Art History 337: Art and Visual Culture in Japan: Field Study, Fall 2020

Instructor: Julia Sapin (julia.sapin@wwu.edu), 650-3670; Office hours: TBA

Course Description:
This course offers an in-depth exploration of some of the prominent themes of Japanese visual culture, along with the opportunity to study them in situ. We will address subjects such as the combustion of different aesthetic currents, the impact of Buddhism on Japanese visual culture, art activism in Japan, and the construction of identity through the manipulation of the visual environment. The parameters of “Japanese-ness” are constantly shifting; studying the cultural sway between tradition and transformation is one way of coming to understand those cultural shifts.

The in-class study complements the on-site aspect of this course. You will learn about both traditional and contemporary Japanese culture in Tokyo, Kyoto, Hiroshima, Miyajima, and Mount Koya. You will visit historical sites, galleries, markets, museums, and department stores. You will also participate in a collaborative exhibition with Kyoto Seika University students and in a natural dyeing workshop.

Student Learning Outcomes:
* Develop an understanding of Japanese visual culture, grounded in some of the specific interpretations that have shaped the field of Japanese art history
* Expand your skills in critical thinking by reading, blogging, and discussing various aspects of Japanese visual culture
* Understand one aspect of Japanese visual culture in depth and articulate your ideas to your classmates through an on-site introduction of a particular site.
* Experience living (at least temporarily) outside your own culture

Date and time: TBA, FI 232
Student Responsibilities:
*You are required to attend all events, both in class and while we are in Japan. Each missed event will result in a 10-point drop in the final grade.
*You will arrive on time with the necessary materials for the event, both in class and in Japan.
*Excessive late arrival will also result in a loss of points: two late arrivals equal one absence, a loss of 10 points.

Participation:
*Participation in group discussions is mandatory.
*Traveling in a group will require cooperation, teamwork, and sensitivity to others. Therefore, students will be expected to be part of the class group more fully than in a normal class.

Reasonable Accommodation: It is the policy of Western Washington University to provide reasonable accommodation to the known physical, sensory, or mental limitations of qualified individuals except where such accommodation would impose undue hardship on the institution. To request accommodation, students must contact WWU disAbility Resources for Students at 360-650-3844 or www.drs.wwu.edu

Grading requirements for the course:
- Presentations (in Japan): 20%  80 points
- Reading blog (4 articles): 20%  80 points
- 5 quizzes on Varley reading, images: 20%  80 points
- Attendance/Participation: 40%  160 points
- Total: 100%  400 points

Required Readings:
Electronic readings available via Wilson Library (access via Canvas site, “Course Reserves” folder)

Grade scale:
376-400=A  336-351=B  296-311=C
360-375=A-  320-335=B-  280-295=C-
352-359=B+  312-319=C+  240-279=D  239 and below=F

*Plagiarism will not be tolerated in either written or oral form. Please familiarize yourself with WWU’s Academic Honesty Policy: http://libguides.wwu.edu/plagiarism

Lecture, discussion, and reading schedule:

Wed, Sept 23: Introduction: overview;

Mon Sept 28: Quiz! The Recurring Re-Branding of “Shinto”: Ise and Itsukushima Shrines
Sign up for presentations (which will happen in Japan)

Wed, Sept 30 Importing Continental Culture: Early Buddhist Art and Architecture, 7th-9th c.
Varley: 19-56.

Varley: 56-94.

Wed, Oct 7: Zen Permeates Japanese Culture: Landscape Painting and Gardens, 12th-17th c.
Varley, 102-139.
Mon Oct 12: **Quiz! Architecture and Authority:** Himeji Castle and Japanese Unification, 16\(^{th}\)-17\(^{th}\) c.  
**Varley:** 140-152.

**Wed, Oct 14:** **Configurations of Kyoto:** Painting Expressing Political Power, 16\(^{th}\)-17\(^{th}\) c.  
**Varley:** 152-163.  
**Blog:** Matthew Philip McKelway, “A Most Marvelous Thing,” in *Capitalscapes: Folding Screens and Political Imagination in Late Medieval Kyoto* (University of Hawai‘i Press, 2006), 1-11.

Mon, Oct 19: **Quiz! Edo-Period Architecture Presaging Modernism:** Katsura Rikyū  
**Varley:** 164-186.

**Wed, Oct 21:** Edo prints (Kabuki)  
**Varley:** 186-204; 226-30.  

Mon. Oct. 26: **Quiz!** Meiji to postwar  
**Varley:** 235-303

**October 28-November 17:** in Japan!

**Thanksgiving Break:** November 23-29

**Nov. 30-Dec 2:** focus on finishing up work for Studio classes

**Wed., Dec. 9, 1-3pm (during Finals period):** Final evaluations and wrap-up