Introduction to Art History: Asia

ARHI 1102 PW1

Summer 2025 (May 27-August 5)

Attribute: Global Studies and Fine Arts

Instructor: Dr. Asato Ikeda

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**Course**

This course offers a survey of Asian art spanning from ancient to contemporary periods. It encompasses the exploration of arts and monuments representing major religions, including Buddhism and Hinduism, as well as the important visual traditions such as Chinese landscape paintings, and Japanese woodblock prints. Utilizing critical art historical scholarship, the course seeks to examine art through various perspectives, including gender, sexuality, transcultural dialogues, and diasporic experiences, while also confronting difficult histories, including colonialism, racism, and war.

**There will be two 15–20 minute oral exams, scheduled during Week 5 and Week 10 of the course.** The exact date and time for each exam will be coordinated with the instructor, taking into account the student's work and travel schedules to ensure flexibility and accommodation.

Students will develop and be evaluated on four different skills:

1. Presenting visual analyses
2. Familiarity with important Asian art objects, artists, art movements and historical chronology
3. Close and careful reading and understanding scholarship (understanding historical context, theoretical concept and scholarly arguments) and articulating and summarizing in an organized manner

4) Managing time and following instructions: attending classes and submitting

assignments on time

**Assignments:**

1. Each week you are required to read assigned text and watch assigned videos.
2. Each week you are required to submit a 15 min video.

Each week, you will create a **15-minute video** in which you present and reflect on that week’s assigned readings. This is an important opportunity to develop your analytical thinking, speaking skills, and personal engagement with the material. It will also serve as practice for your midterm and final oral exams.

In your video each week, address the following:

1. Summary of Key Ideas (10 minutes):
   * Briefly summarize the main arguments or themes from the readings.
   * Identify at least two key concepts or terms from the texts and explain their significance.
   * When relevant, note the historical, cultural, or theoretical context of the works.
2. Your Perspective (5 minutes):
   * What ideas did you find most compelling or challenging? Why?
   * How do the readings connect to each other? Highlight tensions, parallels, or questions they raise in conversation.
   * Offer your own interpretation or critique, supported with specific examples from the texts or real-world connections.
   * Incorporate one of the following:
     + A quote you found particularly striking
     + A real-life connection (current events, personal experience, other classes, etc.)

Video Guidelines

* **Your face must be visible** for the entire video.
* You may use notes, but do not read from a script.
* You may shoot multiple shorter videos that are 15 min in total.
* Upload your video to blackboard. You can upload your video on Youtube (via your Fordham email) and make the videos unlisted so that only I can access them. Share the link with me on Blackboard.

This format is designed to help you internalize course content, articulate your thoughts clearly, and prepare you for the oral exams, where you’ll be expected to discuss readings and present ideas without written prompts.

The videos are due at the end of the day (11:59 pm) every Monday.

1. Students will complete two oral exams (Midterm in Week 5, Final in Week 10), each lasting 15–20 minutes via video conferencing. The exam will assess visual analysis, thematic discussion, and comparative thinking. Students will analyze an artwork, respond to thematic questions, and compare artistic elements. Evaluations will be based on content accuracy, critical thinking, clarity, and engagement. No external aids are allowed, and professionalism is expected.

The professor and students will work together to schedule exam slots throughout the week to accommodate students who are traveling or working, as well as the professor’s travel schedule/time difference.

Each exam will consist of five questions, which will be *similar* to the following:

“Describe this artwork in terms of composition, style, and cultural significance. How does it reflect the artistic traditions of its time?”

“What are the key religious, social, or political influences behind this artwork? How do these factors shape its meaning?”

“Compare and contrast two artworks from different regions or time periods. How do their artistic techniques and themes differ?”

“Identify the main argument in a scholarly article we have read. What evidence does the author use to support their claim?”

Please sign up for your oral exam spot by June 1.

