Multicultural Art in the United States

Instructor: Nancy H. Olsen
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Office Hours: T-Th 11:30 – 12.
L-13 Conference room
2 pm, MCC 14 until class.

Textbooks required


Eva Cockcroft, John Pitman Weber, and James Cockcroft, Towards A People’s Art: The Contemporary Mural Movement, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque. Study Aid

Additional equipment that is helpful: Small hand flashlight to help you take notes when the lights dim to look at slides and a jacket/sweatshirt.

GOALS

We will cover social constructs of race, gender and social issues that participate in the context of the art we learn about. Every cultural group constructs its own body of aesthetics based on their world views or philosophical outlook. These concepts and social issues reflect shared experiences that are the contexts for the visual images. To fully understand and appreciate the art we must have knowledge of these cultural contexts.

A college readiness level of reading is not required, but is strongly encouraged. If you are in a transfer program, you will want to approach this course as though it is a class in a four-year institution. The goal of this class is to add breadth to your understanding of art as it reflects public issues that are now current. It reflects a variety of aesthetic preferences, based on cultural values. You should take notes during the lectures to study for tests. If you have a learning disability please see me. You will have an opportunity to improve your college level skills by:

- Writing – two “problems” and two exam essays.
- Critical thinking – practice synthesizing ideas and information from reading materials, class lectures and outside reading sources for problems and essays.
- Ethno-aesthetics – become familiar with cultural values that create rules for aesthetic choice in each cultural climate. Some are different from Western European aesthetics, some are similar.
• **Artistic analysis** – students will have a chance to develop some critical skills to analyze what makes an example of Western art good.

• **Intercultural Studies** – gain sensitivity through understanding and thus respect for other cultural views, contexts for visual imagery and issues related to ethnicity, gender and social class identification. Gain sensitivity to concepts of ethnocentricity and stereotyping.

• **Appreciation for diversity** – every culture contributes different views of artistic expression here in the United States, making it a very rich environment!

**Requirements to pass the course:**

**Read assignments** – we will discuss ideas in the assignments in class. Come prepared to talk about them!!!

**Ask questions** from your reading assignments!!

**Attendance:** Three absences without contacting me will result in an automatic drop. Attendance will be taken in every class. Be there, it’s the only way to stay involved in your own education!

**Problems** – As in an assignment where you have to use your own thinking skills to complete the assignment. Two problems will be assigned. Do them, turn them in!! Allow yourself enough time to do them so you are not pushing your mental limits at the deadline!

**Two midterms** – take ‘em, pass ‘em! Midterms test your understanding of the reading material and the class lectures and discussions.

**Final exam** – be there! Finish it! This is a De Anza College requirement. Not taking it will result in an F in the class.

**Expectations**

**Attendance** is expected at every class. You will find that because this class covers forms of visual communication, there is no substitute for being present at all of the slide illustrated lectures. Especially if you wish to do well, regular attendance is essential! Three absences without notifying me will result in an automatic drop. Choose your absences wisely!! Email is the best way to reach me outside of office hours. It is your job to stay in touch!

**Respect your fellow students!!**

Talking to your neighbor during class is discouraged – it creates more of a disturbance than you realize and distracts other students around you who are trying to hear and learn.

**Turn off your cell phone** before coming to class. If you are expecting an important call, put it on buzzer mode or voice mail.

**Going in and out of class** while it is in session disrupts concentration of others. If you have to leave early, do so quietly. Sit near the door so you can leave with as little disturbance as possible.
If you decide to **add the class**, it is your responsibility to follow through with the paperwork. You will need to show me your receipt from the Registrar before I can add your name to the class roster.

If you decide to **drop the class**, it is your responsibility to follow through with the paperwork. If you decide to change your grade option from a letter grade to a pass/no pass option, you have to initiate the paper work at the admissions window.

Cheating is not tolerated – don’t do it!! If you have trouble taking tests, please see me!! Don’t try to muddle through with a cheat sheet – it makes other students who have worked hard angry and they are apt to complain if I do not identify your cheating!! Downloading paragraphs is also considered as cheating – don’t do that either!! Bad consequences in either case!!

**Homework**

It is your responsibility to buy the textbooks and read the assignments in a thoughtful manner. Be ready to discuss the issues in class!! Save all your written homework on disk as backup!! Questions are MOST WELCOME – no textbook author has thought of everything!! Read, it’s OK to question what authors say! If you need help with reading or writing in English (whether you are ESL or NOT), take advantage of the TUTORIAL CENTER – L47 website: [www.deanza.edu/tutorial](http://www.deanza.edu/tutorial). Phone 408-864-8682/8683. They do not have tutors in ICS 5 but they have many workshops to help students improve college reading and writing skills. Sign up in L-47. Application forms are available on their website. They cannot correct your grammar but they can show you resources to use and point out some of the most glaring problems with a particular essay or paper. So you still have to do your own thinking!! Drop in help is at the Reading and Writing Lab, ATT Bldg, Room 403.

