

Writing Assignments #9, 10, and 11: Analysis of Chosen Work of Art

On Thursday, March 28th, we will be travelling as a class to the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art. This assignment asks you to prepare for our visit by choosing one work of art housed at the museum about which you will write your Midterm in the form of a take-home essay.

The assignment will be completed in three stages:

- 1) For Tuesday, March 24th, you will turn a two-page paper describing the historical context around your work of art. This will entail a good amount of research, and will lay the groundwork for your actual viewing of the work.
- 2) The final version of your Midterm will be due on Thursday, April 2nd. There will be no drafts involved beyond the assignment for March 24th.

Midterm Take-Home Essay Prompt:

If works of literature such as L'Œuvre describe works of art—absent images employed towards a textual end—, how does the work of art you have chosen employ absent texts in constructing its visual narrative ?

There are five key components of this assignment :

- 1- An analysis how *ekphrasis*, or textual descriptions evoking visual (mental) images or describing works of art, functions in *L'Œuvre* (feel free to use your redaction on *ekphrasis* in *L'Œuvre* here if it fits into your overall discussion)
- 2- A *formal analysis* of the work of art you have chosen to analyze
- 3- An *iconographical analysis* of this work
- 4- A discussion of how the work of art employs an « absent text » in its formal and iconographical presentations
- 5- A comparison of #4 and #1

While these five do not need to be separated out as I have done here, they all need to be present in varying degrees in your paper. You may choose to combine elements (number 2 and 3, for example), reorder them, or somehow otherwise change the format given by the list above.

You should, as always, have a compelling, original, and well-proven argument.

The key to this assignment is to be specific. In other words, employ specific citations in your discussion of the novel ; point to specific visual details in your analysis of the work of art. If you are struggling with using citations well in your writing, come see me.