

## COURSE SYLLABUS

**SURVEY OF ART IN CHINA**  
Alliance for Global Education  
21<sup>st</sup> Century City Program in Shanghai

**Suggested US semester credit hours:** 3 credits

**IFSA-Butler/Alliance Course Code:** ARTH 260

**Course length:** Semester

**Delivery method:** Face to face

**Language of Instruction:** English

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is a systematic seminar that explores the important developments in Chinese art from early history to modern times. Most sessions will take place in selected museums throughout Shanghai. Rather than studying the objects as “art,” we will examine them as “artifacts.” We will explore questions such as: When and how did these artifacts come to be placed within the precincts of art museums? What statement does the object narrate regarding its historical and present context?

Shanghai, as an urban city, has been undergoing unprecedented museum building in the past five years. What do museums reveal about the city, the nation, and society through the placement of art? This course will attempt to scrutinize the categorization of “fine art” and examine the content within the material culture it was produced and consumed. Through the evidence of objects in museum, it is hoped that the students will gain a deeper understanding of Chinese history and society of the past and present.

The course will be conducted in seminar/discussion format. Students are strongly encouraged to ask questions and participate in discussions on the assigned readings and course materials. The course includes several museum visits.

### STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This course includes the following goals for students:

1. Recognize which stylistic elements of art came to be embraced through successive periods of Chinese history.
2. Understand why certain objects and medium were and still are so important in China.
3. Know the city of Shanghai as a critical site for the development of modernism in Chinese art.
4. Become aware of the meaning of “Chinese art” as it continues to remain fixed but has also evolved across geographical regions outside its borders.
5. Become familiar with resources available for research on art in China.
6. Demonstrate understanding of the cultural considerations surrounding a study of art in China.
7. Strengthen academic writing skills.

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8. Strengthen presentation skills.
9. Make connections between learning in this course and other learning experiences in the Alliance for Global Education 21<sup>st</sup> Century City Program in Shanghai.

## COURSE MATERIALS

Required Text: Michael Sullivan, *The Arts of China*, Fifth Edition, Revised and Expanded (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2008).

A compiled reader will also be provided in electronic format.

All required reading assignments will be provided by the instructor and Alliance for Global Education program staff.

## COURSE SCHEDULE

The following schedule of class sessions indicates the weekly discussion topics, related readings, and assignments for this course. Students should complete assigned readings before coming to class and are expected to actively participate in class discussions. Students are required to write weekly museum or reading response papers, take one in-class midterm exam, make one in-class presentation, and submit a final paper. Students are encouraged to bring their prior learning experiences into class discussions and to make connections between this course and others whenever possible. Theories of experiential learning and integrative learning therefore undergird the dynamic learning environment of this course.

Class Meeting:	TBD
Instructor:	Professor Julie Chun
Classroom:	TBD
Email:	julie.arthistory@gmail.com
Phone:	+86-186-0167-3903

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### **1st Session: Introduction. Art and artifact (In-class lecture)**

The introduction will consist of evaluating the terms, which we take for granted: “art” and “artifact.” When does an artifact become legitimized as “art”? Since museums are modern inventions, how did ancient artifacts take on the distinctions of “art”? Who bestowed this lofty status? For what purposes?

Assigned readings:

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- Sullivan textbook, Chapter 1
- Reader: Carol Duncan, *Civilizing Rituals: Inside Public Art Museums* (London and New York: Routledge), 7-20.
- Reader: Stuart Hall, ed., *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices* (London, Thousand Oaks and New Delhi: Sage Publications in Association with The Open University, 1997), 1-11.

Assigned homework:

Submit a 3-page response paper of your definition of “art.” Do you think in this contemporary culture of excess and circulating images, there is a need for art museums? Why or why not?

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### 2nd Session: Understanding the Role of Jade in China’s Ancient Civilization (Aurora Museum)

Before jade was prized as one of the jewels of China, its main function was mortuary. What do archeological excavations of jade, both past and present, reveal about the society in which these objects were created? Even after several millennium years, why is jade still a prized possession in China?

Assigned readings:

- Sullivan textbook, Chapter 2
- Gu Fang and Li Hongjuan, trans. by Tony Blishen, *Chinese Jade* (Shanghai: Shanghai Press and Publishing Development Company, 2013), 85-105.

Assigned homework: Submit a 3-page response paper to today’s museum visit.

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### 3rd Session: China’s Bronze Culture (Shanghai Museum)

Unlike jade, the bronze culture of China emerged, peaked and fell into decline. What was the purpose of bronze vessels in China’s ancient society? What can we glean about the society that produced the diversified types of bronze objects? How are these goods regarded today?

