

## ARTH 504/7435: Studies in Renaissance Art

### Faking It: An Intellectual History of Forgery from Antiquity to AI

Fall 2023 ▪ Thursdays 6-7:40, In-person ▪ Klapper 174

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*“He who knows a thousand works of art, knows a thousand frauds.”*

Horace

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** Fakes have been created, acquired, admired, and exposed for centuries. These objects of deception, whose production can be traced at least to the Phoenicians, have confounded collectors for millennia and today are ubiquitous on eBay. This seminar explores the complex role forgeries and the notion of authenticity play in our interpretation and understanding of art. The course will consider a series of intensive case studies, from the broadest possible historical range (antiquity through 2023), to explore the cultural, economic, and artistic category of fakes, forgeries, and authentic art works.

Course requirements include readings, discussions, two response papers, and an individual research project culminating in a final presentation and 15-page paper.

**COURSE LEARNING GOALS:** In this course, students will:

- Develop a nuanced understanding of art forgery and its complex issues.
- Examine artwork both as aesthetic object and as historical artifact by discussing the social, political, and religious contexts within which a work was made.
- Analyze and critique how concepts about art, artists, and art-making from the past serve as a foundation for ideas about art today.
- Engage with complex texts, critical ideas, and a diverse range of topics across disciplines and learn to use these to inform transdisciplinary analyses of problems and solutions.

#### Course Resources

There is no required textbook for this course. If you would like additional background reading, I am happy to recommend sources.

**Milanote:** Our class site is available on Milanote. Each week you should expect to find: readings, discussion prompts and notes, main images, etc. Access it here --

<https://app.milanote.com/1QAice1gkbVB1X?p=QQ1x4q8huXf>

**Blackboard:** Blackboard will be used to submit assignments and receive feedback in a private manner.

**Email:** In case of a change in class plans (snow days, Covid closure, etc.), I must have a working email address to reach you. I rely on CUNYFirst lists. If you know that your address is outdated, tell me where to reach you.

#### Course Requirements

##### **Grade Breakdown:**

Responses = 10% each (20%)

Discussion Leader = 15%

Proposal and Annotated Bibliography = 15%

Presentation = 20%

Research Paper = 30%

**Attendance:** Attendance is essential. Attendance is not a separate part of the grade, but semester after semester, I have seen that attendance corresponds to the final grade.

**Required Readings:** All readings are to be completed before class. The bulk of our class meetings will be discussion of the readings. If anyone would like additional optional readings, I am very happy to provide them.

**Response Papers (10% each, total of 20%):** There are two reading responses at the beginning of the semester to get your thinking and writing started in preparation for the research paper.

**Discussion Leader (15%):** Once during the semester, working with a partner, you will lead the class discussion of the reading. Students should propose discussion questions, gather relevant images, and guide the in-class discussion.

**Proposal and Annotated Bibliography (15%):** The proposal is due before our individual meeting to begin to define your research topic. After our meeting, you will gather and annotate sources as a start to the research process.

**Presentation (20%):** Presentation based on your research and in preparation for the final version of your research paper. You can think of this as a “first draft” of your paper. Although this presentation will be in oral format, on the date of your presentation, please submit the following written documents: 1) your bibliography 2) detailed outline of your presentation containing the key ideas/dilemmas/issues (approx. 2-4 pages).

### **Research Paper (30%)**

A 15-page research paper on a previously approved topic of your choice. Detailed instructions to follow.

## **Course Policies**

### **Accommodations**

Students with documented disabilities are entitled to accommodations to support their learning. Please visit the Office of Special Services website to learn more, and inform me of your needs/accommodations as soon as possible. <https://www.qc.cuny.edu/studentlife/services/specialserv/Pages/default.aspx>

### **Academic Integrity**

The work you submit in this course should always be your own. Instances of plagiarism (or other forms of academic dishonesty) will adversely affect your grade, and you will not be allowed to resubmit work that has been dishonestly produced or presented. If you are uncertain about what constitutes plagiarism (or academic dishonesty more broadly), please review CUNY’s policies on academic integrity.

<https://www.cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/legal-affairs/policies-procedures/academic-integrity-policy/>

### **Use of Student Work**

All programs in New York State undergo periodic reviews by accreditation agencies. For these purposes, samples of student work are occasionally made available to those professionals conducting the review. Anonymity is assured under these circumstances. If you do not wish to have your work made available for these purposes, please let the professor know before the start of the second class. Thank you for your cooperation.

