

*Associated Colleges of the Midwest*  
*Program in Florence*  
*Fall Semester 2011*  
*The Medici as Patrons of the Arts*  
*Dr. Josephine Rogers Mariotti*

The Medici family is arguably the single most important family in Florentine history, generation after generation, all active patrons of the arts during centuries in which the city experienced its greatest cultural and artistic flourishing. This course will trace the family's history as art patrons during the course of the 15<sup>th</sup> and early 16th century, examining the relations between specific members of the dynasty and the art produced under their auspices.

Beginning with the late 14<sup>th</sup> century, at the debut of the rise in wealth and power of the family, we will explore the history and profiles of various members of the family from Giovanni di Bicci, Cosimo the Elder, Piero the Gouty, Lorenzo il Magnifico, to the Medici popes, Leo X and Clement VII, as well as other members of the family known to the history of the arts. On site experience of the art they promoted will allow us to explore: how each patron relates to the artists employed; how the art sponsored reflects personal philosophy and persona; how patronage relates and contributes to contemporary culture and philosophy; how the art produced under their auspices fits within the cultural, political and social make-up of the city. We will also see the significant role the Medici played in the complex game of art and politics with regard to other centers in Italy, some of which we will have the opportunity to visit during the course of the term. Thus, this course will focus on the major personalities of the early branch of the Medici, concluding with a rapid glance at the initial stages of the age to follow – the Duchy of Tuscany under Medici rule.

**Regular meetings** fall on Tuesdays and Thursdays at the times indicated on the schedule below. There will be also be sessions on Wednesday mornings approximately every other week beginning on February 1. Meeting times are scheduled in accordance to museum and monument openings.

As indicated in the schedule, the morning sessions are 3 hour blocks of time. You will be given a break mid-way through the morning. Approximately every 3 sessions there will be an in-class session aimed at consolidating (discussion, presentations, lectures, etc) our on-site studies.

**Academic Policies and Requirements:**

1. Attendance at all class meetings. One unexcused absence will affect borderline grades; additional unexcused absences will result in the lowering of your grade for each absence. Medical excuse is the only valid reason for absence.
2. When we convene on site rather than in the class room, please plan your route and estimate travel time carefully to ensure prompt arrival -- class sessions will commence at the declared time. Late arrival negatively impacts your grade and you may have to pay your own admission fee to ticket sites.
3. Dress for conditions and be forewarned that 1) many times you will have little or no opportunity to sit 2) churches are not heated 3) museums are minimally heated 4) we cannot reschedule because of unfavourable conditions 5) there are strict dress codes for entering religious sites.
4. Stamina: we will be on our feet for long sessions on site, and in this season the cold will be an important factor. Dress accordingly. Churches and some museums are not much warmer than outside temperature.
5. Sustained engagement with material presented in class and all assigned readings.
6. Timely completion of all written and oral work. (Late delivery of assignments results in incremental reduction of your grade.)
7. All written assignments must be consigned in hard copy, not by electronic attachment.
8. No electronic devices are allowed for exams in class.
9. Photographs during class sessions are allowed only before or after discussion begins and only where regulations permit.
10. No food or drink is allowed during class, whether in the classroom or on site.
11. Avoid bringing backpacks to on-site visits. Many museums require that you check them, and this is time consuming.

12. Remember that public bathrooms are scarce within the city. Finding one is problematic and not always possible during on-site visits.
13. Neither the midterm nor the final exam can be rescheduled except for reasons that originate with the instructor.
14. Communication with the instructor by email can be considered effective only when you receive return email confirmation of receipt. Please allow at least a half day for a response. Urgencies of any type must be communicated *viva voce* (by phone or in person).

**Grading:**

Grading for the course is based on a scale of 100 points. See percentages below. In fairness to your peers, **late work** is not allowed. When the deadline has passed, expect considerable reduction in your grade. To ensure parity, all written assignments must be presented in hard copy on or before deadline.

All of the following assignments must be completed in full before you leave Florence in order to pass the course.

**Assignments:**

- Written presentation on the persona and patronage of a member of the Medici family: 25%
- Written presentation on an artist and masterwork created within the historical/cultural milieu of the Medici: 25%.
- Oral report : 10%
- Final exam: identifications and commentary: 20%
- Participation: 20% Class participation is calculated as a component of your grade. Command of assigned readings and survey text material as well as participation in discussion is expected.

**Assigned and Suggested Readings:**

(Ref. Assigned and Suggested Readings Sheet to be distributed)

Mandatory readings, illustrations and other didactic materials will be provided. If you choose to have individual copies of the readings, you may be assessed a fee since there is no cost for books per se. Some specialized readings will be lent to you and must be checked back in to the instructor in person, *unmarked and in otherwise good condition*. If readings are provided electronically in PDF format or indicated on j-stor, please do not print out the material unless absolutely necessary and share the print outs among yourselves in order not to waste paper.

Books from the ACM library placed on reserve for the course must not be removed from ACM spaces at Linguaviva, 4<sup>th</sup> floor.

### **Tentative Weekly Schedule**

*This is a tentative schedule that may undergo changes.*

- Week I (4): Introduction: Florentine art in the early Quattrocento  
Jan. 31: ore 9 in-class / S.Lorenzo  
Feb. 1: ore 9 S. Croce  
Feb. 2: pm ore 15 Bapt./Opera del Duomo
- Week II (5): Early Medicean Patronage  
Feb. 7 am ore 9 Bargello  
Feb. 9 pm ore 15 Brancacci / S.Spirito
- Week III (6): Cosimo de' Medici as patron and humanist  
Feb. 14 am 9 San Marco  
Feb. 15 am 9 in-class session  
Feb. 16 pm 15 Palazzo Medici
- Week IV (7): Giovanni Rucellai: rival and relative  
Feb. 21 am 9 S. Trinita/Tempietto  
Feb. 23 pm 15 in-class session
- Week V (8): Piero the Gouty and Lorenzo 'Il Magnifico'  
Feb. 28 am 9 S. Apollonia/SS. Annunziata  
Feb. 29 am 9 SMNovella  
Mar. 1 pm 15 in-class session
- Week VI (9): The 'neo-platonic academy' and Garden of San Marco  
Mar. 5 am 9 Casa Buonarroti  
Mar. 7 am 9 Uffizi  
Mar. 8 pm 15 in-class session
- Week VII (10): Michelangelo and the Medici  
Mar. 13 am 9 Gall. dell'Accademia/Medici Chapels  
Mar. 16 am 9:30 Final