[Midterm Oral Exam Slot](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1LMaNPuDUg8nTPTZqtulSnQzrAiYF-6GtZaMRy4UlneY/edit?usp=sharing) (signup sheet)

[Final Exam Oral Exam Slot](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1GiQZLGft5oE_MoWih6ppUb1WPkXf0vXEqVtyP8V93u8/edit?usp=sharing) (signup sheet)

\*Failing to complete assignments by deadlines will significantly lower your grade.

**Course Evaluation**

Weekly Videos x 8 (5% each, due at the end of the day every Monday): 40%:

Midterm Oral Exam (Week 5): 30%

Final Oral Exam (not cumulative; Week 10): 30%

**Textbook**

No need to buy a textbook. All readings will be made available online.

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| --- | --- |
| **A** | 100-93 |
| **A-** | 92-90 |
| **B+** | 89-87 |
| **B** | 86-83 |
| **B-** | 82-80 |
| **C+** | 79-77 |
| **C** | 76-73 |
| **C-** | 72-70 |
| **D** | Below 70 |
| **F** | Below 60 |

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

**Week 1 (May 27-June 2) What Is Art History? What Is Visual Analysis?**

Readings/Videos

* [Asa Simon Mittman “Naturalism, Realism, Abstraction, and Idealization”](https://smarthistory.org/naturalism/)
* [Introduction to art historical analysis](https://smarthistory.org/introduction-to-art-historical-analysis/)

For this week, you are required to submit three 5-minute videos.

1. Post a self-introduction video (5min)

Introduce yourself by sharing:

* The name you go by
* Your gender pronoun
* Your major/minor
* What do you do in your spare time?
* What can you tell us about your cultural heritage/identity?
* Please share if you have particular interest in Asian art/culture/history.

1. Content Summary (5min)

Please create a 5 min video of you summarizing key ideas and concepts learned from the two assigned readings.

1. Self-guided museum visit + visual/formal analysis (5 min)

Visit a museum that displays Asian art, however you define it. This can be any museum, such as the Metropolitan Museum of Art, MoMA, Asia Society, Japan Society, or a commercial gallery. Shoot a 5 min video of you visiting a museum/gallery and finding a work of art. Select one piece of art and conduct visual analysis.

**Week 2 (June 3-June 9) Art and Buddhism in India**

Objects in Focus

* Stupa I, Sanchi, Madhya Pradesh. Ca. 250 BCE. Enlarged and renovated ca. 50-25 BCE
* The Great Departure of the Buddha. Ca. 50-25 BCE. Stone. Sanchi.
* Seated Shakyamuni, 2nd-6th century, CE, Mathura, 73cm. National Museum of India.
* Buddha Shakyamuni, Pakistan: Ancient Gandhara, 200 CE, Norton Simon Museum of Art at Pasadena.

Readings/Videos

* [Introduction to Buddhism](https://smarthistory.org/introduction-to-buddhism/)
* [The stupa, and introduction](https://smarthistory.org/the-stupa-sanchi/)
* [Video on the stupa by Asian art museum](https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/1z612uy0ul7kkpxbpr0av/The-Stupa.mp4?rlkey=mrbf3xt9wk5td66ap7igmk121&dl=0) (4 min)
* [Images of enlightenment: aniconic vs. iconic depictions of the Buddha in India](https://smarthistory.org/aniconic-vs-iconic-depictions-of-the-buddha-in-india/)
* [A Buddha from Mathura](https://smarthistory.org/buddha-mathura/)
* [Vidya Dehejia “Issues of Spectatorship and Representation.” *Representing the Body: Gender Issues in Indian Art*. Vidya Dehejia. ed. Delhi, 1997. P.1-10.](https://www.dropbox.com/s/91bomgyemlgh9hs/Vidya%20Dehejia%2C%20Issues%20of%20Spectatorship%20and%20Representation%20ILL.pdf?dl=0) (scholarly article)

For the scholarly article, make sure that you will be able to answer the following questions:

Q1: What is the main point of this article? (p1-10)

Q2: According to Dehejia, what has Western feminist scholarship argued?

