

**Art in the Museums of Madrid  
Boston University (in Madrid)**

Professor Selma Margaretten

**A. Course Description**

The study of Spanish painting from the 15<sup>th</sup> century (Flemish and Hispanic-Flemish painters), through the Renaissance, Baroque, Neoclassical and Rococo, and Romanticism, up until the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Four painters and their historical periods are the foci of this course: El Greco (1547-1614), Velázquez (1599-1660), Goya (1747-1828) y Picasso (1881-1973). They will be studied via regular lectures, slides, and visits to the Museo del Prado.

The course will study these artists with the following criteria:

- 1) **formal analysis of the work:** composition, technique, color, etc.
- 2) **the social-historical context:** the artist as a product of his time, the role of the Church/kings, his social status, etc.
- 3) **the influence of foreign painters:** Flemish and Italians, Titian, Michelangelo, Caravaggio and Rubens in Spanish art
- 4) **tradition and modernity:** the artist as a follower of artistic trends and as an innovator

With these points in mind we will discuss 4 “universal” paintings that must be seen during the course: El Greco, *El Entierro del Conde de Orgaz*; Velázquez, *Las Meninas*; Goya, *Los Fusilamientos del 3 de Mayo*; Picasso, *Guernica*.

- 5) **The Prado** is a national museum and it also represents the collections and tastes of the monarchs and the history of the Spanish people.

Visits to the museum will take place twice a month and are obligatory.

**Assignments and course grades:**

Midterm and Final Exams:                   66% of the final grade  
Short Paper (minimum 4 pages):       approximately 1/3 of the final grade

Possibilities for Extra Credit: extra reports about expositions, oral presentations, etc.

Class participation, attendance and punctuality may affect the final grade.

**Course Readings:**

Berger, John, *Ways of Seeing*. BBC and Penguin, 1972 (available in the US) – **Required**

Roldán, J.M. *Historia de España*. Edelsa 1997 or any other book about the history of Spain as a reference source.

The professor has a list of several books that are available for general studies and specific books on authors and themes of the course. Many of these can be found in the library of the International Institute.

**General Class Outline:**

- I. Flemish Painting (15<sup>th</sup> Century) to the Renaissance
- II. The Renaissance, the first Hapsburgs, Mannerism  
--Midterm Exam--
- III. 17<sup>th</sup> Century. Baroque, The National Schools, the Spanish “Century of Gold”
- IV. 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> Centuries. Rococo and Neoclassicism, Goya, Tradition and Modernity
- V. 20<sup>th</sup> Century  
--Final Exam (Baroque-the end)--

