

Hosei University
Exchange Students from Overseas Program

Alberto Carrasco Lara
g239008m@icu.ac.jp
albertocarrasco@sophia.ac.jp
carrasco.lara@protonmail.com

Visual Arts in Japan (A8507)

Course Description:

This course delves into the exploration of art, aesthetics, modernity, and postmodernity in Japan. Through an examination of the evolution of visual arts in Japan, we seek to answer fundamental questions surrounding these concepts. Our focus spans from the Meiji period to the present day, encompassing key artists, movements, and cultural expressions.

We will investigate how the introduction of modernity reshaped Japanese aesthetics, analyzing the interpretations and manifestations of this transformation. By studying paradigm shifts in the pre-war and post-war periods, we aim to understand the transition into the postmodern era and the influence of popular culture on both domestic and international scales.

Maintaining a thematic structure, the course will explore specific art movements and events that have contributed to the shaping of modernity and postmodernity in Japan. Emphasis will be placed on the broader cultural, linguistic, and geographic contexts in which these transformations occurred.

Moreover, we will critically evaluate scholarly perspectives on modernity and its transition or juxtaposition to the postmodern condition within the realm of Japanese visual arts. This analysis aims to challenge students to critique the notions of 'art,' 'modernity,' and 'contemporary culture.'

Throughout the course, students will develop tools for visual analysis and critical thinking, equipping them with the necessary skills to engage deeply with the subject matter.

General Objectives:

- Differentiate between modern and contemporary Japanese art:
Explore the transformations of visual arts in Japan from the Meiji period to the present day, focusing on the introduction and interpretation of modernity and postmodernity in Japanese aesthetics.
- Think critically about what culture and art entail:
Critically evaluate scholarly perspectives on modernity, postmodernity, and the transition between the two within the context of Japanese visual arts, challenging notions of 'art,' 'modernity,' and 'contemporary culture.'

- Identify key political and historical events that shaped art movements from the Meiji period to the present day:
Analyze paradigm shifts in Japanese art within specific historical and political contexts, discerning the relationship between politics and aesthetics in shaping artistic movements and expressions.
- Learn how to analyze visual form and think critically:
Develop skills for visual analysis and critical thinking through the examination of specific art movements, events, and cultural manifestations in Japan, enabling students to analyze visual form and engage deeply with the subject matter.

Specific Objectives:

- Recognize major art movements, events, and artists from Japan:
Identify key artists, movements, and cultural manifestations in Japanese art history, recognizing their significance in shaping modernity and postmodernity in Japanese aesthetics.
- Understand the exchanges and connections in the art world beyond the neatly defined borders and linguistic groups:
Explore the broader cultural, linguistic, and geographic contexts in which Japanese art movements and expressions developed, recognizing the interconnectedness of the art world and the influence of global exchanges on Japanese aesthetics.
- Discern the relation between politics and aesthetics:
Analyze the impact of political and historical events on Japanese art movements and expressions, discerning the complex relationship between politics and aesthetics in shaping artistic developments in Japan.
- Compare the processes of modern and contemporary art in Japan:
Compare and contrast the characteristics and processes of modern and contemporary art in Japan, examining the transition between different artistic periods and the influence of global trends and popular culture on Japanese art practices.

Grading Policy:

Reading responses: 40%

Midterm assignment: 10%

Final assignment: 30%

Attendance and participation: 20%

Reading Responses:

All required readings should be followed by a response, no longer than one page. To be submitted prior to the next class (physical and electronic format). They are to help you prepare for class discussion by engaging you with the material that you have read for that class. Each assignment will be graded on the basis of completeness, quality of insight and reflection, degree to which one has engaged the material, posing questions and/or engaging with other material and/or class content. They should be approximately 500 words. Feedback of each response will be provided the session after its submission.

Required Readings:

All required readings for this course will become available on HOPPII as PDF file unless otherwise specified. It is the student's responsibility to access and make a copy of the assigned texts. Please make sure to bring to class the required reading(s) for that day. I also reserve the right to introduce additional readings throughout the semester.

