ASIAN 22500: Asian American Art
Fall 2024
Mondays and Thursdays, 10-11:15 AM
West Bldg W623

Instructor: Maya Jeffereis
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(Please email me with your course section in the subject or body of your email)
Office Hours: By appointment on Mondays and Thursdays immediately following class (please email your request)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this introductory survey course, we will explore the artistic practices of diasporic Asian, Pacific Islander, and Asian American artists from 1850 to the present (with an emphasis on modern and contemporary art) through an art historical and theoretical lens. Throughout the course, we will contemplate questions around how Asian American identity is defined and expressed, given the plurality of nationalities, languages, religions, and cultures. Topics covered will include immigration (first generation immigrants v. American born); home, belonging, and displacement; self-representation v. being represented vis-a-vis Orientalism, Ornamentalism, and model minority myths and stereotypes. These themes will be contextualized within a sociopolitical history that includes early Chinese and Japanese immigrants and the Chinese Exclusion Act; Japanese American incarceration during World War II; the Vietnam War, the Korean War, and the Cambodian genocide and refugee displacement; the Yellow Power movement and the artist as activist; and various contemporary art movements (conceptual art, Fluxus, and performance art). We will consider the role art and representation plays in the Asian American community and beyond, focusing on the many forms of artistic practice these artists engage in, including painting, photography, sculpture, film, video, performance, music, installation, and community-based social practices. Students will engage in ideas through class discussion, presentations, writing assignments, readings, guest speakers, and site visits to art institutions around the city. Students will be asked to closely examine, think critically, and thoughtfully respond to these artists and their work.

RESOURCES

Asian American Studies Program (AASP) at Hunter College website
http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/aasp

Asian American Studies at Hunter College Facebook Page
https://www.facebook.com/hunteraasp/

- The program director is Prof. Vivian Louie, vl923@hunter.cuny.edu

THE HUNTER COLLEGE AANAPISI PROJECT (HCAP)

The Hunter College AANAPISI Project (HCAP) is a five-year, U.S. Department of Education funded program to support students at Hunter College of the City University of New York. HCAP provides programs focused on academic support for multilingual learners, mental health, and leadership. All Hunter College students are welcome to participate in our courses, programs, and events. For more about HCAP, visit our website: http://huntercap.org

WELLNESS @HUNTER

Many students encounter distress during their college experience. Hunter College provides individual counseling and support for students at their Counseling and Wellness Services Department on campus. As a student, you are entitled to walk-in at any time and schedule an

appointment. They are located in Hunter East #1123. You can email them at personalcounseling@hunter.cuny.edu, or call them at 212-772-4931 or visit http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/cws/counselingservices/welcome for more information. HCAP also hosts events at Hunter focused on AAPI Mental Health. For more information about these events, contact Dr. Marcia Liu (ML2138@hunter.cuny.edu).

EXPECTATIONS

- **Attend** (all classes for the entire duration of class).
- **Be present** (keep your video on throughout the duration of the class and display your full name; silence your devices; text messaging, emailing, and the use of cell phones are absolutely prohibited in class).
- **Participate** (this class is a combination of lecture and discussion-based seminar. You are expected to share your thoughts and ideas with the class).
- **Engage** (thoughtfully and critically respond to the ideas presented in class by completing the assignments).
- **Respect** others and our space by exhibiting behavior that creates a safe and inviting environment.
- **Be open** to new ideas, ways of thinking, and the experiences of others.
- **Be ready** by arriving on time, prepared with the following materials: notebook, readings, assignments, a writing instrument.

*If you require any Student Disability Services, please inform the instructor so your needs are accommodated.

