

The Chinese University of Hong Kong
Department of Cultural and Religious Studies

Course Code: CURE 2406

Title in English: Understanding Chinese Art through Exhibitions

Title in Chinese: 從展覽認識中國藝術

Course Teacher: Prof. LEE Wun Sze Sylvia

Day & Time: Thursday 10:30AM - 01:15PM

Venue: ERB_408

Course description:

The exhibition has become a site of knowledge production and a prominent and diverse part of contemporary culture. Regarding “Chinese art” as a social constructed concept, the course uses “exhibition” as an entry point to engage with issues concerning Chinese art and to explore the role played by exhibitions in the formation of the knowledge of Chinese art. It introduces the current theories and debates on the theory and history of exhibition, and the display methods, examining the changing concept of Chinese art and curatorial practices through detailed analysis of case studies. The first part of the course traces the formation of the concept of “Chinese art” by looking closely at the history of exhibitions on Chinese objects from the late Qing dynasty to the early twentieth century. The second part examines important exhibitions that have shaped our understanding of Chinese art. Structured thematically, the course discusses the curatorial concepts of selective significant international exhibitions on Chinese art and investigate how scholarly research has been transformed into exhibitions which have shaped our understanding of Chinese art, constructed identity and been deployed for political ends.

Learning outcomes:

Upon the completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Explain the theories of exhibition and the changing concepts of Chinese art.
- Identify and describe the important exhibitions on Chinese art and prominent Chinese art objects.
- Identify and evaluate the curatorial ideas of important exhibitions on Chinese art.
- Select research materials and Chinese art objects to develop original research.
- Design and plan a virtual exhibition based on original research.

Course syllabus

Topic	Contents/ fundamental concepts
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Narrative Theories and Exhibition Rhetorics- Displaying Chinese objects in international expositions and world fairs- Museum practices and curating international exhibitions on Chinese art- Two Palace Museums: canonising Chinese art history- Constructing a canonical narrative and continuous visual history of Chinese art	The formation of the concept of “Chinese art” by looking closely at the history of exhibitions on Chinese objects from the late Qing dynasty to the early twentieth century
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Funding paradigms: politics, literati tastes and imperial collection in the Northern and Southern Song Dynasties- The arts under the Mongols: mutual assimilation	The curatorial practices of important exhibitions at different period shaped our understanding of “Chinese art”.

between Chinese culture and foreign cultures - Re-examining the Ming Dynasty: courts and global cultural exchange - Cultural diversity and imperial tastes under the rule of Manchu - Modernity, urban culture and nation-building - Art in the Mao era: revolution, popular arts and propaganda	
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Course components (Teaching modes and Learning activities)

Teaching Modes and Learning Activities	
On-site face-to-face (please specify if it is hybrid, i.e. some students will attend the activities elsewhere)	Percentage of time
<i>Lectures</i>	60
<i>Interactive tutorial</i>	30
Out-of-classroom	10

Assessment type	Percentage
- Participation	10
- Group Presentation and written assignment	60
- Field Work – Exhibition Review	30

Assessment rubrics	
Grade	Overall course
A	Outstanding performance on all learning outcomes.
A-	Generally outstanding performance on all (or almost all) learning outcomes.
B	Substantial performance on all learning outcomes, OR high performance on some learning outcomes which compensates for less satisfactory performance on others, resulting in overall substantial performance.
C	Satisfactory performance on the majority of learning outcomes, possibly with a few weaknesses.
D	Barely satisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes
F	Unsatisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes, OR failure to meet specified assessment requirements.

Required and recommended readings

Required readings: - Bruce W. Ferguson, “Exhibition Rhetorics”, in Reesa Greenberg, Sandy Nairne, and Bruce W. Ferguson <i>eds.</i> , <i>Thinking About Exhibition</i> (London: Routledge, 1996), 175-190. - Criag Clunas, “Beginning and Ending”, <i>Chinese Painting and Its Audiences</i> (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2017), 5-35. - Christ, Carol Ann, “‘The Sole Guardians of the Art Inheritance of Asia’: Japan and China at the 1904 St. Louis World’s

