



**Milan: City of Art  
Study Group 550  
Spring 2021**

Welcome to the new course on Milan's art and architecture. My hope is that it will show how the visual arts were sponsored, practiced and collected in Milan (and the region of Lombardy of which it is today the capital). The eight-session course will begin with the transformations that occurred in Late Roman Antiquity and take us up to when Rome again became the capital of a unified Italy in 1871. The general outline of the course looks as follows:

March 1 : Early Christian Art & Architecture: from the late 3<sup>rd</sup> to the beginning of the 5<sup>th</sup> centuries.

March 8 : Milan caught in the crosscurrents of Roman and Germanic interests: towards a Romanesque style with a Lombard accent.

March 15 : Il Duomo, Italy's largest Gothic church, and Santa Maria delle Grazie, a church and monastery marked by Late Gothic and Renaissance architectural practices and innovations.

March 22 : Two Renaissance masters in Milan: Donato Bramante and Leonardo da Vinci in Milan.

March 29 : The Lombard School of Painting.

April 5 : Counter-Reformation, Spanish governance, and Baroque art in the Duchy of Milan

April 12 : Milan's taste for Neo-Classicism in the early years of Austrian rule and later French occupation.

April 19 : Risorgimento, Nationalism and the emergence of Romanticism: Milan's role in Italy's long struggle for independence as reflected in the visual arts.

Recommended readings: *Neo-Classicism* by Hugh Honour (1968, reprinted with revisions in 1977, and later reprintings). Please note that this title does not deal specifically with Milan but covers a period that had a noticeable impact on the city, as seen by the designs of La Scala, the Palazzo Reale (now a space for temporary exhibitions), and Villa Belgiojoso Bonaparte (today the Gallery of Modern Art). An

elegant writer, Hugh Honour succeeds in providing a brilliant survey and analysis of neo-classical artists and architects. The text is not required reading but as an introduction to how to think and write about art, *Neo-Classicism* is invaluable. (Aesthetics and art criticism were established in the period described by Honour.)

*Cities of Art: Milan*, edited by Roberta D'Adda and Massimo Zanella (SKIRA, 2015), is a guide book that I recommend if you plan to visit Milan. It is structured along eight walking itineraries through the city and offers a wealth of information and suggestions. Incidentally, this is not a restaurant/hotel guide.

Erich Keel