ASIAN 330.53: Asian American Art History

Course Description
Asian Americans’ unique history in the United States has helped shape Asian American art practices and the popular and critical reception of their work. Positioning race as a central issue and incorporating social and cultural history as well as critical race and transcultural visual theories, this interdisciplinary course will explore art made by Asian American and Asian transnational artists. Works of art will include community-based social practice, land art, experimental music/Fluxus, installation, painting, performance, photography, sculpture, and video/film made by U.S.-based Asian-descent artists. We will examine the works as they have been chronicled and discussed.

Texts:
• Copies are available at Shakespeare & Co.
Course Reader (will be posted on Blackboard)

Learning Objectives:
• Be familiar with: the most important technical terms, movements, and major ethnic Asian artists active in the United States; major writers on Asian-American art; and race, gender, transnational, and other critical theories.
• In addition, students will be encouraged to participate in class discussions and articulate their thoughts about images and ideas. They will also gain basic skills for writing art history papers.

Class Schedule and Reading/Writing Assignments

Week 1: 1/29, 2/1
Introduction: Asian American Art: A Brief History (1/29)
*Students will be asked to pick up three readings and two artists that they will present in class.

Asian American Art: How Can We Interpret Race and Identity? (2/1)
Readings for Class Presentation:
Suggested:
**First Writing Assignment Due 2/5:**
2-3 typed pages, self-introductory essay: “What is my cultural/ethnic/racial identity?”

**Week 2: 2/5, 8**

**Asian American Art: An Early History (2/5)**
Focus: Toshio Aoki, Chiura Obata, Tyrus Wong

**China Town/Little Tokyo (2/8)**
Focus: Yun Gee, Dong Kingman, Benji Okubo
Readings for Class Presentation:

**Week 3: 2/14, 15**

**Attend: The College Art Association Annual Conference Diasporic Asian Art Network Panel (DAAN) (2/14)**
Place: Hilton New York: 1335 Avenue of the Americas, Morgan Suite, 2nd Floor
Thursday, Feb 14, 5:30 PM–7:00 PM (Free Admission)
**Reconceptualizing the “Invisible” Hyphen** (panel discussion)
Chair: ShiPu Wang, University of California, Merced
Alexandra Chang, New York University
Laura Kina, DePaul University
Viet Lê, California College of the Arts
Susette S. Min, University of California, Davis

**Extra Credit:** Attend the opening of an exhibition, “War is for the Living,” curated by Chuong-Dai Vo and Midori Yamamura
The Sylvia Wald and Po Kim Gallery, 417 Lafayette St. 4th FL. New York, NY 10003
6-9 pm (a sign-up sheet will be at the reception desk)

**Synthesizing Identity: Asian American Artists on the West Coast (2/15)**
Focus: Hideo Date, Eitaro Ishigaki, Hideo Noda
Seattle based artists: George Tsutakawa, Paul Horiuchi
Readings for Class Presentation:

**Week 4: 2/19, 22**

**Synthesizing Identity: Asian American Artists on the East Coast (2/19)**
Focus: Yasuo Kuniyoshi, Isamu Noguchi
Readings for Class Presentation:
Asian-American Photography: From Photo-Studio to Pictorialism (2/22)
Focus: Kyo Koike, Frank Kunishige, Isabelle May Lee, Yai S. Lee, Kai Suck, Harry K. Shigeta
Readings for Class Presentation:

Week 5: 2/26, 3/1
Asian-American Photography: Modernist Photography (2/26)
Focus: James Wong Howe, Ichiro Itani, Kem Lee, Hiromu Kimura, A. Kono, Toyo Miyatake, Kentaro Nakamura, Harry K. Shigeta, Shigemi Uyeda, Chao-chen Yang
Readings for Class Presentation:

Art as Life: Art and the Japanese Internment Experience (3/1)
Readings for Class Presentation:

Week 6: 3/5, 8
The Philippines: The U.S.’s Only Official Colony (3/5)
Focus: Santiago Bose, Paul Pfeiffer
Questions: How do people get colonized, how does colonialism function?
In class viewing of an excerpt, from Kidlat Tahimik’s Perfumed Nightmare (1977), followed by a discussion.
Reading for Class Presentation:
Other Reading:
Suggested:

Filipino-Americans: Search for Postcolonial Identity (3/8)
Focus: Manuel Ocampo, Angel Velasco Shaw
Question: Is postcolonialism relevant to Asian American identity?
In class viewing of Angel Velasco Shaw, Nailed (selection) (1992)
Guest speaker, Angel Velasco Shaw
Readings for Class Presentation:
Suggested Reading:

Week 7: 3/12,15
New York: World’s New Cosmopolitan Cultural Center (3/12)
Focus: Gutai Art Association, Saburo Hasegawa, Genichiro Inokuma, Mike Kanemitsu, Po Kim, Kenzo Okada, Alfonso Ossorio, Walasse Ting
Readings for Class Presentation:
Other Reading:

From Abstract Expressionism to Pop and Minimalism: Canonical Formations of U.S. Art (3/15)
Focus: Shusaku Arakawa, On Kawara, Yayoi Kusama, Ushio Shinohara
Question: How canonical U.S. art formulated?
Readings for Class Presentation:

Week 8: 3/19, 22
Fluxus: Creating a New Transnational Artist Community (3/19)
Focus: Nam June Paik, Shigeko Kubota, Ay-O, Yoko Ono, Etsuko Shiomi, Yasunao Tone
Readings for Class Presentation:
Other Readings
Yoko Ono, Grapefruit
Grapefruit Assignment:
A group will select three performable instructions from Grapefruit and give instruction to the class and lead a class discussion about Performance, Everyday, and Conceptualism.

