

Art and Identity in Today's Italy

Literature and Art are fundamental elements for truly getting to know other cultures and languages. When one studies a foreign language, one doesn't only need to talk about practical matters but also needs to understand and participate in the social and cultural life of a given place. To truly get to know a new culture one must study texts and art in relation to surroundings and in relation to daily life, as they go hand in hand, touching points of politics, identity, gender, race, religion, sexuality, immigration and so much more. In this course we will look at various aspects of Italian culture today, building on a foundation of history and reflecting on how the past and present come together. We will do this through literature, film, museum visits and visits to other cultural centers. We will try to build our understanding of Italy not only as outsiders looking in from afar, but as participants and vital players in the life of Florence. Contemporary Italian culture gives us a lens through which to understand Italy past, present, and future in all its complexity and detail. In this course we will visit many places and meet many people who can offer us unique understandings of the "Bel Paese" and the city of Florence. We will touch on a variety of topics, allowing us to see Italy not only in one light, and to understand how Italy can move further towards its global future.