M. Shanks, “Archaeology and the forms of history” in Hodder, ed., Interpreting Archaeology

I am arguing:

for the primacy of interpretation, rather than a past out there and back then;
for a dynamic unity of past and present in the crafting of culture and history;
for accepting the loss and decay of the past;
and therefore the obligation of restitution, our redeeming act of reconstruction.

History sweeps a great pile of debris at our feet. We can hoard fetishistically,
be buried by the increasing mass, or use the rich references, evocations and
knowledges in our cultural self-production.

This course examines Greek and Roman sculpture and the history of its survival in western
art. Many people consider sculpture the ultimate form of Greek and Roman art. Statuary
types created in Antiquity have been continuously adopted by all subsequent cultures in the
west, from Mediaeval times through the present. How was this sculpture made, displayed,
and viewed in Antiquity? How do we see it today?

Required Book
John Onians, Classical Art and the Culture of Greece and Rome

Course Web Sites
http://www.oberlin.edu/~skane/courses/art_222/intro.html
http://www.oberlin.edu/~jromano/images/grkrom.html

Course Requirements
A $4.00 lab fee is required for this course. All work must be completed in order to receive
a passing grade.

Projects
I. Carving project (CR/NE) Due 12 September
II. Sculpture analysis and reconstruction (15% of grade) Due 26 September
III. Iconography project (10% of grade) Due 5 October
IV. Critical Analysis project (30% of grade) Due 19 November

Cumulative Final Examination:
Tuesday 18 Dec 9 am (45% of grade)

Office Hours
Wed 9–11 am or by appointment
Part I: Archaic and Classical Art
Read: Onians chapters 1, 2, 3

September
5 Sculpture culture
Recommended reading:
M. Marvin, “Roman Sculptural Reproductions or Polykleitos: the Sequel” 7-28 in A. Hughes and E. Ranfit, Sculpture and its Reproductions

7 Body language

10 Tooling the body: field trip to Fairplay Studios (by car)
Recommended reading:

12 Looking east (Project I due)

17 Revealing gods
Recommended reading:

19 & 21 Revealing men

24 Library research talk by Barbara Prior for Project III

26 AMAM visit (Project II due)

28 Revealing men cont’d

October
1, 3 & 5 Goddesses and women (Project III due 5 Oct)
Recommended reading:

8, 10, 12, 15 & 17 Cult and politics

19 Breaking the Classical mould

Autumn break

Part II: The sensation of Hellenistic art
Read: Onians chapter 4

October 29, 31, & November 2 The patronage of kings

Part III: Rome: the wonder of the ancient world
Read: Onians chapters 5, 6, 7
November
5 & 7 Where did portraiture begin? Putting a name to a face.
   Recommended reading:
   S. Nodelman, “How to Read a Roman Portrait”
9 AMAM visit
12 Library research talk by Barbara Prior for Project IV
14 & 16 Cultural traffic and the merchandising of art
   Recommended reading:
   E. D’Ambra, ed., Roman Art in Context
19 & 21 Roman myth and Augustan triumph (Project IV due)
23 no class (Thanksgiving)
26, 28 & 30 Rome as collector

December
3, 5 & 7 Sizing up power: Masters of Art and Emperors galore
10 The Roman Nude: Loving Antinous
   Read:
   J. Winckelmann, “Reflections on the Imitation of Greek Works in Painting and
   Sculpture” 31-39 and W. Davis, “Winckelmann Divided: Mourning the Death of
   Art History” 40-51 in D. Preziosi, The Art of Art History: A Critical Reader
12 The world of art at your fingertips: Hadrian’s Villa at Tivoli
14 Rome as monument and ruin
18 Cumulative Final Examination 9 am

Projects
Project I: Carving Project
Due: 12 Sept (CR/NE)
   Useful Reading:
   The hand-out for this assignment provides a brief explanation of the Egyptian process
   of making a statue. Early Greek sculptors adapted Egyptian carving techniques and
   used a canon of proportions (expressed in a grid system) that was scratched on the
   surface of the block before the carving process was begun.
   Assignment:
   Carve a statue of a human figure (either seated or standing) out of your assigned
   foam block.

Project II: Analysis and Reconstruction of a Greek Sculpture
Due: 26 September (15% of grade)
   Length: 3–5 pages plus reconstruction
   Useful Reading:
   S. Barnet, A Short Guide to Writing About Art, ch. 2 (on permanent reference in
   the Art Library)
Assignment:
Go into the AMAM Goblet Room and study a white marble male torso on display there—the “Pothos”—inv. no. 41.43.
Write a visual analysis of this statue.
Provide salient facts about the work: its material, approximate height, and present condition.
Then analyse its original stance, overall appearance, and visual impact on the viewer. Your visual-analysis paper should be an analytical assessment of the figure. Use your own eyes—this is an exercise in primary observation, not secondary source research.
Draw a reconstruction of the figure based on your observations.

Project III: Iconography Exercise
Due: 5 October (10% of grade)
Length: 2–4 pages plus image
Useful Resource: Class lecture by Barbara Prior, Art Librarian on 24 September
Assignment:
Using the research tools provided by Art Librarian Barbara Prior on 24 September, analyse the major iconographic significance of one of the following Graeco-Roman deities:
- Aphrodite
- Apollo
- Artemis
- Athena
- Dionysos (Dionysus)
- Herakles (Hercules)
Provide a visual image of your chosen deity (from any period in art history) and a synopsis of one myth or story that best reflects their character and/or powers.

Project IV: Comparative Critical Analysis
Due: 19 November (45% of grade)
Length: 10 pages
Useful Resource: Class lecture by Barbara Prior, Art Librarian on 12 November
Read:
J. Onians, Classical Art and the Cultures of Greece and Rome:
  Ch. 2 – Greek Art and the Culture of Conflict
  Ch. 3 – Greek Art and the Culture of Competition
A. Stewart, Art, Desire, and the Body in Ancient Greece:
  Ch. 4 – Three Attic Ideologies
  Ch. 5 – Of War and Love
  Ch. 6 – Womanufacture
Assignment:
Using the research tools provided by Art Librarian Barbara Prior on 12 November, do a comparative critical analysis of the information provided in selected chapters of these two books.
Your analysis should include:
1) a content analysis (the intended audience, objective reasoning, coverage, writing style, and an assessment of its evaluative reviews
2) an annotated bibliography for further reading and research on the subjects covered in the selected chapters of these books