Spring 2021
AEAH 4801.001: Art and Everyday Life in the Ancient Mediterranean World

Class Meetings: Group A: Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2:00-2:40
Group B: Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2:45-3:20

Instructor: Dr. Neville McFerrin

Contact Information: neville.mcferrin@unt.edu and Canvas Inbox. I will respond to all student emails within 24 hours on weekdays. If emailing please include the course number in the subject line.

Office Hours: On Zoom on Mondays from 2:00-4:00 PM and by appointment. All appointments must be scheduled at least 24 hours in advance.

Course Description: From mosaics to wall paintings, painted vases to terracotta sculptures, some of the most prevalent art of the ancient Mediterranean world was created, commissioned, and used not by emperors, archons, and pharaohs, but by everyday people. This course considers visual and material culture associated with ancient Egypt, Greece, Rome, Pompeii, and North Africa in the period between the sixteenth century BCE and the 6th century CE. While it considers themes ranging from mass production and artistic identity to gender identity and resistance in art, it focuses in particular upon domestic space, upon houses and the art and artifacts associated with them. In this context it explores a range of topics from the organization of interior space to household work to explore the ways in which individuals structured their daily lives. The course considers a variety of media and materials ranging from domestic architecture to wall painting, from mosaics to ceramics, re-contextualizing such visual and material culture by considering them, not as isolated art objects, but within their broader spatial, social, and cultural contexts, offering students the opportunity to compare household activities and the material and visual culture of everyday people across time and space.

Course Objectives:

Through the analysis of material, visual, and textual evidence students will:

- Explore the range of artistic and creative practices associated with non-elite art in the ancient Mediterranean.
- Identify major sites, artifacts, and objects
- Describe styles, periods, and media associated with domestic art and artifacts
- Contextualize artistic creations by time period, group, function, and identity intersection
• Integrate multiple theoretical and methodological approaches into discussion and writing
• Apply terms and identifications to the analysis of previously unseen works
• Generate original research projects or artistic works that expand upon the major themes and artworks presented in the course

Course Structure:

This course meets remotely. Before each synchronous meeting, students will watch an online lecture and read a set of assigned readings, after which they will receive a list of questions or image prompts for discussion. To facilitate discussion, students are sorted into two groups—Group A and Group B; students can locate their group assignment in the PEOPLE tab of the course Canvas website. Group A meets via Zoom on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2:00-2:40; Group B meets via Zoom on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2:45-3:20.

All additional readings, assignments, lectures, and discussion prompts will be uploaded to the course Canvas website. Weekly modules on the course Canvas site will provide links to relevant readings, assignments, prompts, and recorded lectures.

Discussion Expectations:

- **Attend.** As much of our discussion together will reference, but not replicate, the information provided in assigned texts and lectures, a lack of attendance will lead to a lack of understanding.
- **Participate.** Class meetings are designed to give you the opportunity to engage actively with ideas and images that are central to the themes of our course. It is through dialogue that new ideas come to light.
- **Read.** Assigned readings are the foundation for insights that will propel discussion and inform written work. All readings listed on the syllabus are intended to be read before the class on which they will be discussed. Thus readings listed on a Tuesday should be read between Friday and Monday and readings listed on a Thursday should be read on the Tuesday or Wednesday prior to the Thursday class meeting.
- **Look.** The lectures uploaded prior to each class meeting and the assigned meetings will highlight multiple artworks that relate to the time period, area, or theme upon which we focus in any given week. Take the time to look carefully at each work. Consider the composition and media, and any relevant comparanda that might help to provide insight into the piece.
- **Think.**
- **Respect.** While discussion without dissent would be futile, a healthy discussion environment is dependent upon mutual respect for differing
opinions. Students who do not show proper respect for their classmates may be asked to sign-off for the day and will be counted absent.