Attendance Policy and participation:

Regular attendance and active participation are mandatory and will count toward 20% of your overall course grade. In order to receive full credit for attendance, it is expected that you arrive in class, having read the assigned reading(s) and prepared to discuss any other assignment(s). If you have to miss a class due to health or personal reason, you must contact the professor as soon as possible. If you arrive late to class, it is your responsibility to notify the professor after class to change the record of your attendance from "absent" to "late." Three late arrivals will be counted as one "unexcused" absence. Three unexcused absences (including not showing up for fieldtrips) will result in a reduction of a full letter grade, and after three such absences, each unexcused absence will result in a further reduction of a letter grade. In other words, you will automatically fail this course if you miss more than five class meetings for no good reason.

*During the term, each student must select one of the readings assigned and lead the class discussion, making a brief oral presentation and engaging students with prepared questions. (*Contingent on the number of students enrolled in the course.)

Final Essay:

Due at the end of the term. Students can select their own topic as long as it aligns with the class theme. Topic approval is required after discussion with the instructor.

Class format:

Each session will be divided into two parts. The first part of the session is comprised by the lecture on the assigned topic/theme. The second part of the session is devoted to class discussion. *During the discussion, students will follow the lead of the student in charge of the assigned reading. After the initial discussion, the instructor will join to answer and pose questions to students. (*Contingent on the number of students enrolled in the course.)

Warning against Missing Exams and Assignment Deadlines:

Exam dates and other project deadlines for this course are firm and non-negotiable. If you miss an exam or an assignment, your credit for that course requirement will be zero. Make-up exams will not be given except for extraordinary circumstances and real emergency.

Warning against Academic Dishonesty:

All forms of academic dishonesty, such as plagiarism and cheating, will be treated seriously and will result in you failing the course. Please consult the university policy and student handout for plagiarism for further information.

University Policies on Harassment:

Hosei University prohibits any act of harassment and ensures that education, research, studies, student life and work are conducted in a fair and safe environment, as it respects the individuality of all its members, and recognizes that harassment is an infringement of human rights and an act of sexual discrimination. For further information, see:

https://www.hosei.ac.jp/application/files/6116/8535/0608/2022Hosei_Harrassment_Guidelines_Eng.pdf

Course Schedule:

*subject to changes prior notice via Email

1st session **Introduction**

2nd session **Aesthetics, Modernity and the Meiji State**

Readings: Excerpts from: Sato, Doshi, *Modern Japanese Art and the Meiji State: The Politics of Beauty*, Getty, 2011

3rd session **Aesthetics, Modernity and the Meiji State (2)**

Readings: Excerpts from: Marra, Michele, *Modern Japanese Aesthetics: a reader*, University of Hawaii Press, 2001

4th session **Yoga, Western Visuality in Japanese Arts**

Readings: Excerpts from: Winther-Tamaki, Bert, *Maximum Embodiment: Yoga, the Western Painting of Japan, 1912-1955*, University of Hawaii Press, 2012.

5th session **Japanese Cultural Identity in Modern Art**

Readings: Excerpts from: Mostow, Joshua, Norman, Bryson, et al., *Gender and Power in the Japanese Visual Field*, University of Hawaii Press, 2003.

6th session **Japanese Cultural Identity in Modern Art (2)**

Readings: Excerpts from: Mostow, Joshua, Norman, Bryson, et al., *Gender and Power in the Japanese Visual Field*, University of Hawaii Press, 2003.

7th session **The Wound of Modernity in Japan: Legacies of an Imperialist Past**

Reading: Excerpts from: Ivy, Marilyn, *Discourses of the Vanishing*, University of Chicago Press, 1997.

8th session **Postmodern Turn in Japanese Visual Arts: Art and Subculture**

Readings: Murakami, Takashi, *Little Boy: The Arts of Japan's Exploding Subculture*, Yale University Press, 2005.

