

Medieval Florence

History of Art Course
2025 Sample Programme

07 JAN - 31 JAN / 31 MAR - 18 APR / 08 SEP - 03 OCT



Our **Medieval Florence** course covers the artistic awakening that took place in Florence during the twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Against a complex backdrop of rapid economic growth, turbulent political change, famine and war, artists including Cimabue, Arnolfo di Cambio, Giotto, Andrea Pisano, Bernardo Daddi, Orcagna, Andrea di Buonaiuto, Taddeo and Agnolo Gaddi skilfully catered to new contemporary religious, cultural and political aspirations, forging a new style and marking the beginning of the dominant figurative tradition in Western European art. This course is the first instalment of two devoted to the art and artists of Florence, and can be followed 3 times per year:

MEDIEVAL FLORENCE	07 JAN - 31 JAN	31 MAR - 18 APR	08 SEP - 03 OCT
RENAISSANCE FLORENCE	03 FEB - 28 FEB	05 MAY - 30 MAY	06 OCT - 31 OCT
GRAND-TOUR FLORENCE	02 MAR - 28 MAR	03 JUN - 27 JUN	03 NOV - 28 NOV

Our 2025 cycles of monthly courses can be followed in person, with lectures and visits conducted in Florence, or online via zoom. Blended lectures are held and broadcast from the British Institute library on Monday, Wednesday and Friday afternoons, while visits are conducted on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons throughout Florence's historic centre.

WEEKDAY	MONDAYS	TUESDAYS	WEDNESDAYS	THURSDAYS	FRIDAYS
TIME	15:00 – 16:30 CET	15:00 – 16:30 CET	15:00 – 16:30 CET	15:00 – 16:30 CET	15:00 – 16:30 CET
FORMAT	Blended Lectures	Offsite Visits	Blended Lectures	Offsite Visits	Blended Lectures

The Institute's international teaching team offers a spectrum of expertise and approaches to teaching, while the department 'house style' of lecturing is informal, relaxed, engaging and participatory. Our courses are accessible to those coming to the subject with no previous background in Art History, but are at the same time pitched at a level that will engage all those who are already familiar with the subject. All monthly courses can be followed by month, week, or by individual session:

Single Sessions in Florence (90 MIN)	€ 45
FULL COURSE: 20 Sessions in Florence (90 MIN)	€ 800
Single Sessions Online (90 MIN)	€ 15
12 Sessions Online (90 MIN)	€ 160

COURSE LECTURERS

Jeremy Boudreau (MA) joined the Senior Management Team of the Institute as Head of History of Art in 2014. His training is as a museum educator and art historian and his specialisation is the art and culture of Renaissance Italy. Today, he oversees a team of lecturers who contribute to the Institute's history of art courses and study abroad programming. After graduating with a degree in Museum Education from the Massachusetts College of Art and Design in Boston, Jeremy completed his MA in Art History at Syracuse University as a Florence Fellow. He is an accredited Lecturer for The Arts Society, a member of the Association of Art Historians (AAH) and a member of the International Council of Museums (ICOM).

Agata Anna Chrzanowska (PhD) graduated in Art History with a thesis concerning twentieth-century photography and in Italian Studies with a thesis on the linear perspective in Renaissance painting from University of Warsaw. She obtained her PhD in Italian Studies from Durham University with a thesis on the relationship between the narrative fresco cycles and religious spectacles in fifteenth-century Florence. She has published on the Tornabuoni Chapel in Santa Maria Novella and on the history of Polish photography. She collaborates with the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz, the Peggy Guggenheim Collection in Venice and she works as licensed tour guide.

Caterina Romei (MA) graduated in Art History from the University of Florence with a thesis on the 'Counter-Reformation in the church of SS. Annunziata' and received her 'laurea specialistica' in Museology with a thesis on 'Copyists and painters: visitors to the Uffizi Gallery at the end of the 18th century'. Caterina has taught for many years on study abroad programmes for American universities.

