Analytical Assignment #6 (Art Gallery)

Instructions
This assignment has three parts, in which you will:

a) Post to Bb a response to the prompt – due by midnight on Sunday, 11/14 (20 pts)
b) Participate in a conversation in class on Monday, 11/15 (10 pts)
c) Post your writing assignment (a blog entry) via SafeAssign by Friday, 11/18 (70 pts)

The focus of this assignment is comparison among visual representations of a story from myth (in this case, Aeneas’ departure from Troy). By looking closely at the images, you can see interpretation at work, through the details the artist includes, the compositional design, and the setting/medium for the depiction. Aeneas always leaves Troy, but not always with the same meaning or impact. This assignment moves toward understanding that every representation, in any medium, of a myth is an interpretation of the myth.

Goals
This worksheet addresses four of the intellectual goals listed on the syllabus:

1) situate Greek and Roman myths in the cultural framework of the people who told them
2) understand and use a technical vocabulary for ancient literature and art
3) discern among and evaluate competing claims or approaches to myths or to the problems they explore
4) understand myth’s context in and dependence on the culture and individual who tell it
5) be able to cite properly ancient texts, ancient artworks and material remains, and secondary sources

Strategies
The first part of this involves some web searching on complicated research sites, so please give yourself time to figure out the websites. We give you lots of guidance below. You’ll visit those same sites again for Part 3.

Part 1: Online
Sometime before midnight on Sunday, Nov 14, visit two websites (linked below). The first (Beazley) is an archive of Classical art. It is not comprehensive – it doesn’t have every ancient artwork – but does have a searchable database. The second (numismatics) is an archive of ancient coins in the American Numismatic Society’s huge collection. Here’s the prompt:

In each database, you’re to search for and choose three images of Aeneas escaping Troy carrying Anchises on his back. Save the images (so you don’t have to go back and get them later) and post them to Bb in your small group (if you can’t save them, you can copy and paste them into a thread). With each image, please put citation and caption information; details for this are below the links.

http://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/index.htm
Click on “pottery database” then “search without logging in”
In the “description” field, enter “Anchises” (too many results w/“Aineios”) Then click on “browse” at the bottom of the page. Next page, “images” tab. A set of images will pop up. Click an image for details, zoom, other angles.

http://numismatics.org/

Click on “research” then “online resources” then “mantis” “How to cite” information available on the “online resources” page

- Citation: To cite a coin, give the ANS number (usually in a format such as “ANS 1967.172.35”). To cite a vase painting, it’s standard to use the Beazley number. This can be found in each artifact’s record; it’s the first “Publication Record” and the number at the end is the citation, e.g., “Beazley 658.124.”
- Caption: Give subject (e.g., Aeneas carrying Anchises), artifact type (Roman silver denarius/Athenian black-figure vase), date, where it is now.

Part 2: In class
In class on Monday, Nov 15, discuss the three slides that will be on the screens. One will be a Greek vase; one a Roman coin; and the third, a representation from another medium (sculpture, gemstone, wall painting, etc.). In the second half of class, I’ll replace the first two images (the Greek vase and Roman coin) with two further images for you to discuss. The questions you should consider are the ones below, but don’t limit yourself to the ones below. Time permitting, we will share some of our ideas on the final question.

- What details are emphasized in the image, and what is suppressed?
- Describe the composition (the arrangement of the image), as if to someone who’s not looking at it.
- Describe the medium – vase, coin, sculpture – how would it be used? When might it be seen, and by what sorts of people?
- Consider what message or meaning the images might convey to the viewer.

Part 3: Turn in
On Friday, Nov 18, post to SafeAssign a blog entry (in MS Word format) on three visual images of Aeneas fleeing Rome, a sort of “virtual exhibit” that includes the images with captions (see below) and text that teaches the visitor how to “read” those images as complex interpretations of or responses to this mythic event (imagine it as “wall text” in a museum). One of your images must be a vase, another a coin, and the third can be from any medium and need not be a work of ancient art. Your blog should assume an audience who is intelligent but not necessarily familiar with all the details and sources for this myth. Your blog should be 600-700 words plus captions (and images).

Here is an example of a good blog “virtual gallery.” https://blogs.lt.vt.edu/classicaltradition/. Note that each blog entry in this example is around 400-500 words, plus images. Note also that we wish you to provide fuller citations and captions than this blog example.