## Class Schedule

### 8/31 Introduction

- Rosemary Hill, "'Art and Artifice' At the Courtauld," *London Review of Books*, Vol. 45, No. 17, 9/7/2023. <https://www.lrb.co.uk/the-paper/v45/n17/rosemary-hill/at-the-courtauld>

### 9/7 Defining "Fake" / Defining "Art" -- Across Time and Culture

- Ross Bowden, "What Is Wrong with an Art Forgery?: An Anthropological Perspective," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, Vol. 57(3) (Summer, 1999), pp. 333- 343.
- Carolyn Dean, "The Trouble with (the Term) Art," *Art Journal*, Vol. 65 (2) (2006), 24-33.

RESPONSE PAPER #1: What is a Fake? In a 2-page response to the readings and discussion this week, write a thorough and thoughtful definition of "fake." Explain your definition, using the arguments in the readings. Be sure to explain any complimentary terms, such as "art" "copy" etc. as well.

**\*\*Due 9/21, in class.**

### 9/14 Antiquity: Collectors, Forgers, Copyists

GUEST SPEAKER, Dr. Maya Muratov, Provenance researcher at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Archaeologist, Associate Professor at Adelphi University.

- Anne Anguissola. "Retaining the Function: Sacred Copies in Greek and Roman Art." *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics* 51 (2007): 98–107.
- J. Spier, "Blinded with Science: the abuse of science in the detection of false antiquities" *Burlington Magazine* (Sept 1990), 623-631.
- Kenneth D.S. Lapatin, "Snake Goddesses, Fake Goddesses." *Archaeology*, vol. 54, no. 1, 2001, pp. 33–36.

### 9/21 The Cult of Art / The Cult of the Artist

- Alexander Nagel, "Beyond the Cult of Art," *Brooklyn Rail*, July 2014, pp. 26-27.
- Nagel, Alexander. "Authorship and Image-Making in the Monument to Giotto in Florence Cathedral." *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics*, no. 53/54, 2008, pp. 143–51.

### 9/28 Renaissance Case Studies: Leonardo and Michelangelo

- Catterson, Lynn. "Michelangelo's 'Laocoön?'" *Artibus et Historiae*, vol. 26, no. 52, 2005, pp. 29–56.
- David Grann, "The Mark of a Masterpiece," *The New Yorker*, 7/12/201 and the response published in the 8/2/2010 issue.

Optional:

- *Nova: Mystery of a Masterpiece*. David Murdock, PBS, 2012. (52 minutes)

RESPONSE PAPER #2: Revisit your definition of a fake from a few weeks ago. Extend your definition with an additional 2 pages, accounting for historical and contextual changes, examined in the readings from Weeks 3-6.

**\*\*Due 10/5, in class.**

### 10/5 Forging New Arts: Printing, Photography, New Media

- Jonathon Keats, "Forging a New Art," in *Forged: Why Fakes are the Great Art of Our Age*, Oxford University Press, 2013, pp. 157-77.

Optional:

- Winston Cho, “AI-Created Art Isn’t Copyrightable, Judge Says in Ruling That Could Give Hollywood Studios Pause,” *Hollywood Reporter*, 8/18/2023.
- Peter J. Karol, Albrecht Dürer’s Enforcement Actions: A Trademark Origin Story, 25 *Vanderbilt Journal of Entertainment and Technology Law* 421 (2023).

**\*\*Paper Topic Proposal Due, Tuesday 10/10**

10/12 No Class – Meet with me individually (on Zoom) to discuss your paper topic.

10/19 Forging History: Restoration, Revivals, and Lothar Malskat

- Jonathon Keats, “What is Belief? Lothar Malskat 1913-88,” in *Forged: Why Fakes are the Great Art of Our Age*, Oxford University Press, 2013, pp. 31-49.
- Ramage, Nancy H. “Restorer and Collector: Notes on Eighteenth-Century Recreations of Roman Statues.” *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome. Supplementary Volumes*, vol. 1, 2002, pp. 61–77.

10/26 Forging the “Other”: Pre-Columbian Fakes

- Pasztory, Esther. “Truth in Forgery.” *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics*, no. 42, 2002, pp. 159–65.
- Walsh, Jane MacLaren. “Legend of the Crystal Skulls.” *Archaeology*, vol. 61, no. 3, Archaeological Institute of America, 2008, pp. 36–41.
- Stanish, Charles. “Forging Ahead.” *Archaeology*, vol. 62, no. 3, 2009, 58-60, 65-66.

