Pompeian Wall Painting and Mythology
CLAS/FA 145B
Topics in Greek and Roman Art and Archaeology
Syllabus (draft of Aug. 5, 2016)

Brandeis University, Fall 2016
Tues. and Thurs., 5:00 - 6:20 p.m., Block V, Location TBA, possibly MCH G12
Instructor: Professor Ann Olga Koloski-Ostrow (Prof. AOK-O),
Chair, Department of Classical Studies
Office: Mandel Center for the Humanities, rm. 213, tel. 736-2183 (voice mail)
or 736-2180 (departmental office);
E-mail: aoko@brandeis.edu
Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 3:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. and by
appointment in Mandel Center for the Humanities, rm. 213.

CA (Course Assistant): Ruth Portes, Graduate M.A. Student in Ancient Greek
and Roman Studies
Email: rportes1@brandeis.edu
Rabb Graduate Center, room 359
Tel: TBA
Office Hours: Rabb Graduate Center, rm. 359, TBA and by appointment

This course satisfies the requirement for either the School of Creative Arts (CA)
or the School of Humanities (HUM), but not for both.

If you are a student with a documented disability on record at Brandeis
University and wish to have a reasonable accommodation made for you in
this class, please see Professor Koloski-Ostrow immediately.

Rationale of Course:

This course is about Roman, especially Pompeian, wall painting. We cover the
history of the development of Roman wall painting, the techniques and
technologies necessary to implement it, its distribution and the state of
preservation of its corpus across the Mediterranean, especially at Pompeii, the
best examples across Roman time (2nd c. BCE to 4th c. CE), its meaning,
especially of its mythological content, and its context (whether private houses,
palaces, temples, public buildings, baths, or tombs). As a principal learning
goal, students will become familiar with a substantial number of what we can
call the most famous examples of Roman (and Pompeian) wall paintings,
understand them in some detail, learn how to analyze and “read” them, and
see the influence they had on later paintings and styles after the Roman
period. The principal primary source we consult in the course, apart from the
wall paintings themselves, will be Pliny the Elder’s Natural History, especially
his chapters on the history of art, Books XXXIII through XXXVII. This work,
divided into 37 libri, or “books,” was completed, except for finishing touches,
in 77 CE. The work was dedicated to the Emperor Titus, who became emperor
just about two months before Pliny's death, which occurred during the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius on the Bay of Naples, possibly in August, 79 CE.

The subjects of Books XXXIII through XXXVII include minerals, precious stones, and metals, especially those used by Roman craftsmen in the production of art. In describing their uses, Pliny the Elder referred to famous artists and their creations, including wall paintings, and to Roman architectural styles and technology.

With the decline of the ancient world and the loss of the Greek texts on which Pliny the Elder had so heavily depended to write his own work, the *Natural History* became a substitute for a general education. We shall use him as an overarching guide for the history of wall painting. In the European Middle Ages many of the larger monastic libraries possessed copies of his work; these and many abridged versions ensured Pliny the Elder’s place in European literature. His authority was unchallenged, partly because of a lack of more reliable information and partly because his assertions were not and, in many cases, could not be tested.

**Required Texts:**

**Required and to be POSTED on LATTE:**


4. A variety of other articles, parts of ancient texts, and book chapters to be posted in LATTE over the course of the semester.

**Course Requirements:**
1. Students must be present (in mind and body) and participate as actively as possible during lectures, discussions, and any out-of-class activities or fieldtrips. Questions are always welcome and encouraged. Class attendance will be taken on a regular basis, especially at the beginning of the term so that your professor can get to know you. In every class students will receive a sign-in sheet for attendance. Please note that it quickly becomes apparent who is present and who is not from class sign-in sheets.

2. Students must complete all assigned readings (from required texts and from books on reserve or articles posted on LATTE). Appreciation and understanding of lectures and discussions will be greatly enhanced if reading assignments are finished by their due dates. This syllabus contains assignments from required
texts and from various books on the reserve for the semester. Since lectures are original creations, you are advised *not* to miss them. Many points made in them cannot be found in the required or reserve reading.

3. Students will complete one take-home midterm essay exam on Thurs., October 20, 2016. (If you must request an extension, it must be only for a valid MEDICAL or other SERIOUS reason, approved by your professor, preferably in ADVANCE.)

