

## **Incorporating Japanese Culture into Art History curriculum**

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Attending Japan Studies Institute allowed me to gain invaluable new perspectives on the culture and art of Japan. In addition to including new topics to the curriculum which I will outline above, I would like to rethink my teaching philosophy when teaching Japanese culture to underscore several cultural differences and therefore to emphasize the idea of diversity in contemporary culture. The core value that I would like to examine is a different paradigm of thinking about originality. In art history, artistic originality and innovative approach to subject matter and/or technique is valued very highly. We tend to judge artistic innovation as the main tool of artistic achievement. For example, when teaching about modern art, it is the originality of the style, e.g. development from Impressionism to Fauvism to Cubism that is emphasized and valued. From my experience of learning about Japanese culture, I would mainly like to impart to my students the idea of respect for skill, tradition, and mastery. This does not preclude examining innovations that Japanese art had brought to modern and especially contemporary art.

### **Art of the 19<sup>th</sup> century**

I usually teach this course as a survey of the styles starting from Neo-Classicism and ending with Symbolism examining art, sculpture, architecture, and photography. When I revise the course I would like to add two lectures:

1. Japanese visual culture around Meiji period including Ukiyo-e prints. I will learn and then outline the process of making woodblock prints and more importantly their symbolism and suggestiveness along with the idea of them being part of the popular rather than high art culture
2. Lecture on Japanese influence on Impressionist art. *Japonisme* is a well-known result of the cultural exchange between Japanese and Western art. Now I feel I have enough knowledge to explain why Impressionists were so fascinated with these images.

### **Visual Arts today**

This is a large (about 200 students) class that aimed mainly at freshmen. I teach Visual art appreciation (film, art, media) from 1980s to present. The course satisfies General Education requirement and attracts majors in business, biology, history, sciences. I tend to think of this course as my attempt to make students more visually literate and savvy. Therefore, I tend to use media theory and examples to provide understanding of visuality as a language.

I have two ideas on how to incorporate Japanese culture

1. I would like to show the two versions of the film *Shall We Dance* and have students discuss the differences. The knowledge that I gained about the Japanese culture will make me more comfortable discussing Japanese film. In doing that I would like to emphasize the idea of cultural appropriation.
2. As part of this class I teach basic semiotic theory and how it relates to advertising and fashion. In the past I assigned students to find and analyze an American advertisement. Now, in addition I will use some Japanese examples from *anime* and *manga*.

### **Contemporary Art and Globalization**

This is a second year course that I developed as introduction the issues of contemporary art thought from a global perspective. I use examples from 1990 to present with an emphasis on contemporary (after 2005) art. The goal of this course is to introduce the students to main players of contemporary art world and also give them some theoretical base for understanding contemporary art. Thus, I introduce several issues including postmodernism, globalization, cultural appropriation and pastiche in the course of the semester. The artists that I will be incorporating are:

1. Yayoi Kusama
2. Riusuke Fukahori
3. Takashi Murakami
4. Fuyuko Matsui, Nine Stages of Decay.
5. Keiko Masumoto

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