Q3: One of the issues she considers to sustain her argument is patronage and audience. What does she say about it?

Q4: The other issue Dehejia discusses the idea of “an ideology that glorified women.” What is this about?

Q5: How does Dehejia dismiss the efficacy of the misogynist legal text the Laws of Manu (p.8).

Q6: Do you agree with Dehejia? If so, why? If not, why not?

Weekly video due on June 9.

**Week 3 (June 10-June 16) Art and Hinduism in India**

Objects:

1. Shiva as the Lord of Dance (Nataraja), Chola period ca. 11th century. MET
2. Lakshmana Temple. Ca. 1030 Khajuraho. Madhya Pradesh. NORTH
3. Rajarajeshwara Temple, Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu, completed in 1010. SOUTH

Readings:

* [Three Hindu Gods](https://smarthistory.org/three-hindu-gods/)
* [Video on Hinduism](https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/szr5cwsxugq6hwxqdebe4/Hinduism.mp4?rlkey=5no4m293746tak5jpk5zhk6jd&dl=0) produced by Asian Art Museum in SF
* [Video on Hindu Temple](https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/1qddtuls9hnw6n8ibsqlc/The-Hindu-Temple.webm?rlkey=kwh1q7295vin8sd09yvfw204a&dl=0)
* [*Shiva as Lord of the Dance (Nataraja)*](https://smarthistory.org/shiva-as-lord-of-the-dance-nataraja/)
* [Rajarajesvara temple, Tanjavu](https://smarthistory.org/temple-tanjavur/)r
* [Sacred space and symbolic form at Lakshmana Temple, Khajuraho (India)](https://smarthistory.org/lakshmana-temple/)
* [Video on Khajuraho temple](https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/7v4l8jrt1j2izosaz3t15/Khajuraho-Temple.mp4?rlkey=gyeo5njhroihprlviziveul5t&dl=0)
* [Padma Kaimal, “Playful Ambiguity and Political Authority at the Large Relief at Mamallapuram,” *Asian Art: Blackwell Anthologies in Art History*, pp.43-53.](https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/0ywt5tgtputt37w9jr2i0/Padma-Kaimal-Playful-Ambiguity-ILL-with-IMAGES.pdf?rlkey=z3k17y2mamzz3w6bjq9f21b5v&dl=0) (scholarly article)

For the scholarly article, please make sure that you can answer the following questions:

Q1: What is the artwork that the essay examines? Where and when was it made?

Q2: What is the author's argument?

Q3: What is “Arjuna’s Penance”?

Q4: How is “Arjuna’s Penance” visually represented in the relief? (Refer to the picture.)

Q5: What are the issues with interpreting the relief as a representation of Arjuna’s Penance?

Q6: What is “The Descent of the Ganges”?

Q7: How is “The Descent of the Ganges” visually represented in the relief? (Refer to the picture.)

Q8: What are the issues with interpreting the relief as a representation of this story?

Q9: Why are these particular stories depicted together?

15 min video due on June 16.

**Week 4 (June 17-June 23)**  **Early Chinese Art**

Objects:

1. Lidded ritual ewer (guang) with taotie, dragons, birds, tigers, elephants, fish, snakes, and humans, Shang Dynasty, Middle Yangzi Valley, China, c. 1100–1050 ​B.C.E.,
2. Lintong District, Xi’an, Shaanxi, China, painted terracotta
3. Funerary Banner, the Lady of Dai, Western Han dynasty, ca. 180 (ARTSTOR)

Readings:

