

Module Title: Art and Power in Early Modern Europe

Module Code: HST6219

Credit Value: 15

Level: 6

Pre-requisite modules:

Content Description

What power does art have? How can it be used to control, manipulate, entice, and inspire? This module offers students the chance to explore the power of art in one of the most dynamic periods of European history and artistic production – from the royal and papal courts of the seventeenth century, through the Counter-Reformation and the Enlightenment, to the French Revolution at the end of the eighteenth century. In this module, students will encounter iconic sites (Versailles, the Vatican) and artists (Caravaggio, Bernini, Gentileschi, Rubens, Velazquez, Boucher, David, Vigée-Lebrun). Students will also learn to analyse different kinds of objects and spaces (sculpture, paintings, palaces, churches), go on museum and site visits, and think about power in a range of discourses (politics, religion, sex, science, gender, and money). From the churches of baroque Rome to the toppling statues of Paris in the Revolution, what can art tell us about the histories of power in Europe?