Course Environment:

- In order to foster an inclusive learning environment, each of us must respect the thoughts and opinions presented by others. Although you may have a pertinent point, refrain from interrupting. And while disagreements lead to lively and interesting conversations, comments must be kept impersonal.
- Keep your camera on. To ensure that we are all engaged, we will demonstrate our attention to discussion, in part, by sharing a digital space.
- In order to minimize distractions, when you are not speaking, keep your microphone muted.
- Keep your focus on the discussion. While minor interruptions are inevitable, prolonged distractions that divert attention away from the topics at hand are disruptive for all participants.

Course Requirements:

Required Text:


Required Equipment:

In order to participate in course discussions, students will need the following equipment:

- Regular access to a computer
- A stable internet connection
- Regular access to a webcam
- Regular access to a microphone (Built-in microphones, such as those found in most laptops and desktop computers are fine!)

Assessments:

Grading:

Discussion Attendance: 5%

Please be signed into Zoom slightly prior to your assigned time, to ensure that we are all present at the start of discussion. If you must miss a class, you are responsible for turning in any assignment due that day, although you may turn in assignments for excused absences upon your return to class. Absences will be excused for documented medical reasons, family emergencies, university activities,
and for religious observances. If you must be absent, please make sure to turn in any assignments that are due that day and to ask a classmate for notes. As unforeseen difficulties are a fact of life, all students may take two absences from class, with no questions asked; unless there are previously discussed difficulties, those who are more than 15 minutes late will be counted as absent for the day. After the second unexcused absence, the student's attendance grade will be dropped by 5 points for each subsequent absence.

While attendance is expected as outlined above, please contact me if you are ill or unable to attend class due to COVID-19. It is important that you communicate with me prior to your absence, so that I may make a decision about accommodating your request to be excused from class. Although our course meets remotely, it is still important to take appropriate steps to ensure your health, and the health of our community. If you are experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19 seek medical attention from the Student Health and Wellness Center (940-565-2333 or askSHWC@unt.edu) or your healthcare provider prior to any campus interactions. UNT also requires you to contact the UNT COVID Hotline at 844-366-5892 or COVID@unt.edu for guidance on actions to take due to symptoms, pending or positive test results, or potential exposure.

Discussion Participation: 10%

Prior to each course meeting, students will have access to a recording lecture, assigned readings and a set of image prompts and/or questions for discussion. These will provide a starting place for our group conversations. Students should carefully watch and read all assigned materials, and make notes of any questions or thoughts that arise from these sources. Students should also be prepared to answer any questions posed in the recorded lectures, or in the uploaded prompts.

There are many ways to be an active participant in our course discussions. Active participants may put forth points or raise questions that stimulate discussion. They may provide relevant examples in support of the points raised by others, or point the class towards useful resources. They may tie ideas presented in lectures or readings to other works of art, or to contemporary visual culture. Active participants might nod or shake their heads, insert reactions into chat, or upload relevant links, or undertake some combination of any of the listed approaches. However, activities that are disruptive to others, including belligerent or combative behavior or responses, undermine the spirit of scholarly dialogue. These behaviors, together with unresponsiveness or inattentiveness, will result in a 1 point deduction for each violation.

Responses: 15%

Over the course of the semester, students will be asked to generate short written responses of approximately 500 words, or to seek out relevant images, in response to a series of prompts. Guidelines for each of these assignments will be provided as part of the Canvas module in which they are assigned. Relevant due dates are noted below in the course schedule.

Mini-Test: 5%
This short test, offered at the mid-point of the first half of the semester, is designed to prepare students for the longer tests that will occur later in the course. The mini-test will feature a previously unseen structure, artwork, object, or artifact that is related to similar items discussed in readings and recorded lectures. Students will be asked to identify and discuss the previously unseen image based upon relevant comparanda.

**Test 1: 15%**

This test, focusing on material from lectures and readings assigned during the first half of the course will be offered in Week 8. To ensure that all students have time to take the test, there will be no discussions, recorded lectures, or assigned readings on Thursday, March 4.

**Paper/Project Proposal: 5%**

At the end of Week 11, students will propose a theme or topic for their final project. They will generate a short proposal (250-300 words) identifying the format of their final project and 3 images or sources, including at least two sources that are not on the syllabus or in lectures that will inform this project. Students will then provide either a brief description of their intended project output, or propose a question that they wish to explore through further research.

