



SAN GEMINI PRESERVATION STUDIES

**(WVU) Syllabus for ARHS 458:**

**Professional Field Experience**

**Traditional Materials, Methods of Painting Workshop\***

3 credit hours

(SGPS) 208 B - 3 Units

Summer Semester, 2024

Session 2 (July 15 – August 9), Afternoon Workshop: Monday-Friday, 2:00-6:00 (4 weeks)

Location: Location: Piazza San Giovanni Battista 8, Centro Giovanile classroom,  
San Gemini, Italy

Lead Instructor: Prof. Sofia Oliveti

Email: [oliveti.66076.saficr@gmail.com](mailto:oliveti.66076.saficr@gmail.com)

Office Hours: on site, TBA

**\*Must be taken with the following co-requisites:**

ARHS 457: Professional Field Experience

Traditional Materials, Methods of Painting and Art Restoration Issues (3 credit hours)

**AND**

ARHS 459: Professional Field Experience

Restoration: Theory, Ethics and Issues (2 credit hours)

Note: this is a course that can only be completed in San Gemini, Italy and not on the WVU campus or online. There are flight, meal, and program costs related to the course. Please go to the WVU Education Abroad website for current cost information.

<https://educationabroad.wvu.edu/>

**No prerequisites required**

**Catalog Description:**

Covers traditional Italian painting materials and techniques (fresco, sgraffito, tempera on wood, gilding, oil on canvas) through hands-on experience using historical methods. No experience necessary; this is not an art class. The main objective is for students to learn the painting processes, difficulties, and limitations associated with each technique and material and how this influences aesthetics and the image-making process.

**Note:**

The traditional painting workshop, unlike other workshops in the program, **does not** involve any formal material restoration work, nevertheless all the knowledge and experience learned in this workshop is fundamental for anyone planning to become a painting conservator.

**Student Learning Outcomes:**

Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

- Prepare painting supports using traditional methods
- Prepare wall paintings/decorations (sgraffito and fresco) and easel paintings (tempera)

- on wooden panel and oil on canvas)
- Employ appropriate methods for transferring designs to supports
- Apply gilding methods on a wooden panel properly prepared
- Grind and mix pigment using historical methods

**Required Text:**

Cennino Cennini, *The Craftsman's Handbook*.

**Required Materials:**

Apron (if desired); All other materials are provided.

**Grading**

Painting Assignments 100%

**Breakdown of Painting Assignments**

Sgraffito (red and black)	20%
Fresco	20%
Egg tempera panel	20%
Oil painting techniques on canvas	20%
Gilding on panel	20%

Grading is based on successful technique not aesthetics (correct number of layers and order, quality of preparation such as sanding or rabbit-skin glue, etc., quality of design transference, of stretching canvases, grinding pigment, mixing pigment, building surfaces, application of paint or gilding materials, etc.)

**Note:** *all assignments run concurrently* due to the compressed four-week session. Professor Vakalis will demonstrate each project, but you will also have access to the Professional Teaching Assistants at each project station to guide you. Italian law requires that there is one professor and additionally there is one fully qualified teaching assistant (all have their art conservation degrees) per every five students.

**Grading scale:**

- 94-100 = A
- 90-93 = A-
- 87-89 = B+
- 84-86 = B
- 80-83 = B-
- 77-79 = C+
- 74-76 = C
- 70-73 = C-
- 67-69 = D+
- 64-66 = D
- 60-63 = D-
- Below 60 = F

**Late Assignment Policies**

Students work on several projects simultaneously as they wait for various stages to dry in each medium and project (rabbit-skin glue, mortar, gypsum, etc.). Projects may be completed

in any order as there is no individual deadline for each of the five projects, but ALL work must be completed by the final day of class in San Gemini, Italy. The workshop lab is dismantled the following day after the program ends and students will not have access to materials or lab space. No work is accepted after the last day of class.

## **Lecture topics and demonstrations**

### **Part 1. Renaissance Fresco Technique**

- Support, preparation
  - Arriccio
  - Intonaco
- Image transfer
  - Cartoon
- Painting
  - Pigments
    - Natural
    - Synthetic
  - Paint preparation
  - Brushes
- Secco
- Glazes
- Cleanup methods

### **Part 2. Sgraffito**

- Support, preparation
  - Arriccio
  - Base black plaster
  - White surface coat
- Image transfer
  - Pounced drawing
- Scraping

### **Part 3. Painting on Wood Board using 14th Century Methods**

- Board preparation
  - Gesso rendering
  - Sanding
- Paint
  - Pigments
  - Tempera binding and emulsifier
- Glazes and varnishes
- Gilding
  - Mordant method
  - Gouache method - bolo
  - Burnishing