* [Tigers, dragons, and, monsters on a Shang Dynasty Ewer](https://smarthistory.org/shang-dynasty-bronze-ewer/)
* [The Tomb of the First Emperor](https://smarthistory.org/tomb-first-emperor-qin/)
* [Video](https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/t5x305g3ukppnlvp19amy/Terracotta-Army-The-greatest-archaeological-find-of-the-20th-century-BBC-News.mp4?rlkey=htgaxjmnhxqj95ak0w7keijm2&dl=0) on Terracotta Army
* [*Funeral banner of Lady Dai (Xin Zhui)*](https://smarthistory.org/funeral-banner-of-lady-dai-xin-zhui/)
* [Video](https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/xhjauul2ee4ygvdbkdom7/Lady-Dai.mp4?rlkey=xxkalgj5aiu96jot5t85c41u4&dl=0) on Lady Dai
* Wu Hung, [“The Nine Tripods and Traditional Chinese Concepts of Monumentality,”](https://www.dropbox.com/s/35feuogja9rtyti/Wu%20Hung%20The%20Nine%20Tripods%20and%20Traditional%20Chinese%20Concepts%20of%20Monumentality.pdf?dl=0) *Asian Art: Blackwell Anthologies in Art History*, pp. 201-211. (scholarly article)

**Week 5 (June 24- June 30)**  Mid-Term Oral Exam (June 25, 26, 27)

Please sign up for a slot [HERE](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1LMaNPuDUg8nTPTZqtulSnQzrAiYF-6GtZaMRy4UlneY/edit?usp=sharing)

If these slots do not work for you, please email me at[**aikeda@fordham.edu**](mailto:aikeda@fordham.edu) **.** We will find an alternative date.

**Week 6 (July 1-July 7) Chinese Ink Paintings**

Objects:

1. Dong Yuan, Wintry Groves and Layered Banks, Southern Tang dynasty, ca. 950. Hanging scroll, ink and color on silk.
2. Fan Kuan, Travelers by Streams and Mountains, ca. 1000. Ink on silk hanging scroll.
3. Guo Xi, Early Spring, 1072, Song Dynasty

Readings:

* [Chinese landscape painting](https://smarthistory.org/chinese-landscape-painting/)
* [Mountings of Chinese paintings: scrolls, fans, and leafs](https://smarthistory.org/mountings-chinese-paintings/)
* [Ancient Chinese Art by NYT](https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/d1292minahyuncf4knvze/Arts_-Ancient-Chinese-Art-The-New-York-Times.mp4?rlkey=e7kbibaqsb2nhgxgaqiw1v21h&dl=0)
* Wen C. Fong, [“Of Nature and Art: Monumental Landscape”](https://www.dropbox.com/previews/Asato%20Important%20Files/Fordham/2024-2025/ARHI%202211%20Chinese%20Art%20and%20Visual%20Culture%20Syllabus/readings/Wen%20Fong%2C%20Of%20Nature%20and%20Art%3A%20Monumental%20Landscape.pdf?context=search&path=%2F&query=monumental&role=personal&typeahead_session_id=87126660722075243463243658764900)
* [Guo Xi’s Early Spring](https://depts.washington.edu/chinaciv/painting/4lndguox.htm)
* [Guo Xi’s Writings on Landscape Painting](https://www.dropbox.com/previews/Asato%20Important%20Files/Fordham/2024-2025/ARHI%202211%20Chinese%20Art%20and%20Visual%20Culture%20Syllabus/readings/Wen%20Fong%2C%20Of%20Nature%20and%20Art%3A%20Monumental%20Landscape.pdf?context=search&path=%2F&query=monumental&role=personal&typeahead_session_id=87126660722075243463243658764900)
* [Neo-Confucianism and Fan Kuan, *Travelers by Streams and Mountains*](https://smarthistory.org/neo-confucianism-fan-kuan-travelers-by-streams-and-mountains/)
* [Craig Clunas, “Practices of Vision,” *Asian Art: Blackwell Anthologies in Art History*, pp. 352-361.](https://www.dropbox.com/s/0c3ch1wvhf7yl1l/Craig%20Clunas%20Practices%20of%20Vision.pdf?dl=0) (scholarly article)

For the scholarly article, make sure that you are able to answer the following question:

Q1: What does the author examine, and what is the main argument of the essay?

Q2: What characterizes the viewing practices of Ming-period China?

Q3: What do the Chinese terms kan, guan, and du mean?