**\*\*Annotated Bibliography Due 10/26**

11/2 Scientific Detection of Forgeries: Han van Meegren, Eric Hebborn, Elmyr de Hory

- Noah Charney, “Revenge” in *The Art of Forgery*, Phaidon, 2015, pp. 93-120 (focus on pp. 100-108).
- Selections from Eric Hebborn, *The Art Forger's Handbook*, Overlook Press, 2004.
- Jones Mark et al., “The Scientific Detection of Fakes and Forgeries,” in *Fake? : The Art of Deception*. University of California Press 1990, Chapter 9.

Optional:

- *F for Fake*. Dir. Orson Welles. Perf. Orson Welles, Oja Kodar, François Reichenbach. Janus Films, 1973. (88 minutes)

11/9 Student Presentations (4)

11/16 Student Presentations (5)

11/23 Thanksgiving. No Class.

11/30 Student Presentations (5)

12/7 Conclusion / Paper Peer-Review in-class (bring at least 5-6 pages of your paper to class)

### **Possible Topics for Research Projects**

This list is *not* exhaustive. If you have an idea, let's talk!

(in rough chronological order; topics in bold are especially encouraged)

1. Dr. Beringer's Lying Stones (1725) – fake fossils
2. **"One of the most enchanting works of art in existence": The Snake Goddess in Boston**
3. The Lady from Elche: A Fraud or Spanish National Symbol?
4. **King Priam's Treasure: An Archaeological Fraud (Arthur Evans)**
5. **Song Dynasty master Su Shi and the problem of forgery in Chinese painting**
6. The Voynich Manuscript: Still a Mystery?
7. Perry T. Rathbone and the Boston Raphael
8. Albrecht Durer versus Marc Antonio Raimondi, the beginnings of copyright
9. Holbein's '2 Madonnas' and their exhibition in 1871
10. Rembrandt/Not Rembrandt (choose 2-3 examples to investigate)
11. Plaster casts and the Grand Tour
12. Alceo Dossena (1878-1937): Forger or Misunderstood Artist? (medieval/Ren sculpture)
13. Thomas Keating (1917-1984): Forger of Degas, Renoir
14. *Códice Maya de México – authenticating the oldest surviving book of the Americas*
15. Photo Forgeries (Case-study: Occult Photography and the story of William H. Mumler)
16. Andy Warhol and Damien Hirst – issues of authorship and authenticity
17. "Paintings worth burning" – the Unfortunate Story of a Fake Chagall
18. Giacometti and the Forgeries
19. **Jackson Pollock in the Attic?**
20. Ai WeiWei – The Fake Case (documentary, exhibit, and context)
21. AI and the detection of fakes / authentication of artworks (very current, will need more focus)

## **Annotated Bibliography and Outline**

**Due 10/26**

Annotated Bibliography: informed list of sources.

Think of the annotated bibliography as a first draft of the literature review portion of your paper. This is where you tell the reader about relevant research, introducing your sources.

What it includes —

- **First list the source, with complete citation information.**

You are free to use any citation style you prefer, but use it consistently. I prefer MLA.

Link to citation guide:

[https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research\\_and\\_citation/mla\\_style/mla\\_formatting\\_and\\_style\\_guide/mla\\_formatting\\_and\\_style\\_guide.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_formatting_and_style_guide/mla_formatting_and_style_guide.html)

- **Then write a paragraph explaining** (2-3 sentences each):

- a brief summary of the source (What is the main idea?)
- an evaluation of why it is trustworthy (What is the main evidence? How does the author evaluate evidence?)
- how does the source apply to your project?

You should list 5 sources. Some projects will include newspaper articles, etc. but the majority of your sources should be from scholarly journals or books.

## Outline

The outline is the roadmap for your presentation and paper. It will shift as you complete your research and writing, but the main components should be set from the beginning.

Your outline should include the beginnings of each part below. Aim for 1-2 paragraphs for each part. Think of this as a first draft for your ideas. For the outline, these sections can be bullet points, or imperfect sentences — but the more work you do here, the stronger your ideas will be in the end. (Writing and thinking are not separate processes.)

### Introduction, 1-2 paragraphs

- Do not start with a list of leading questions.
- Do not start with ideas about *all* art or *all* anything. Be specific from the opening.
- State your main idea in 2-3 sentences. Situate your reader in time and space (when / where is your topic?)
- Describe how it relates to bigger questions of the class.
- Provide a sentence-by-sentence map of the rest of your paper. A reader should be able to understand the main ideas and evidence of your paper from your Introduction.