Assigned readings:

- Sullivan text, Chapters 2, 3
- Patricia Buckley Ebrey, *Cambridge Illustrated History China* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), Chapter 2, 38-59.
- Willow Weilan Hai Chang, “The Cradle of Chinese Civilization along the Yangtze River: Bronze Treasures from Hunan,” *Antiques and Fine Art*, 2011, 268-271.

Assigned homework: Submit a 3-page response paper to today’s museum visit.

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### 4th Session: Sculpture - Mortuary and Religious (Shanghai Museum)

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Sculpture in China's pre-modern history was either placed above or below the ground. What differentiated their placement and thereby role in society? In this session, we will observe closely the most renowned funerary sculptures of China, Qin Shi Huang's terra cotta soldiers and the most recognized religious sculptures of The Buddha. As funerary or religious markers, why might have they been created and how have the meanings of these sculptures changed over the years?

Assigned readings:

- Sullivan text, Chapters 4, 5, 6
- "The Ancient World Religions," excerpted from *Western Civilizations* (New York: Harper & Row, 1990), 146-156.
- Ladislav Kesner, "Likeness of No One: (Re)presenting the First Emperor's Army," *Art Bulletin*, Vol. 77, No. 1, March 1995, 115-132.

Assigned homework: Submit a 3-page response paper to Kesner's article.

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### 5th Session: Calligraphy and Introduction to Ink Painting (Shanghai Museum)

Calligraphy was and is still considered the highest art form in China. Why is that? This session will trace the history of calligraphy in China and its associative mediums of ink, silk and paper. How does our understanding of calligraphy and ink painting relate to concepts of text and image? What were the central subject matters in Chinese ink painting? How have their stylistic aspects digressed or remained constant?

Assigned readings:

- Sullivan text, Chapters 7
- Jessica Rawson, ed., *The British Museum Book of Chinese Art* (London: The British Museum Press, 2007), 84-133.

Assigned homework: Submit a 3-page response paper to today's museum visit.

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### 6th Session: Ink Painting Continued (Location TBD)

The importance of ink painting in China took several historical turns. When and why? In this session, we will explore the genres of figuration and landscape painting in Chinese ink art. We will also examine the emergence of the literati or wenren and examine how they affected not only the arts, but also the culture and moral codes for successive generations.

Assigned readings:

- Sullivan text, Chapters 8, 9, 10
- Zhang Hongxing, ed., *Masterpieces of Chinese Painting, 700-1900* (London: V&A Publishing, 2013), 11-63.

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Assigned homework: Submit a 3-page response paper to *Masterpieces of Chinese Painting* reading.

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### 7th Session: In-Class Mid-Term Exam

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### 8th Session: Shanghai School (China Art Museum)

Art took a turn towards modernism in Shanghai. What is the historical significance of the city of Shanghai? How did its locality and history attribute to the shifting conditions taking place in society? How did the emergence of the Shanghai School painters disrupt the wenren tradition? Who and what was the Shanghai School and why should they claim a place in Shanghai's history? This session will take place at the China Art Museum, the largest museum (by square footage) in all of Asia. We will also briefly discuss the history of museum building in China and the curatorial challenges of Chinese museums.

Assigned reading:

- Julia F. Andrews and Kuiyi Shen, *The Art of Modern China* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2012), 1-25.
- Yu-chih Lai, "Remapping Borders: Ren Bonian Frontier Paintings and Urban Life in 1880s Shanghai," *Art Bulletin*, September 2004, 86, No. 3, 550-572.
- Julie Chun, "Manufacturing Nationalism," *Courier*, February 2013, 18-21.

Assigned homework: Submit a 3-page response paper to today's museum visit.

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### 9th Session: Shift Toward Modernism (Tushanwan Museum)

Continuing our discussion from 8<sup>th</sup> Session, we will convene, not at an art museum, but at the site of a former orphanage. We will trace the history of important foreigners in China, especially those who played a significant role in bridging the art of the West and the East. In addition, we will define the categorical distinctions of what constitutes "modern art" within the art historical context to examine how socio-political forces in Shanghai arose to affect artistic shifts for a turn towards modernism at a craft school built for local orphans.

Assigned reading:

- Rudolf G. Wagner, "The Role of the Foreign Community in the Chinese Public Sphere," *The China Quarterly*, No. 142, June 1995, 423-443.
- Julia F. Andrews and Kuiyi Shen, *The Art of Modern China* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2012), 27-81.

Assigned homework: Submit a 3-page response paper to today's museum visit.

