Art Institutions in Twentieth-Century China

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Class meetings: Tuesdays 12:30-2:15

Course Description

The course examines the correlation between art and institutions in twentieth-century China, aiming to encourage students to think about modern Chinese art through the theory of the artworld. The downfall of the Qing dynasty and the establishment of the Republican China transformed the social and institutional organisation of the production, distribution, and consumption of art as well as the traditional patronage system in modern China. The structural changes conditioned the emergence of formal and informal art institutions that facilitated yet constrained artistic practices, laying the foundation for the development of a modern art world in China. The course looks at the history of modern Chinese art and the formation of different art institutions in the sociocultural and economic context of modern China. Weekly topics are structured thematically, which cover a wide range of themes, including art schools, art societies, museums, exhibitions, and art market. Adopting an interdisciplinary approach, the course offers students multi-perspectives to understand the transformation of modern Chinese art and the interactions between artistic practices and society in modern China.

Intended Learning Outcomes

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

- Explain the history of art institutions in modern China;
- Identify and describe the historical background, aesthetics, and social factors reflected in specific artworks;
- Identify and interpret the correlation between artistic styles and the institutional organisation;
- Reflect upon the roles of art institutions in the process of art creation, production, distribution and consumption;
- Select research materials and develop original research topics on modern Chinese art.
Week 1 (Jan 7) Introduction: The Theory of the Artworld and the Emergence of a Modern Art World in China

Week 2 (Jan 14) The Interaction between art creation and dynamic urban culture in major Chinese cities

Week 3 (Jan 21) How was art taught through the newly established educational system and curriculum?

Week 4 (Feb 4) Artistic network: art societies and their functions

Week 5 (Feb 11) The course instructor will attend an international conference, so class will not meet and a field trip to the Hong Kong Museum of Art will be arranged on March 7, Saturday afternoon.

Week 6 (Feb 18) Publishing culture: a new way to disseminate artworks and generate public discourse

Week 7 (Feb 25) New technology: the introduction of photography and its impact on art


**Week 8 (March 3)  How did museums change the perception and presentation of art?**


**March 7, Saturday afternoon**

**Field Trip to the Hong Kong Museum of Art.** Through a guided tour, students will be able to apply the knowledge acquired from the course to evaluate and review selected artworks.

**Week 9 (March 10)  Collecting activities and the formation of collections of modern Chinese art**

*Guest lecture given by Dr. Yu-Ping Luk, Curator of the British Museum*


**Week 10 (March 17)  Art and its audience: the consumption and reception of art**


**Week 11 (March 24)  Constructing the national identity through international exhibitions**


**Week 12 (April 7)  Art market: professional intermediaries and a new patronage system**


Week 13 (14 April)  The structure of the Chinese artworld since the Mao era and Wrap Up

Assessment Tasks
Participation (10%)
Identify and discuss the key arguments from the required readings. Participate actively in in-class activities. (Reading and literature)
Field Trip Reflection (30%) due on April 19, 23:59
Review and evaluate an exhibition visited and reflect upon the connections between what you’ve learned from the course and the site visit, and between theory and practice (500-800 words in English, x 1.5 in Chinese). (Understanding of concepts and aesthetic elements of artworks)
Individual Term Paper (60%) due on April 19, 23:59
Select 3 to 5 artworks discussed in the class and develop a research paper on the artworks. (2,500-3,000 words in English, x 1.5 in Chinese) (Use of materials and resources; understanding of concepts and theories; language and presentation)

Recommended Readings:
Croizier, Ralph. Art and Revolution in Modern China: The Lingnan (Cantonese) School of Painting, 1906-1951 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988)
Danzker, Jo-Anne Birnie, Ken Lum, and Zheng Shengtian, eds. Shanghai Modern, 1919-1945 (Ostfildern-Ruit: Hatje Cantz, 2005)
Denton, Kirk. Exhibiting the Past: Historical Memory and the Politics of Museums in Postsocialist China (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2014)
Hearn, Maxwell K., and Judith G. Smith, ed. Chinese Art: Modern Expressions (New York: Department of Asian Art, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2001)
Huang Kewu 黃克武, ed. Hua zhong you hua: jindai Zhongguo de shijue biaoshu yu wenhua goutu 畫中有話：近代中國的視覺表述與文代構圖 [When Images Speak: Visual
Representation and Cultural Mapping in Modern China (Taipei: Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, 2003)
Hung, Chang-tai, War and Popular Culture: Resistance in Modern China, 1937-1945 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994)
Shui Tianzhong 水天中, and Lang Shaojun 郎紹君, eds. Ershi shiji Zhongguo meishu wenxuan 二十世紀中國美術文選 [Essays on Twentieth Century Chinese Art]. 2 volumes (Shanghai: Shanghai shuhua chubanshe, 1999)
Academic Honesty: Papers with any plagiarized content will receive an ‘F’ with no chance for a rewrite. Clear evidence of cheating on an exam will also result in a grade of ‘F’.

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 students of the same group should be asked to sign the declaration, each of whom is responsible and liable to disciplinary actions should there be any plagiarized contents in the group project, irrespective of whether he/she has signed the declaration and whether he/she has contributed directly or indirectly to the plagiarized 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.

Assignments without the 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 submission. 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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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Overall course</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Outstanding performance on all learning outcomes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>Generally outstanding performance on all (or almost all) learning outcomes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>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.</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Satisfactory performance on the majority of learning outcomes, possibly with a few weaknesses.</td>
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<td>D</td>
<td>Barely satisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>Unsatisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes, OR failure to meet specified assessment requirements.</td>
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