

Gender and French Visual Culture: Renaissance to Revolution

Jessica Fripp

This course looks at three centuries of representations of women in art in France across a range of media from the sixteenth through the eighteenth centuries. The course will consider the gender politics of women as subjects of representation, patrons of art, and as artists. The class will provide students with a strong museum-based background in painting, sculpture and material culture through close study of original works of art. Drawing on the unrivalled collections of the French national and municipal museums (Versailles, the Louvre, Château de Fontainebleau, Musée des arts décoratifs), we will follow a broad historical progression beginning with the Renaissance and baroque court cultures through the fall of the *ancien régime* in the eighteenth century. This period saw the rise of powerful women at court and in urban society, and we will examine changing conceptions of their roles in relation to changing fantasies of the female figure.

Students will be evaluated based on the following:

- Presentation based upon works of art in museum collections and assigned article, plus written 2-page response to article, to be sent to me via email before class on Thursday (35%)
- Short paper based on a work of art in a Paris museum not discussed during the course (40%)
- Reading related assignments (15%)
- Participation/Punctuality (10%)

Presentations:

Each student is responsible for an on-site presentation, based on an assigned work and reading (posted on c-tools). You are responsible to explain to your classmates pertinent information about the painting: artist, date, provenance/exhibition history (when available), some historical context, visual analysis, as well as presenting the assigned article's argument. While the readings should help provide you with most of the above, feel free to dig deeper (using research tools available through the UM library (example: Jstor, google books, etc.). **PLEASE** come meet with me if you have any questions.

Final Paper

This paper must be based on a work of your choosing, IN A PARISIEN COLLECTION but not one we covered in depth during the course. (Things shown or mentioned briefly in lecture or in readings are fair game). Please see me to have your choice approved by the fourth week and I will also try to help you in terms of possible sources. Papers should be 3-5 pages. See handout for more details.

Unit 1: February 22 and 24: Introduction and Issues

February 22: Institut Catholique

February 24: site visit, Musée du Louvre **1:45**

Readings:

- Gill Perry and Emma Barker: *Gender and Art* (Yale University Press, in association with the Open University, 1999) "Introduction," 8-31.
- Linda Nochlin, "Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?" *Art News* (January 1971): 22-39, 67-71.
- Guerilla Girls, "Introduction and Conclusion to the Guerilla Girl's Bedside Companion to the History of Western Art," in Amelia Jones, ed. *The Feminism and Visual Culture Reader* (Routledge, 2003), 349-353.

Unit 2: March 1 and 3: Women as Patron I: Representing Female Rule

March 1: Institut Catholique

March 4: Val-de-Grâce/Luxembourg Palace **1:30**

Readings:

- Geraldine A. Johnson, "Pictures Fit for a Queen" Peter Paul Rubens and the Marie de Medici Cycle," *Art History* 16:3 (September 1993): 447-6s9
- Jennifer Germann, "The Val-de-Grâce as a Portrait of Anne of Austria: Queen, Queen Regent, Queen Mother," in *Architecture and the Politics of Gender in Early Modern Europe* (Ashgate, 2003), 47-61

NB: Be prepared to discuss the Val-de-Grâce reading onsite at the Church. We will devote class time on Tuesday to reviewing online art history resources.

Presentation Options

Palais et jardins du Luxembourg. Selections from Deborah Marrow, "The Art Patronage of Marie de Medici." PhD dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1978.

Unit 3: MONDAY March 7 and WEDNESDAY 9: Woman as Patron II:

Fashioning the Self

March 8: Institut Catholique

March 10: Musée du Louvre (be prepared to discuss Ruben's material from previous week) **2:30**

- Shelia ffolliot, "Casting a Rival in the Shade: Catherine de Medici and Diane de Poitiers," *Art Journal* 48:2 (Summer 1989): 138-43
- Melissa Hyde, "The Makeup of the Marquise," *Making up the Rococo: François Boucher and his Critics* (Los Angeles: Getty, 2006), 107-138

Presentation Options:

Maurice Quentin de la Tour, *Portrait of Madame de Pompadour* (w/ Boucher's painting). Ewa Lajer-Burcharth, "Pompadour's Touch: Difference in Representation," *Representations* 73 (Winter 2001), 54-88

School of Fontainebleau, *Gabrielle d'Estrée and her sister + Henri IV as Hercules* (in same gallery), Crawford, Katherine B. "The Politics of Promiscuity: Masculinity and Heroic Representation at the Court of Henry IV," *French Historical Studies*, Volume 26, Number 2, (Spring 2003): 225-252

Unit 4: MONDAY March 14 and FRIDAY 18 : Woman as Allegory I: Fecund France

March 15: Institut Catholique

***** FRIDAY March 18: Fontainebleau: meet at the Gare de Lyon at (9:30)*****

Readings:

- Rebecca Zorach, “Milk,” in *Blood Milk Ink Gold: Abundance in the French Renaissance* (University of Chicago Press, 2005), 83-135

Please come in prepared to discuss this article in-depth. Come prepared with questions to discuss. You may want to outline it. Questions must be turned into me at the end of class (can be handwritten).