- Fair,” *Positions: East Asia cultures critique* 8, no. 3 (2000): 675–709.
- Susan Fernsebner, “When the Local is the Global: Case Studies in Early 20th Century Chinese Exposition Projects”, in David Raizman and Ethan Robey eds., *Expanding Nationalisms at World Fairs: Identity, Diversity And Exchange, 1851-1915* (New York: Routledge, 2017), 173-194.
 - Jason Steuber, “The Exhibition of Chinese Art at Burlington House, London, 1935-1936”, *The Burlington Magazine* 148, 1241 (2006): 528-36.
 - Pedith Chan, “Representations of Chinese Civilisation: Exhibiting Chinese Art in Republican China”, in Suzanne Macleod, Tricia Austin, Jonathan Hale, Oscar Ho eds., *The Future of Museum and Gallery Design: Purpose, Process, Perception* (London: Routledge, 2018), 71-85.
 - Susan Naquin, “The Forbidden City Goes Abroad: Qing History and the Foreign Exhibitions of the Palace Museum, 1974-2004”, *T’oung Pao*, vol. 90 (4) (2004): 341-97.
 - Jane C. Chu, “The Palace Museum as Representation of Culture: Exhibitions and Canons of Chinese Art History,” in Huang Ke-wu ed., *Hua zhong you hua: Jindai Zhongguo de shijue biaooshu yu wenhua goutu* 畫中有話: 近代中國的視覺表述與文化構圖 (Taipei: Academia Sinica Institute of Modern History, 2003), 477-507.
 - Chang Lin-sheng, “The National Palace Museum: A History of the Collection”, in *Possessing the Past: Treasures from the National Palace Museum, Taipei* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1996), 3-25.
 - Wen Fong, “Chinese Art and Cross-Cultural Understanding”, in *Possessing the Past: Treasures from the National Palace Museum, Taipei* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1996), 27-39.
 - Wen Fong, “Deconstructing Paradigms in Sung and Yuan Painting: Life After the Death of Mastering Representation”, in Wang Yao-ting ed., *Conference on Founding Paradigms: Papers on the Art and Culture of the Northern Sung Dynasty* (Taipei: National Palace Museum, 2008), 9-39.
 - Huang Kuan-chung, “All Embracing the Arts: The Development of Features of Southern Song politics, Scholars, and Culture”, in *Dynastic Renaissance: Art and Culture of the Southern Song* (Taipei: National Palace Museum, 2010), 18-30.
 - Emperors’ Treasures: Chinese Art from the National Palace Museum, Taipei, Asian Art Museum, SF, 2016.
 - James C.Y. Watt, “Introduction”, James C.Y. watt ed., *the World of Khubilai Khan Chinese Art in the Yuan Dynasty* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2010), 3-38.
 - Maxwell Hearn, “Painting and Calligraphy under the Mongols”, in James C.Y. watt ed., *the World of Khubilai Khan Chinese Art in the Yuan Dynasty* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2010), 181-242.
 - Craig Clunas, “*A Second Founding: Ming China 1400-1450*”, in Craig Clunas and Jessica Harrison-Hall eds., *The BP Exhibition Ming 50 Years that Changed China* (London: British Museum, 2014), 18-43.
 - Craig Clunas, “*Wen: The Arts of Peace*”, in Craig Clunas and Jessica Harrison-Hall eds., *The BP Exhibition Ming 50 Years that Changed China* (London: British Museum, 2014), 158-203.
 - Evelyn Rawski, “The ‘Prosperous Age’: China in the Kangxi, Yongzheng and Qianlong reigns”, in Evelyn Rawski and Jessica Rawson eds., *China: the Three Emperors, 1662-1795* (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 2006), 22-53.
 - Julia Lovell, “Introduction: China’s Long 19th Century”, in Harrison-Hall, Jessica, and Julia Lovell, eds. *China’s Hidden Century: 1796-1912* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2023), 10-37.
 - Gruber, David R. “The (Digital) Majesty of All Under Heaven: Affective Constitutive Rhetoric at the Hong Kong Museum of History’s Multi-Media Exhibition of Terracotta Warriors.” *Rhetoric Society quarterly* 44, no. 2 (2014): 148–167.
 - Ma, William H. “China’s Hidden Century: 1796–1912.” *Nineteenth-century art worldwide* 22, no. 2 (2023).
 - Wen Fong “Introduction: East Meets West,” in *Between Two Cultures: Late Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Chinese Paintings from the Robert H. Ellsworth Collection in the Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2001), 3-22.
 - Aida Wong, “Tradition is a Foreign Country”, *Parting the Mists: Discovering Japan and the Rise of National-style Painting in Modern China* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2006), 3-34.
 - Ralph Crozier, “Politics in Command: Chinese Art, 1949-1979”, in Melissa Chiu and Shengtian Zheng eds., *Art and China’s Revolution* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 57-73.
 - Kuiyi Shen, “Propaganda Posters and Art during the Cultural Revolution”, in Melissa Chiu and Shengtian Zheng eds., *Art and China’s Revolution* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 149-163.
 - James Cahill, “Beautiful Women and the Courtesan Culture”, in *Pictures for Use and Pleasure: Vernacular Painting in High Qing China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), 149-198