4. Before the final paper or project is due, you must also write a prospectus (summary of your plans) with a working bibliography, if relevant (directions forthcoming), due Thurs., November 3, 2016. The final project requires a sustained effort to be done well, hence this early due date for the prospectus. The final project or paper on Roman wall painting (7-8 pages for undergraduates and 8-10 pages for graduate students) is due on the last day of class, Tues., December 6, 2016. You will have ample opportunities to consult with your professor or our CA about this project and possible topics for it. You will lose one grade step for every day that your prospectus or final project is late (A+ to A to A- to B+—unless you have a medical or other truly valid excuse, presented IN ADVANCE, if at all possible). This final paper assignment replaces a final exam.

**Course Requirements with Approximate Grade Determination:**

1) Class attendance, class participation, field trips, and completion of reading assignments (20%)
2) Midterm Take-Home Exam Essay (due Thurs., Oct. 20, 2016) (30%)
3) Prospectus for final paper or project (due Thurs. Nov. 3, 2016) (20%)
4) Final Resarch Paper/Analysis of Mythological Wall Painting, 7-8 pages/ 8-10 pages or creative project (due Tues., Dec. 6, 2016) (30%)

Total: (100%)

**Academic Honesty (last, but hardly least!):**
You are expected to be honest in all of your academic work. Brandeis University policy on academic honesty is contained in your Student Handbook in section 5 under “Rights and Responsibilities.” Instances of cheating, plagiarism, or other alleged dishonesty will be reported to the Office of Campus Life for possible referral to the Student Judicial System. The adjudication process is also outlined in your Handbook. Potential consequences of academic dishonesty include (in addition to an “E” on the assignment) failure in the course, disciplinary probation, and suspension from the University. A record of any offense will remain in a student’s disciplinary file in the Office of Student Affairs throughout his or her career at Brandeis. Please know that I take this code very seriously. If you have any questions about my expectations, please ask me.
Lecture topics for the entire semester are listed by date below, along with due dates for assignments, field trips, special events, and special lectures. Readings are included, but may change slightly in the syllabus handed out on the first day of class.

Please contact me if you have questions about the readings.

**LECTURE AND/OR DISCUSSION TOPICS WITH READINGS:**

**AUGUST:**

**Thurs., Aug. 25**
Introduction to the Course, Readings, and to each other
Social significance of wall painting: examples from Etruria, Lucania, and Magna Graecia, origins of wall paintings (Greeks and before)

**Tues., Aug. 30**
The Corpus—where and why?
Pompeii and the Bay of Naples: An Introduction
Pompeii: The Roman House as a Context for Painting


**SEPTEMBER:**

**Thurs., Sept. 1**
Techniques of Wall Painting and Pompeian Decoration from Samnites to Sulla; Introduction to Pliny the Elder Film in class. (TBA)

**Source Reading:** Pliny the Elder, Introduction.

**[Monday, Sept. 5] No Classes**

**Tues., Sept. 6**
Major Workshops of the Pompeian Second Style: “The Porticus Style”; Early Mosaics

**Assigned Reading:** Ling, *RP*, Chapter 2, pp.12-22.

**Source Reading:** Vitruvius *De Architectura* 7.5.1-7 (Perseus website or Pollitt, pp. 127-12; Pliny the Elder, *NH* 36.48-50; 36. 1 09-110 (Pollitt,pp. 81-84).

**Suggested Graduate Reading:** Bruno, V.J. 1969.
Varro. *De Re Rustica*, Book 3. 2.3-2.17; Book 3. 5.8-5.18;
Plutarch, “Life of Lucullus” 33-43 (39 is in Pollitt, p. 83); Dawson,
1944, Chapters 1-2; Barbet, 1984, Chapters 1 and 2, pp. 1-80;
P.W. Lehmann. *Roman Wall Paintings from Boscoreale in the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thurs., Sept. 8</th>
<th>Brandeis Monday, no class</th>
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<tr>
<td>Tues., Sept. 13</td>
<td>Major Workshops of the Pompeian Second Style</td>
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<td>Stage Front Style and Second Style Megalographies</td>
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<td>(Villa of the Mysteries, for example)</td>
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<td><strong>Assigned Reading:</strong> Ling, <em>RP</em>, Chapter 3, pp. 23-31.</td>
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<td><strong>Source Reading:</strong> Vitruvius 7.5. 1-7; Pliny the Elder, <em>NH</em> 36. 4-8; 36. 113-115 (Pollitt, pp. 81-84).</td>
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<td><strong>Suggested Graduate Reading:</strong> A. M. G. Little. “A Roman Sourcebook for the Stage,” <em>AJA</em> 60 (1956): 27 ff. (Can be downloaded from AIA website.)</td>
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<td>Thurs., Sept. 15</td>
<td>Roman Public Buildings: Temples, Baths, Administrative Buildings, Tombs</td>
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<td>Grappling with Chronology of Wall Painting</td>
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<td><strong>Assigned Reading:</strong> Ling, <em>RP</em>, Chapter 6, pp. 101-107; Anderson, “Painting in Rome and Pompeii, 1-16.</td>
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<td><strong>Suggested Graduate Reading:</strong> Clarke, Ch 7, “Commemoration of the Dead,” 181-203 (posted in LATTE); Lehmann. 1953. Chapter 2. pp. 23-81.</td>
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<td>Tues., Sept. 20</td>
<td>From Second Style to Third</td>
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<td>Augustus and Egyptianizing Style</td>
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<td><strong>Assigned Reading:</strong> Ling, <em>RP</em>, Chapter 3, pp 31-51; Chapter 4, pp. 51-57; Ramage and Ramage, Chapter 2, 94-109.</td>
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<td><strong>Source Reading:</strong> Vitruvius. 7.5. 1-7.</td>
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<td>Thurs., Sept. 22</td>
<td>The Picture Gallery Room and Augustan Culture, including Tiberius’ Villas</td>
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| | **Assigned Reading:** Richardson, L. 1988, Chapter 15, pp.
221-241; Wallace-Hadrill, Chapter 1, “Reading the Roman House,”
3-16.