Jason Arkles (MA) is an American sculptor working in the traditional methods and materials one would normally associate with a sculptor in Florence. His large-scale figurative work in bronze, marble, terracotta and wood can be found in public and private spaces, museums, cemeteries, and churches in Europe and America, including on the façade of Florence's Saint Mark's English Church. Trained in the studio of Charles H. Cecil and in a Pontifical Academy in Rome, he runs a teaching studio in Florence, in tandem with his professional career. Jason has also self-published two small books on sculpture; a manual for sculpting in clay using a living model, and a translation and commentary on Leon Battista Alberti's *Della Statua*.

Kate Bolton-Porciatti (MPhil) has over 25 years' professional experience in the early and Classical music world. She teaches music and cultural history at the Scuola Lorenzo de' Medici. Her post-graduate thesis focused on music and dance in 14th-century Italy, and she has published extensively as an academic, journalist and critic. Prior to moving to Italy in 2007, she was Senior Producer, BBC Arts and Classical Music, and Artistic Director of the prestigious Lufthansa Festival of Baroque Music, in London.

Laura Fenelli (PhD) is originally from Parma and has been living and working as an art historian in Florence since 2007. She has an MA in Medieval History of Art and a Ph.D. in Medieval History. She works on history of medieval and early modern images and saints' iconography and hagiography and she collaborates with the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florence. Since 2009 she has been lecturing Art History in English for various colleges and universities.

Lisa Kaborycha (PhD) has a BA in Comparative Literature, an MA in Italian Studies, and a PhD in Medieval and Early Modern European History from the University of California, Berkeley. Her area of specialty is the cultural and social history of Renaissance Florence, having extensively researched fifteenth-century Florentine manuscript anthologies known as zibaldoni. She has been the recipient of Fulbright and National Endowment for the Humanities awards, and Harvard's Villa I Tatti Fellowship. The author of *A Short History of Renaissance Italy* (Pearson 2010) and *A Corresponding Renaissance: Letters Written by Italian Women 1375-1650* (Oxford 2016), Lisa is an accredited Arts Society Lecturer, as well as a Senior Research Fellow at the Medici Archive Project.

WEEK ONE

MONDAY



Introduction to Medieval Florence This lecture will establish the scope and contents of the course with a survey of Florence's major artistic personalities and movements during the Middle Ages. Participants will receive access to online course materials, including reading and slide folders, along with a tour of the British Institute Library and its collections in Palazzo Lanfredini.

TUESDAY



VISIT: Foundations of Florence Historical Walk This visit will offer an historical and topographical introduction to Florence's historic centre, from its establishment as a Roman colony in 59 BCE through to its earliest fortifications, churches and civic palaces in the early Middle Ages.

WEDNESDAY



Pagan and Early Christian Florence This lecture will examine the major iconographic vocabulary of pagan and paleo Christian art employed and revisited in medieval painting and sculpture in Florence, emphasizing the rich symbolism employed in religious narrative and devotional paintings of the 12th century.

THURSDAY



VISIT: The Church of San Miniato al Monte This visit will encompass a range of different artistic techniques used to decorate the church of San Miniato, constructed in the 11th century to house the relics of Florence's first Christian martyr, including fresco, mosaic, marble inlay, panel painting, stained glass and sculpture.

FRIDAY



Early Saints and Relics of Florence This lecture will introduce the earliest principal religious figures of the medieval city with particular attention given to Saints Minias and Zenobius of Florence, in order to identify and decipher the visual language of religious paintings and sculpture commonly depicted in Florentine art of the Middle Ages.

WEEK TWO

MONDAY



Dugento Florence: Rise of the Commune This lecture will consider the popular commune from 1200-1290, a period rife with local violence and factionalism. While feudalism still dominated most of Europe, Florence was one of the small, spirited city-states of Italy that invented a political structure, from which nobles were excluded, and citizens—artisans, tradesmen, and merchants—were elected to public office, a form of representative self-government unheard-of in its time.

TUESDAY



VISIT: The Museo dell'Opera del Duomo This visit will identify the remnants and vestiges of the earliest decorative programmes of the Florentine Cathedral and bell tower located today in the collections of the Museo dell'Opera del Duomo.