### **Part 1. Oil Painting on Canvas using 17th Century Methods**

- Prepare stretchers
- Install canvas

- Canvas rendering
- Paint
  - Pigments
  - Oil binders and emulsifiers
  - Brushes
  - Cleanup methods
- Glazes
- Varnishes

## Class Schedule Summer 2024

Date	Day	Lecture 8:30 - 10:15 AM	Lecture 10:30 -12:00	Afternoon 2:30-7:00 Traditional Painting Workshop
7/14	Sun	Arrival in San Gemini		Orientation
7/15	Mon	Brief Historical Overview of Umbria <i>Cardillo</i>		Visit to City of San Gemini <i>M Cardillo</i> 3:00PM-7:00PM
7/16	Tue	Time, transformation, and memory	Introduction (general plan of the lectures) and sgraffito technique <i>F. Vitale</i>	Introduction to the studio work <i>T. Mascolo</i>
7/17	Wed	What type of objects do we conserve and how we establishing value	Painting techniques – overview <i>F. Vitali</i>	Assignments run concurrently. This maximizes time during this Short four-week period. For example you may have one layer of sgraffito drying while you prep your canvas.  <i>T. Mascolo</i>
7/18	Thu	Approaches to restoration and the goals motivating the restoration (Reading Cesare Brandi)	Pigments – general chemical and physical features <i>F. Vitali</i>	<i>T. Mascolo</i>
7/19	Fri	Visiting Lecturer TBD	Visiting Lecturer TBD	<i>T. Mascolo</i>
7/20	Sat	Visit to the Roman city of Carsulae <i>Cardillo, Lorenzetti</i>	No class	No class
7/21	Sun	No class	No class	No class
7/22	Mon	Restoration and Change: The case of cleaning (Reading Cesare Brandi)	Pigments – inorganic pigments <i>F. Vitali</i>	<i>T. Mascolo</i>
7/23	Tue	The original intent of the artist, the "potential unity of art" and wholeness and deterioration (Reading Cesare Brandi)	Pigments – organic pigments <i>F. Vitali</i>	<i>T. Mascolo</i>
7/24	Wed	Presentation of the restored object: Integration (retouching), completions (Reading Cesare Brandi)	Mortars and plasters – aerial binders <i>F. Vitali</i>	<i>T. Mascolo</i>
7/25	Thu	Restoring written documents, books or printed art	Mortars and Plasters – hydraulic binders <i>F. Vitali</i>	<i>T. Mascolo</i>
7/26	Fri	Visiting Lecturer TBD	Visiting Lecturer TBD	<i>T. Mascolo</i>

7/27	Sat	No class	No class	No class
7/28	Sun	No class	F No class	No class
7/29	Mon	Copies, reconstructions and additions	Mortars and Plasters – inert and hydraulic aggregates <i>F. Vitali</i>	<i>T. Mascolo</i>
7/30	Tue	Ethics of restoration (Cesare Brandi)	Fresco – main features <i>F. Vitali</i>	<i>T. Mascolo</i>
7/31	Wed	Context, frames and perception of the object	Fresco – evolution throughout the centuries <i>F. Vitali</i>	<i>T. Mascolo</i>
8/1	Thu	Context museums and decontextualization	Fresco – decay <i>F. Vitali</i>	<i>T. Mascolo</i>
8/2	Fri	Visiting Lecturer TBD	Visiting Lecturer TBD	<i>T. Mascolo</i>

8/3	Sat	No class	No class	No class
8/4	Sun	No class	No class	No class
8/5	Mon	Collections and recontextualization	Fresco – restoration <i>F. Vitali</i>	<i>T. Mascolo</i>
8/6	Tue	The concept of collective cultural property: the case of the Elgin Marbles (Italian restoration Chart of 1987)	Tempera – technology of wood and support <i>F. Vitali</i>	<i>T. Mascolo</i>
8/7	Wed	Heritage and cultural identity and nationalism, Cultural identity as a motive for cultural genocide or worst. (Italian restoration Chart of 1987)	Tempera - ground layer and paint layer <i>F. Vitali</i>	<i>T. Mascolo</i>
8/8	Thu	Strategies for the preservation of cultural heritage	Oil – canvas support, ground and paint layer <i>F. Vitali</i>	<i>T. Mascolo</i>
8/9	Fri	Visiting Lecturer TBD	Visiting Lecturer TBD	Studio Cleanup <i>T. Mascolo</i>

**For all WVU Academic Policies and Syllabus Statements Please go to:**

<https://tlcommons.wvu.edu/syllabus-policies-and-statements>