GRADING AND EVALUATION

Attendance	10%
Notebooks/Participation	10%
Writing Responses	20%
Pop-Up Quizzes	5%
Presentations	10%
Midterm Paper	20%
Final Paper	25%
Extra Credit	+2% per assignment

Attendance

- Hunter College is “not an attendance-taking institution," in regard to Federal Title IV Regulations and financial aid. However, the instructor has the right to set attendance as one of the requirements for the course and to use it as part of the grade.
- Students are expected to attend **ALL** class sessions—the majority of learning will happen in class.
- Students may request up to three excused absences (for sickness or other emergencies) with a note from the doctor, etc.
- Each unexcused absence will result in a lower grade by half a letter.
- **Four or more absences (excused or unexcused) will result in an F grade.**
- Excessive tardiness (more than ten minutes late) more than twice will also result in a reduction of attendance/participation grade by half a letter.
- Leaving class early will result in a lower attendance/participation grade by half a letter.

Participation

- Students are expected to regularly share their thoughts in class.

- The class consists of seminar style discussions. This means that these readings, and our interpretations should be challenged in a collegial manner that invites the use of relevant evidence and analyses.
- If you are on the quieter side and wish to boost your participation grade, you might do an extra credit assignment or two, each worth 2%. I also encourage you to express your voice in class!
- Repeated phone-use during class will result in a lower attendance/participation grade by half a letter.

Notebooks

- The notebooks will be handed in at the end of the semester for the professor to monitor student progress.
- The notebooks are graded on notes taken for each class lecture but are not necessarily graded based on length (this is mostly about accountability to make sure that you are following lectures and writing down important information to be used in pop quizzes, reading responses, and papers).

Reading Responses

- Every week you will write a 1-2 paragraph response to the readings, site visits, and artists learned in class.
- Reading response prompts will be posted to the Blackboard Safe Assign. Reading responses must be uploaded before each class on Thursdays and brought to class for group discussion.
- These papers should include a thesis statement and topic sentences (when applicable).

Pop-Up Quizzes

- Pop Quizzes will be given randomly throughout the semester on readings and class lectures in short answer format.

Mid-Term Paper

- Write a 5-page research paper on one of the artists we have covered in class (cannot be the same artist from your presentation).
- What are the major themes in their work? How does their work address questions of identity, history, and socio-political issues? How is their work is situated within a sociopolitical and art historical context.
- Include images, artist quotes, and primary and secondary source materials in your text to support your thesis and include footnotes and a bibliography for citation purposes.
- A writing style sheet is attached for your reference.
- Please contact me early if you are having trouble with this so I can put you in touch with the Writing Center.

Final Exam

- From the artists and ideas presented throughout the semester, select one work by five different artists (5 works total) and “curate” an exhibition with a theme, curatorial statement (5-7 pages), floor plan, and works cited/bibliography.

Late Work

- Late work will be accepted for up to 5 days, with a half letter reduction of grade per day. After 5 days, late work will no longer be accepted.

Extra Credit

- There will be several opportunities for extra credit announced throughout the semester. These will include a virtual/site visit to an exhibition or art event and a one-page response paper.
- Create a work of art (photograph, object, performance, etc.) that responds to a work by an artist we have studied and write a curatorial statement (1 page), explaining how your work references and expands upon the original work of art, and how this work addresses contemporary American identity and issues.

READINGS

- Readings will be posted to Blackboard weekly and will include a range of scholarly articles, primary source materials, and interviews.
- Please come prepared with your opinions, reactions, responses, and questions.

Reading Guidelines

- Reading within a text: You should read all texts for the meaning and comprehension with the attempt of first understanding the author's argument and the ways in which they attempt to achieve it. What is the point or argument the author is making? Who says and on what basis?
- Reading around the text: You should also understand and be sensitive to the context in which the text was written. When and why was this text written?
- Reading against the text: After you have made sense of the text and situated it within its context, then be critical of the text. How does this text connect and diverge from my own beliefs and knowledge? What is new? What might be the problems with this text? How does this article contribute to existing knowledge? Who cares? How and why is this text worthwhile?
- Use the questions above to frame your thinking and analysis for your reading responses.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY STATEMENT

Hunter College regards acts of academic dishonesty (e.g., plagiarism, cheating on examinations, obtaining unfair advantage, and falsification of records and official documents) as serious offenses against the values of intellectual honesty. The College is committed to enforcing the CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity and will pursue cases of academic dishonesty according to the Hunter College Academic Integrity Procedures.