WEDNESDAY



Medieval Soundscape This lecture will introduce the traditions of music making and plainchant associated with monastic communities in the Middle Ages, referring to both the representation of musical instruments in medieval works of art, as well as audio recordings of historically significant works performed on original instruments of the age.

THURSDAY



VISIT: The Baptistery of San Giovanni This visit will investigate the role of Florence's Baptistery in the city's earliest founding myths, as well as its influential decorative programmes of mosaic and its earliest portal sculptures.

FRIDAY



Florentine Painting in the Age of Cimabue This lecture will explore the life, works and legacy of Bencivieni di Pepo, better known as Cimabue (c. 1240 - 1302) including his groundbreaking interpretation of Christian devotional imagery including the Madonna and Child, along with Christ's Crucifixion, both on panel and in fresco painting.

WEEK THREE

MONDAY



Gothic Sculpture in the Age of Arnolfo This lecture will consider the profession of the medieval sculptor, the transition from the Romanesque style to the Gothic, and the philosophical seeds of Renaissance sculpture which bore early fruit in the work of Arnolfo di Cambio.

TUESDAY



VISIT: The Museo di Palazzo Vecchio This visit will examine the vestiges of Arnolfo di Cambio's original project for the Palazzo Vecchio, prior to Vasari's broad interventions in the sixteenth century. Discussion will center on the organization and use of space as intended for the various councils of elected officials driving Florence's mercantile republic at the dawn of the fourteenth century.

WEDNESDAY



Florentine Painting in the Age of Giotto This lecture will explore the lives and legacies of late 13th-century Florentine painters including Cimabue, Giotto di Bondone along with those of their contemporaries. For the British Institute's Wednesday Evening Lecture Series, visit our website or find us on social media.

THURSDAY



VISIT: The Church of Ognissanti This visit will survey the major decorative programmes of the Umiliati turned Franciscan basilica of San Salvatore di Ognissanti in Florence produced prior to the church's post-Tridentine renovations.

FRIDAY



Popular Religion in Trecento Florence This lecture will explore the dynamic interaction of popular tradition with religious doctrine in Trecento Tuscany, as expressed in art, with particular attention to the influence of the mendicant orders, widely-circulated hagiographies such as Jacopus de Voragine's Golden Legend, as well as evidence from the customs and devotional objects of real-life men and women.

WEEK FOUR

MONDAY



Art, Politics and Pestilence in Trecento Florence This lecture will examine the dramatic changes in Florentine society, culture, and politics from 1348 to 1378. From its vigorous response to the Black Death and its aftermath - an unprecedented urban workers' rebellion known as the Ciompi Revolt - the Florentine guild government demonstrated a resilience and ability for finding creative solutions that would herald the birth of the Renaissance.

TUESDAY



VISIT: The Church of Santa Maria Novella This visit will survey the major decorative programmes of the Dominican basilica of Santa Maria Novella in Florence produced both before and after the 1349 Black Death.

WEDNESDAY



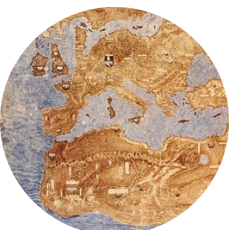
Post-Black Death Painting in Tuscany This lecture will investigate what happened to Florentine and Tuscan painting after the traumatic events of the plague: A rise in devotion to miraculous images, novel iconography, and a renewed attention to the decoration of family chapels.

THURSDAY



VISIT: The Church of Santa Croce This visit will offer an in-depth look at Giotto's revolutionary frescoes in the Bardi and Peruzzi chapels and Taddeo Gaddi's later Baroncelli chapel and Cimabue's damaged Crucifix recently re-located to the Sacristy. The visit will conclude with Gaddi's ground-breaking Last Supper in the refectory.

FRIDAY



Making Connections with Medieval Florence This lecture will offer a concluding selection of monuments and movements of medieval / post-classical art and architecture in Europe, Asia, Africa, America and Oceania, including Great Zimbabwe, Angkor Wat, Chichen Itza, Pueblo Bonito and Nan Madol.