**Paper/Project Consultations: 5%**

During Week 12, each student will sign up for a 10-minute consultation with Dr. McFerrin. During this individual meeting, students will have the opportunity to expand upon their project proposals, and Dr. McFerrin will provide suggestions for further research or idea revision. Students should come to this meeting prepared with questions, concerns, or further ideas to present. Failure to schedule a meeting, or to appear during the chosen meeting time, will lead to a grade of zero for this assignment.

**Test 2: 15%**

This test, focusing on material from lectures and readings assigned during the second half of the course will be offered in Week 14. To ensure that all students have time to take the test, there will be no discussions, recorded lectures, or assigned readings on Thursday, April 15.

**Final Paper/Project: 25%**

This final work, which may take the form of a traditional research paper, a digital recording, an artwork, or a recorded performance, offers students the opportunity to expand upon the ideas presented and discussed in the course. Papers should be approximately 3000 words in length, and should incorporate multiple lines of argumentation and relevant comparanda. A bibliography of no fewer than 6 scholarly works is required, together with a clearly stated, arguable thesis. Students choosing to generate their own works of art in response to those presented in class should provide an artist’s statement of no fewer than 750 words, which describes
the intersections between course themes and artworks and their own creation. Together with this statement, they should submit no fewer than 3 works of ancient Mediterranean art that inform their own work.

This project is due no later than Thursday, April 29 at 11:59 PM.

**Course Policies:**

**Policy on Late Work:** For written assignments with a 10-15 point value, late work is accepted via the Canvas portal with a 0.5 point deduction for each day that the assignment is late until half credit has been reached, after which point, assignments will receive no more than half credit. For paper/project consultations, missed consultations will result is a zero for the assignment, unless extreme circumstances require accommodation. Late tests may be accepted at the discretion of the professor. Students must notify Dr. McFerrin to identify the circumstances that prevent them from completing the test within 24 hours of the due date. All late work must be submitted no later than April 16 at 11:59 PM. In the absence of cases of extreme duress, late final projects will not be accepted.

**Policy on Cheating and Plagiarism:** Cheating and plagiarism are serious offenses and violate UNT's Code of Student Conduct. According to UNT Policy 06.003, Student Academic Integrity, academic dishonesty occurs when students engage in behaviors including, but not limited to, cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, forgery, plagiarism, and sabotage. Plagiarism, defined by the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities, as “the deliberate adoption or reproduction of ideas, words, or statements of another person of one’s own without acknowledgement,” is a serious academic offense. Students who fail to attribute ideas appropriately, or who put forward another's work as their own, as in the case of purchasing term papers, will be reported to the appropriate academic authorities. Upon evaluation of the incident, the student may fail the assignment, fail the course, or be expelled from the University. Please consult policy 06.003 for further information.

**Policy on Student Behavior in the Classroom:** Student behavior that interferes with an instructor’s ability to conduct a class or other student’s opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be instructed to leave the instructional space and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student’s conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university’s expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional fora, including university and electronic classrooms labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at [http://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct](http://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct)

**Policy on Sexual Discrimination, Harassment, and Assault:**
UNT is committed to providing an environment free from all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. If you, or someone you know, has experienced or experiences any of these acts of aggression, please know that you are not alone. The federal Title IX law makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses. UNT has staff members trained to support you in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more.

**Policy on ADA Accommodation:**
The College of Visual Arts and Design is committed to full academic access for all qualified students, including those with disabilities. In keeping with this commitment and in order to facilitate equality of educational access, faculty members in the College will make reasonable accommodations for qualified students with a disability, such as appropriate adjustments to the course environment and the teaching, testing, or learning methodologies when doing so does not fundamentally alter the course.

Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide a student with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty, after which we can enter into private discussion to consider a student’s specific course needs. Students may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester, to ensure that appropriate steps are taken. Students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for each semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Students who have letters of accommodation should schedule an appointment to discuss their individual needs with me no later than Friday, January 22. Additional information can be found on the ODA website at [http://disability.unt.edu/](http://disability.unt.edu/)

**Course Risk Factor:**
According to University Policy, this course is classified as a category one course. Students enrolled in this course will not be exposed to any significant hazards and are not likely to suffer any bodily injury. Students in this class will be informed of any potential health hazards or potential bodily injury connected with the use of any materials and/or processes and will be instructed how to proceed without danger to themselves or others.

**Emergency Notifications and Procedures:**
UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify students with critical information in the event of an emergency, i.e. severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence. In the event of a university closure, please refer to Canvas for further instructions regarding course continuity.
Policy on Course Content:
Content in the arts can sometimes include works, situations, actions, and language that can be personally challenging or offensive to some students on the grounds, for example, of sexual explicitness, violence, or blasphemy. As the College of Visual Arts and Design is devoted to the principle of freedom of expression, artistic and otherwise, it is not the College’s practice to censor these works or ideas on any of these grounds. Students who may feel unduly distressed or made uncomfortable by such expressions should withdraw at the start of the term and seek another course.

Policy on the Syllabus:
This document serves as an agreement between students, professors, and the community of the course. Students with questions regarding any of the procedures or policies outlined here are strongly encouraged to schedule an appointment to discuss any concerns with Dr. McFerrin. By remaining in the course, students signal their willingness to adhere to the policies presented here.

Course Topics, Schedule and Overview:
The following list of topics, readings, and assignment deadlines will provide us with the structure needed to tackle our topic. However, the following information is subject to change, given the interests and aptitudes of the class.

Unit 1: Considering Terminologies

Week 1: Kitsch and Everyday Art

Tuesday, January 12: Introduction to the Course

Thursday, January 14: Defining the Terms: Kitsch, Art, and the Ancient Mediterranean World

Online Lecture: Beyond “High Art:” Repetition, Ready-mades and Pompeian Art


Assignment: About Me, Due Friday, January 15 by 11:59 PM

Week 2: The Mechanics of Mass Production

Tuesday, January 19: Considering Clay

Online Lecture: Mass Production and Art: The Case of Hellenistic Terracottas

Thursday, January 21: Replication and Roman Art

Online Lecture: Beyond Greek Copies: Replication and Emulation in Roman Art


Assignment: The Politics of Kitsch, Due Friday, January 22 at 11:59 PM

Week 3: The Issue of the Artist

Tuesday, January 26: The Artist’s Signature

Online Lecture: Signed Pots and Named Artists in Athens

Readings: PDFs on Canvas, John Frow, “Signature and Brand,” p. 56-74; Sarah Bolmarch and Georgina Muskett, “Artists’ Signatures on Archaic Greek Vases from Athens,” p. 154-176

Thursday, January 28: Painters in Pompeii

Online Lecture: How to Craft a Pompeian Wall Painting

Readings: PDFs on Canvas, Regina Gee, “Fourth Style Workshop Deployment and Movement Patterns at Villa A at Oplontis,” p. 113-134; Francesca Bologna, “Painters and Workshops in Pompeii,” p. 3-14

Week 4: Defining the Domestic

Tuesday, February 2: Space and Thought

Online Lecture: Organizing Life: The House as Microcosm


Thursday, February 4: Houses and Other Microcosms

Online Lecture: Space and Taste: Replicating Power in the Roman House

Assignment: Mini-Test, Due Friday, February 5 by 11:59 PM

**Unit 2: The Mechanics of the House**

*Week 5: Household Architecture, Part I*

**Tuesday, February 9: Early Houses**

Online Lecture: The Archaeology of Early Domestic Life in the Ancient Mediterranean

Readings: Nevett, House Form and Complexity, p. 22-42; Alexander Mazarakis Ainian, “From Huts to Houses in Early Iron Age Greece,” p. 139-161

