

Fall 2021

Fromm Institute: Race and European Art

Dr. Letha Ch'ien

Sep. 14 – Nov. 9

Tuesdays 10:00 – 11:40

"Race transforms the act of the perpetrator into a characteristic of the target. Race transforms one person's action into another person's being." - Barbara J. Fields

Course Description

This course recognizes traditional art history curricula grew out of nineteenth-century nationalist movements steeped in racial ideologies. Discussions of style and competing analytical categories dropped explicit discussion of race without abandoning racial ideological structures. We will consider the categories of 'race' and 'European art' together both historically in their periods of creation and subsequently in our own time by examining the art historical canon critically by analyzing artwork traditionally included and artwork traditionally excluded from the canon.

Like a survey course, this class proceeds roughly chronologically following the pattern of a traditional art history survey course. In addition to studying often neglected works of art and neglected aspects of them, we will foreground the ongoing effect of the inherited legacies of art and history of art throughout.

This class deals with sensitive subject matter. We may experience discomfort as we progress through the course. Please consider others when asking questions and making comments.

Class Schedule

Subject to Change.

Sep. 14 Racecraft and History

Further reading: • Daniel Larkin, "How the Louvre Codified Essentialism in Art History," *Hyperallergic* March 15, 2021 <https://hyperallergic.com/621631/how-the-louvre-codified-essentialism-in-art-history/> • Karen E. Fields and Barbara J. Fields, *Racecraft: The Soul of Inequality in American Life* (2012)

Sep. 21: Classical Antiquity

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Further reading: Nell Irvin Painter, "The White Beauty Ideal as Science" in *A History of White People*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2010: 59-71

Sep. 28: Medieval Europe

Further reading: Asa Simon Mittman, "Are the 'monstrous races' races?" *postmedieval: a journal of medieval cultural studies* (2015): 36-51.

Oct. 05: Renaissance Representations of Jews

Further reading: • The 'Geto at San Hieronimo', 1516. From a Venetian Senate decree 29 March 1516. • Kalmar, Ivan Davison, "Jesus Did Not Wear a Turban: Orientalism, the Jews, and Christian Art" in *Orientalism and the Jews*. Edited by Ivan Davison Kalmar and Derek J. Penslar. London: University Press of New England, 2005. 3-31.

Oct. 12: Representations of Muslims & Turks / European Imaginations of the Americas

Further reading: Amanda Wunder, "Western Travelers, Eastern Antiquities, and the Image of the Turk in Early Modern Europe" *Journal of Early Modern History* 7.1-2 (2003): 89-119

Oct. 19: Early Modern Representations of Blackness

Further reading: • Paul Kaplan, "Black Turks: Venetian artists and perceptions of Ottoman ethnicity" in *The Turk and Islam in the Western Eye, 1450-1750: Visual Imagery before Orientalism* edited by James G. Harper. Routledge: 41-66.

Oct. 26: Asians to Orientalism / 19th c. Figurations of Blackness

Further reading: • Darcy Grimaldo Grigsby, *Extremities: Painting Empire in Post-Revolutionary France*. London, Yale University Press, 2002.

Nov. 02: Contemporary Responses