The Naked and the Nude
(An Inquiry on Nudity in Architecture, Art, and Philosophy)

Nudity: an Iconological Dilemma

We typically perceive architecture as being naked when it is unadorned, or when it reveals its structure, or when its material is rough, or when its expression is extremely frugal. A nude architecture is therefore many different things at once. Yet the concept of nude (or naked) architecture is seemingly apparent to everyone. The fact is, even in architecture, nudity is a mystery. St. Augustine recognized this dilemma and so, when asked why a naked body could seem both demure and lustful, he answered that a chaste nudity is not naked, but is dressed in the invisible mantle of grace.

This course will investigate one of the greatest iconological mysteries of today, as well as of the past: that of nudity.