

## SEMESTER AT SEA COURSE SYLLABUS

**Voyage: Spring 2013**  
**Discipline: Art History**  
**ARTH 1505: Engaging Chinese Art**  
**Division: Lower**  
**Faculty Name: Ariana Maki**

**Pre-requisites:** Previous coursework related to the arts, culture, religion or history of Asia

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The artistic culture of China stretches back more than three thousand years. In this course we will study Chinese art from the Neolithic era to the modern, learning how to critically analyze and discuss the materials, styles and compositions of various Chinese arts. We will also explore the religious, social, economic and political contexts that inform and gave rise to significant artistic movements and specific works. Topics will include traditional philosophies, construction of sacred space, ritual use of objects, and regional/cross-cultural interactions.

### **COURSE FORMAT**

This course will be presented as a series of slide-illustrated lectures, with frequent in-class group activities and discussion sessions. These non-traditional sessions will aid in synthesizing key concepts, artistic innovations, and significant works of art. In addition, there will be exercises with 'unknown' works of art, which will allow students to explore visual culture, employ visual analysis and critical thinking to furnish an identification for the object, and present the underlying rationale for that choice.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

1. Identify the technological and artistic innovations in Chinese Art history
2. Understand the theoretical, aesthetic and historical context for key works of art
3. Recognize how Chinese art reflects the political, religious and cultural environments that surround its production

### **REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS**

**AUTHOR:** Sullivan, Michael  
**TITLE:** *The Arts of China*  
**PUBLISHER:** University of California Press  
**ISBN #:** 978-0-520-25568-5 (hardback) or 978-0-520-25569-2 (paperback)  
**DATE/EDITION:** 2008/Fifth edition

### **TENTATIVE TOPICAL OUTLINE OF COURSE**

Jan. 10: Orientation

**Lecture One**—Neolithic to Eastern Zhou period

Questions to be addressed: What are the characteristics of Neolithic cultural artifacts? How can the different phases of ancient bronzes be differentiated? What can we learn from art discovered in ancient tombs?

Readings: Sullivan, Chapters 1

**Assignments:** Map of Asia; Art Historical Terms

**Lecture Two**—Eastern Zhou and Warring States

Questions: What is the role of ritual objects during these eras? How does art provide evidence of how people viewed their world, and the place of humans within it?

Readings: Sullivan, Chapters 2 and 3

**Assignment due: Map of China, Art Historical Terms**

Jan. 15-16: No Class. Hilo

**Lecture Three**—Qin and Han Dynasties

Questions: How do the works found in Emperor Qin's tomb reveal beliefs about the afterlife? What roles did the figurines play?

Readings: Sullivan, Chapter 4

Response paper assignment given

**Lecture Four**— Qin and Han Dynasties: Part Two

Questions: What spiritual beliefs were prevalent in Han culture, and how were they expressed artistically? What can we understand about painting in the Han dynasty? Which decorative arts were prevalent during the Han, and how can we distinguish them?

In class activity: Discussion groups focusing on offering tentative identifications for 'unknown' works of art similar to what we have already encountered in class

Jan. 21: (International Date Line). No Class.

Jan. 22: Study Day. No Class.

**Lecture Five**— Introduction to Religious Traditions in Early Chinese History

Questions: What is Daoism? What is Confucianism? What religions and systems of thought were prevalent in early China, and how were they different in terms of goals, methodology and worldview? How were art objects used in religious practice, or how were they used in philosophical pursuits or practical concerns?

**Lecture Six**— Three Kingdoms and Six Dynasties

Questions: How did arts inspired by Daoism and Buddhism contribute to this era of Chinese history? What innovations can be noticed in paintings of this time? What are the basic features of Buddhist and Daoist art?

Readings: Sullivan, Chapter 5

**Response Paper One due**

Jan 27-31: No Class.—Yokohama and Kobe

**Lecture Seven: Early Buddhist Art of China**

Questions: Who was the historical Buddha? What were key events in his Life? What are the key tenets of Buddhism? How did Buddhist imagery arrive in China, and how did it adapt to its new home?

Feb. 03-08: No Class. Shanghai and Hong Kong

**\*\*Required Field Lab in Shanghai**

**Lecture Eight: War and Chan (Zen) Buddhism: The Five Dynasties Period**

Questions: How did war and invasions impact Chinese art? How does Zen Buddhist art function in ritual practice and the temple environment?

Readings: Sullivan, Chapter 7

**Lecture Nine: Review Session**

Exercises with 'unknown' works of art; open discussion and questions

**Lecture Ten: Southern Song Dynasty**

Questions: What did court artists create? What was the role of landscape painting, and what characteristics identify it?

