Syllabus: ARTH 188A

San José State University
Department of Art and Art History

ARTH 188A Northern Renaissance Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries, Section 1
Fall Semester 2018

Course and Contact Information

Instructor: Professor Anne Simonson
Office Location: Art Building 123
Telephone: (408) 924-4796 (email preferred—please do not leave phone message)
Email: anne.simonson@sjsu.edu
Office Hours: MW 10:15-11 and T afternoons by appointment
Class Days/Time: MW 9-10:15
Classroom: Art 110
Prerequisites: ARTH 70B recommended
Units: 3

Additional Contact Information

* E-mail is the best method of contact.
* Please allow 48-hours for an e-mail response.
* Emergency: 911
* Individuals with disabilities may contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC), Administrative Building 110, 408/924-6000, for a variety of formats such as Braille, large print, sign interpreters, assistive listening devices, audio tape and accommodations for physical accessibility.

Course Format: lecture/discussion

Email and Course Materials

Course materials such as syllabus, handouts, notes, assignment instructions, etc. will be emailed to you and then made available on the Course Website and/or on Canvas. You are responsible for regularly checking your email to obtain course materials and to learn of any updates.

Course Description

ARTH 188A is focused on visual arts from about 1375 to 1500 in the areas that are today Belgium and the Netherlands and France, with side trips to other areas such as modern Germany/Austria and Spain that are considered “northern” (meaning: north of the Alps, north of the Italian peninsula). Artists whose work we will consider include the Limbourg Brothers, Jan van Eyck, Rogier van der Weyden, Hugo van der Goes, Hans Memling. Northern Renaissance artists illuminated manuscripts, “invented” oil painting, and began to make woodcuts and engravings; they also worked in stone, wood, and metal.
Although relatively little of their work remains to us, the artists we know primarily as painters also worked as designers of sculpture, tapestries, metalwork, furniture, and theatrical productions, so we will want to think about surviving objects in terms of this more comprehensive visual culture.

Course Goals
The course is intended as an introduction to the vibrant visual culture of the late 14th century and the 15th century, to the inventions and imagination of an era of unmatched craftsmanship and rapid cultural change. For examples of the latter: the invention of printing mid-century meant that more books were produced between 1450 and 1500 than had been produced in the previous 1500 years; a fascination with geography and natural sciences led to discovery of the New World in 1492; the increasingly personal explorations of traditional Christianity led to the Protestant Reformation soon afterwards. The Burgundian Netherlands, the wealthiest and most densely populated area of Europe in the 15thC, was at the center of these developments and its arts and artists highly prized and extraordinarily influential in their own time and afterwards.

The artists to be studied may mostly be unfamiliar to you, and it’s difficult to reconstruct a visual world where (as is not the case for the Italian Renaissance) only about 10% of the visual culture and/or the written archive has survived the terrible destruction brought about during the Reformation, the French Revolution, and two world wars. Thus the course is intended as an exploration of unfamiliar material and of the scholarly tools and types of interpretations that can help unlock it for us.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)

Course Skill Learning Outcomes
Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

CLO1 - discuss artwork made in this period, including probable reasons for its production and probable explanations of its use;

CLO2 - understand some of the current research questions in northern renaissance art history and evaluate the effectiveness of contemporary art historical interpretation of certain key works;

CLO3 - develop and demonstrate upper-division level skills in research, analysis, and writing.

Course Content Learning Outcomes
Upon successful completion of this course, students will have mastered:

CLO4 - an understanding of the personal styles (and mediums and choice of subject matter) of major artists of the late 14th and 15th centuries—that can be identified and described;

CLO5 - an understanding of the social/historical contexts for art/design production in this period—that can be explained simply and clearly;

CLO6 - an understanding of the work of 15thC painters (materials, techniques, workshop organization, artistic processes) and also important artistic issues of the period (such as the choice of subject matter, the status of the artist)—that can be explained simply and clearly;
Required Texts/Readings

Required Readings

1. James SNYDER, *Northern Renaissance Art, 2nd EDITION* (revised by Larry Silver and Henry Luttikhuizen), 2005. Snyder’s book is the standard textbook for classes in the Northern Renaissance and covers 14th-16thC and the Low Countries, Germany, and France (material covered in ARTH 188A + 188B). The focus is on painting and prints. Regular reading assignments are given in the Snyder text, and the image selection is excellent. Pertinent sections of this book are REQUIRED reading for the class. We will not, however, use the entire book but, rather, a selection of pages from the first half of the text. The SNYDER book is available in King Library course reserves: see [https://reserves.calstate.edu/sanjose/](https://reserves.calstate.edu/sanjose/) and ARTH 188A. You can also rent or purchase copies from amazon.com or other sources.

