

Assignment 3

Although Roman architecture exhibits both Greek and Etruscan influences, Roman builders revolutionized architectural design through the development of concrete, which allowed for unprecedented shaping of space through arches. Discuss the disadvantages and exceptional qualities of concrete as used by Roman architects through a comparison of the Greek *Parthenon* 447 - 438 BCE, with the Roman *Pantheon* 118 - 125 CE. What were the central concerns and focal points for Iktinos and Kallikrates when designing the *Parthenon*. How did the concerns of the architects of the *Pantheon* differ and manifest in differing focal points for the monuments? How was space conceived in each monument? How does the handling of space in these buildings reflect the sacred functions and world views of the civilizations that built them?

- or -

Attend a professional exhibition that includes works from the prehistoric period to the Middle Ages. The Getty Museum, LACMA, the Fowler Museum, the Huntington Museum, the Norton Simon Museum, and the Bowers Museum regularly feature exhibitions of prehistoric to medieval works. Plan ahead by checking museum websites to be sure that relevant works will be on view when you plan to visit.

Choose one work seen in person and develop a visual analysis. Visual description involves communicating what you see and feel when viewing a work of art to a general reader who may or may not have experienced the work themselves. Assume that your reader has a background in art, but has not seen the work you are discussing in person. Begin your description with the basics - let your reader know the artist's name, the title of the work (being sure to distinguish the title in your text by italicizing or bolding your font), and the date the work was made. Describe what you see, drawing the viewer's attention to key elements (objects, figures, symbols). Discuss the work's subjects. What are the main components, what is represented, who is portrayed, where does the story take place? While you may want to keep your visual description concise, remember that you cannot assume that what you are seeing and experiencing is universal.

Next, identify important formal elements (shapes, textures, lines, colors, etc.) in the work. While this may feel descriptive, what you're focusing on in this section are the qualities and characteristics of compositional elements such as *atmospheric* (over) perspective, *asymmetrical* balance, *irregular* rhythm, *organic* shapes, *faint* line work, and *bold* color harmonies. The handouts on design and the elements of art from the Getty Museum may be helpful. Finally, connect your private experience with the work and its visual elements. What meaning do the objects, subjects, and symbols suggest? What meaning is conveyed by the work's form and visual elements? What story is told, or view of the world expressed by this work of art?

Please include a photograph of yourself at the museum with your essay.

- or -

Compose a timeline that includes at least ten key historical events (political, cultural and/or social) from the periods we have studied this semester - Renaissance to early Modern periods. Incorporate at least ten important works of art (properly identified) that exemplify the artistic concerns of the era. Include concise explanatory text to connect the key events with the exemplary works of art you have identified. Your timeline should incorporate both text and images. How well you organize this data is one element of your grade.

Rather than consider all of the history we have studied this semester, you may choose to focus on one relevant period. The interactive timeline, *The Top 50 Works of Modern Art* on artstory.org provides an excellent model.

Please provide a CMS Bibliography to cite at least two credible sources of information you consulted while developing your timeline. This can be printed, glued to, or follow your timeline.

- or -

Find and photograph a building in your immediate environment (on campus, surrounding cities, or your home town). The building may be civic or domestic, famous or unknown, recently constructed or historic. Find images in your textbook or online of buildings constructed from the Renaissance to Modern periods that incorporate similar details, decorative programs, floor plans, construction methods, and/or architectural styles. Using your photo as the base, create a diagram that outlines the architectural elements and their references. Include descriptive text that identifies each element, explains its context, and considers its function. Please also include floorplans of at least two architectural works in your analysis.

Be creative! A diagram doesn't have to be two-dimensional - it can be a three-dimensional model, a Powerpoint presentation or a computer animation. You may choose to form small groups of two or three to collaborate on this assignment.