-Century Society*, will explain how absolutist monarchs like Louis XIV and his successors authorized the creations of academies which sponsored the growth of the new ideas and promoted the professionalization of artistic and intellectual pursuits even though those ideas eventually undermined the authoritarian basis of absolute divine-right monarchy. Ranging from the style and subject matter of painting to the appropriate forms of decorative furnishings for intimate spaces in private residences, the course will contextualize the way secular genre subjects of everyday life were powerfully expressive of the shift in values from hierarchichal institutions of religion and state to the subversive realm of private emotion and the desire for individual happiness and fulfillment.

The course will make use of philosophical, scientific and literary readings along with first-person accounts and travel literature to amplify the issues in the realm of ideas which were also expressed visually and materially in the arts. Eventually, it is my goal to write an art history text book to accompany this course.

**Syllabus for a Proposed Course**

This is a survey course which aims to give a picture of the entire spectrum of architecture and of the fine and decorative arts in a full European cultural context. Students will learn about individual artists and architects in readings which will be done in parallel to the course lectures which will concentrate on overarching patterns of stylistic evolution and changes in usage brought about by shifts in social and economic conditions. All students will do an independent research project and term paper based on a single work of art that they can study at first hand or on a central text of the period. Students who are able to read in a foreign language (French, Italian, German, Spanish or a Scandinavian or Central or Eastern-European language) may earn an extra **half-credit** by doing an additional
body of reading in the foreign language as part of the Languages Across the Curriculum program.

**Course requirements:** There will be two exams and one research term paper project which will require students to visit a major museum collection or rare book library on their own. There will also be one required group museum trip. Students will be graded upon the tests, term paper project, **attendance at class meetings and museum trips**, and on active and informed participation in class discussions. Students will be assigned to lead discussions in class on readings.

Texts: There is no single adequate text book for the broad sweep of European arts of the eighteenth century. The books which do exist are divided by nationality and by medium. Therefore, I am obliged to use several different books in which students will be assigned readings. **All of these will be on Reserve in the Trinity College Library.** Shorter essays will be available in a **course reading packet (indicated in the syllabus by an asterisk *)** which will be sold at cost in the Department of Fine Arts office. Students who wish to own the books **may purchase** them either at the Trinity College Bookstore or via one of the on-line commercial book dealers. Any edition is acceptable, though I provide below the essential information for the latest editions including ISBN numbers for such ordering:

Michael Levey, *Painting and Sculpture in France 1700-1789,* New Haven, Yale Univ. Press, (paperback, Amazon new $35, used $17.95); (0-3-0006494-2)
Michael Levey, *Painting in Eighteenth-Century Venice,* 1959. (0-3-0006057-2)

For students without sufficient prior study of European history, it is recommended that you buy a standard history, such as Jeremy Black, *Eighteenth-Century Europe* in the History of Europe series in paperback, New York, St. Martin’s Press, 2nd edition, 1999.

**PART I: From Grandeur to Intimacy. Circa 1680 to circa 1745. FRANCE**


- **Th., Sept. 7 –** The Pre-eminence of France and the reordering of artistic leadership in the Late Reign of Louis XIV. The importance of the French arts institutions and their educational model. Palaces, Gardens and Interiors and the Expression of
Power and Social Order. Reading: * Joan DeJean, “Introduction, Living Luxe” and “Fashion Queens” from The Essence of Style: How the French Invented High Fashion ..., New York, Free Press, 2005. (Coursepack) and Reserve: Skim picture books on Open Reserve on Château de Vaux-le-Vicomte; Palais de Versailles; French Gardens;


- PART II: Art And The Expression Of The Subjective. 1715-1760


and Sculpture in France 1700-1789, New Haven, ..., Chapter 1 & 4 (Painting up to the Death of Boucher, 1770, sections on Boucher, Chardin, Greuze).

- Tuesday, October 10. REQUIRED ART BUS TO NEW YORK: TRINITY DAYS

- PART III: Italy, Austria, Germany.


- Oct. 19. Mid-Term Exam on material through October 10.

- Term Paper Topic Due.


- PART IV: ENGLAND


- PART V: Sublime, the Picturesque, National Antiquariansim and Historicism.
• T. Nov 7. Historicism in Architecture and Decorative Arts. Summerson, Chapter 24 (Building in Gothic: From Wren to Walpole); Chapter 25 (Neo-Classicism and the Picturesque 1750-1830: Neo-Classicism and Britons Abroad); Chapter 26 (William Chambers and Robert Adam).

• SPECIAL LECTURE: 5 PM. Th. Nov. 9. Visiting Scholar


• LATER 18th C. PAINTING

• Nov 14: Levey, *Painting and Sculpture in France 1700-1789,* Chapter 4 (Painting up to the Death of Boucher, 1770 section on landscape painter Vernet) & Chapter 6 (Painting up to the Salon of 1789, through section entitled Genre: Aubry and Boilly). The Psychological and Fantastic Dimension and the Transition to Romanticism: Fuseli, Stubbs, Goya

• Nov 16 & 21. NO CLASS: RESEARCH DAYS IN MUSEUMS & LIBRARIES: TERM PAPER PROJECTS

• THANKSGIVING BREAK. NOV 22-25.

• T. Nov 28 & 30. History Painting 1750-1789 in England and France: Reading: Waterhouse, Chapter 16 (Sir Joshua Reynolds); Chapter 19 (Foundation Members of the Royal Academy); Levey, *Painting and Sculpture in France 1700-1789,* Chapter 6 (Painting up to the Salon of 1789, Second part to end.) * Andrew McClellan, The Museum and Its Public in Eighteenth-Century France,” from Per Bjurström, *The Genesis of the Art Museum in the 18th Century,* Stockholm, Nationalmuseum, 1993, pp. 61-80 (Coursepack)


Final Exam: Dec 14. 9 AM