2. Pertinent entries in *Oxford Art Online* (online database available through King Library at [https://libguides.sjsu.edu/az.php?a=oxfordartdatabase](https://libguides.sjsu.edu/az.php?a=oxfordartdatabase)) and then look for Oxford Art Online. You will need to set up a library password to access this source from off campus. OAO is useful for looking up information on individual artists, techniques, locations, etc. and provides scholarly bibliographies with each entry.

3. Articles to be provided via email and/or on the course webpage.

Exhibition at the Legion of Honor, San Francisco (on your own—before September 30)
The Truth and Beauty exhibition includes paintings by Jan van Eyck and Hans Memling that have never before travelled to the west coast.

Recommended Reading

1. Craig HARBISON, *The Mirror of the Artist*, 2003. This is a thematic introduction to the world of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century northern painters.

2. Susie NASH, *Northern Renaissance Art*, 2009. This book is focused on the 4thC and the 15thC and primarily on work made in France, the Low Countries, and Spain and deals with issues of production and reception. Nash addresses manuscripts, tapestries, sculpted altarpieces, and metalwork as well as paintings.

3. Bernhard RIDDERBOS, Anne VAN BUREN, and Henk VAN VEEN (editors), *Early Netherlandish Paintings: Rediscovery, Reception, and Research*, 2005. This is an excellent introduction to current research approaches.


Additional Recommended Reading (“classic” studies of more than one Northern Renaissance artist):
- Michael BAXANDALL, *The Limewood Sculptors of Renaissance Germany*, 1987
- Shirley Neilsen BLUM, *Early Netherlandish Triptychs*, 1969
- Julien CHAPUIS (editor), *Invention: Northern Renaissance Studies in Honor of Molly Fairies*, 2008
- Cleveland Museum of Art, *Art from the Court of Burgundy: 1364-1419*, 2005
- Charles CUTTLER, *Northern Painting from Pucelle to Bruegel*, 1968
- Detroit Institute of Arts, *Flanders in the Fifteenth Century: Art and Civilization* (1960 exhibition)
Syllabus: ARTH 188A

- Max J. FRIEDLAENDER, Early Netherlandish Painting (14 volumes), in English translation, 1969
- *Les Primitifs flamands* (multi-volume, several series of books published by the Centre national de recherches ‘Primitifs flamands’ in Brussels)
- Arthur HIND, *An Introduction to a History of Woodcut* (Dover paperback reprint of 1935 edition)
- Arthur HIND, *A History of Engraving and Etching* (Dover paperback)
- Johan HUIZINGA, *The Waning of the Middle Ages*, 1924 (later editions in paperback)
- Susan Frances JONES, *Van Eyck to Gossaert: towards a Northern Renaissance*, National Gallery, Washington, D.C., 2011
- Millard MEISS, *French Painting at the Time of Jean de Berry* (several volumes on manuscripts--with subtitles specifying the Limburg Brothers, the Boucicaut Master, etc.), 1969 and later
- Emile MÂLE, *L’Art religieux en France à la fin du moyen age*, 1931
- Susan MARTI, Till-Holger BORCHERT, and Gabrielle KECK (editors), *Splendor of the Burgundian Court: Charles the Bold (1433-1477)*, 2008
- Wolfgang STECHOW, *Northern Renaissance Art (Sources and Documents series)*, 1969

Optional materials and supplementary learning materials, such as web resources and writing guides will be available through the Canvas course website.

**Course Web Materials include**

- ARTH Course materials *may* be posted on-line on the SJSU Canvas site for the course at:  
  [https://sjsu.instructure.com](https://sjsu.instructure.com). Your Username would be your 9-digit SJSU ID number, and your password would be your SJSU-One account password.
- ARTH Course Website. Available at [http://arth.sjsu.edu/](http://arth.sjsu.edu/), select Course Web Pages. Access through User: and Password: (login instructions to be announced in class).
- Items emailed directly to you at the email account used for your SJSU-One account

**Library Liaison**

Peggy Cabrera: [https://libguides.sjsu.edu/prf.php?account_id=157124](https://libguides.sjsu.edu/prf.php?account_id=157124)  
Email: peggy.cabrera@sjsu.edu