AI

While Artificial Intelligence exists but the goal of this class is to help you to think critically and creatively for yourselves. AI is not without flaws, including racial bias, inaccuracy, and false information. In class, we will discuss answers that AI offers in order to learn how to ask better questions and critique our own questions, frameworks, and answers generated by AI. Clearly copying and pasting AI-generated responses constitutes plagiarism according to Hunter's Academic Integrity Statement (above).

DISABILITY STATEMENT

In compliance with the ADA and with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Hunter College is committed to ensuring educational access and accommodations for all its registered students. Hunter College's students with disabilities and medical conditions are encouraged to register with the Office of AccessABILITY for assistance and accommodation. For information and appointment contact the Office of AccessABILITY located in Room E1214 or call (212) 772-4857 /or VRS (646) 755-3129.

HUNTER COLLEGE POLICY ON SEXUAL MISCONDUCT
In compliance with the CUNY Policy on Sexual Misconduct, Hunter College reaffirms the prohibition of any sexual misconduct, which includes sexual violence, sexual harassment, and gender-based harassment retaliation against students, employees, or visitors, as well as certain intimate relationships. Students who have experienced any form of sexual violence on or off campus (including CUNY sponsored trips and events) are entitled to the rights outlined in the Bill of Rights for Hunter College.

Sexual Violence: Students are strongly encouraged to immediately report the incident by calling 911, contacting NYPD Special Victims Division Hotline (646-610-7272) or their local police precinct, or contacting the College's Public Safety Office (212-772-4444).

All Other Forms of Sexual Misconduct: Students are also encouraged to contact the College's Title IX Campus Coordinator, Dean John Rose (jtrose@hunter.cuny.edu or 212-650-3262) or Colleen Barry (colleen.barry@hunter.cuny.edu or 212-772-4534) and seek complimentary services through the Counseling and Wellness Services Office, Hunter East 1123.
CUNY Policy on Sexual Misconduct Link.

***NOTE: SYLLABUS SUBJECT TO CHANGES THROUGHOUT THE SEMESTER**

SCHEDULE

Week 1(a): Introductions

Thursday, August 29: Introductions, Syllabus, Art Terms, Activity

Week 1(b): Early Asians in the Americas

Monday, September 2: NO CLASS—LABOR DAY

Thursday, September 5: Early Asian Americans, Writing Guidelines, Writing Exercise
Historical Context: Chinese and Japanese immigration, Chinese Exclusion Act & 1924 Immigration Act, Asian American arts associations and clubs
Readings Due
Gordon H. Chang. "Emerging from the Shadows." In *Asian American Art* (foreword, p. ix-xv)
Mark Dean Johnson. "Uncovering Asian American Art in San Francisco, 1850-1940." In *Asian American Art* p. 1-29
Practice Response Due

Week 2: Colonial Histories of Hawaii
Missionaries, Merchants, and Military Presence in Hawaii, Annexation of Hawaii, Japanese Immigrant Plantation Laborers, Interethnic Labor Movements

Monday, September 9: Christopher Makoto Yogi
Readings Due
Hokulani K. Aikau and Vernadette Vicuña Gonzalez, "Introduction" in *Detours: A Decolonial Guide to Hawaii* (p. 1-13)

Thursday, September 12: Anthony Banua-Simon
Readings Due
Haumani-Kay Trask, "Introduction" in *From a Native Daughter* (p. 1-21)
Response #1 Due
Presentation #1

Week 3: 1904 St. Louis World's Fair & Japanese American Internment
Historical Context: WWII Japanese American Incarceration, Executive Order 9066, US propaganda, Fred Korematsu (Korematsu v. United States)

Monday, September 16: Stephanie Syjuco
Readings Due
Eve Tuck & K. Wayne Yang. "Decolonization is not a metaphor" (p. 1-23)
Ekalan Hou. "Stephanie Syjuco: Native Resolution." *The Brooklyn Rail*.

