

EALC 499: SPECIAL TOPICS
JAPANESE VISUAL CULTURE, HOUSED IN LA
4 UNITS/SPRING 2017/WEDNESDAYS 2:00-4:50/LOCATION TBA
INSTRUCTOR: MIYA ELISE MIZUTA
OFFICE: TAPER HALL 376, WEDNESDAYS 1:00-2:00 OR BY APPOINTMENT
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EXCUSE ME, BUT THIS ISN'T MY HOUSE BY ANY CHANCE?
--ABE KÖBŌ, "RED COCOON" (1950)

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The Japanese Foreign Ministry is opening a "Japan House" in Los Angeles in the summer of 2017 to showcase Japanese culture—its traditional and popular culture, subculture, craftsmanship, technology, and cuisine—with the stated aim of "laying the groundwork for winning international understanding of Japan." The Los Angeles Japan House will be located in the heart of Hollywood; two other Japan Houses will be created in London and São Paulo. The inauguration of Japan House LA provides a perfect opportunity for examining the history of the relationship between Los Angeles and Japan and considering the ways in which Japanese visual culture has been and continues to be utilized to define and promote Japan's national identity. What image of Japan will be presented in this "place of encounter" and to what end: what are the potential political and symbolic impacts of Japan House serving as an embodiment of Japan? What are the personal, public, local, national, and international goals of "encouraging an experiential discovery" of "authentic" Japan in this format? This course will consider the ways in which cultural artifacts exceed the materiality of the spaces they occupy through display, thereby transforming not only the perception of the nation they represent but the cultural arena in which they are housed. We will read critical essays, novels, and short stories; survey works of art, design, and architecture; and view short and feature-length films. This class thematizes the issues of image-making and the politics of international display by addressing the following topics:

Japonisme, the history of Japanese Americans in LA, Japan's participation in World's Fairs, Japanese gardens and the teahouse, the influence of Japanese art and architecture on the mid-century modern style, collections of Japanese art in LA (LACMA and MOCA museums, and commercial gallery Blum & Poe), Japan and Hollywood, Japanese cuisine and food design in LA, and Japanese popular culture and subculture in LA. Students will work collaboratively throughout the term toward a final presentation and paper in which they will present a program for Japan House's event hall/gallery, multimedia spaces, theater, restaurant, and retail space.

The class will take 5 field trips: Gamble House (Charles and Henry Greene, 1908); Japanese Garden at the Huntington (1912); Hollyhock House (Frank Lloyd Wright, 1919-21; Schindler House (Rudolph M. Schindler, 1921-22); Pavilion for Japanese Art, Los Angeles Country Museum of Art (Bruce Goff, 1988) and Blum and Poe Gallery (1994).

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

In this class students will develop their critical, collaborative, writing, and presentation skills, by working together toward a final presentation and paper. Through exposure to critical essays and works of modern and contemporary Japanese literature, architecture, art, design, and film, the objective is to learn how localized, distinctive Japanese culture is generated, transmitted, and received within a transnational framework and examine Japan's contribution to global culture, in particular Los Angeles. The mode of analysis employed will reflect the fluidity and hybridity of Japanese cultural production and position Japan as one possible alternate module to Euro-American artistic production, further adding to and enriching the cultural archive of students engaged in a liberal arts education.

RECOMMENDED PREPARATION:

All readings will be in English. Knowledge of Japanese language or a background in Japanese culture is NOT required.

COURSE NOTES:

While the course will focus on reading a variety of critical and literary texts, preparation for one class session will require viewing feature-length films. Each session will typically be structured as follows: an introductory lecture by the instructor that includes a Powerpoint presentation with visual aids and video clips. The second half of class will primarily be devoted to student-led discussion. 5 sessions will be class trips and these sessions will be conducted off campus.

TECHNOLOGICAL PROFICIENCY AND HARDWARE/SOFTWARE REQUIRED:

Students will need to access Blackboard regularly to post their weekly assignments. Papers will be submitted and returned via email.

REQUIRED READINGS AND SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS:

All readings and audiovisual material will be posted to Blackboard. Feature films will be put on reserve at Leavey Library and are also available to stream on Amazon or Netflix. The required novel can be purchased through Amazon:

Shōson Nagahara, Lament in the Night (1925; Kaya Press, 2012)

You MUST bring a copy (hard copy or digital copy) of the assigned preparatory readings to each class; we will regularly refer to the readings during class discussion.

DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT OF ASSIGNMENTS:

Brief weekly assignments to be posted to Blackboard (please see below). Students can opt out of 2 of the 10 possible assignments (8 must be submitted). Blackboard assignments and short papers will take the place of quizzes and exams. 3 short papers of 3 pages each are to be submitted by email. For these shorter papers students will have the option of submitting expository or creative essays (creative essays *must* be accompanied by a one-paragraph critical preface). The course will culminate with a final presentation (group presentation, approx. 15-20 minutes per group) and each student will submit a 5-page final paper. The final paper will include the submission of a 2-paragraph "culminating statement" that reflects on the learning experience.

BLACKBOARD:

Brief weekly assignments should be posted to Blackboard *by 9am on Wednesdays, before the class meeting*. Students can opt out of 2 of the 10 possible assignments (8 must be submitted). Blackboard assignments *must* be submitted on time to receive full credit; late postings will only receive partial credit.

PLEASE STRUCTURE YOUR BRIEF & INFORMAL RESPONSES AS FOLLOWS:

Please post a response to the readings in the following format (a., b., c., d.) Please follow this format for all Blackboard postings throughout the term. *Please post your responses directly to the discussion board, DO NOT attach your responses as Word documents.

- a. a few sentences summarizing what the reading is about.
- b. a few sentences about why you think we are reading this.
- c. rank the reading on a 1-10 (10 being the best) and state why, briefly.
- d. pose a *thoughtful* question you would like to have answered/for discussion OR comment on what you have read

***For your own notes (to facilitate discussion), please select/mark 1 passage from each reading that you think is key and merits further attention/discussion.**

Your responses will be marked as or +

3 SHORT PAPERS:

Papers will take the place of exams. 2 papers of approximately 3 pages each, and a 5-page final paper to be submitted by email. The final paper should include a 2-paragraph “culminating statement” that reflects on the learning experience.

Late papers will be accepted but will result in a lower grade and comments/feedback will be minimal.

Students will have the option of submitting expository or creative essays.

PRESENTATIONS:

Final presentation of approximately 15 minutes will complement the 5-page final paper.

GRADING BREAKDOWN:

| Assignment | Points | % of Grade |
|-------------------------------|--|------------|
| weekly Blackboard posting | 2 points each, 10 total (20 points total) | 20% |
| 3 short papers | 3@10 points each | 30% |
| Final Presentation | 15 points | 15% |
| Final Paper | 20 points | 20% |
| Preparation and Participation | 15 | 15% |
| Total | 100 | |

ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSION POLICY:

All papers are to be submitted by email only; please be sure to confirm receipt.

Papers will be returned by email; please be sure to confirm receipt.

ADDITIONAL POLICY:

Papers can be reworked and resubmitted for a higher grade.

Extra credit opportunities will be provided throughout the term; students are encouraged to work with the instructor to meet their personal goals for the course.

Two excused absences will be permitted; thereafter, any unexcused absences will result in a lowering of the final grade.

WEEK 1: JANUARY 11

Topic: Introduction and Orientation

Japonisme ... Little Tokyo & Sawtelle Japantown ... Yamashiro Hollywood (1914), and Japan House's design team leaders: HARA Kenya, TANIGAWA Junji, KOSAKA Ryū, and NAWA Kōhei.

ABE Kobo, "Red Cocoon" (short story)(1950)
Ben Strang, dir. *The Sale* (9 minutes)

WEEK 2: JANUARY 18

Topic: Japan at World's Fairs/Exhibitions of Japanese Art Then and Now

Contemporary Japanese artists in Los Angeles SONE Yutaka and TANAKI Kōki

PREPARATORY ASSIGNMENT:

NAGAI Kafū, "The Inebriated Beauty" (short story), in *American Stories* (1905)(11 pages).

OKAKURA Kakuzō, "Modern Problems in Painting" (1906)(15 pages).

TANAKA Kōki, *Abstract Speaking Sharing Uncertainty and Collective Acts* (the Japan Pavilion at the 55th International Art Exhibition – la Biennale di Venezia and *Precarious Practice*, 2015 (selections).

Total: 50 pages.

WEEK 3: JANUARY 25

Topic: Japan at the World's Columbian Exposition (1893)

VISIT #1: Gamble House (Charles and Henry Greene, 1908)

PREPARATORY ASSIGNMENT:

YAMAMOTO Sae, "From The Display of 'Japan' in Wartime World's Fairs: Modernists and 'Japaneseness'" (2014)(selections).

Ellen Conant, "Japan 'Abroad' at the Chicago Exposition" (2006)(selections).

The Gamble House: Building Paradise in California (USC School of Architecture, CityFiles Press, 2015)(selections).

Total: 50 pages.