Source Reading: Cicero. Selections from the Letters
concerning art collecting (Pollitt, pp. 76-79)

Suggested Graduate Reading: Wallace-Hadrill, Chapter 2,
1962 or 1990, Introduction and Ch. I. pp. 9-16; Ch. 3. pp. 38-51;

Tues, Sept. 27  Luxury Real and Simulated: Imperial Pleasure Palaces
from Caligula to Nero and from Domitian to Hadrian


Suggested Graduate Reading: Elsner, 1994, Chapter 7.

Thurs., Sept. 29  More on Chronology and Content; Problems of
Third/Fourth Style Chronology.
Film and Discussion

Assigned Reading: Richardson, Chapter 12, 171-183.

OCTOBER:
[Mon., Oct. 3  No Classes, Rosh Hashana]

Tues., Oct. 4  No Classes, Rosh Hashana

Thurs., Oct. 6  Analysis of the Pompeian Fourth Style;
The Via di Mercurio Neighborhood;
Magistrates of the 70’s and their Houses.

Assigned Reading: Mau. 1904. Chs. 54-55. pp. 456-484;
Ling, RP, Chapter 5, pp. 71-100; Bulwer-Lytton, Chapter 3.

Suggested Reading in Social History: Jongman "The Dimension of Social Inequality," pp. 207-273; Wallace-Hadrill 1995, "Honor and Pleasure in the City".

*Sun., Oct. 9*  
Class trip to Harvard Art Museums (Details to follow.)

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**Tues., Oct. 11**  
Images of Villas and Gardens


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[**Wed., Oct. 12**]  
No Classes, Yom Kippur

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**Thurs., Oct. 13**  
Images of Spectacles: Theaters and Ampitheaters


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[**Mon., Oct. 17**]  
No Classes, Sukkot

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**Tues., Oct. 18**  
Mythological Landscapes: The Odyssey Frieze and Continuous Narrative

**Assigned Reading:** Ling, *RP*, pp. 107-111; If time, review plates in *Die Kunstsammlungen der Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana* Rom. 1969.

**Source Reading:** Homer. *Odyssey* Books 10-11.

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**Thurs., Oct. 20**  
MIDTERM TAKE-HOME ESSAYS DUE  
More Mythology: Other Stories in Continuous Narratives

Source Reading: Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 3. 138-252; more TBA.

*Sun., Oct. 23*  
Class trip to MFA  
(Details to follow in LATTE.)

**WEEK 9**


Tues., Oct. 25  
No class, Brandeis Monday, Simcat Torah

Thurs., Oct. 27  
More Mythology: Popular Third Style Subjects


Suggested Graduate Reading: Dawson. 1944. Chapter 4. pp. 116-179

**WEEK 10**

NOVEMBER

Tues., Nov. 1  
Mythological Ensembles

Assigned Reading: Thomson. 1961: pp. 36-77;

Source Reading: Petronius, *Satyricon*


*Thurs., Nov. 3*  
FINAL PAPER PROSPECTUSES/BIBLIOGRAPHIES DUE

Mythological Landscapes in Paint and Mosaics
More Fourth Style Mythology; Mythology in Mosaics