King Library 4th Floor  
Phone: (408) 808-2034

Art and Art History Resources: [https://libguides.sjsu.edu/Art](https://libguides.sjsu.edu/Art)

**Course Requirements and Assignments**

The [University Policy S16-9](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf), Course Syllabi (http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf) requires the following language to be included in the syllabus:

“Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally three hours per unit per week) for instruction, preparation/studying, or course related activities, including but not limited to internships, labs, and clinical practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.”
Final Examination or Evaluation

Wednesday, December 11 at 8:30 am; the exam is scheduled for 7:15-9:30, but this will be a short image i.d. exam and the due date for take-home final exam essays.

Grading Information

Assignment Format and Submission: The course requires familiarity with specific examples of Northern Renaissance Art and with the characteristics that make them typical for their time. Students should be prepared to memorize a limited number of items (artist/title/date), to apply what they know about artists’ personal styles and typical subject matter to unfamiliar problems, and to write both short-answer and essay responses that demonstrate an understanding of artistic production, processes and contexts of the period and require written analysis of artworks and their interpretation.

Please remember: Course Skill Learning Outcomes

CLO1 - discuss artwork made in this period, including probable reasons for its production and probable explanations of its use;

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Please remember: Course Content Learning Outcomes

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CLO6 - an understanding of the work of 15thC painters (materials, techniques, workshop organization, artistic processes) and also important artistic issues of the period (such as the choice of subject matter, the status of the artist)—that can be explained simply and clearly.

Determination of Grades

- Grades will be based on 3 short in-class exams and longer take-home assignments; additionally, participation in class discussions and familiarity with the class material (based on readings and previous lecture/discussion sessions) will be evaluated via brief pop-up quizzes.
- No extra credit is available; the take-home essay assignment format of the course should provide the needed flexibility.
- Please see below for the percentage weight assigned to various class assignments.
- Late assignments will only be accepted under unusual, extenuating, or emergency circumstances—and by prior arrangement with the instructor; the grade will be dropped by one letter grade for each week that an assignment is late.

Relative weight of course requirements:

1) In-class tests (20%)
2) Take-home essays (50%)
3) Paper(s?) analyzing scholarly articles (20%)
4) Class Participation (10%)

**Numeric grade equivalents:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>93% and above</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>92% - 90%</td>
<td>A-</td>
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<tr>
<td>89% - 88%</td>
<td>B+</td>
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<tr>
<td>87% - 83%</td>
<td>B</td>
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<tr>
<td>82% - 80%</td>
<td>B-</td>
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<tr>
<td>79% - 78%</td>
<td>C+</td>
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<tr>
<td>77% - 73%</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>72% - 70%</td>
<td>C-</td>
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<tr>
<td>69% - 68%</td>
<td>D+</td>
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<tr>
<td>67% - 63%</td>
<td>D</td>
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<tr>
<td>62% - 60%</td>
<td>D-</td>
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<tr>
<td>below 60%</td>
<td>F</td>
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**Please note:** Except in cases of documented emergencies, incomplete grades are not given in this course.

“All students have the right, within a reasonable time, to know their academic scores, to review their grade-dependent work, and to be provided with explanations for the determination of their course grades.” See University Policy F13-1 at [http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F13-1.pdf](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F13-1.pdf) for more details.

**Additional Note:**

This syllabus is subject to change, in the event of unforeseen circumstances, or in the case that changes will significantly enhance the quality of the course. Students will collectively have the opportunity to shape the ways in which the course unfolds.

**Department Advising**

For information about majors and minors in Art & Art History, for change of major/minor forms and a list of advisors: [http://www.sjsu.edu/art/](http://www.sjsu.edu/art/) or the Art & Art History department office in ART 116, 408-924-4320, art@sjsu.edu

**Classroom Protocol**

Students are expected to be punctual for class and actively engaged during all class meetings. Cell phones, smart phones, or other devices that detract from full attention should turned off or silenced.