Feedback for evaluation:

In class face-to-face on an ongoing basis

Course schedule

Class/ week	Date	Topic	Requirements
1	Sep 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Narrative Theories and Exhibition Rhetorics 	Students are required to read the assigned readings and discuss/express in their own words
2	Sep 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Displaying Chinese objects in international expositions and world fairs 	Students are required to read the assigned readings and discuss/express in their own words how presentation of Chinese art constructed the national identity
3	Sep 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Museum practices and curating international exhibitions on Chinese art 	Students are required to read the assigned readings and discuss/express in their own words museum practices shape the understanding of Chinese art and culture
4	Sep 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two Palace Museums: canonising Chinese art history 	Students are required to read the assigned readings and discuss/express in their own words the representation of Chinese culture in the two different palace museums
5	Oct 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Constructing a canonical narrative and continuous visual history of Chinese art 	Students are required to read the assigned readings and discuss/express in their own words the importance of possessing the translation.
6	Oct 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field Trip 	Students are required to learn how to formulate analyse artworks and the curatorial practice of the exhibition and express in their own words how the exhibition present the research and formulate our understanding of the art pieces.
7	Oct 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding paradigms: politics, literati tastes and imperial collection in the Northern and Southern Song Dynasties 	Using this case study, students are required to read the assigned readings and compare in their own words the different discourses of exhibitions of Chinese art and how they shaped our understanding of them.
8	Oct 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The arts under the Mongols: mutual assimilation between Chinese culture and foreign cultures 	Using this case study, students are required to read the assigned readings and compare in their own words the different discourses of exhibitions of Chinese art and how they shaped our understanding of them.
9	Oct 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re-examining the Ming Dynasty: courts and global cultural exchange 	Using this case study, students are required to read the assigned readings and compare in their own words the different discourses of exhibitions of Chinese art and how they shaped our understanding of them.
10	Nov 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural diversity and imperial tastes under the rule of Manchu 	Using this case study, students are required to read the assigned readings and compare in their own words the different discourses of exhibitions of Chinese art and how they shaped our understanding of them.
11	Nov 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modernity, urban culture and nation-building 	Using this case study, students are required to read the assigned readings and compare in their own words the different discourses of exhibitions of Chinese art and how they shaped our understanding of them.
12	Nov 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Art in the Mao era: revolution, popular arts and propaganda 	Using this case study, students are required to read the assigned readings and compare in their own words the different discourses of exhibitions of Chinese art and how they shaped our understanding of them.
13	Nov 27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding Chinese art from multi-perspective 	Students are required to read the assigned readings and summarize the different perspective and how they construct the understanding of Chinese art

Academic honesty and plagiarism

Attention is drawn to University policy and regulations on honesty in academic work, and to the disciplinary

guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations. Details may be found at <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/>.

With each assignment, students will be required to submit a signed **declaration** that they are aware of these policies, regulations, guidelines and procedures.

- In the case of group projects, all members of the group should be asked to sign the declaration, each of whom is responsible and liable to disciplinary actions, irrespective of whether he/she has signed the declaration and whether he/she has contributed, directly or indirectly, to the problematic contents.
- For assignments in the form of a computer-generated document that is principally text-based and submitted via VeriGuide, the statement, in the form of a receipt, will be issued by the system upon students' uploading of the soft copy of the assignment.
- Students are fully aware that their work may be investigated by AI content detection software to determine originality.
- Students are fully aware of the AI approach(es) adopted in the course. In the case where some AI tools are allowed, students have made proper acknowledgment and citations as suggested by the course teacher.

Assignments without a properly signed declaration will not be graded by teachers.

Only the final version of the assignment should be submitted via VeriGuide.

The submission of a piece of work, or a part of a piece of work, for more than one purpose (e.g. to satisfy the requirements in two different courses) without declaration to this effect shall be regarded as having committed undeclared multiple submissions. It is common and acceptable to reuse a turn of phrase or a sentence or two from one's own work; but wholesale reuse is problematic. In any case, agreement from the course teacher(s) concerned should be obtained prior to the submission of the piece of work.

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