CLASSICISM FROM THE RENAISSANCE TO THE 20TH CENTURY

The civilisations of Ancient Greece and Rome have provided a seemingly inexhaustible source of inspiration for European art, design and architecture. This course investigates the afterlife of the classical era, exploring the ways in which classical themes, motifs and styles were re-discovered and interpreted between the 16th and early 20th centuries.

From the Renaissance period onwards, artists and scholars developed an increasingly sophisticated knowledge of the antique world, grounded in close study of art works and archaeological excavations in Greece and Italy. While some continued to see classicism as a standard for ideal beauty, others viewed antiquity as humanity's golden age in society and government, and hoped to inspire its future revival through their architecture and art. On a lighter level, many painters and sculptors looked to classical history and mythology as sources for narrative subjects, or to feed the general public's seemingly insatiable appetite for images of daily life in Athens, Rome and Pompeii. By the start of the 20th century there was no clear consensus on what the classical tradition meant. Still, the majority of artists – whether they were innovators or traditionalists – continued to insist that classicism had an essential role to play in their work. This course emphasizes that classicism is a living tradition, re-invented to meet the needs and interests of each new age.

DR KATHY MCLAUCHLAN

Dr Kathy McLauchlan is art historian specialising in French painting and lecturer with the Arts Society, Morley College and Oxford University.

*Dish depicting the Rape of Helen, painted by Nicola da Urbino, Italy, about 1535-38. C.2246-1910*
COURSE PROGRAMME

19 April
Introduction: Recovering Antiquity
10.30  The Recovery of Myth Paula Nuttall
12.00  Nero's Golden Palace David Bellingham
14.00  The Grotesque Style David Bellingham
15.30  Spotlight Session: Botticelli’s Venus and Mars David Bellingham

26 April
Classicism in the North
10.30  The Classical World in German Renaissance Art Albert Godetzky
12.00  French Olympus Kathy McLauchlan
14.00  Classical Mythology in Dutch & Flemish Art Clare Ford-Wille
15.30  Spotlight Session: Lafreri’s Architecture and Ornament Volume Liz Miller

5 May
Art & the Antique
10.30  Unearthing Art: The Rediscovery of Ancient Sculpture Clare Hornsby
12.00  16th-Century Sculpture and the Antique Clare Ford-Wille
14.00  Michelangelo and the Nude Kevin Childs
15.30  Spotlight Session: Renaissance Sculpture at the V&A Michaela Zoschg

10 May
Emulating the Antique
10.30  The Classical Ideal in High Renaissance Painting Susan Bracken
12.00  Teaching at the Academy Kathy McLauchlan
14.00  Drawing and the Study of Anatomy Clare Ford-Wille
15.30  Spotlight Session: Raphael Cartoons Susan Bracken

17 May
16th-Century Venice
10.30  Architecture in Renaissance Venice Caroline Knight
12.00  Palladio & his Legacy Caroline Knight
14.00  Classical Beauty in Venetian Art Paula Nuttall
15.30  Spotlight Session: The Inspiration of Ancient Glass Justine Hopkins

24 May
Legacy in Rome
10.30  The Carracci Susan Bracken
12.00  Rome: Monumental City Antonio Cartolano
14.00  The French in Rome Kathy McLauchlan
15.30  Spotlight Session: Inigo Jones & Architecture Caroline Knight

7 June
Pompeii and Herculaneum
10.30  79AD Steve Kershaw
12.00  Rediscovery Steve Kershaw
14.00  Pathetic Spectacle, Awful Warning: The Afterlife of Pompeii’s Destruction Justine Hopkins
15.30  Spotlight Session: Pompeian Interior David Bellingham

14 June
Artists & Collectors in 18th-Century Rome
10.30  Tourism, Dealing and the Market in 18th Century Rome Clare Hornsby
12.00  Cult of Ruins David Bellingham
14.00  A New Classicism Kathy McLauchlan
15.30  Spotlight Session: Micromosaics from the Gilbert Collection Jessica Eddie
21 June Sculpting the Ideal
10.30 Canova’s Living Classicism Justine Hopkins
12.00 Elgin, the Marbles and the British Museum David Bellingham
14.00 Colouring the Antique Kathy McLauchlan
15.30 Spotlight Session: Archaeology, the Classics, and the Romantic Gaze Neil Faulkner

28 June France and the Legacy of Antiquity
10.30 David and the True Style Kathy McLauchlan
12.00 Imperial Capital Clare Ford-Wille
14.00 Faces of the Antique in French Art Kathy McLauchlan
15.30 Spotlight Session: Bathing Classical Style Stephen Clews

5 July Imagining Rome
10.30 Rising, Declining, Falling: Rome and the Romantic Vision Justine Hopkins
12.00 The Past Revived: Victorian Visions of Rome Justine Hopkins
14.00 “How can man die better?” History, Legend and the Making of ‘Romanitas’ Justine Hopkins
15.30 Spotlight Session: Quiz and Q&A Kathy McLauchlan

12 July Classicism for a New Age
10.30 A Living Tradition Kathy McLauchlan
12.00 Modern Archaic Antonio Cartolano
14.00 Nation, Empire, Master-Race: a critical look at the modern Olympics from 1896 to 1936 Neil Faulkner
15.30 Spotlight Session: ‘And then we saw the Daughters of the Minotaur’: Classic Myths and Modern Artists Justine Hopkins

Note: this programme is subject to change.

V&A ACADEMY ONLINE

V&A Academy art history courses offer students sustained and rigorous engagement with key subject areas from the history of art. Drawing heavily on the V&A’s outstanding collections and bringing together world-leading experts, they are designed to give you a thorough overview, but also to spark your imagination and prepare you for further study.

Each week of this online course consists of three hour-long lectures, plus an hour of additional content. Lectures will be delivered live at the times below via Microsoft Teams, or available to view later in your own time. Additional content may take the form of a curator talk, a guest lecture, an extended Q&A with your Course Director or an object spotlight session.

Click here to view a full list of frequently asked questions about our courses.