

Vis122D: Michelangelo
Winter 2020
Prof. Jack Greenstein

Grading: Mid-term Exam 40% Final Exam 60%

This class studies and analyzes the works of Michelangelo and how they relate to the facts and standard stories about the artist. We are fortunate to have good English translations of two full-length biographies written during Michelangelo's life-time, as well as of some key letters and poems by the artist. The lectures are oriented towards visual analysis, interpretation, and art criticism both of the works and of the biographical material. Since they will present much, *but not necessarily all*, of the factual material, you are advised to read and re-read the biographies carefully and to compile the factual information and standard stories (which sometimes are not the same) on the basis of your lecture notes, the course study guide, and the required readings, especially Condivi, Vasari, Wallace, the other required reading and the modern survey books by Hibbard and Hughes (you need consult each week either Hibbard or Hughes, not both). The **mid-term exam** will cover the website and study guide material up to and including the *Sistine Chapel Ceiling*, especially the images and layout (but excluding the Julius tomb and related works), even if the lectures may not have reached this point in Michelangelo's career. The **final exam** will cover Michelangelo's entire career, with emphasis on the material not on the mid-term exam. *Both exams may include works on the digital images reserves and people on the printed study guide that are not discussed in the lectures.* However, the examinations emphasize material and analyses presented in the lectures, much of which is not replicated in the readings. Attendance is mandatory, since it is not possible to do well without the lecture material.

The exams will have **short essay questions on the assigned readings, the people and places on the study guide, and the works by Michelangelo on the course website** and longer essays with **comparisons and/or visual analyses** drawing on the interpretative materials presented in the readings and lectures. The final exam will also have a **long synthetic essay** about Michelangelo. The question for this long essay may, at the instructor's discretion, be distributed in advance, and it may, at the instructor's discretion, be assigned as a take-home component of the exam. You may work together with other students to compile and learn the material for the exams, and you may discuss with other students the topics of the essays, if they are distributed in advance. *But all submitted work for the exams must be your own writing. Plagiarism, collusion, memorizing and/or copying essays or answers composed by others, and other forms of cheating will not be tolerated. Violators will be reported to authority and subject to expulsion per university regulations.*

There will be no make-up exam for the final exam. Make-up exams for the mid-term exams will be offered only under very extraordinary circumstances with prior approval.

Study Guides: A web-site with the required images and some basic factual material about them may be accessed [here](#). A study guide with a list of places and people important for understanding the career of Michelangelo follows this syllabus. These are intended to give you the scaffolding you need to construct through readings and lecture notes the material to understand the artist. The required readings are available on the library e-reserves at <https://library.ucsd.edu/borrow-and-request/course-reserves/index.html>; search by course number or professor's name. *Please note*: some images on the course website are accessed through links to ArtStor; to access them from off-campus you, it may need to use the AnyConnect vpn client for UCSD. To download and configure it, see the remote-access instructions on the library services page (<https://library.ucsd.edu/computing-and-technology/connect-from-off-campus/>).

On the exams you may be asked to identify the roles that the people and places on the study guide played in Michelangelo's life and career, including where and when they knew him, the nature of their relations with Michelangelo, and the works which they commissioned or collaborated on, if any. This information may be culled from the **lectures, Vasari and Condivi, Michelangelo's** letters, the chapters by **Wallace**, the books by **Hibbard** or **Hughes**, and the other required readings. Some of the people appear in the

“Brief Biographies” appendix in Hughes. It is necessary, however, to supplement the information there with information on their role in Michelangelo’s life and career from the other sources.

All reading should be done in advance of the lecture for which it is listed. Although we are likely to fall a bit behind the syllabus at points and then catch up, you are strongly advised to keep up with the required reading, since the syllabus was constructed to distribute it as evenly as possible.

Required Books at UCSD Bookstore

Giorgio **Vasari**, *Lives of the Artists*, trans. George Bull, vol. 1, Penguin Classics

Michelangelo: Life, Letters and Poetry, trans. George Bull (contains “The Life of Michelangelo by Ascanio **Condivi**”), Oxford University Press

Required Books on reserve at Geisel (it is okay to read one or the other each week)

Howard **Hibbard**, *Michelangelo*, Icon Edition, New York: Harper & Row, 1974 (other editions available)

Anthony **Hughes**, *Michelangelo*, London: Phaidon, 1997

Required Articles: The articles listed below are required for this course. Due to copyright issues, half a dozen illustrations have been omitted from the pdf of Leo Steinberg’s brilliant, lengthy article “Metaphors of Love and Birth in Michelangelo’s *Pieta*.” Equivalent images are posted in a separate file on the course website. **The final exam essays will draw on the required readings and possibly additional readings announced in class in the weeks before the exam. You are well advised to complete Vasari, Condivi, Hibbard or Hughes and the articles well before then.**

See the syllabus for assignments. In addition to the assigned reading in Vasari, Condivi and Hibbard or Hughes, **all the articles assigned up to February 5 on the syllabus should be completed before the mid-term exam.** Note: Bold indicates how the books are cited on the syllabus.