### Main sections, you will have 3-5

In the outline, each section should be a paragraph in length. (In the paper, these sections will be about 2-3 pages each.) Each section will explore a main idea, a single object or group of objects.

- Describe what each section will be about and how it relates to your main idea. These sentences are the topic sentences for the section.
- Indicate which sources will be important for each section. You may have an opening “literature review” section, where you discuss the state of research, or you may incorporate your sources into sections organized around an idea or topic. Both are fine, but indicate your approach.
- Identify the images you will be discussing and include the caption information here. (Artist, title, date, size, location)

### Conclusion, 1-2 paragraphs

- To start your conclusion, take the topic sentences from the paragraphs in your main sections. (If you don't have strong topic sentences, go back and add them.)
- Put the topic sentences into a new document as if they are one continuous paragraph.
- Read your paragraph and ask yourself whether your ideas develop logically. Does one point flow into another? Does each section provide support for the main idea and for the following ideas?
- Rewrite your original sentences as a conclusion, explaining how your ideas build to your main point.

## Research Presentation

### General Points:

The presentation should be 15-20 minutes long, including 5 (or so) minutes of discussion. Practice, so that you know how much material you've got. Don't make us sit through the 'first draft' of your work. Practice to refine your ideas and their presentation.

Speak in an understandable, organized way. (This looks different for different people.) Some will read sections of their paper, but make an effort to be engaging. Others will speak more conversationally, but make an effort to present thoughtful, complete ideas.

You should include images from your research, and explain them clearly.

If you include text in your slides, opt for a 24-point (or larger) font so that it will be legible. Avoid reading long sections of text from your slides.

If you include direct quotations or paraphrased "chunks" from your sources, list those sources in a slide along with the citation information.

**\*\*Although it is not an official part of the grade, everyone should help to create a supportive environment for the presenter. Listen to them. Engage with their questions... If you see a connection to your topic, tell us about that connection in the discussion.**

### Format:

Your presentation should mostly follow the order of your outline.

- Introduction: 'tell us what you are going to tell us.'
  - Give an overview of your organization ("This presentation will include 3 parts, all addressing the theme of ...")
  - Open with an engaging image that introduces your main research question.
    - Tip: This is the easiest way to write an Intro that is specific and visual. Think about how museum exhibitions open with a 'star image' to draw people in and wall text that explains why the image is important.
- Supporting sections. Depending on your outline, you will have 2-3 supporting sections. This is where you present your 'evidence.' Include images, cite sources... Be sure to tie your supporting sections to your main theme.
- Conclusion: Your conclusion should make a connection between your topic and one of the main ideas of the class. Look over each week so far, and ask yourself where your topic 'fits.' How can you connect the discussion from the class to your topic?
  - End your presentation with 1-2 discussion questions. These questions should reach beyond: 'tell me what you think' or similar.

Please share your presentation slides with me before the class when you are presenting. You can upload your presentation to Milanote, save it as a PDF and email it... Let's iron out the tech details ahead of time.

## Research Paper Guidelines

- Due 12/14. Submit it by email as a PDF, or discuss with me.
- 15 pages maximum / 10 minimum, double-spaced. Use a standard font, 12 pt, 1-inch margins...
- You should list at least 5 sources. Some projects will include newspaper articles, etc. but the majority of your sources should be from scholarly journals or books.
- Include footnotes and a bibliography, carefully formatted according to your preferred style.
  - I recommend MLA. See the guide here --  
[https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research\\_and\\_citation/mla\\_style/mla\\_formatting\\_and\\_style\\_guide/mla\\_formatting\\_and\\_style\\_guide.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_formatting_and_style_guide/mla_formatting_and_style_guide.html)
- Include images that you discuss in depth. You can insert them into the text or add them at the end. Number them so that you can reference them in the text easily. (Figure 1, Figure 2...)
- Review the guidelines from the outline handout (pasted below) to be sure your paper is clear and organized.
- Edit. Read your paper, rewriting and reorganizing as necessary.
- Proofread. At the final stages, check for small errors in grammar and citations.

I recommend that you trade papers with a fellow student, since they will also know the paper requirements. If you'd like me to make to facilitate peer-editing, let me know.

### From the Outline Assignment

#### Introduction, 1-2 paragraphs

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- State your main idea in 2-3 sentences. Situate your reader in time and space (when / where is your topic?)
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- Identify the images you will be discussing and include the caption information here. (Artist, title, date, size, location)

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- Rewrite your original sentences as a conclusion, explaining how your ideas build to your main point.