**Above all BE KIND TO YOURSELF!!** Allow yourself enough time to do the assignments – this isn’t high school, this is college and it’s more complicated than high school!!

“Problems” are assignments where I give you a list of questions about a topic. It always involves going somewhere to look at some kind of art. You answer the questions first based on what you observe – first hand. When you write up your answers I suggest that you also consult the textbook to help you answer the questions. (Not to tell you what to say, but the topics to cover.) You will find yourself examining your own opinions or the presentation of the images. That’s good and encouraged! Do it in writing!! The more you read, the more you will have something to say. People who can’t think what to say haven’t read enough!!

**Tests**

There will be 2 midterms and one final. Midterms and a section of the final test the information we have just studied. The final will have one comprehensive essay as well. Tests come in two parts – **slide identification** and **essay**. There
will be a slide review just before the test. Disks with the pictures are also available after the review, over the weekend in the Open Media Lab in the Library Annex. Ask for them by the label “Olsen, ICS5 study disks." You can put them on a PC computer in the lab to study them or make printouts and take them home to study. Usually there are about 30 slides per test. You can retrieve them in a Power Point format and add your notes on “why the picture/image is important.” **Essays** follow the general collegiate format – Introduction/question to answer, state your answer, then provide the information that leads to justifying your answer.

**Grading Policy**

Two tests, two problems, a final and class attendance and participation all enter into your final grade. I arrive at final grades mathematically. The two midterms are worth 50 points each. The problems are worth 50 points each, the final is worth 100 points, totaling 300 possible academic points. In addition, you will earn points per class attendance totaling 25 points. If you come in after the roll has been called, let me know, otherwise, you’ll be counted as absent. Class participation in discussion/questions adds 25 points. The total number of points to be earned is 350. In addition there will be opportunities to earn extra credit throughout the quarter. Each student may earn a maximum of 20 points extra credit. These opportunities will be announced in class and are usually spontaneous (gotta be there to hear about them!).

350 or greater = A+.
90% of 350 = 315. That is the cut-off for an A.
   349 – 322 = A
   321 – 315 = A-
80% of 350 is 280 – that is the cut-off for a B
   314 – 301 = B+
   300 – 287 = B
   286 – 280 = B-
70% of 350 is 245 – that is the cut-off for a C
   279 – 266 = C+
   265 – 251 = C
   250 – 245 = C-
60% of 350 is 210 – that is the cut-off for a D
   244 – 231 = D+
   230 - 217 = D
   216 - 210 = D-

Anything below that score is an F. If you have an identified learning disability or you are an ESL student, please see me during office hours, after class or contact me by email. We can work out other ways of testing.

**The Good News:** this is a Humanities class where there are no exact answers, only thoughtful answers! Thoughtful answers use information gained from class lectures, reading assignments and problems. The more reading you do, the easier it will be to answer essay questions and write problems. Reading and
grading problems is not an exact science either. To help communication between you and me, try to be as specific as you can, monitor your use of pronouns and definitely do not answer problem questions with a “yes” or “no” answer.

I am committed to helping you improve your communication skills. I respond to your writing by comments written in the margins of your problems. I applaud when you put two concepts together in a manner that has meaning. I try to show you what to do next time when you did not. Office hours are meant for students who would like to discuss their progress, have questions about the problems or anything else. I want everyone to be a successful student.

**The Bad News:** I am a rather strict grader. I expect people to invest time in their education. As you plan out your time for this class, plan 2 hours homework time for every hour spent in class!! This is the customary expectation of 4-year institutions, get used to it. If part of a homework assignment comes off the internet, I am not impressed. I reserve the right to give a 0 if copying is evident.

### SCHEDULE OF CLASS TOPICS, READING ASSIGNMENTS AND TESTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading Assignment for next week</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 29</td>
<td>Colonial period – beginnings of change – slavery and slave trade - Quilts and quilt making in Africa as free people and in the US as slaves. How it changed, what it became, how it reflects the spirit of a quiet resistance!</td>
<td><em>African American Art and Artists: Chapter 2 p.23 –57. Chapter 3 p.23 -</em></td>
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Oct. 6 Early 19th C. painters: Robert Duncanson & Edward Bannister. Henry Tanner – precursor to the Harlem Renaissance! He’s important!

