

ARH 301: Introduction to Visual Arts

Unique # 19610, Spring 2019

Instructor:	Elliot López-Finn	elliott.lopezfinn@gmail.com Pronouns: they/them
Lecture:	MW 4-5:30 PM	ART 1.110
Office hours:	MW 3-4:00 PM	ART 1.412

PLEASE READ THIS SYLLABUS CAREFULLY, AS IT IS YOUR CONTRACT WITH ME.

Regardless of your major, art history can be a valuable component of your studies at UT, exposing you to the ways other human beings throughout time have interacted with, and responded to, the world around them. Our course especially focuses on how art and visual culture can help us connect to people outside of our culture(s) and time periods. Be aware that we likely will discuss some potentially controversial subjects, including politics, spirituality, sexuality, gender, etc.

There is no assigned textbook for this course. For most lectures, you will read a textbook chapter or news article. Please read the assigned pages before the associated lecture so that you have an appropriate introduction to the cultures that we discuss.

Lectures are an important component of this course, as I will present material and information that is not widely published. As I will reiterate in class: the readings provide the data, and the lectures will provide interpretation. If you do not attend lecture consistently, you will not do well in this course.

Descriptions of the assignments, study materials, and major grades will be posted on Canvas. **You are responsible for keeping track of your own attendance, checking Canvas for announcements and grades, and reporting any errors to the instructor.** Any grading issues need to be resolved by the last day of class.

This course carries the **Global Cultures flag**. Global Cultures courses are designed to increase your familiarity with cultural groups outside the United States. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from assignments covering the practices, beliefs, and histories of at least one non-U.S. cultural group, past or present.

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Communication and Email Policy

- Please be aware that it may take up to 24 hours for me to return emails, and I only answer emails that use respectful language. Treat this class as you would a job.
- Check that your email address is up-to-date in Canvas. **You are responsible for checking your email regularly.** You can find instructions for updating your e-mail address at:

<http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.php>

Classroom conduct

- **This is a no-laptops and no-cellphone classroom.** If you need a laptop to take notes, please alert me via email or in person.
- **I reserve the right to ask you to leave if you intentionally disrupt the rest of the class's ability to learn.**
- You should feel free to interpret ideas and express your thoughts without feeling embarrassed or fearing retribution. Please be open to listening to others' views and compose your comments/questions in the most respectful language possible.
- Your success in this course will be proportional to your "ownership" of the material. That entails not only studying the class material, but also asking questions for clarification if you have a problem understanding something.
- Audio recording lectures for personal use is allowed! But large-scale distribution (i.e. posting on Youtube, sharing via Dropbox folders, etc.) and monetization of recorded lectures violates copyright law. In addition, refrain from selling your notes of my lectures. Share them for free!

Grading Breakdown:

Due Date

5%: Reflection Journal #1

2/4

5%: Formal Analysis Paper #1

2/18

10%: Test 1

2/25

5%: Reflection Journal #2

3/13

15%: Test 2

4/8

20%: Formal Analysis Paper #2

4/24

20%: Test 3

5/8

20%: Attendance (see Attendance Policy*)

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*Attendance Policy

- There will be an **attendance sheet** to sign for each lecture. It is your responsibility to sign the sheet upon arrival.
- I take up the attendance sheet within 10 minutes of class starting. If you arrive after I collect the sign-in sheet, **you may be counted as absent.**
 - (Exceptions can be made for specific instances if you email me ahead of time! I will be flexible as long as you are proactive.)
- If you miss more than four classes, I will deduct one point from your final grade for each additional absence.
- **Why is attendance so important?**
 - You should be aware that it would be nearly impossible to do well in this course unless you attend class regularly, take careful notes, and participate in class discussion. Exams will be based on lectures and class discussions and writing assignments will be explained during class time. If you miss a class, be certain that you get notes from one of your classmates. Please come to office hours with any questions you may have about the material.
- Exceptions to Late Attendance/Assignment Policy:
 - **Religious holidays:** By UT Austin policy, you must notify me of your pending absence at least **fourteen days prior to the date of observance** of a religious holy day. You will be given an opportunity to complete missed work.
 - **Department of Intercollegiate Athletics** travel days are approved and do not take up your excused absences. HOWEVER, you must still inform me of your impending absences through the proper paperwork. You are still responsible for any assignments due. If travel days fall on any quizzes or tests in the course calendar of this syllabus, please notify me so arrangements can be made in advance.
 - If you have an **illness, injury, personal or family emergency**, your absence can be excused with notification from the Student Emergency Services in the Office of the Dean of Students:
<http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/emergency/students.php>

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Course Schedule

Section One: Eurasian and African Art and Architecture

WEEK 1

January 23: What is Visual Culture?

- **Reading:** Selections from “Chapter 1: Experiencing Art” from *Art Past, Art Present*, 3-19.

WEEK 2

January 28: The Rise of Art in Paleolithic and Neolithic Eurasia

- **Assignment: Reflection Journal #1:** Details on CANVAS, due **February 6**.
- **Reading:** “Chapter 2: Prehistoric Art” from *Art Past, Art Present*, 22-29.

January 30: Neolithic Near Eastern Urbanism and Political Art

- **Reading:** “Chapter 2: Ancient Near Eastern Art” from Janson’s *History of Art*, 21-47.