**Thursday, February 11: Egyptian Villages and Their Houses**

Online Lecture: Community Planning at Deir el-Medina and Amarna


*Week 6: Household Architecture, Part II*

**Tuesday, February 16: Olynthos and the Greek House**

Online Lecture: Considering Greek Houses


**Thursday, February 18: Ideal Roman Houses and the Townhouses of Pompeii**

Online Lectures: Idealized Pompeians and Everyday Houses

Assignment: Domestic Assemblages in Pompeii, Due Friday, February 19 at 11:59 PM

**Unit 3: Houses and Structures**

*Week 7: Houses and Politics*

Tuesday, February 23: Hurling Furniture in Classical Athens

Online Lecture: Symposia and the Politics of Parties in Fifth Century Athens

Readings: Nevett, “A Space for Hurling the Furniture?,” p. 43-62; PDFs on Canvas
Robin Osborne, “Did Democracy Transform Athenian Space?” p. 195-200; Kathleen

**Thursday, February 25: Ambitious Dinner Parties: The Case of Trimalchio**

Online Lecture: Trimalchio’s Dinner Party and Aspirational Living

Readings: PDFs on Canvas, Petronius, Excerpts from the *Satyricon*, Francesca C.
Tronchin, “Roman Collecting, Decorating, and Eclectic Practice in the Textual
Sources,” p. 333-345

**Week 8: Houses, Politics, and Gender**

Tuesday, March 2: Gender and the Greek House

Online Lecture: Beyond Cloistered Women: Reconsidering Gender in Greek
Domestic Space

Readings: PDFs on Canvas, Lloyd Llewellyn-Jones, “House and Veil in Ancient
Greece,” p. 233-243; Carla Antonaccio, “Architecture and Behavior: Building Gender
into Greek Houses,” p. 517-533

**Thursday, March 4: No discussion meetings! No recorded lectures! No assigned
readings! Take your test!**

Assignment: Test 1, Due Friday, March 5 by 11:59 PM

**Week 9: Houses and Gender, II**

Tuesday, March 9: Work and Gender in the Roman House

Online Lecture: Gender and Work in Pompeii

**Thursday, March 11: Toys and Gendered Play**

Online Lecture: Learning Gender: Dolls in Ancient Rome


**Unit 4: Houses and Identity**

**Week 10: Houses and Local Identity**

**Tuesday, March 16: Considering Delos**

Online Lecture: Identity on Delos


**Thursday, March 18: Resistance and Rebellion in Pompeii**

Online Lecture: Seeing Resistance in the House of Jason


Assignment: Houses and Identity Today, Due Friday, March 19 at 11:59 PM

**Week 11: Houses and Personal Identity**

**Tuesday, March 23: Constructing Selves in the House of the Vettii**

Online Lecture: Freedmen, Identity, and the House of the Vettii


**Thursday, March 25: Constructing Power in North Africa**

Online Lecture: Light, Lamps, and North African Houses
Readings: Nevett, “Housing as Symbol,” p. 119-141; Simon Ellis, “Shedding Light on Late Roman Housing,” p. 283-302

Assignment: Paper/Project Proposal due on Friday, March 26 by 11:59 PM

**Week 12: Household Religion**

Tuesday, March 30: No Discussion meetings! Sign up for individual meeting times!

Thursday, April 1: Household Religion in Pompeii

Online Lecture: Gods in the Pompeian House


**Unit 5: Social Art**

**Week 13: Considering Neighborhoods**

Tuesday, April 6: Beyond the Walls of Pompeian Houses

Online Lecture: The Art of Exterior Spaces in Pompeii


Thursday, April 8: Household Graffiti in Pompeii

Online Lecture: Graffiti in the Pompeian Cityscape


**Week 14: Conversations across Media**

Tuesday, April 13: Political Pots

Online Lecture: The Politics of Athenian Pottery

Thursday, April 15: No discussion meetings! No recorded lectures! No assigned readings! Take your test!

Assignment: Test 2, Due on Friday, April 16 by 11:59 PM.

Week 15: Unauthorized Art

Tuesday, April 20: Ostraca, Humor, and Dissent in Egypt

Online Lecture: Doodles and Other Unauthorized Art


Thursday, April 22: Life, the Universe, and the Meaning of Everything

No additional materials! Come to discussion prepared to discuss your project!

Final Project due by Thursday, April 29 by 11:59 PM