

UGA Cortona Spring 2027

Painting: Color & Application

ARST 3115

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01 Italy puts centuries of color in front of you

02 You test what you see in the studio

03 You understand color as your own

Your UGA Cortona semester places you before works by Duccio, Piero della Francesca, Luca Signorelli, and the colorists of the Sienese and Florentine schools. These painters spent their careers solving the exact problems of chroma, value, and optical mixing that you're learning to solve. This course asks: what happens to your understanding of color when your reference isn't a swatch book, but instead a fresco that's an arm's length away?

Painting: Color and Application is a studio course built upon the color theory and painting fundamentals that you've previously explored in its prerequisites. The same technical approaches you'll see firsthand during our excursions will support your painting practice, because every studio lesson has a physical, observable source.

Historical technique, contemporary practice

This isn't merely an art history course with a studio component. Instead, each project links aspects of Italian painting with specific painting problems:

- **Limited chroma paintings** provide a time-tested foundation
- **Opaque vs. transparent** paint applications build complex painted surfaces
- **Direct vs. indirect** paint applications achieve specific pictorial statements
- **Glazing and velatura** push you toward more subtle color manipulation
- **Building pictorial space with color and value** provides an expressive tool for both observational and abstract compositions

You'll leave Cortona with both technical skill and historical fluency. You'll also learn to develop complex color relationships in your own paintings, putting technique in service of your own contemporary color sense. The results go on display alongside your classmates' work at **La Mostra**, a public exhibition in Cortona at semester's end.

Why this class is unique to UGA Cortona

- **Your reference collection is the real thing.** Instead of deriving color theory from reproductions and textbook plates, you'll stand in front of Piero's frescoes in Arezzo, Duccio's altarpieces in Siena, and the Uffizi's comprehensive collection in Firenze. Actual surfaces, actual light, actual painted ideas.
- **The excursions are studio research.** Roma, Orvieto, and San Gimignano aren't breaks from the coursework. Instead they're sources for the color vocabulary you bring back to the easel that same week.
- **You're experiencing the light that made these colors famous.** Tuscan light is part of why these paintings look the way they do. Observing and working in it changes how you see color before you even pick up your brush.

Questions?

Email me at mtaggart@uga.edu if you'd like to make sure this class is the right fit for you.