Thursday, September 19: Isamu Noguchi
Readings
Gordon H. Chang. "Deployments, Engagements, Obliterations: Asian American Artists and World War II." In *Asian American Art* (p. 111-139)
Isamu Noguchi, "I Become a Nisei" (p. 1-1M2)
Amy Lyford. "Noguchi, Sculptural Abstraction, and the Politics of Japanese American Internment" (p. 1-16)
Response #2 Due

Presentation #2

Week 4: Partition
Monday, September 23: Zarina
Historical Context: 1947 Partition of British India; Cold War, Soviet and US Imperialism in Afghanistan
Readings
Allegra Pesenti. “The Garden of Dark Roses: Zarina in Conversation with Sandhini Poddar” in *Zarina: Paper Like Skin* (p. 161-175)
Edward Said. “Introduction.” In *Orientalism* (p. 1-28)

Thursday, September 26: Samia Halaby
Historical Context: British Mandate for Palestine, 1948 Nakba
Readings
“LETTER: An open letter from Eskenazi School of Art, Architecture + Design faculty and staff” https://www.idsnews.com/article/2024/02/letter-eskenazi-school-art-samia-halaby-israel-palestine-iu-bloomington-academic-freedom-college
“Palestinian Artist Samia Halaby Slams Indiana University for Canceling Exhibit over Her Support for Gaza”
https://www.democracynow.org/2024/1/18/censorship_palestinian_solidarity
Response #3 Due
Presentation #3

Week 5: Western Asia
Historical Context: British Mandate for Palestine, 1948 Nakba

Monday, September 30: Emily Jacir
Readings
Edward Said. “Permission to Narrate.” *Journal of Palestine Studies* (p. 2-23)
“Artist Emily Jacir: Rampant Censorship Is Part of the Genocidal Campaign to Erase Palestinians”
https://www.democracynow.org/2024/1/18/censorship_israel_palestine_gaza
Response #4 Due
Presentation #4

Thursday, October 3: NO CLASS

Week 6: A Nation Divided: Artists Responding to the Korean & Vietnam Wars
Historical Context: Korean War (1950-53); Vietnam War (1955-75)

Monday, October 7: Theresa Hak Kyung Cha
Readings
Theresa Hak Kyung Cha. *Dictee*. (p. 79-89)
David L. Eng & Shinhee Han. “Racial Melancholia: Model Minorities, Depression, and Suicide” in *Racial Melancholia, Racial Dissociation* (p. 34-65)

Thursday, October 10: An-My Lê
Historical Context: Vietnam War, Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965, 1968 Student Protests, Yellow Power Movement, Ethnic Studies
***Prof. Charles Tien observes**
Readings

Nina Wallace, “Yellow Power: The Origins of Asian America” (p. 1-10)
Larry Kubota, “Yellow Power!” (p. 1-2)
Dennis Zhou. “An-My Le’s Uncanny Images of War.” *The New Yorker* (p. 1-14)
Response #5 Due
Presentation #5

Week 7: The Act of Remembering: Cambodia
Khmer Rouge, Cambodian Genocide

Monday, October 14: NO CLASS

Tuesday, October 15 (Classes follow a Monday schedule): Sopheap Pich
Historical Context: Khmer Rouge & the Cambodian Genocide
Readings
Sopheap Pich. *Sopheap Pich: Sculpture 2004-2013* (p. 3-19)
Margo Machida. “Trauma, Social Memory, and Art.” in *Unsettled Visions: Contemporary Asian American Artists and the Social Imaginary* (p. 120-132)
Workshop Midterm Rough Drafts
Presentation #6