Q4: How do you compare the art viewing practices of the Ming period with the ways we view art today?

The weekly video is due on July 7.

**Week 7 (July 8-July 14) Japanese Woodblock Prints #1**

Objects:

1. Hishikawa Moronobu, Street Scene in Yoshiwara, late 17th century. Woodblock Print. MET.
2. Suzuki Harunobu, the Flowers of Beauty in the Floating World: Motoura and Yaezakura of the Minami Yamasakiya, ca. 1769.
3. Kitagawa Utamaro, Night Rain, ca. 1797. Polychrome woodblock print on paper. The Art Institute of Chicago

* Readings:
* [Edo period, an introduction](https://smarthistory.org/edo-period/)
* [Street Scene in Yoshiwara](https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/55584)
* [Street Scene in Yoshiwara](https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/6kuaji3t0tvy2p2w3eflq/Street-scene-in-the-pleasure-quarter-of-Edo-Japan.mp4?rlkey=kngi4at0pasoipoq6q4ybahkd&dl=0) (video)
* Michelle Hartney, [“Correct Art history.”](https://www.michellehartney.com/alternate-audio-tour) The Alternative Audio Guide
* [Charles Cramer and Kim Grant, “Japonisme” Smarthistory](https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/becoming-modern/avant-garde-france/impressionism/a/japonisme?modal=1%C2%A0)
* Greg Cook, [“MFA Director on Kimono Controversy: “‘I think That Was Misguided and Apologize”](https://www.wbur.org/news/2016/02/08/mfa-kimono-controversy) wbur. February 8, 2016.

For the last reading, make sure you are able to answer the following questions:

Q: What were Kimono Wednesdays at the Museum of Fine Arts in 2015, and what happened to the event? How did people from different perspectives express their opinions at the follow-up event? What are your thoughts on the issue?

The weekly video is due on July 14.

**Week 8 (July 15-July 21) Art and War in Japan and its Empire**

Objects:

1. Fujita Tsuguharu, *The Battle of Nomonhan* (Haruha kahan no sentō), 1940.  
   Oil on canvas, 140 x 448 cm.
2. Mine Okubo, Citizen 13660, 1946
3. Statue of Peace, Kim Seo-kyung and Kim Eun-sung, 2011

Readings:

* Asato Ikeda, [The Politics of Painting: Fascism and Japanese Art during the Second World War, excerpt.](https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/1ditoo66qwq8b7u8a3cvw/Asato-Ikeda-on-Fujita-Tsuguharu-Excerpt.pdf?rlkey=0ahe8v2ans8zpgmrn65pw9dkv&dl=0)
* Paul Mori, “[A celebration of the 75th anniversary of Miné Obubo’s landmark graphic novel “Citizen 13660](https://iexaminer.org/a-celebration-of-the-75th-anniversary-of-mine-obubos-landmark-graphic-novel-citizen-13660-at-the-japanese-american-national-museum/)” at the Japanese American National Museum”
* [Video](https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/r9atf3y3iq9ofwdr0x8kz/UNBOXED_-Min-Okubo-s-Masterpiece_-The-Art-of-Citizen-13660.mp4?rlkey=mejs2aku4fr0qd4c9njbztuvh&dl=0) about Mine Okubo
* Dongho Chun[, “The Battle of Representations: Gazing at the Peace Monument or Comfort Women Statue](https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/4rwoqk9p8esz83l0c3dtz/Dongho-Chun-the-battle-of-representations-gazing-at-the-peace-monument-or-comfort-women-statue-excerpt.pdf.pdf?rlkey=wu2b0dyf2pwyon8hvyr8j4eay&dl=0)” positions 28.2 (May 2020). Excerpt.
* [Video](https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/0mzaraxepfb2furt0jwc7/Former-comfort-woman-recalls-horrors.mp4?rlkey=qskmq6x1hcnlmseysulz5340j&dl=0) about comfort women
* For in-class activity and class discussion, read: [Asato Ikeda, “Japan’s Haunting War Art: Contested War Memories and Art Museums,” *disClosure*, p5-7; 16-28.](https://www.dropbox.com/s/5ipxtipamrquspg/Asato%20Ikeda%20Disclosure%20EXCERPT.pdf?dl=0) (\*not the entire essay)

For the scholarly reading, please make sure that you are able to answer the following questions

Q1: What questions does this essay address, and how does the author answer them? (p6)

Q2: How is the collection of 153 paintings currently displayed at the national museum, and what issues arise from this?