Readings: Lee, *A History of Far Eastern Art*, p. 358-383

Feb. 12-18: No Class. Ho Chi Minh City

(B class Lecture Ten meets after port)

**Lecture Eleven: Northern Song Dynasty**

Questions: What major genres of painting developed during the Song Dynasty? Who was Emperor Huizong, and how did he impact art? Who were the literati, and what arts were associated with them? How does Buddhist art change during the Song?

Feb. 20-21: No Class. Singapore

(B class Lecture Eleven meets after port)

Feb. 25-Mar 01: No Class. Yangon

**Lecture Twelve: Yuan Dynasty**

Questions: How was political change reflected in Yuan Dynasty art? What were the effects of patronage on the style and subject of art produced during this era? What was the role of the court artists, and what themes can be seen in the works they produced?

Readings: Sullivan, Chapter 8

Mar. 06-11: Cochin

### **Lecture Thirteen: Yuan Dynasty: Part Two**

Questions: Who were the four great masters of late Yuan landscape painting? How were human figures painted during this time, and what overarching themes are frequently encountered in Yuan Dynasty figure painting? What were other common genres?

Mar. 15: Tuesday. No Class. Study Day.

### **Lecture Fourteen: Ming Dynasty**

Questions: How did the emergence of the woodblock print impact Chinese art? What was the relationship between academic and literati painters, and how can we distinguish their works? What were the larger technical and artistic contributions of Ming Dynasty decorative arts?

Readings: Sullivan, Chapter 9

### **Lecture Fifteen: Review Session**

In-class exercises with 'unknowns,' exam practice questions and open questions.  
Response Paper Two assigned

Mar. 18: No Class .Port Louis.

(B class Lecture Fifteen meets after port)

### **Lecture Sixteen: Qing Dynasty**

Questions: How did the emergence of the Manchus change Chinese artistic production? What was the role, if any, of increasing contacts with European and other foreign cultures? How did the literati and the academics respectively respond to these interactions? Which artists had a lasting impact on Qing culture, and for what genres were they best known? What was the role of the 'eccentrics' on the development of art? What was the Shanghai school?

Reading: Sullivan, Chapter 10 and Chongzheng, "The Late Qing," 289-307

Mar. 21: No Class. Study Day.

(B class Lecture Sixteen meets after port)

### **Lecture Seventeen: The Early Modern Era Response Paper Two Due**

Mar. 25-30: No Class. **Cape Town**

### **Lecture Eighteen: Early Twentieth Century Art**

Questions: What were the prevailing sources for art and architecture during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century? How were the artistic achievements of the past revisited and expressed anew? How were woodcuts different from other Chinese arts we have studied so far? In what ways were they used, and what effects did they have on social movements?

Readings: Sullivan, Chapter 20

### **Lecture Nineteen: Art of the People's Republic of China**

Questions: How did the Communist government's policies change the production and dissemination of art?

Reading: Andrews, "Revolutionaries and Academics: Art of the Republican Period" in *Painters and Politics*, 11-33

April 01: No Class. Study Day.

### **Lecture Twenty: Art of the Cultural Revolution**

Questions: What effects did the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution have on Chinese art?

Reading: Andrews, "The Victory of Socialist Realism: Oil Painting and the New Guohua" in *Century in Crisis*, 228-237

**Field Lab Papers Due.**

April 06-10: No Class. Ghana.

### **Lecture Twenty-one: The Art of Subversion: Modern Chinese Art**

Questions: How are themes, styles and traditions of the past being reused in modern art, and how are the same characteristics being reinvented and/or rejected? How has the role of the artist changed along with the arrival of modernity?

April 13: No Class. Study Day.

### **Lecture Twenty-two: Final Review Session**

We will have practice questions in the final exam format, and have an open discussion/question session.

Questions to consider from this course: How did patronage and political power encourage (or discourage) artistic expression throughout Chinese history? What has been the role of the past, and revisiting the past, in art objects covered throughout this course? What are the major genres of Chinese art, and the main contributions of the various dynasties? How did philosophy, politics and religion impact the production of particular artistic styles and themes?

April 16-17: No Class. Study Days.

April 18-21: No Class. Casablanca.

### **Lecture Twenty-four: FINAL EXAM**

## **FIELD WORK**

### **Field Lab:**

- Three Thousand Years in a Day
- Shanghai, February 03, 2013
- Destination: Shanghai Museum

### **Academic Objectives:**

1. Identify important stylistic characteristics of Chinese arts throughout history
2. Learn to distinguish arts informed by Buddhist, Daoist and Confucian concerns
3. Understand and differentiate the artistic techniques of different eras, such as brushstrokes
4. Discern the different genres of Chinese painting and the motivations for their creation

**Field Lab Description:** In this lab, we will explore the Shanghai Museum's vast collection, which numbers over 120,000 art works. With exhibits dedicated to early bronze ware and tomb finds, we will directly engage the earliest strata of Chinese visual culture. The sculpture galleries will enable us to examine early Buddhist art, and in the extensive painting displays, we will study firsthand works from each of the major artistic moments in Chinese art history. Further, we will survey and discuss the decorative and calligraphic arts on display.