Thursday, October 17: Guest Speaker Leilehua Lanzilotti
Response #6 Due

Week 8: Central Asia
Monday, October 21: Lida Abdul
Readings
Sara Raza, “Introduction” in *Punk Orientalism* (p. 4-9, 74-81)

Thursday, October 24: Shirin Neshat
Readings
Mehraneh Ebrahimi, *Women, Art, and Literature in the Iranian Diaspora* p. 98-117

Midterm Papers Due at 10am

Week 9: FLUXUS
Monday, October 28: Nam June Paik
Readings
George Maciunas, *Fluxus Manifesto*, 1963. https://www.moma.org/collection/works/127947
Hannah Higgins. “Border Crossings: Three Transnationalisms of Fluxus.” (p. 1-22)
Melissa Chiu, Michelle Yun. *Nam June Paik: Becoming Robot* (p. 15-33)

Thursday, October 31: Yoko Ono
Readings
Yoko Ono. *Grapefruit* (TBD)
Julia Bryan-Wilson. “Remembering Yoko Ono’s “Cut Piece” (p. 1-24)
Response #7 Due
Presentation #7

Week 10: I AM STILL ALIVE
Monday, November 4: On Kawara
Readings

Jeffrey Weiss. “Bounded Infinity” in *On Kawara -- Silence* (p. 25-47)

Thursday, November 7: Tehching Hsieh
Readings
Andre Lepecki, *Duration*
Response #8 Due
Presentation #8

Week 11: The Relational & the Social
Monday, November 11: Rirkrit Tiravanija,
Readings
“Rirkrit Tiravanija with Delia Bajo and Brainard Carey” *The Brooklyn Rail* (p. 1-16)

Thursday, November 14: Lee Mingwei
Readings
Irina Aristarkhova, *Lee Mingwei: The Man Who Welcomes*
Pablo Helguera, “Introduction” in *Education for Socially Engaged Art: A Materials and Techniques Handbook*
Response #9 Due
Presentation #9

Week 12: Queering Asian American Art
Monday, November 18: Martin Wong
Readings
Richard G. Mann. Wong, Martin (1946-1999) (p. 1-11)

Thursday, November 21: Salman Toor
Readings
Jan Christian Bernabe, Laura Kina. “Introduction: For the Love of Unicorns: Queering Contemporary Asian American Art” in *Queering Contemporary Asian American Art.* (p. 19-55).
Web
Murtaza Vali, “Salman Toor’s ‘How Will I Know’” e-flux Criticism
Ambika Trasi, “Self as Cipher” *The Whitney Museum of American Art*
Response #10 Due: Final Paper Proposal
Presentation #10

Week 13: Ornamental & Emasculated: Confronting Gender Stereotypes
Monday, November 25: Kenneth Tam
Readings
Jordan Aaron Guy. “Kenneth Tam confronts Asian American masculinity in ‘Silent Spikes.’” *Document*. April 5, 2021

Thursday, November 28: NO CLASS—THANKSGIVING

Week 14: Feminism & Asia Futurism
Monday, December 2: Patty Chang
Readings
Anne Anlin Cheng. “Ornamentalism: A Feminist Theory for the Yellow Woman” (p. 415-446)

Thursday, December 5: Astria Suparak; Workshop final papers
Readings

Dawn Chan. “Asia-Futurism.” *Artforum*.
Xin Wang. “Asian Futurism and the Non-Other.” *e-flux Journal*
Astria Suparak, “Asian Futures, Without Asians” in *Why Are They So Afraid of the Lotus?* (p. 96-134)

Week 15:
Monday, December 9: Conclusions
Workshop Final Papers; Teacher Evaluations
Notebooks Due

Thursday, December 12: FINAL PAPER DUE at 10AM (no exceptions)

December 15-21: NO CLASS--FINALS WEEK