WEEK 3

February 4: Art and the Birth of Writing in Upper Africa

- **Reading:** “Egypt from Narmer to Cleopatra”, from *Gardner’s Art through the Ages: A Global History*.

February 6: Cosmopolitanism and Communication in the Ancient World

- **Assignment: Reflection Journal #1** due in hard copy at beginning of class

WEEK 4

February 11: Art and Architecture of Sub-Saharan Africa

- **Reading:** “Ch. 13: Arts of Africa to the Sixteenth Century” from Stokstad’s *Art History*, 413-439.

February 13: Art of Ancient Bronze Age China

- **Reading:** Selections from Chapter 2, “The Early Bronze Age: Shang and Western Zhou” p 15-34, 42-43 and Chapter 3, “Eastern Zhou and the Period of the Warring States” p45-46, 51-57. *The Arts of China*.

WEEK 5

February 18: Early Buddhist and Hindu Art in India and Southeast Asia

- **Reading:** Selections from Chapter 2, “The Early Bronze Age: Shang and Western Zhou” p 15-34, 42-43 and Chapter 3, “Eastern Zhou and the Period of the Warring States” p45-46, 51-57. *The Arts of China*.
- **Assignment: Formal Analysis Paper #1:** Details on CANVAS, due

February 20: Test Review

WEEK 6

February 25: No Class: TEST ONE DUE

- Due in Canvas by midnight
- This test is an open note, take-home essay that draws off of the works and discussions from Unit I; the prompt will be posted February 20.

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Section Two: The Americas

WEEK 6

February 27: Introducing the Americas

- **Reading:** "Introduction" from *The Art of Mesoamerica: From Olmec to Aztec*, pp. 8-15.

WEEK 7

March 4: Preclassic Olmec Civilization and the Sacred Landscape

- **Reading:** "The Olmecs" from *The Art of Mesoamerica: From Olmec to Aztec*, pp. 21-41.

March 6: Urbanism in Classic Teotihuacan

- **Reading:** "The Metropolis of Teotihuacan", from *Mexico: Splendors of Thirty Centuries*, pp. 87-114.
- **Assignment: Reflection Journal #2:** Details on **CANVAS**, due March 13

WEEK 8

March 11: Courtly Life among the Classic Maya

- **Reading:** "Classic Splendor: the Late Period" from *The Maya*.

March 13: Communication between Teotihuacan and the Maya

- **Reading:** See "Chapter XX"
- **Assignment: Reflection Journal #2** due in hard copy at beginning of class

WEEK 9

March 18 and 20: Spring Break

WEEK 10

March 25: North America and Mesoamerica in Contact

- **Reading:** "American Landscapes, Seen and Unseen" by Richard Townsend. From *Hero, Hawk, and Open Hand*. Pp15-36.

March 27: The Art of Life and Death in the Aztec Empire

- **Reading:** "The Aztecs" from *The Art of Mesoamerica: From Olmec to Aztec*.

WEEK 11

April 1: Late Aztec and Colonial Spanish Art

- **Reading:** See October 29.

April 3: Test Review

WEEK 12

April 8: TEST TWO

- Due in Canvas by midnight
- This test is an open note, take-home essay that draws off of the works and discussions from Unit I; the prompt will be posted February 20.

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Section Three: Legacies of the Ancient World

WEEK 12

April 10: A Museum without Walls: Modern and Contemporary Art

- **Reading:** "Christo and Jeanne-Claude: On the Making of the Running Fence"
- **Reading:** "30,000 Years of Modern Art", from *The Guardian*
 - **Optional:** <https://journal.collectionair.com/how-to/looking-contemporary-art/>

WEEK 13

April 15: The Art of Archaeology and Anthropology

- **Reading:** "Sculpture as Landscape" pp. 66-69.
- **Reading:** "Michael Heizer's Monumental "City"" from *The New Yorker*.

April 17: Conquest and Colonialism in Retrospect

- **Reading:** "Chapter 12: Trends of 1980s and Early 1990s" from *Twentieth-Century Art of Latin America*, pp. 317, 324-332.

WEEK 14

April 22: Museums, Looting, and the Ethics of Display

- **Reading:** "How *Mining the Museum* Changed the Art World" from *BmoreArt*
- **Reading:** "The Total Destruction of the National Museum of Anthropology: Eduardo Abaroa" from *Adobe Airstream*, April 2012.
 - **Optional:** "Notes to a Project: Total Destruction of the Anthropology Museum" by Eduardo Abaroa. From *Scapegoat Journal*. Pp.147-150

April 24: Copies and Forgeries in Museums and the Modern Art Market

- **Assignment: Formal Analysis Paper #2** due at beginning of class

WEEK 15:

April 29: Exoticism and Archaism, 19th century to Today

- **Reading:** "Frank Lloyd Wright's Textile Block Houses and the Maya Revival"
- **Reading:** "Nearly a century later, a video artist follows in Frank Lloyd Wright's Mayan footsteps" from *the Los Angeles Times*, Oct. 15, 2017.

May 1: Gender, Sexuality, Identity: Ancient to Modern

- **Reading:** TBD

WEEK 16:

May 6: Politics, Propaganda, and Resistance

- **Reading:** TBD

May 8: TEST THREE DUE

- Due in Canvas by midnight