Art History 271: Visual Culture in East Asia (China, Korea, Japan)

Syllabus and Schedule - Spring 2008
Julia Sapin

Course Description

This course explores visual cultures in China, Korea, and Japan over the past four millennia. Within this vast expanse of visual representation, we will trace transformations brought on by successive waves of cultural influx and examine how those influences merged with pre-existing traditions within each culture. The course will proceed chronologically (for the most part) in each cultural area, which will help give you a sense of cultural developments within individual cultures and understand the ways in which these developments built on one another, within each culture and from one culture to the next. Weekly topics will focus on specific trends in painting, architecture, sculpture, and other media, as they relate to their religious, social, and cultural settings. As we progress through the course, we will visit and revisit certain thematic issues such as representation of the divine, transformation of styles across cultures, and construction of cultural identity through visual representation. You will also get a sense for some of the different career paths and activities in the field of art history through discussion-board "scenarios" introduced in each section.

Course Objectives

- Familiarize yourself with East Asian visual cultures and some understanding of the religious, social, and cultural environments within which they were created
- Practice visual analysis, which will help further your understanding of the field of visual culture studies
- Get a glimpse of career options and professional activities in the field of art history
- Develop critical thinking and writing skills, which will help further your understanding of the course material as well as subject matter beyond the purview of this class

You can achieve these objectives by attending class and conscientiously preparing for exams. Studying images used in lecture is highly recommended as a way to review material from lecture and discussion. Images, study guides, and other materials will be available via Blackboard, which can be accessed through http://mywestern.wwu.edu

Course Requirements

Three exams (China, Korea, Japan), each 100 points, for a total of 300 points. Exams will be multiple choice and essay format. Participation in online discussions, which will help prepare you for the essay question on each exam, will count for 10 of each exam's 100 points (more info in class).

Readings will be posted electronically on the Western Library online site.

*NO MAKEUP EXAMS WILL BE GIVEN without proof of emergency verified by the Student Health Center or the Office of the Dean of Students.*

Grade Scale

\[
\begin{align*}
282-300 &= A \\
270-281 &= A- \\
264-269 &= B+ \\
252-263 &= B \\
240-251 &= B- \\
234-239 &= C+ \\
222-233 &= C \\
210-221 &= C- \\
178-209 &= D \\
177 \text{ and below} &= F
\end{align*}
\]
**Lecture Schedule**

For best results, do the readings before class.

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readations</th>
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<tr>
<td>Tues., April 1</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
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| Thurs., April 3   | **Chinese Ritual Arts: Shang and Zhou Bronzes**            | *Craig Clunas, "Art in the Tomb," in *Art in China*
|                   | **Read**                                                   |                                                                            |
| Tues., April 8    | **Qin and Han Funerary Arts: Burials Fit for Kings and Queens** | *The Analects of Confucius,* trans. Arthur Waley *The Way of Life* or *Dao De Jing* (Tao Te Ching) of Laozi (Lao Tzu), trans. Stephen Addiss and Stanley Lombardo, available through Google Books (Google "Tao Te Ching Addiss"); focus on texts not introduction
|                   | *Suggested (not required) background on Confucianism and Daoism:* | http://www.wsu.edu/~dee/CHPHIL/CHPHIL.HTM                                |
| Thurs., April 10  | **Post 1 due**                                            |                                                                            |
|                   | **The Rise of Buddhist Arts**                             | *Richard Robinson et al., The Buddhist Religions: A Historical Introduction*
<p>|                   | <strong>Read</strong>                                                   |                                                                            |
|                   | <strong>Read</strong>                                                   |                                                                            |
| Thurs., April 17  | <strong>Post 2 due</strong>                                            |                                                                            |
|                   | <strong>Read</strong>                                                   |                                                                            |
| Tues., April 22   | <strong>Contemporary Chinese Art</strong>                              |                                                                            |
| Thurs., April 24  | <strong>Exam I: China</strong>                                         |                                                                            |
| Tues., April 29   | <strong>Contemporary Korean arts Read all about Do-ho Suh:</strong>    | <em><a href="http://www.pbs.org/art21/artists/suh/index.html">http://www.pbs.org/art21/artists/suh/index.html</a></em>                        |</p>
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<tr>
<td>Thurs., May 1:</td>
<td>Post 1 due Korean Cultural Origins: Neolithic to Iron-Age Ceramics and Bronzes</td>
<td>Andrew C. Nahm, &quot;Early Korea,&quot; in <em>A Panorama of 5000 Years: Korean History</em></td>
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<td>Tues., May 6:</td>
<td>Courty Trappings of the Three Kingdoms and the Rise of Buddhist Arts</td>
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<td>Thurs., May 8:</td>
<td>Post 2 due Celadons and Sutras of the Unified Silla and Koryo (Goryeo) Dynasties</td>
<td>Jane Portal, &quot;Koryo Period,&quot; in <em>Korea: Art and Archaeology</em></td>
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| Tues., May 13: | Interior and Exterior Landscapes of the Choson (Joseon) Dynasty | from the Metropolitan Museum website:  
http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/mowa/hd_mowa.htm  
http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/yang/hd_yang.htm |
| Thurs., May 15: | Exam II: Korea |                                                                      |
| Tues., May 20: | Japanese Beginnings: Jomon, Yayoi and Kofun ceramics; Ise Shrine | **Discussion text:**  
Read a selection of poems from Kenneth Rexroth, *One Hundred Poems from the Japanese*, available through Google Books |
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<tr>
<td>Tues., June 3</td>
<td>The Burgeoning of Popular Culture: The Edo Period</td>
<td>Read: Christine Guth, &quot;Mapping the Artistic Landscape,&quot; in Art of Edo Japan: The Artist and the City, 1615-1868</td>
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<td>Thurs., June 7</td>
<td>Contemporary Japan: Art in the &quot;Global Image Stream&quot;</td>
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<td>Thurs., June 12, 1-3 pm</td>
<td>Exam III: Japan (during scheduled final time, but NOT cumulative)</td>
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