Oct. 8 Sculpture - Edmonia Lewis and Meta Vaux Warrick – Hand out Problem #1. Due Oct. 27 (Cozetta Guinn, tour of the De Young American artists Oct. 24)
Reading Assignment next weej: African American Art and Artists, Chapter 4 p. 59 – 113. (1920-1940)

Video: “Against the Odds” Philosophically, what does the Harlem Renaissance mean for African American artists?? For the US?? Answer handout on the video.
William H. Johnson, Jones, Horace Pippin

Oct. 15 Sculpture – Augusta Savage, Raymond Barthé, Sargent Johnson.


Oct. 20 Contemporary African American artists and new social issues. Romare Beardon, Alma Thomas, Jacob Lawrence – two different approaches to the same social problem.


Oct. 27 Review for Test #1. Problem #1 due. Essay posted on Turnitin.com at noon today. Begin working on it right away. It will be due on midnight of Oct. 29.

Oct. 29 Midterm #1.
Chicano!
Video - Central Valley, Cesar Chavez – Farmworkers Union
Upcoming: Days of the Dead Write one page about your experiences of this event!!
Websites to visit – Chicano!
   El Teatro Campesino – go to Educational Theater – watch program –
Reading Assignment: Toward a People’s Art: Read Chap. 1, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, & 11. Visit Precita Eyes in San Francisco – they will take you on a tour of Balmy Alley and around a few blocks of wall murals. Choose a wall mural to do your problem 2 about.

Nov. 3 Begin Chicano section
Handout Problem 2 – Public Art/Political Art – locate and take pictures of a wall mural. Murals can be seen in San Jose, Milpitas, Los Gatos, San Francisco, Berkeley and lots of places in between.
Find one – photograph it – answer the questions on your problem sheet as you stand in front of it. IN CLASS – we will discuss - What about Public Art? Where did it begin? In class we’ll begin with Pre-Columbian art. Teotihuacan outside Mexico City, Valley of Mexico. Mayan wall paintings – Bonampak. Aztec ceremonial center of Tenochtitlan.

Extra Credit Assignment: Choose an event or exhibit, attend and write a 1 – 2 page evaluation of your experience. What did you learn? Look up Enrique Chagoya on line – he teaches art at Stanford University. He is part of an exhibit at the Cantor Center, Stanford University. His portion is entitled “Illegal Alien’s Guide to America.” He will be speaking in the Cantor Center auditorium on Dec. 3 at 7 pm. Extra Credit - go, write a reflection about his points and what you learned. It’s FREE!!!

Nov. 5 Maya and Aztec – Bonampak and Templo Mayor – murals! Jose Guadalupe Posada – a people’s artist in 19th century Mexico City. Test #1 returned, Problem #1 returned. Problem 2 handed out.

Nov. 10 Diego Rivera, Frida Kahlo, José Clemente Orozco, David Alfaro Siquieros – public painters of the revolution.

Nov. 12 More resources: website www.chicano.com has many additional resources on Chicano culture, literature, poetry, and social issues. Check it out!! Go to “Time Line” then click on “Issues to think about.” Bibliography – go to Teachers’ and Parents’ section – excellent resource!! Also visit El Teatro Campesino – see handout. Inside-Outside the Master’s House, Issues in Chicano Art, Rasquachismo, Alter – Nativity, Politics of Native Ethnography - identity

Nov. 17 Review for Midterm #2 Essay will be posted on Turnitin.com at noon today. Begin working on it right away. It will be due on Nov. 19 at midnight. You may bring a printed copy as backup if you wish.

Nov. 19 Midterm #2 – Essay due tonight at midnight at Turnitin.com. I.M. Pei video

Nov. 24 China – 5000 years of painting, sculpting, carving, modeling, - Japan inherits philosophical views and changes heritage to create a Japanese heritage with the new tools. Reading Assignment for next week: Views from Asian California.

Nov. 26 Thanksgiving Holiday!! No School!!
Dec. 1  Turn in Problem 2 today in class!!
Water-color painters – Chiura Obata, graphic tradition including
JAM Workshop, (now Leland Wong’s A-town!) and others! Visit
Kearny Street Workshop – find out what kind of arts they support!!
Visit Asian Art Museum constantly!!

Dec. 3  Review slides for final
Review topics we covered this quarter – last chance to bring
questions to class to ask!!!
Maya Lin “A Clear Strong Vision” video
Enrique Chagoya speaks tonight at Stanford University
Cantor Visual Arts Center auditorium, 7 pm
Last extra credit project to do before the final. Write up what his
points were and what you learned and bring to final!.

No class on  Dec. 8 or 10 – it’s finals week and there are no regular classes.

Dec. 11  Final Exam – 1:45-3:45 PM
And it’s done!!
If you would like to get your papers and final back with final grade
quickly, please bring a manila envelope with 2 – first class stamps
and your address on it. I will mail your final and papers to you. Let
the mailman do the walking!!