**Field Lab Assignments:** Students will break into smaller groups with an assignment to find a specific work of art and then give a brief presentation on it to the group as a whole. During the course of the visit, students will be expected to document and photograph (where possible) those works of art which impact them the most, or which they perceive as particularly noteworthy. After their visit, students will produce a 6-8 page paper that addresses at least four of their selected works, describing its artistic, stylistic, historical or religious significance.

## **METHODS OF EVALUATION**

Grades for the course will be calculated as follows:

- Exam: 30%
- Field Lab Report: 30%
- Response papers and map assignment: 20%
- Class Participation: 20%

At the beginning of the voyage, students will complete a map exercise based on our upcoming journey. Over the course of the trip, there will be two 2-4 page response papers where the student offers his or her perspective on a particular reading and its associated art. The field lab report will be a 6-8 page paper based on site visits as outlined in the Field Work section above.

The final exam will consist of identification and comparisons of known and unknown works of art, answered in short essay form. For unknown works, grades will be based on the student's ability to adequately assign a culture of origin to the object, a rough time period, and provide a convincing supporting argument. We will practice for this throughout the semester during a series of in-class exercises, which, along with contributions to class discussions, regular attendance and adequate preparation for class, will constitute the participation component of the final grade.

## **RESERVE LIBRARY LIST**

AUTHOR: Barnhart, Richard M. et al

TITLE: *Three Thousand Years of Chinese Painting*  
PUBLISHER: Yale University  
ISBN #: 0-300-07013-6  
DATE/EDITION: 1997/First ed.

AUTHOR: Andrews, Julia F. and Kuiyi Shen  
TITLE: *A Century in Crisis: Modernity and Tradition in the Art of Twentieth Century China*  
PUBLISHER: Guggenheim Museum: Dist. by Harry N. Abrams  
ISBN #: 978-081096-909-4  
DATE/EDITION: 1998/First

AUTHOR: Wiseman, Mary Bittner and Liu Yuedi, Eds.  
TITLE: *Subversive Strategies in Contemporary Chinese Art*  
PUBLISHER: Brill  
ISBN #: 978-90-04-18795-5  
DATE/EDITION: 2011/First

AUTHOR: Thorp, Robert  
TITLE: *Chinese Art and Culture*  
PUBLISHER: Prentice Hall  
ISBN #: 0810941457 (hardback) or 0130889695 (paperback)  
DATE/EDITION: 2001/First

## **ELECTRONIC COURSE MATERIALS**

AUTHOR: Andrews, Julia  
CHAPTER TITLE: "The Victory of Socialist Realism: Oil Painting and the New Guohua"  
BOOK TITLE: *Century in Crisis: Modernity and Tradition in the Art of Twentieth- Century China*  
DATE: 1998  
PAGES: 228-237

AUTHOR: Andrews, Julia  
CHAPTER TITLE: Chapter One: "Revolutionaries and Academics: Art of the Republican Period"  
BOOK TITLE: *Painters and Politics in the People's Republic of China, 1949-1979*  
DATE: 1994  
PAGES: 11-33

AUTHOR: Lee, Sherman  
CHAPTER TITLE: Chinese Art of the Song Dynasty  
BOOK TITLE: *A History of Far Eastern Art, Fifth Edition*  
DATE: 1994  
PAGES: 358-383

AUTHOR: Chongzheng, Nie  
CHAPTER TITLE: The Late Qing  
BOOK TITLE: *Three Thousand Years of Chinese Painting*

DATE: 1997  
PAGES: 289-307

AUTHOR: Carrier, David  
CHAPTER TITLE: How to Misunderstand Chinese Art: Seven Examples  
BOOK TITLE: Subversive Strategies in Contemporary Chinese Art  
DATE: 2011  
PAGES: 369-376

### **HONOR CODE**

Semester at Sea students enroll in an academic program administered by the University of Virginia, and thus bind themselves to the University's honor code. The code prohibits all acts of lying, cheating, and stealing. Please consult the Voyager's Handbook for further explanation of what constitutes an honor offense.

Each written assignment for this course must be pledged by the student as follows: "On my honor as a student, I pledge that I have neither given nor received aid on this assignment." The pledge must be signed, or, in the case of an electronic file, signed "[signed]."