

Japanese Studies Institute Fellowship Project Summary

By the spring of 2017, I will be implementing several class projects in the painting and drawing classes that I teach. These projects will be repeated in a four year span of a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree completion. Therefore, students who take my classes will be immersed into the aesthetics of the Japanese art and culture while completing their degrees.

In these class assignments, I plan to show artwork examples from Japanese artists and artists who are/were influenced by the Japanese art and culture. Viewing art movies and documentaries about the history and social life of Japan will also be part of the class curriculum. In response to the provided information, students will be expected to create art works that retain the Japanese aesthetics and way of life.

I am presenting two assignments examples here, which I will be further branching out in the future.

Project 1) Shigeru Mizuki Manga Painting Project

I will be using Shigeru Mizuki historical Manga series about Japan as a platform to reflect upon the history of the Mississippi Delta. At the beginning of the semester, students will be assigned to read one of Mizuki's Showa volumes. In addition, they will read articles, write a research paper, and watch videos about the murder of Emmett Till in Money, Mississippi. Emmett Till was a fourteen year old boy who was visiting his relatives in Money, MS, when he reportedly flirted with a white cashier at a grocery store. He was then kidnapped, beaten, mutilated and shot in the head.

Project 2) Japanese Calligraphy and Abstract Expressionism

There is a philosophical and methodical correlation between the art of Japanese calligraphy and abstract expressionist paintings. In this project, after examining both of these artistic expressions, students will create artworks that reflect the intertwined spirit of Japanese calligraphy and abstract expressionist paintings.

I will clearly lay out the purpose, skills, and knowledge that are necessary to complete each assignment. Learning objectives will be transparent so students can understand how this assignment can benefit their learning. Students will analyze, evaluate, and create during the process of completing each assignment.

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