

WOODSWORTH COLLEGE University of Toronto
2025 Siena Summer Abroad Program

FAH 394Y0: Italy in International Modernism: 1909 to the present

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This course follows Italian art within the history of European and international modernism, from the First Futurist Manifesto in 1909 rejecting the “eternal and futile worship of the past,” through the problematic modernity of Italian Fascism and Informalism, the witty Arte Povera works made with unexpected things, and the postmodern “transavantgarde” painters of the 1980’s who wanted to put together “a past removed from the rhetoric of the great traditions”. All of these artists and movements work with, and sometimes play with, expectations created by the weight of Classical Antiquity and Italy’s Renaissance past. We take field trips to the spectacular collections of Italian and international modern and contemporary art. These offer a rich context for this exploration of the dynamic Italy of the past hundred years.

In this course you will be given the opportunity to think about what it’s like to be cutting-edge contemporary while living in a museum. The assignments give you the opportunity to work on your own critical writing skills, allowing you to approach the material as if you were a professional curator, critic, and creative writer.

Marking Scheme:

Class participation 10%

This means alert/awake attendance, and preparedness to enter into discussion.

1. Essay 30%

You should prepare this assignment in advance of the course beginning

One of the great twentieth century Italian contributions has been in the area of industrial design. Choose ***one work*** of twentieth century Italian design. Write a five page (1250 word) essay on that object.

Reading in support of your essays: When thinking about the work you want to write about for the course assignments consult these helpful online books offer an overview of modern and contemporary art.

Arnason, H. H. *A History of Modern Art : Painting, Sculpture, Architecture*. New York:1998.
https://archive.org/details/historyofmoderna00arna_0

Brettell, Richard R. *Modern Art, 1851-1929 : Capitalism and Representation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999. Online: <https://archive.org/details/modernart18511920000bret>

Cottini, Luca. *Art of Objects: the Birth of Italian Industrial Culture, 1878-1928*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2018. (Available online through U of T libraries)
Hopkins, David. *After Modern Art: 1945-2017*. Second edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018. (Available online through U of T libraries).
Fallan, Kjetil, and Grace Lees-Maffei, eds. *Made in Italy: Rethinking a Century of Italian Design*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2014. (Available online through U of T libraries).
White, Anthony. *Italian Modern Art in the Age of Fascism*. New York: Routledge, 2019. (Available online through U of T libraries).

*Part of this assignment is doing research and finding information. A good place to start looking for an object is in Claudia Neumann, *Design Directory Italy*.

Some things to consider:

What function does the object fulfill?

How is it innovative?

How does it fit into a particular social or historical context?

You need at least TWO *academic* sources, books or articles that **are *not* open online pages of Wikipedia**. Go into the U of T library catalogue and search for books or articles on your subject. These may include the books listed in “Reading” (above). If you are unsure of your references, email the instructor for advice!

2. Two art response short essays Value: 60% (30 marks each)

1000 words per work of art: Due: September 1st

Write 2 individual responses to 3 works of art that you have seen in the Gori Collection, Venice, Rome, Tuscany, Umbria or anywhere during the course. This will be a *close examination and* interpretation of a work of art.

You might want to talk about how this work is typical of a given artist or movement, referring to the books in the reading list, or to the course lectures. You might think about the ways that the artist’s choice of materials, techniques, and scale affect what we take away from the work. Consider the way that the physical location and installation of the work affects the way that it may be understood. Take this opportunity to use your eyes, to look closely at the work. Try and find the language to describe it, the ways it’s made, and your own responses to it. One way to prepare for this is to make notes as we visit different locations, so that you have material to work with. You may only write about things *we have actually seen during the course*.

Course Schedule –

Monday 4 Introduction

Tuesday 5 20th Century Sculpture

Wednesday 6 Field Trip: Gori Site Specific Sculpture Collection, Pistoia

Thursday 7 Fascism, Sironi

Monday 11 Futurism and the Avant-Gardes
Tuesday 12 Surrealism, Surrealist women artists
Wednesday 13 Field Trip: Venice Guggenheim Museum
Thursday 14 Walking tour, Cini Foundation

Monday 18 Italian art and the USA (1950-1960s)
Tuesday 19 Informale: Burri, Fontana
Wednesday 20 Toti Scialoja
Thursday 21 Field Trip: Spoleto, Palazzo Collicola

Monday 25 Arte Povera
Tuesday 26 Pino Pascali
Wednesday 27 Field Trip: Galleria Nazionale d'arte Moderna, Rome
Thursday 28 Field Trip: Ara Pacis/ Italian design

* **Academic integrity** Academic integrity is essential to the pursuit of learning and scholarship in a university, and to ensuring that a degree from the University of Toronto is a strong signal of each student's individual academic achievement. As a result, the University treats cases of cheating and plagiarism very seriously. The University of Toronto's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters (www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm) outlines the behaviours that constitute academic dishonesty and the processes for addressing academic offences. All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be investigated following procedures outlined in the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters. If you have questions or concerns about what constitutes appropriate academic behaviour or appropriate research and citation methods, you are expected to seek out additional information on academic integrity from your instructor or from other institutional resources (see <http://academicintegrity.utoronto.ca/>).