**University Policies**

Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc. will be available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs’ Syllabus Information web page at [http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/).”
### TENTATIVE Course Schedule

**ARTH 188A Northern Renaissance Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries**

**Fall Semester 2018**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>M 8/27, W/8/29</td>
<td><strong>READING:</strong> SNYDER ch 2, 16-43; <em>Oxford Art Online</em> entries for techniques (= reading for this week’s topics)&lt;br&gt;The Valois Courts &amp; court culture—late 14thC (1300s)&lt;br&gt;French kings Charles V and Charles VI in Paris and their brothers: the (Valois dynasty) Dukes of Anjou, Berry, Burgundy&lt;br&gt;Visual culture, luxury arts: metalwork, illuminated manuscripts, tapestries</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>M 9/3, W 9/5</td>
<td>HOLIDAY&lt;br&gt;The Duke of Berry and the Limbourg Brothers (manuscripts)—early 15thC&lt;br&gt;<em>The Très riches heures du Duc de Berri</em></td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>M 9/10, W 9/12</td>
<td>The Duke of Burgundy (Philip the Bold)—late 14thC—patronage, including the Chartreuse de Champmol&lt;br&gt;Stone sculpture by Claus Sluter (and workshop); woodcarving/painting by Jacques de Baerze, Melchior Broederlam, and others; the “total work of art”</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>M 9/17, W 9/17</td>
<td><strong>EXHIBITION (including van Eyck) at the Legion of Honor closes 9/30</strong>&lt;br&gt;The Dukes of Burgundy and the Burgundian Netherlands&lt;br&gt;(Dukes John the Fearless, ruled 1394-1419; Philip the Good, ruled 1419-1464)&lt;br&gt;<em>The Ghent Altarpiece</em>, 1432 (Hubert and Jan VAN EYCK)</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>M 9/24, W 9/26</td>
<td><strong>READING:</strong> SNYDER ch 5, 86-109&lt;br&gt;Jan van Eyck—artist at the court of Duke Philip the Good of Burgundy</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>M 10/1, W 10/3</td>
<td>Jan van Eyck (1430s-40s)</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>M 10/8, W 10/10</td>
<td><strong>READING:</strong> SNYDER ch 6, 110-137&lt;br&gt;Robert Campin (and pupils—including), Rogier van der Weyden (1420s-60s)&lt;br&gt;Art for the cities of Tournai and Brussels (and for private patrons)</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>M 10/15</td>
<td>Rogier van der Weyden</td>
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<td>Date</td>
<td>Reading</td>
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<tr>
<td>W 10/17</td>
<td><strong>READING: SNYDER and TBA</strong></td>
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<td>M 10/22</td>
<td>1430s-60s Court &amp; City marketplaces:</td>
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<tr>
<td>W 10/24</td>
<td>Manuscripts, printing in the 1450s, woodcuts and engravings</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td><strong>READING: SNYDER, 12-15, 154-157, 223-224, 248-265, 270-274, Oxford Art Online entries for techniques and locations, and TBA</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>M 10/29</td>
<td>Prints, metal, wood, wool</td>
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<td>W 10/31</td>
<td>(in the Burgundian Netherlands, Holy Roman Empire = Germany/Austria)</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td><strong>READING: SNYDER ch 7, 137-154</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>M 11/5</td>
<td>Dieric Bouts, Petrus Christus (“2nd generation” painters)—mid 15thC</td>
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<tr>
<td>W 11/7</td>
<td><strong>READING: SNYDER, 73-86, 215-242, Oxford Art Online entries for techniques and locations and TBA</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>M 11/12</td>
<td>HOLIDAY</td>
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<tr>
<td>W 11/14</td>
<td>Spain, France, Germany (Holy Roman Empire)—politics and international trade</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td><strong>READING: SNYDER, 159-163 and TBA</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>M 11/19</td>
<td>Italy and the North</td>
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<td>W 11/21</td>
<td>HOLIDAY</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td><strong>READING: SNYDER ch 8, 158-174</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>M 11/26</td>
<td>Hugo van der Goes</td>
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<tr>
<td>W 11/28</td>
<td><strong>READING: SNYDER ch 10, 182-192</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>M 12/3</td>
<td>Hans Memling</td>
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<tr>
<td>W 12/5</td>
<td><strong>READING: SNYDER ch 9, 175-184</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>M 12/10</td>
<td>Bruges and Antwerp, and the northern Netherlands in the 1470s-1490s (after the deaths of Duke Charles the Bold, 1477, and his daughter Mary of Burgundy—who married Maximilian Habsburg in 1477 but died in 1482)</td>
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<tr>
<td>W 12/12 final</td>
<td>Geertgen tot Sint Jans, Gerard David, Hieronymus Bosch</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td><strong>Final Exam</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>W 12/10</td>
<td>8:30 am (not 7:15, as scheduled) to 9:30</td>
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