WEEK 11

Tues., Nov. 8  Film on Roman Wall Painting, Discussion

Thurs., Nov. 10  Sacral-idyllic Landscapes

**Assigned Reading:** Ling, *RP*, pp. 142-149; von Blanckenhagen. 1962. pp. 18-37; Bianchi Bandinelli, 1970. pp. 185-194 (about the Ara Pacis)


WEEK 12

Tues., Nov. 15  Villa Landscapes and Seascapes

**Assigned Reading:** Ling, *RP*, 1978: 1-16.

**Source Reading:** Pliny *NH* 35. 116-117 (Pollitt. pp. 115-116); Pliny Letters 2.17; 5.6; Statius *Silvae* 1.3 and 2.1

**Suggested Graduate Reading:** Rostovstev. 1904: 103-126.

Thurs., Nov. 17  Mosaic Landscape: The Palestrina Mosaic

**Assigned Reading:** Whitehouse. 1976. pp. 1-10.

**Source Reading:** Pliny *NH* 36.189 (Pollitt. p. 107).

WEEK 13

Tues., Nov. 22  Post-Pompeian Decorations in Rome, Ostia, and the Provinces; Late Roman Wall Paintings

**Assigned Reading:** Ling, *RP*, Chapters 8 and 9.

Wed., Nov. 23 - Fri., Nov. 25, Thanksgiving Vacation

WEEK 14

Tues., Nov. 29  Painters, Workshops and The Question of “Greek Originals” in Fourth Style Mythology; Philostratus and Literary Viewing

**Assigned Reading:** Ling, *RP*, pp. 128-144; Chapter 11; Bianchi Bandinelli. pp. 110-116.

**Source Reading:** Philostratus *Imagines*.


DECEMBER:
The Discovery of the Golden House and its Importance to Renaissance Decoration; Seventeenth Century Discoveries and Descriptions

Assigned Reading: Gombrich, The Sense of Order, Chapter 10, "The Edge of Chaos."

Suggested Graduate Reading: Moormann on the Golden House

* Tues., Dec. 6
  FINAL PAPERS/PROJECTS DUE
  The History of Campanian Excavation; Publishing Pompeii: The Development of the Museo Borbonico, Le antichità di Ercolano and the Influence of Pompeii in European Art


CUT AND ADD TO SEPARATE DOCUMENT?
Possible topic ideas for Final Student Papers on Roman Wall Painting
(Mostly utilizing Third and Fourth Style wall paintings from Pompeii, Herculaneum, and the Villas of the Bay of Naples)

Portraits (male and/or female)

Specific Myths
(Some classic examples: Abandonment of Ariadne, Armor of Achilles, Perseus and Danae, Europa, Narcissus, Mars and Venus, Rape of Cassandra and Return of Helen, Trojan Horse or Trojan War, Theseus and Minotaur, Pasiphae and the Bull, Medea and her Children, Helle and Phrixus and Golden Ram, Hero and Leander (IX 5, 14), Rescue of Andromeda by Perseus (VII 16, 2, Casa del Marinaio and VI 10, 2, Casa dei Cinque scheletri), Death of Niobe’s Children, Amazons fighting
Greeks (VI 8, 3, Casa del Poeta tragico), Leda and the Swan (IX 2, 7, Casa della fontana d’amore)

Carpet patterns/ border designs/ grand panoramic architectural designs with perspectives and columns

Animals (dogs, cats, fish, birds, donkeys, horses, or exotic animals from Africa)

Mythological Monsters (especially in story of Andromeda and Perseus)

External and Internal Audience Perspective (Robing and Disrobing, for example)

Clothing (for women, men, children, slaves, shop keepers, prostitutes, et al.)

Hairstyles and/or Jewelry

Musical Instruments (tambourines, drums, flutes, lyres)

Objects from Daily Life (kitchen pots, baskets, looms, candelabra, household furnishings, perfume dispensers, theatrical masks, coins, sacks, coin counters, styluses, tabellae, mirrors, dice, hairpins, and the like)

Military Themes and/or Dress

Religious Themes (altars, fires, religious instruments, gods and goddesses, ritual practices)

Lararia (genii, snakes, altars)

Food (fruits, meats, fish, bread, drinks)

Street scenes or scenes from commerce (fullers, bakers, shop keepers, scenes inside bars or thermopolia)

Precious gems and other indicators or wealth (columns, crowns, ancestor masks, precious weapons)

Gladiators

Bath Life

Theatrical Life (actors, masks, stage sets)

Winged or flying women and/or Cupids—decoration or some other significance?

Architectural elements, meanders, floral patterns, geometric patterns
Scenes of Love-making (brothel and Suburban Baths and private houses)

Sacro-idyllic Landscapes

Dionysus and Satyrs and Menads