WEEK 4: FEBRUARY 1

Topic: Japanese Gardens, Tea Houses, and Tea Culture

VISIT #2: Japanese Gardens at the Huntington (1912)

PREPARATORY ASSIGNMENT:

Lafcadio Hearn, "In a Japanese Garden" (1892)(selections)

Toshio WATANBE, "The Modern Japanese Garden" (2011)(selections).

Allen S. Weiss, *Zen Landscapes: Perspectives on Japanese Gardens and Ceramics* (2013)(selections).

OKAKURA Kakuzo, *The Book of Tea* (1906)(selections).

Total: 50 pages.

WEEK 5 (PAPER #1 DUE): FEBRUARY 8

VISIT #3: Frank Lloyd Wright's Hollyhock House (1919-21)

PREPARATORY ASSIGNMENT:

ISOZAKI Arata, "MA: Space-Time in Japan" (1978/2009)(7 pages).

HARA Kenya, "The Origins of Japanese Design" (2014)(7 pages).

Total: 14 pages.

*short preparatory assignment because paper is due.

WEEK 6: FEBRUARY 15

Topic: *Lament in the Night* (novel)

Isamu NOGUCHI (and the Japanese American Cultural and Community Center, 1971)

PREPARATORY ASSIGNMENT:

Shōson NAGAHARA, *Lament in the Night* (1925; Kaya Press, 2012)(456 pages)

Total pages: approx. 250 (students are strongly encouraged to read the novel in full, but instructor will propose selections as an option).

WEEK 7: FEBRUARY 22

Topic: Japanese art, architecture, and design and the mid-century modern style—Part One

VISIT #4: Schindler House (1921-22)

PREPARATORY ASSIGNMENT:

TANIZAKI Jun'ichiro, "In Praise of Shadows" (1932-34)(100 pages).

Total: 100 pages.

WEEK 8: MARCH 1

Topic: Japanese art, architecture, and design and the mid-century modern style—Part Two (ISOZAKI Arata, BAN Shigeru, and ABE Hitoshi)

PREPARATORY ASSIGNMENT:

Reynolds, Jonathan. "Can Architecture Be Both Modern and "Japanese"? The Expression of Japanese Cultural Identity through Architectural Practice from 1850 to the Present" (2011)(25 pages).

Ban Shigeru and Philip Jodidio, *Master of Innovation: Challenging Accepted Notions of Architecture* (2012)(selections); Ban Shigeru and Philip Jodidio, *Ban Shigeru: Complete Works 1985-2015* (2015) (selections).

Hitoshi ABE and Naomi R. Pollack, *Hitoshi Abe* (2008)(selections).

Total: 50 pages.

WEEK 9 (PAPER #2 DUE): MARCH 8

Topic: Japanese art collections in LA
(Price Collection, MURAKAMI Takashi, NARA Yoshitomo, and Mono-ha)

VISIT #5: LACMA Japanese Pavilion and Blum and Poe

PREPARATORY ASSIGNMENT:

SHIMIZU Yoshiaki, "Japan in the American Museums: But Which Japan?" (March 2001)(11 pages).

Total: 11 pages.

*short preparatory assignment because paper is due.

SPRING RECESS: NO CLASS MARCH 15

WEEK 10: MARCH 22

Topic: Japan and Hollywood (Sessue HAYAKAWA and KITANO Takeshi)

PREPARATORY ASSIGNMENT:

(films to be viewed outside of class):

The Bridge on the River Kwai (dir. David Lean, 1957, 161 minutes)

Brother (dir. KITANO Takeshi, 2000, 114 minutes)

Total viewing time: approx. 4 hours (students are strongly encouraged to watch both films, but have the option of choosing one of the two films).

WEEK 11: MARCH 29

Topic: Japanese Cuisine/Food Design in Los Angeles
(Yoko ISSASSI and Sonoko SAKAI)(KUSUMOTO Shūjirō)

PREPARATORY ASSIGNMENT:

Roland Barthes, "Water and Flake," "Chopsticks" and "Food Decentered," "The Interstice," in *Empire of Signs* (1982)(25 pages).

Kenji EKUAN, *The Aesthetics of the Japanese Lunchbox* (MIT Press, 1998)(selections)

Total: 50 pages.

WEEK 12 (PAPER #3 DUE): APRIL 5

Mandatory Student Meetings

Topic: Discuss Final Presentation and Paper

WEEK 13: APRIL 12

Topic: Japanese popular culture and subculture in Los Angeles—Part One

(“Hello! Exploring the Supercute World of Hello Kitty” [2014-15] and Perseverance: Japanese Tattoo Tradition in a Modern World” [2014] at the Japanese American National Museum ... mural and graffiti art)

PREPARATORY ASSIGNMENT:

Christine Yano, *Pink Globalization: Hello Kitty’s Trek Across the Pacific* (Duke University Press, 2013)(selections)

Perseverance: Japanese Tattoo Tradition in a Modern World, exhibition catalogue (Japanese American National Museum, 2014)(selections).