Presentation Options:

(2 students) Primaticcio Gallery, Rebecca Zorach, “Blood,” in *Blood Milk Ink Gold: Abundance in the French Renaissance* (University of Chicago Press, 2005), 33-83

Unit 5: March 22 and 24: Woman as Artist I: Women Painters at Court

March 22: Institut Catholique

March 24: Versailles – **Be at the Saint Michel fountain by 1:15. We have an appointment with a curator at 2:30 in order to see the portraits of the Mesdames, which are not on view during the week.**

Readings:

- Re-look at Nochlin (week 1)
- Melissa Hyde, “Women and the Visual Arts in the Age of Marie-Antoinette,” in Eik Kahng and Marianne Roland Michel, eds., *Anne Vallayer-Coster, Painter to the Court of Marie-Antoinette* (Dallas Museum of Art, in association with Yale University Press, 2002), 74-93
- Melissa Hyde, “Under the Sign of Minerva: Adélaïde Labille-Guiard’s Portrait of Madame Adélaïde” in *Women, Art and the Politics of Identity in Eighteenth-Century Europe* (Ashgate, 2003), 139-163.

NB: We’ll discuss the second Hyde article onsite.

Presentation Options

Élisabeth Vigée-Lebrun, Marie-Antoinette and her Children. Mary Sheriff, “The Cradle is Empty: Élisabeth Vigée-Lebrun, Marie-Antoinette and the Problem of Intention” in *Women, Art and the Politics of Identity in Eighteenth-Century Europe*, (Ashgate, 2003), 164-187.

Unit 6: March 29 and FRIDAY April 1: Woman as Artist II: Becoming an Artist

March 29: Institut Catholique

April 1: Louvre **11:00am**

Readings:

- Mary Vidal, “The ‘Other Atelier’: Jacques-Louis David’s Female Students,” in *Women, Art and the Politics of Identity in Eighteenth-Century Europe* (Ashgate, 2003), 237-262.
- Laura Auricchio, “The Laws of Bienséance and the Gendering of Emulation in Eighteenth-Century French Art Education” in *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 36:2 (Winter 2003): 231-240.

Presentation Options:

Vigée-Lebrun, *Self-Portrait w/ daughter Julie* Paula Rea Radisich, "Qui peut définir les femmes? Vigée-Lebrun's Portrait of an Artist," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 25.4 (1992): 441-467

Marie Benoist, *Negresse*, Helen Weston, "The cook, the thief, his wife and her lover': LaVille-Leroux's Portrait de Negresse and the signs of misrecognition" in *Work and the Image: visual representations in changing histories* (Ashgate, 2000), 53-74

Unit 7: April 5 and 7: Woman as Allegory II: Revolution

April 5: Institut Catholique

April 7: Louvre **3:30**

Readings:

Joan Landes, "Embodiments of Female Virtue," *Visualizing the Nation: Gender, Representation and Revolution in Eighteenth-Century France* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001), 81-134

Please come in prepared to discuss this article in-depth. Come prepared with questions to discuss. You may want to outline it. Questions must be turned into me at the end of class (can be handwritten).

Presentation Options:

Jacques-Louis David, *Brutus*, Thomas Crow, "A male republic: bonds between men in the art and life of Jacques-Louis David," in *Femininity and masculinity in eighteenth-century art and culture* By Gillian Perry, Michael Rossington (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994, 204-219.
Jacques-Louis David, *Intervention of the Sabine Women*, Ewa Lajer-Burcharth, "David's *Sabine Women*: Body, Gender and the Republican Culture under the Directory," *Art History* 14:3 (September 1991): 397-430.

Unit 8: April 12 and WEDNESDAY 13: Woman as Consumer: Living in a Material World

April 12: Institut Catholique

April 14: Musée des Arts Déco ****FINAL PAPERS DUE THURSDAY****

Readings:

- Kathryn Norberg, "Goddesses of Taste: Courtesans and their Furniture in Late Eighteenth-Century Paris," in Dena Goodman and Kathryn Norberg, eds *Furnishing the Eighteenth Century: what furniture can tell us about the European and American past* (Routledge, 2007), 97-114
- Jennifer Jones, "Coquettes and Grisettes," in *Sexing La Mode: Gender, Fashion and Commercial Culture in Old Regime France* (Berg Publishers, 2004), 145-177.