CIEE Kyoto, Japan

Course name: Japanese Art History  
Course number: AHIS 3001 KYJA  
Programs offering course: Ancient and Modern Japan  
Language of instruction: English  
U.S. Semester Credits: 3  
Contact Hours: 45  
Term: Spring 2020

Course Description

This course spans a range of mediums and critical issues in Japanese art from the nineteenth century to the present, including its relationship to the visual cultures of the rest of Asia, Europe, and the United States. We will analyze the key moments in which artists have attempted to negotiate Japan’s complex history, engage the tradition vs. modernity dichotomy, and/or blend Eastern and Western visualities. Emphasis is placed upon developing students’ skills in visual analysis, as well as on helping them understand the work of art in its physical, historical, and social context.

Learning Objectives

By completing this course, students will be able to:

- Distinguish and analyze the formal characteristics of Japanese works of art.
- Explain the significant developments in the history of modern and contemporary Japanese art.
- Use vocabulary required to identify and describe selected differences of style and movement.
- Contextualize and deconstruct how Japanese visual culture and society interact with each other through various techniques and institutions of production, presentation, distribution, and reception.

Course Prerequisites

Previous completion of an introductory course related to art history / Japanese history is recommended.

Methods of Instruction

This course will incorporate lectures, discussions, readings, field research, and analyses of works of Japanese art.
Assessment and Final Grade

- Class Participation  15%
- Exhibition Report  15%
- Midterm Exam  20%
- Research Essay  25%
- Final Exam  25%

Course Requirements

Class Participation
You are expected to follow CIEE’s attendance and participation policies as outlined in the CIEE Academic Manual for students.

Exhibition Report
Students must attend an art exhibit (information about current offerings will be shared in class and on Canvas) and share with the rest of the class a description of 1) the venue, 2) the set-up for viewing the exhibition and spectator behavior, and 3) the art work on display. The report should be 1200 to 1400 words in length, broken down equally between the three aspects of the report.

Midterm Exam
The midterm exam will be partly based on the identification of works previously viewed in class. The student will have to memorize the artist’s name (when applicable), the title of the work, the format, the medium and the period. There will be questions on basic vocabulary of important Japanese terms, as well as the comparison of two or three pairs of slides on the screen according to the topics suggested in the exam. There will also be an essay dealing with larger issues discussed in class and readings.

Research Essay
Each student must deliver a research essay of 2000 to 2500 words, complete with footnotes and a bibliography, before the end of Week 4. A short 200-word proposal outlining the essay topic and including 3 scholarly sources must be submitted to the instructor before the end of Week 2. The student is expected to write about an issue related to modern or contemporary Japanese art history. Typical examples include studies of a single artwork, conclusions about a particular aspect of a single artist’s work, or a carefully delimited discussion about the development of a particular type of subject matter. If you choose an artist or subject that is part of the regular course material, you should explore the topic more deeply or from a different standpoint than the discussions found in class lectures or assigned readings. For questions regarding how to format the essay, please refer to the Chicago Manual of Style.

Final Exam
The final exam will include questions on the whole course. It will be similar to the midterm but longer and with more analytical questions on individual artists, movements, and works of art.
Weekly Schedule

Week 1
1.1 Edo Visuality and Modernity
Introduction, Ukiyo-e (floating world pictures), and Shunga (erotic art)
Readings:
1. Screech, pp. 23-40

Week 2
2.1 Modernizing Sexuality: Western-Style Painting
Yōga (Western painting)
Readings:
2. Tseng, pp. 418-441

Week 3
3.1 Modernization: Becoming a “Western” Country
Tokyo Under Construction, and Woodblock Prints of the Sino-Japanese War (1894-95)
Readings:
1. Meech-Pekarik, 62-110

Week 4
4.1 Nippon Modern
Shinkō shashin (New Photography) and Graphic Design
Readings:
1. Takeba, pp. 142-183
2. Weisenfeld, pp. 573-598

Week 5
5.1 Total War
Propaganda and Sensōga (war painting)
Readings:
1. Germer

Week 6
6.1 Field trip (example: Kyoto National Museum. Location and contents TBD.)
Essay topic due
Week 7
7.1 Avant-Garde Art of the 1950s
Gutai Art Association
Readings:
1. Yoshihara Jirō, pp. 695-698
2. Tiampo, pp. 11-43
Mid-term Exam

Week 8
8.1 Avant-Garde Art of the 1960s
Butoh (Dance of Absolute Darkness); Mishima Yukio and Hosoe Eikoh; Mono-ha (School of Things)
Short excerpts from Edin Velez’s Dance of Darkness, 1989 to be screened in class.
Readings:
1. Munroe, “Revolt of the Flesh…” pp. 189-213

Week 9
9.1 Protest Art
The Hiroshima Panels and Reportage Painters
Short excerpts ANPO: Art X War and Hellfire: A Journey from Hiroshima will be screened in class.
Readings:
1. Junkerman, pp. 121-128
2. Hoaglund,
   http://ocw.mit.edu/ans7870/21f/21f.027/protest_art_50s_japan/index.html

Week 10
10.1 Japanese New Wave
New Wave Cinema and Hiroshi Teshigahara
Short excerpts of Woman in the Dunes will be screened in class.
Readings:
1. Desser, pp. 1-12
2. Kimura-Steven, pp. 155-178
Exhibition Report due
Week 11

11.1 Society of the Spectacle
The 1964 Tokyo Olympics and Expo ‘70 in Osaka
Short excerpts of Tokyo Olympiad and The Blossoming of Japan’s International World Exposition will be screened in class.
1. Cazdyn et al., pp. 315-337
2. Winther-Tamaki, 2011, pp. 81-101

Research Essay due

Week 12

12.1 Economic Miracle: Arts of the 1980s
Anime
Short excerpts of Akira and Barefoot Gen will be screened in class.

Readings:

Week 13

13.1 Lost Decade(s): Arts of the 1990s and 2000s
Morimura Yasumasu; Manga; Aida Makoto and the Translation of ‘Otaku’ into ‘Art’
1. Bryson, pp. 74-79
2. Orbaugh, pp. 200-228
3. Kataoka Mami, pp. 33-45

Week 14

14.1 「GO FOR FUTURE」
Chim↑Pom and Responses to 3/11
Short excerpts from The Atomic Artists will be screened in class.
1. Rawlings, pp. 94-101

Week 15

15.1 Final Exam

Course Materials

Readings


Visual Materials

Edin Velez’s Dance of Darkness, 1989
Emily Taguchi’s The Atomic Artists, 2011
Hiroshi Teshigahara’s Woman in the Dunes, 1964
John Junkerman and John W. Dower’s Hellfire: A Journey from Hiroshima, 1986
Katsuhiro Otomo’s Akira, 1988
Kon Ichikawa’s Tokyo Olympiad, 1965
Linda Hoaglund’s ANPO: Art X War, 2010
Mori Masaki’s Barefoot Gen, 1983
Nittsu Company’s The Blossoming of Japan’s International World Exposition, 1970