DEPARTMENT OF ART
ART HISTORY & ART CONSERVATION

ARTH 253  BAROQUE ART
PROFESSOR GAUVIN BAILEY

CALENDAR DESCRIPTION:
A survey of the visual culture of Europe and its colonies in the Baroque age (ca. 1580-1750). Attention is given to developments in all aspects of the visual arts, with emphasis on painting, sculpture, architecture, and the graphic arts, and on the achievements of artists such as Rembrandt, Rubens, Poussin, Velasquez, and Bernini.

Prerequisites: Second-year standing or permission of the Department

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
This course considers the art and architecture of Europe and beyond from around 1580 to 1780, the period usually defined as Baroque & Rococo. An era of astonishing artistic activity, it was marked by lavish patronage by popes, cardinals, and princes, centering on the cosmopolitan capitals of Rome, Paris, and Amsterdam, with prodigious activity in city and country from Lisbon to St Petersburg, Lima to Buenos Aires. This period was characterized by fundamental changes in society, including the rebirth of the Catholic Church as we know it today, new and revolutionary scientific discoveries, a new global awareness, warfare and plague, and the growth of political absolutism. Explores how these developments informed the style, iconography, and patronage of art and architecture, and highlights artists such as Caravaggio, Bernini, Borromini, Rubens, Rembrandt, Velázquez, and De La Tour. Taking the position that international versions of Baroque & Rococo are dialects of a global language, it explores the uniqueness of global variants of Baroque art and architecture and how they relate to their social context. Topics considered include the clash between Classical and Gothic traditions, the rise of the academies, landscape painting, still life, and genre painting, as well as the concept of the Baroque unity of the arts, or “bel composto.” This course will not only consider painting, sculpture, and architecture, but also décor and “decorative arts,” ephemera, and gardens.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:
A detailed list of readings and requirements will be available during the first class. There will be one written essay and three in-class tests.