Class Visit to the exhibition “War is for the Living” at Po Kim Gallery (3/22)
The Class will meet at: The Sylvia Wald and Po Kim Gallery.
Address: 417 Lafayette St. 4th FL. New York, NY 10003
Second Writing Assignment, Due 4/5:
Write 3-4 typed pages about a particular artwork by an Asian-American/Asian-Diasporic artist (preferably seeing the actual work), discuss what attracted you to the work, what you want to find out more about the work. This paper will serve as the basis for your final paper.

**Week 9: 3/25, 29, 4/2 Spring Recess**

**Week 10: 4/5**
**Art After the Immigration Act of 1965 (4/5)**
Readings for Class Presentation:
Other Reading

**Week 11: 4/9, 12 (April 12, Last day to drop the course and apply for a “W.”)**
**Art and Social Consciousness (4/9)**
Focus: Carlos Carvajal Sr., Theresa Hak Kyung Cha, Jim Dong, Carlos Villa, Martin Wong
Reading:

**Artist Talk, Tomie Arai (4/12)**
Reading:

**Week 12: 4/16, 19**
**Asian American Feminism (4/16)**
Focus: Hung Liu, Yong Soon Min, Laurel Nakadate, Hanh Thi Pham
Reading for Class Presentation:
Other Sources
Laurel Nakadate Teens Interview 1 & 2

**Representing Asian American Self? (4/19)**
Focus: Tse Kwong Chi, Byron Kim, Nikki S. Lee, Paul Pfeiffer, Shizu Saldamando, Roger Shimomura, Shazia Sikander, Masami Teraoka, Tam Tran
Reading for Class Presentation:

Other Reading:

Week 13: 4/23, 26
Visit Asian/Pacific American Institute at NYU (4/23)
Exhibition: Prints of Pop (War & War)
Curated by Roger Shimomura. Skype conversation with Shimomura.
8 Washington Mews, New York, NY 10003
Tel: 212-998-3700

War and Memories (4/26)
Focus: Allan deSouza, Maya Lin, An-My Lê, Dinh Q. Lê, Simon Leung
Readings for Class Presentation:

Other Readings:
Allan deSouza, “My Mother, My Sight,” in Allan deSouza (New York; Deli: Talwar Gallery, 2008), n.p.

Week 14: 4/30, 5/3
Relational Aesthetic/Asian American Art Now (4/30)
Paul Chan, Patty Chang, Tehching Hsieh, Nancy Hwang, Sarah Sze, Rirkrit Tiravanija
Readings for Class Presentation:

Suggested:

5/3, 7, 10: Students’ PowerPoint Presentation (10 min, about 2 ½ typed pages)

Course Requirements: Project(s), Paper(s), Assignment(s)

Reading Summary/Presentation/Leading Discussion:
A group of four students will be required to present a one-page summary of the assigned reading and lead a discussion based on the text. The summary must include points of interests.

**First Assignment (Due on Feb. 5th):**
Self-introductory essay (2-3 page double spaced typed paper). Introduce yourself and discuss whether cultural/ethnic/racial identity played any role in shaping your life/work.

**Second Assignment (Due on Apr. 5th):**
Write 3-4 typed pages about a particular artwork by Asian-American/Asian-Diasporic artist (preferably seeing the actual work), discuss what attracted you to the work, what you want to find out more about the work. This paper and your questions will serve as a base for your final paper.

The aim of this assignment is visual analysis and to write about the possible meaning of the chosen work your interests. You do not need a bibliography and footnotes. No research is required.

**Third Assignment (Due on May 7th/10th/14th):**
Research Paper. Students are required to hand in a 10-page paper on work(s) by Asian American and Asian Transnational artists active in the United States, preferably seeing the actual work.

**May 3, 7, 10:** Students presentation. 10 min. presentation in a conference format (about a 2 ½-page double spaced typed paper) with ppt. images, followed by 5 min. feedback. The students presenting the paper on the 3rd will incorporate the feedback and submit their paper on the 7th. The students presenting the paper on the 7th will incorporate the feedback and submit their work on the 10th. The students presenting the paper on the 10th will incorporate the feedback and submit their work on the 14th. No late papers will be accepted.

**Style Manual:** Please follow for footnotes and bibliography, Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers.*

**Guidelines for Submitting Writing Assignments for a Grade**

**Final Term Paper: Grading Checklist and Point System (Rubric)**

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<th>Task</th>
<th>Points for Task</th>
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<tr>
<td>Cover page with title plus 9-Page Minimum (2250 words total)</td>
<td>5 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Illustration</td>
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<td>Written content</td>
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<td>Grammar, spacing, and format</td>
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<td>Citations and bibliography in proper Kate L. Turabian <em>A Manual for Writers</em> format</td>
<td>10 points</td>
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<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td><strong>100 points</strong></td>
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Compile your paper in the following order:
Cover, List of Illustrations, Main Text, Bibliography, Illustration

Requirements for the Course and Grading Policies:
Quiz (two in-class quizzes) (10%)
At-Home writing assignments on artworks (20%)
Group presentation on assigned readings (15%)
Presentation on artist (15%)
Class participation (10%)
Final Paper (30%)

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The grade of C- does not exist at CUNY

Policies

Academic dishonesty:
Any form of academic dishonesty, including cheating and plagiarism, will result in a failing grade for the course.

Attendance and participation
Students are expected to attend all classes and participate in all class activities. No more than two absences per semester are permitted, but not encouraged.

Policy on students with disabilities
Any students with a documented disability or special need should see me at the start of the term for special arrangements.

Additional Policy
No cell phones, electronic devices, computers—if you plan to use computers for taking notes, use must be cleared with me—, and food are permitted in the class.