Q3: Where *do you* believe this collection belongs? How do you think the paintings should be displayed—or should they be displayed at all?

Q4: How do museum displays of Japanese war art contrast with those in American and other national contexts in addressing war responsibility?

Weekly video is due on July 21.

**Week 9 (July 22-July 28) Bollywood Film/Japanese Animation**

For this week, I will ask you to watch two films, Monsoon Wedding and Princess Mononoke. You might have to pay a few dollars to online stream.

* Video by Professor Ikeda
* [Film *Monsoon Wedding* (2001)](https://itunes.apple.com/us/movie/monsoon-wedding/id336868080) directed by Mira Nair
* [Film *Princess Mononoke* (1999)](https://www.amazon.com/gp/video/detail/B081RHKVL2/ref=atv_dl_rdr) directed by Hayao Miyazaki (available at LC)
* [Jenny Sharpe, “Gender, Nation, and Globalization in Monsoon Wedding and Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge,” *Meridians* 6.1 (2005): 58-81](https://www.dropbox.com/s/zbnun1hif541zl4/Jenny%20Sharpe%20Gender%20Nation%20and%20Globalization%20in%20Monsoon%20Wedding%20and%20Dilwale%20Dulhania%20Le%20Jayenge.pdf?dl=0). (scholarly article)
* [Susan Napier, “Confronting Master Narrative: History As Vision in Miyazaki Hayao’s Cinema of De-assurance,” *positions: east asia cultures critique*](https://www.dropbox.com/s/91os8go7t4eceig/Susan%20Napier%20Confronting%20Master%20Narratives%20EXCERPT.pdf?dl=0), 9.2 (Fall 2001) (scholarly article)

For the scholarly articles, please make sure that you are able to answer the following questions:

For Sharpe:

Q1: What are Bollywood films, and who is their audience?

Q2: How does the author characterize the history of Bollywood from the 1950s to the 1990s?

Q3: How does the author explain Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge (DDLJ) and Monsoon Wedding? How do they compare the two films?

Q4: After watching the film, do you agree with the author? Share one thing you found interesting about the film.

For Napier:

Q1: According to Napier, what are the similarities between Miyazaki anime and Disney films?

Q2: What are the differences between them?

Q3: Having watched Princess Mononoke, do you agree with the author?

Weekly video is due on July 28.

**Week 10 (July 29-August 5) Final Exam (Oral) Signup Sheet** [**HERE**](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1GiQZLGft5oE_MoWih6ppUb1WPkXf0vXEqVtyP8V93u8/edit?usp=sharing)

**AI Use Policy for This Course**

Consulting generative AI tools (such as ChatGPT) is permitted for this course, but students are still expected to *read and engage critically with all assigned materials*. AI may be used to brainstorm, clarify concepts, or help structure ideas, but it must not replace the essential process of reading, thinking, and formulating original insights.

Please note that oral exams (both midterm and final) will require you to answer questions on the spot, without external assistance. If your preparation has relied solely on AI-generated content rather than your own understanding of the readings, this will become evident and will negatively affect your performance and grade.

**Assignment Completion Policy**

Completion of All Assignments is Required to Pass the Course:

* + Every assignment, regardless of weight, must be submitted.
  + Late assignments will only be accepted with prior approval or valid documentation.
  + Assignments submitted late without prior approval or valid documentation will incur a penalty of 10% per day.

The deadline remains in Eastern Time, so be caution about the deadline if you are in a different time zone.