

ARTD 3108: Art of Ancient China

CUNY-BC Study in China Program

Instructor: Professor Jennifer Ball, Ph.D.

Textbooks:

1. Michael Sullivan, *Arts of China*, 5th Edition, UC Press, 2009
2. Craig Clunas, *Art in China*, 2nd Edition, Oxford University Press, 2009

Course Description:

Exploration of the art and architecture of China from ancient to contemporary times.

Objectives:

1. To identify major monuments and works of Chinese art and be able to discuss those works in oral and written work.
2. To engage the historiography of the field and in critical thinking about the secondary source material.
3. To view original works of art in a museum or *in situ*

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of this course students should be able to:

1. identify the major works of Chinese Art and Architecture
2. critically discuss historiography and methods of the field in writing and orally
3. know the major sources for the field and use it in research
4. view works of Chinese art in a museum/archaeological or other site

Course Outline

Unit 1 Funerary Art

An examination of tombs and grave goods. What can we learn from art made in service of the dead? How, if at all, do these art forms relate to the living? What do these cultures value?

Visit: Tomb of Emperor Qin Shi Huang and Terra Cotta Army Museum

Sullivan, ch. 1-4

Clunas, ch. 1

Unit 2 Religious Expression: Buddhist Art

An examination of Buddhist shrines and works of art made in monastic settings. What makes space or a site 'sacred'? How do religious expression and artistic expression function together?

Visit: Jiming Buddhist Temple, Nanjing Museum, Yangzhou Museum

Clunas, ch. 3

Sullivan, ch. 5-7

Unit 3 Silk Road

An examination of the development of the Silk Road, a network of trade routes that connected East Asia to Europe, and the objects and art forms that reflect the many cultures with which China came into contact via the Silk Road.

What happens to a culture when it connects with other cultures? How is knowledge and culture transmitted? How are the arts affected by economic and political forces?

Visit: Porcelain factory; Great Mosque in Xi'an; Yangzhou Puhaddin Graveyard

Clunas, ch. 5

Sullivan, ch. 8

Unit 4 The Great Wall

The Great Wall of China was built over centuries, with some parts built as early as the 7th century BCE and the most recent building occurring during the Ming Dynasty. An in-depth study of the Great Wall highlights China's history with its neighbors, military advancements, and changes in building techniques.

Additionally, the thousands of people who literally built the Wall and the dozens of foreign travelers in history who have commented on it represent other ways of understanding China.

Visit: The Great Wall

Unit 5 Imperial China

China experienced several 'Golden Ages', known commonly as the Great Dynasties: the Han, Tang, Yuan and Ming. These dynasties flourished financially, artistically, in literature and music, as well as sciences and other advancements. The arts of elites during these dynasties will be examined. What messages and values were conveyed through the arts?

Visit: The Forbidden City; Confucius Temple in Nanjing; Ming Tomb in Nanjing

Clunas, ch. 2 and 4

Sullivan, ch. 9-10

Unit 6 China in the Global Art World

Where does China fit into the Global Art World? Are artists privileged who are taken up by Western audiences, such as Ai Wei Wei?

Visit: Art Galleries in Xi'an and Nanjing; Nanjing University Art Museum;

Nanjing Normal University School of Art

Sullivan, ch. 11

Methods of Evaluation and Assessment:

1. 3-4-page Visual analysis of one artifact in its original context (to be done at any site in which objects are *in situ*) 15%
2. 3-page Review of any work or show of contemporary art (to be done at a gallery, museum with contemporary work, or with a work of public sculpture or street art seen during the trip) 20%
3. 3-4-page response paper on an issue-based article (assignment to be handed out) focusing on issues such as repatriation of objects, archaeological concerns, propagandistic art, “art” in active religious sites 20%
4. Midterm 20%
5. Final exam 25%