TANIZAKI Jun’ichiro, “Tattoo” (short story)(1925)(10 pages).

Total: 50 pages.

WEEK 14: APRIL 19

Topic: Japanese popular culture and subculture in Los Angeles—Part Two (Manga and anime; Japanese fashion design, Muji and Uniqlo)(YOKOKAWA Masaki and Welcome)

PREPARATORY ASSIGNMENT:

HARA Kenya, “Identity and Communication of MUJI” (5 pages).

HARA Kenya, “The Discovery of White” and “Back to White,” in *White* (Lars Müller Publishers, 2007) (20 pages)

TANIGAWA Junji, *The Space Composer: JTQ Inc.* (Page One Publishing, 2013)(selections).

Total: 50 pages.

WEEK 15: APRIL 26

Topic: Final Presentations

WEEK 16: WEDNESDAY MAY 10 (DATE TO BE CONFIRMED)

FINAL PAPER DUE BY EMAIL

OVERVIEW OF COURSE SCHEDULE: DELIVERABLE/DUE DATES

| DATE | TOPIC | DELIVERABLE/DUES DATES |
|-----------------------|--|------------------------|
| Week 1 January 11 | Introduction and Orientation | |
| Week 2 January 18 | Topic: Japan at World's Fairs/Exhibitions of Japanese Art Then and Now | BB response #1 due |
| Week 3 January 25 | Topic: Japan at the World's Columbian Exposition (1893) Visit Gamble House | BB response #2 due |
| Week 4 February 1 | Topic: Japanese Gardens, Tea Houses, and Tea Culture Visit Japanese Gardens at the Huntington | BB response #3 due |
| Week 5 February 8 | Visit Frank Lloyd Wright's Hollyhock House | PAPER #1 due |
| Week 6 February 15 | Topic: Lament in the Night (novel) | BB response #4 due |
| Week 7 February 22 | Topic: Japanese art, architecture, and design and the mid-century modern style—Part One Visit Schindler House (1921-22) | BB response #5 due |
| Week 8 March 1 | Topic: Japanese art, architecture, and design and the mid-century modern style—Part Two (ISOZAKI Arata, BAN Shigeru, and ABE Hitoshi) | BB response #6 due |
| Week 9 March 8 | Topic: Japanese art collections in LA (Price Collection, MURAKAMI Takashi, NARA Yoshitomo, and Mono-ha) Visit LACMA Japanese Pavilion and Blum and Poe | PAPER #2 due |
| Week 10 March 22 | Topic: Japan and Hollywood (Sessue HAYAKAWA and KITANO Takeshi) | BB response #7 due |
| Week 11 March 29 | Topic: Japanese Cuisine/Food Design in Los Angeles (Yoko ISSASSI and Sonoko SAKAI)(KUSUMOTO Shūjirō) | BB response #8 due |
| Week 12 April 5 | Mandatory Student Meetings Topic: Discuss Final Presentation and Paper | PAPER #3 due |
| Week 13 April 12 | Topic: Japanese popular culture and subculture in Los Angeles—Part One | BB response #9 due |
| Week 14 April 19 | Topic: Japanese popular culture and subculture in Los Angeles— | BB response #10 due |

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| | Part Two | |
| Week 15 April 26 | Topic: Final Presentations | Final Presentations |
| FINAL December 10 | | Final Paper Due (No final exam) |

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Conduct

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Part B, Section II, “Behavior Violating University Standards”

<https://policy.usc.edu/student/scampus/part-b>. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct>.

Discrimination, sexual assault, intimate partner violence, stalking, and harassment are prohibited by the university. You are encouraged to report all incidents to the *Office of Equity and Diversity/Title IX Office* <http://equity.usc.edu> and/or to the *Department of Public Safety* <http://dps.usc.edu>. This is important for the health and safety of the whole USC community. Faculty and staff must report any information regarding an incident to the Title IX Coordinator who will provide outreach and information to the affected party. The sexual assault resource center webpage <http://sarc.usc.edu> fully describes reporting options. Relationship and Sexual Violence Services <https://engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp> provides 24/7 confidential support.

Support Systems

A number of USC’s schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more. Students whose primary language is not English should check with the *American Language Institute* <http://ali.usc.edu>, which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students. *The Office of Disability Services and Programs* <http://dsp.usc.edu> provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, *USC Emergency Information* <http://emergency.usc.edu> will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of Blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.