William E. **Wallace**, *Michelangelo: The Artist, the Man and his Times*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010, pp. 28-71 (chapters 2-3)

Johannes **Wilde**, “Michelangelo, Vasari, and Condivi” from *Michelangelo, Six Lectures*, Oxford, 1978, pp. 1-16.

Leo **Steinberg**, “Metaphors of Love and Birth in Michelangelo’s *Pietàs*,” from *Studies in Erotic Art*, eds. Theodore Bowie and Cornelia V. Christenson, New York, 1970, pp. 231-335.

Leo **Steinberg**, “The **Line of Fate** in Michelangelo’s Painting,” *Critical Inquiry*, vol. 6, no. 3 (1980): 411-454.

Charles **Seymour**, “Introduction: ‘And I with My Bow’” from *Michelangelo’s David: A search for Identity*, Pittsburgh, University of Pittsburgh Press, 1967, pp. 1-17.

Sven **Sandstrom**, “The Sistine Chapel Ceiling” from *Levels of Unreality: Studies in Structure and Construction in Italian Mural Painting during the Renaissance*, Figura: Uppsala Studies in the History of Art, n.s., 4, Uppsala, 1963, pp. 173-191

Creighton **Gilbert**, “The Proportion of Women,” in *Michelangelo On and Off the Sistine Ceiling*, New York, 1994

James **Saslow**, “‘A Veil of Ice between My Heart and the Fire’: Michelangelo’s Sexual Identity and Early Modern Constructs of Homosexuality,” *Genders* vol. 2 (1988): 77-89.

Alexander **Perrig**, “Authenticity Problems with Michelangelo: The Drawings on the Louvre Sheet Mo. 685,” in *Authentication in the Visual Arts. A Multidisciplinary Symposium*, Amsterdam, 12th March 1977, Amsterdam, B. M. Israel, 1979, pp. 27-56.

Leo **Steinberg**, “**Michelangelo’s Last Judgment** as Merciful Heresy,” *Art in America*, November/December 1975: 49-63.

SYLLABUS OF LECTURES AND ASSIGNED READINGS

Note: Please read through entire biographies of Michelangelo by Condivi and Vasari in the first two weeks, and then each subsequent week reread the few pages in both pertaining to topic of the lecture, even though the Condivi and Vasari are not listed again each week. The “Selected Letters” printed in *Michelangelo: Life, Letters, and Poetry* are chronologically arranged and should also be read in anticipation of the lectures, even when they are not listed below. All readings listed under a lecture should be completed before the lecture where they are listed.

- 1/06 Michelangelo, Renaissance historiography and the question of biography
1/08 Florentine art before Michelangelo: a brief review
reading: Vasari, “Introduction”, “Preface to the Lives”, “Preface to Part Two”, “Preface to Part Three” (pp. 9-47, 83-93, 249-254); **Hibbard**, chap 1, or **Hughes**, pp. 4-42
- 1/13: From apprentice to master: Michelangelo's training and first independent works:
Battle relief, Madonna of the Stairs, Statues for Tomb of S. Dominic (S. Procolo, S. Petronio, Angel bearing Candelabrum)
reading: Wilde; Vasari, “Life of Michelangelo”, pp. 325-442; **Condivi in Michelangelo**, pp. 3-21
- 1/15 Michelangelo in Rome: Riario and the *Bacchus*
reading: Wallace; Condivi in Michelangelo, pp. 3-73; **Michelangelo**, Letters, nos. 1-2, pp.77-78.
- 1/20 No class—Happy Martin Luther King Day
1/22 *The Roman Pieta*
reading: Steinberg, “Metaphors”, pp. 231-239; **Hughes**, pp. 42-62, or **Hibbard**, chap. 2, or **Hughes**, pp. 42-62
- 1/27 First paintings: *Manchester Madonna, Entombment of Christ*
reading: Steinberg, “Line of Fate”
- 1/29 The Triumphal Return to Florence: *David*
reading: Seymour
- 2/03 The Burdens of Success: *Taddei Tondo, Pitti Tondo, Bruges Madonna, Battle Cartoon and Doni Tondo*
reading: Hibbard, chap. 3, or **Hughes**, pp. 63-102
complete the study guide material for the mid-term
- 2/05 *St. Matthew* and Michelangelo's concept of the body; Michelangelo and Julius II: The first project for the Julius Tomb and the second Bolognese sojourn
reading: reread Vasari, pp. 342-50 and Condivi in **Michelangelo**, pp. 24-32; read anew **Michelangelo**, Letters nos. 3, 17, pp. 78-80, 99-102; **Hibbard**, chap. 4, or **Hughes**, pp. 90-95, 105-18
- 2/10 *Midterm Exam*: covering material on the website and study guide up to the Sistine Chapel Ceiling
2/12 The Sistine Chapel Ceiling: decorative scheme and the ancestors
reading: Sandstrom
- 2/17 No class—Happy Presidents’ Day
2/19 The Sistine Chapel Ceiling: Prophets and Sibyls; early histories
reading: Gilbert; Hibbard, chap. 5, or **Hughes**, pp. 118-144
- 2/24 The Sistine Chapel Ceiling: the Histories (concluded)
reading: Saslow; Michelangelo: Selected Poetry (pp. 139-160)
- 2/26 The Statues for the Julius Tomb, *Moses* and the *Slaves*
reading: Perrig; Hibbard, chap. 6 and pp. 267-73, or **Hughes**, pp. 145-172, 266-72

