

Art and Social Change in Postwar Japan



Hiroshi Sugimoto, *Time Exposed, Mirtoan Sea, Sounion*, 1990, installation view seen from the dock at Naoshima Island, Japan 2013.
Photo by Shawn Michelle Smith, artwork copyright Hiroshi Sugimoto, courtesy of Benesse Art Site Naoshima.

Module Code and Title	Art and Social Change in Postwar Japan
Module Description	This seminar will examine contemporary art in Japan from Postwar to today with a focus on artist collectives, social engagement and cooperative practices. Readings and visual materials on contemporary art including Mono-ha, Fluxus, Setouchi, Mabuni Peace Project and other movements will inform discussions on the collective possibilities and impossibilities in art. We will apply gender analysis and transnational approaches, and we will decenter modernism while engaging with the work of artists, art historians, and cultural critics. Each student will complete a final research project in a creative or expository format on one artist collective for this module.
Learning Objectives	<p>Students will be expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop skills of visual and cultural analysis for diverse artworks • Exercise collaborative skills through class discussions and response to readings • Demonstrate research skills examining contemporary art in Japan • Collect, classify, and contextualize visual, performative and other artistic works • Engage critically with other artists' work through analysis, argument and written communication • Evaluate and critique the work of peers through workshops
Modes of Learning & Teaching	<p>Week 1 Intro to "Japonesia" & methodologies of "Japaneseness"</p> <p>Week 2 World War 2, Okinawa</p> <p>Week 3 Reportage, Gutai</p> <p>Week 4 The Play, Kyushu-ha</p> <p>Week 5 Fluxus, Midterm work drafts</p> <p>Week 6 Midterm work critique, Hi Red Center</p> <p>Week 7 Mono-ha, Koto-ha</p> <p>Week 8 Anti-art, Fukuoka</p> <p>Week 9 Hakushū, Mabuni Peace Project</p> <p>Week 10 Echigo-Tsumari, Setouchi</p> <p>Week 11 Japanese American Art, Able Art</p> <p>Week 12 Final work drafts and critique</p> <p>Week 13 Final presentations</p>
Assessment Criteria <i>Please provide details of the assessment methods or what proportion of the overall grade is composed by each component of assessment</i>	<p>20% Participation</p> <p>10% Responses</p> <p>20% Presentation</p> <p>20% Midterm work</p> <p>30% Final work</p>

Required Reading	<p>Required Reading List enabled during module registration here: http://courses.yale-nus.edu.sg/required-reading-list/</p> <p>*Please note readings are subject to change</p>
Additional Readings	<p>Favell, Adrian. <i>Before and After Superflat: A Short History of Contemporary Japanese Art 1990-2011</i>. Timezone 8, 2012.</p> <p>Ishikawa Norio, (2017/Translation 2020) “The Origins of Shima Toshio’s ‘Japonnesia’ Ideas”, Kokugakuin Japan Studies, v1: 47-65.</p> <p>Jesty, Justin (2021) “Japan’s Rural Art Festivals: The Echigo-Tsumari Paradigm” <i>Companion to Art in the Public Realm</i>. Routledge.</p> <p>Jesty, Justin. (2018) “Kyushu-ha: Between Three Worlds”, <i>Art and Engagement in Early Postwar Japan</i>. Cornell: 198-219.</p> <p>Kano, Ayako. “Women? Japan? Art? Chino Kaori and the Feminist Art History Debates,” in <i>Review of Japanese Culture and Society</i>, vol. 15 (December 2003): 25-38.</p> <p>Kapur, Nick. <i>Japan at the crossroads: conflict and compromise after Anpo</i>. Harvard, 2018.</p> <p>Kitagawa, Fram. <i>Art Place Japan: The Echigo-Tsumari Art Triennale and the Vision to Reconnect Art and Nature</i>. Princeton Architectural Press, 2015.</p> <p>Kumakura, Sumiko and Yuichiro Nagatsu. <i>An Overview of Art Projects in Japan: A Society that Co-Creates with Art</i>. Arts Council Tokyo. 2015.</p> <p>Machida, Margo. “Reframing Asia America” essay for “Asia/America: Identities in Contemporary Asian American Art”, Asia Society, 1994.</p> <p>McCormack, Gavan and Satoko Oka Norimatsu. <i>Resistant Islands: Okinawa Confronts Japan and the United States</i>. Rowman & Littlefield, 2012.</p> <p>Munroe, Alexandra. <i>Japanese Art After 1945: Scream Against the Sky</i>. Harry N. Abrams, 1994.</p> <p>Tiampo, Ming. <i>Gutai: Decentering Modernism</i>. U of Chicago, 2011.</p> <p>Tomii, Reiko. <i>Radicalism in the Wilderness: International Contemporaneity and 1960s Art in Japan</i>. MIT, 2016.</p> <p>Tsutakawa, Mayumi. <i>They Painted From Their Hearts: Pioneer Asian American Artists</i>. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1994.</p> <p>Yoshimoto, Midori. (2013) “A Woman and Collectives: An Interview with Mitsuko Tabe,” <i>positions</i>, 21:2, 474-488.</p> <p>Yoshitake, Mika, James Jack Oshrat Dotan and Reiko Tomii. <i>Requiem for the Sun: Mono-ha</i>. Blum & Poe Gallery, 2012.</p>
Any other Information	<p>A visiting curator and professional artist will be invited for special class session(s) to engage with students.</p> <p>Assignments may be submitted in written or creative media including (but not limited to): video, audio, drawing, painting, poetry and others.</p>