9th session **Postmodern Turn in Japanese Visual Arts (2): Gender, Japan and the Posthuman**

Reading: Haraway, Donna, *A Cyborg Manifesto*, Socialist Review, 1985.

Excerpts from: Lamarre, Thomas, *The Anime Machine: a media theory of animation*, University of Minnesota Press, 2009.

Optional: Chino Kaori, excerpts of "Gender in Japanese Art" (2003), in Mostow, Joshua, Norman, Bryson, et al., *Gender and Power in the Japanese Visual Field*, University of Hawaii Press, 2003.

Movie: Mamoru Oshii, *Ghost in the Shell*, (1995).

10th session **Identity and Art: Queer Art (Guest Lecturer)**

Readings: Brandes, Kerstin, *Morimura/Duchamp: Image Recycling and Parody*, Edinburg University Press, 2003.
TBA

11th session **Postmodern Turn in Japanese Visual Arts (3): Kawaii and Gender Performativity**

Readings: Kinsella, Sharon. "Cuties in Japan." In *Women, Media and Consumption in Japan*, edited by Lise Skov and Brian Moeran, 220-254. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1995.

Excerpts from: Butler, Judith. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. New York: Routledge, 1990.

12th session **Blurring the Realm Between Subculture and Fine Arts: Nara, Murakami, Aida**

Readings: Excerpts from: Murakami, Takashi, *Superflat*, Last Gasp, 2003.

Excerpts from: Aida, Makoto, *MONUMENT FOR NOTHING: Tensai De Gomen Nasai*, SEIGENSHA Art Publishing, Inc., 2012, (catalogue)
TBA

13th session **Aesthetics and Politics in Contemporary Japanese Arts: Ranciere, State Violence & Chim/Pom**

Readings: Rancière, Jacques. *Aesthetics and Politics*. Edited by Ronald R. Martinez. Translated by Gabriel Rockhill. London: Verso, 2007.

TBA

14th session **Wrap up Session**

****Submission of the final paper ****

Bibliography:

*in order of appearance on the syllabus

Sato, Doshi, *Modern Japanese Art and the Meiji State: The Politics of Beauty*, Getty, 2011
Marra, Michele, *Modern Japanese Aesthetics: a reader*, University of Hawaii Press, 2001
Winther-Tamaki, Bert, *Maximum Embodiment: Yoga, the Western Painting of Japan, 1912-1955*, University of Hawaii Press, 2012.

Mostow, Joshua, Norman, Bryson, et al., *Gender and Power in the Japanese Visual Field*, University of Hawaii Press, 2003.

Ivy, Marilyn, *Discourses of the Vanishing*, University of Chicago Press, 1997.

Murakami, Takashi, *Little Boy: The Arts of Japan's Exploding Subculture*, Yale University Press, 2005.

Haraway, Donna, *A Cyborg Manifesto*, *Socialist Review*, 1985.

Lamarre, Thomas, *The Anime Machine: a media theory of animation*, University of Minnesota Press, 2009.

Chino Kaori, excerpts of "Gender in Japanese Art" (2003), in Mostow, Joshua, Norman, Bryson, et al., *Gender and Power in the Japanese Visual Field*, University of Hawaii Press, 2003.

Brandes, Kerstin, *Morimura/Duchamp: ImageRecycling and Parody*, Edinburg University Press, 2003.

Kinsella, Sharon. "Cuties in Japan." In *Women, Media and Consumption in Japan*, edited by Lise Skov and Brian Moeran, 220-254. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1995.

Butler, Judith. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. New York: Routledge, 1990.

Murakami, Takashi, *Superflat*, Last Gasp, 2003.

Aida, Makoto, *MONUMENT FOR NOTHING: Tensai De Gomen Nasai*, SEIGENSHA Art Publishing, Inc., 2012, (catalogue)

Rancière, Jacques. *Aesthetics and Politics*. Edited by Ronald R. Martinez. Translated by Gabriel Rockhill. London: Verso, 2007.