- 3/02 Florence again for the last time: Medici Chapel, Medici Tombs, *Medici Madonna*
reading: Steinberg, "Metaphors", pp. 239-285; Hibbard, chaps. 7-9, or Hughes, pp. 174-228
- 3/04 Rome, the included self: *Last Judgment* and *Florentine Pieta*
reading: Steinberg, "Michelangelo's Last Judgment"; Hibbard, chaps 10-11, or Hughes, pp. 230-54, 272-88
- 3/09 Roman architecture: the Campidoglio and the dome of St. Peter's
reading: Hibbard, chaps. 12-13, or Hughes, pp. 290-330.
- 3/11 *Rondanini Pieta* and final observations on Michelangelo's life and art

FINAL EXAM: Wednesday, March 18, 11:30-2:30

See next page for study guide

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Study Guide on Michelangelo's Family, Friends, Patrons, and Colleagues

The mid-term and the final exams will have fact-oriented components for which you will be required to know the “who, what, when, where, and why” of Michelangelo's life and works. Bare-bones summaries of the factual material about his works are included on the digital reserves posted on the internet. Fuller accounts will be presented in lectures and found in the required readings. For full credit on the exams, you will be asked to go beyond the factual summaries given on the digital reserves and also to indicate how this information is known and to give a brief account of the significance of the work for Michelangelo's artistic career.

In addition to the works on digital reserves, you may be asked about the following people and their role in Michelangelo's life and career. Some of these people are included in the “Brief Biographies” section of the appendix in Hughes. However, Hughes gives a general biography and does not focus, as you should, on their relations with Michelangelo. The additional information will be found in the lectures, the digital study guide, and the required readings.

Remember the exams may include works, people and material not covered in the lectures

Michelangelo's places: Florence, Bologna, Siena, Rome

Please be able to locate the above listed cities on a map of Italy, give the dates that Michelangelo worked there, the works produced while in the city, works produced to be displayed in the city and works currently in each city with their dates, original locations and patrons.

Michelangelo and the Popes

Be able to identify the role that the following popes played in Michelangelo's life and career, including their dates, family names, the character of their relations with Michelangelo, and the works that they commissioned. The mid-term covers Pope Julius; the final, all the listed popes

Julius II, family name: Giuliano della Rovere, of Savona, Pope 1503-1513

Leo X, family name: Giovanni dei Medici, of Florence, Pope 1513-1521

Clement VII, family name: Giulio dei Medici, of Florence, Pope 1523-34

Paul III, family name: Alessandro Farnese, of Camino (Rome) or Viterbo?, Pope 1534-1549

Paul IV, family name: Giovanni Pietro Caraffa, of Capriolo, Avellino, Pope 1555-1559

Pius IV, family name Giovanni Angelo dei Medici, of Milan, Pope 1559-1565

Michelangelo's family, friends, patrons, and acquaintances

Be able to identify the following important people in Michelangelo's life. Know when and where he knew them and the nature of their relations. The mid-term will cover all the people in the left-hand column and those in the right-hand column up to and including Donato Bramante.

Giorgio Vasari

Ascanio Condivi

Ludovico Buonarroti

Francesco Granacci

Pietro Torrigiano

Domenico Ghirlandiaio

Lorenzo di Piero de' Medici (Il Magnifico)

Bertoldo di Giovanni

Angelo Poliziano (Politian)

Giulio de' Medici

Giovanni de' Medici

Gianfrancesco Aldovrandi

Cardinal Raffaele Riario

Pietro Soderini

Angelo Doni

Leonardo da Vinci

Donato Bramante

Sebastiano Luciano (del Piombo)

Jacopo Pontormo

Antonio Mini

Tommaso de' Cavalieri

Vittorio Colonna

Marcello Venusti