New Spring 2017 Course!

Rome, The Eternal City
ARHS 3913 | ARHS 6813*
Prof. Leslie Geddes

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9:30–10:45am
Woldenberg Art Center, Room 210

For millennia, Rome has served as a nexus of power and artistic excellence rendered in service to powerful clients, from emperors to popes and the scions of the city's most powerful families. This course examines the city through its special status as the former center of the Roman Empire and its place as the spiritual heart of the Roman Catholic Church. We will survey the city and its artistic production from its early Christian period and its medieval decline to its resurgence under the papacy in the Renaissance and Baroque eras through the nineteenth-century unification of Italy and the advent of Mussolini. Our principle focus will emphasize its richest, most influential period of art production: c. 1500-1700.

We will examine the commissioning of some of the most iconic works of art in the Western world, from Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel and Raphael's School of Athens to Bernini's Four Rivers Fountain and Caravaggio's Calling of St. Matthew. An interrogation of the city's architectural marvels, including the monumental renovation and decoration of St. Peter's Basilica and the construction of urban and suburban palaces such as the Villa Medici and the Villa Farnesina will ground our understanding of how power was expressed through the built environment. Major themes to be covered include the revival of antiquity; artistic rivalry; the representation of the city in print; rituals, pageants, and processions; Grand Tour-ism and Rome's role as the capital of an international 'Republic of Letters.' Rigorously examining centuries of cultural production, we will consider how – despite radical shifts in religious and secular power – the city of Rome maintained its centrality to European culture by continually reinventing itself.

*This class is offered as both a 3000 and 6000-level course: ARHS 3913 Open to all undergraduates. ARHS 6813 Open to Graduates, advanced undergraduates.
For questions, please contact Prof. Leslie Geddes: lgeddes1@tulane.edu

This course counts towards the art history major’s distribution requirements for the field of Colonial Latin America/ Renaissance/Baroque. This course may count towards a MEMS (Medieval and Early Modern studies) major/minor.