The Baroque style of art is typically thought to have originated in Italy at the turn of the seventeenth century and spread throughout much of Europe as artists strove to surpass the Roman school of late Renaissance art.

Alongside this traditional account, students in this course will explore how the Baroque operated as a global style, the traces of which can be identified in various parts of the world from 1600 to 1750. By adopting a global perspective, we will endeavor to understand how and why the style appeared in so many regions and what its distinct meanings were. We will also investigate the art historical origins of the term ‘Baroque’ and question the term’s continued efficacy.

Our focus will be on comparing artworks from different parts of the world in an attempt clarify their local meanings. Important themes include cultural contact, evangelization, hybridity or the contamination of style and practice, and culturally constructed notions of race and gender.