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### 10th Session: China's Revolutionary Art (Long Museum Pudong)

We recognize the symbolic images of China's revolutionary art through propaganda posters and iconic Socialist Realist portraits, but what truly defines China's revolutionary art? When did it begin? Who were the early artists? How were the form and content conceived? This session will provide a systematic understanding of Maoist era art that took effective hold during the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. We will examine how and why some techniques, mediums, and stylistic elements came to be established as state-sanctioned visual culture that has had profound resonance in official art, while conversely coming under challenge by Chinese contemporary artists.

Assigned Reading:

- Julia F. Andrews and Kuiyi Shen, *The Art of Modern China* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2012), 115-159, 183-199.
- Roderick MacFarquhar, "The Cultural Revolution," in *Art and China's Revolution*, ed. Melissa Chiu and Zheng Shengtian (New York: Asia Society, 2009), 41-54.

Assigned homework: Submit a 3-page response paper to today's museum visit.

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### 11th Session: Chinese Contemporary Art, After 1978 (In-class lecture)

This session will be a concise in-class lecture, which explores the socio-political conditions that paved the way for the rise of contemporary art in China. We will trace the history of the art and the artists who came into prominence after the Cultural Revolution. This lecture will discuss the early works of some of the highly renowned Chinese artists who are recognized globally today and examine why their works of art are considered important.

Assigned reading:

- Sullivan text, Chapter 11

Assigned homework: Submit a 3-page response paper to today's lecture.

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### 12th Session: Art in the Public Sphere (Propaganda Poster Center, Shanghai Sculpture Space, Bazaar Compatible Program)

Visual culture has expanded the definition of art beyond painting and sculpture to include posters, cartoons, and even recycled art. What are the distinctions that divide fine art and street art? Should art only be placed in museums proper? This session will take us out to the local and public spheres where art can be found. How is the cultural definition of art being re-defined? Is this a good thing or not? Why or why not?

Assigned reading:

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- Marita Sturken and Lisa Cartwright, *Practices of Looking: An Introduction to Visual Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University of Press, 2001), 1-9.
- Julie Chun, "Being Out There: The Challenges and Possibilities of Public Art in Shanghai," *Yishu Journal of Contemporary Chinese Art*, November/December 2014, Volume 13, No. 6, 6-27.

Assigned homework: Submit a 3-page response paper to today's visit to public art sites.

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### 13th Session: Chinese Contemporary Art Now (Museum TBD)

When art upholds a narrative, it conveys a story. But contemporary art is foregrounded in concepts and abstract ideals. How are to make sense of this new art? Are contemporary art important culturally or are they commercial pretensions? What defines decorative and critical art? When China has been criticized for perpetuating the culture of copying, how original are Chinese contemporary art? What are some statements conveyed in Chinese contemporary art?

Assigned reading:

- Rosalind Krauss, *Originality of the Avant-garde and Other Modernist Myths* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1985), 151-170.
- Julie Chun, "The Inner Trappings of a Dragon: Long Museum, Shanghai," *Yishu Journal of Contemporary Chinese Art*, September/October 2014, Vol. 13, No. 5, 20-28.

Assigned homework: Submit a 3-page response paper to today's museum visit.

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### 14th Session: Class Presentations and Final Review

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## ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATION METHODS

Participation:

Students are expected to attend all sessions of the course unless there are emergencies or medical reasons. For each class session, students must complete the required readings. All students shall participate actively and intelligently in class discussions. Thoughtful comments, interesting questions, and provocative insights will be highly valued. Participation grades include attendance, engagement in discussion, civility and respect.

Mid-Term Exam:

There will be one in-class, closed book midterm exam based on readings and course materials covered thus far. The exam will be graded and returned to students the following week.

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### Response Papers:

Students must write and submit a total of 12 museum/reading response papers relating to the topic that was discussed in the session. The instructor will provide the requirements for each museum or reading response papers at the end of each session so regular attendance is highly recommended. In the case a student is absent from a session, the instructor will email the requirements for the response paper based upon one of the required readings. Each response paper must be approximately 3 pages in length, double-spaced. The response paper is due at the beginning of each class. The instructor will provide a grading rubric for the response papers.

### Final Paper:

The final paper should be 7-9 pages in length and relate to one of the course topics. Students should first turn in a one-page rationale for the research on Week 6. The final paper should include citations of selected references. The instructor will provide the due date for the final paper.

The final paper will reveal the efforts of the student's personal research.

1. Select an object from one of the museum studies.
2. Provide the findings from the following questions:
  - What is it?
  - Where and when was it found or excavated?
  - Where and when was it used?
  - Who was it made for and by whom?
  - Describe its known social, political, economic contexts.
3. What has been written about it? Do you feel the sources are adequate? Why or why not?
4. From your personal research about the object, what is your own assessment about the object?
5. How does this object fit within the canon of art in China? What statement does it make about China and its society?

### Final Presentation:

Each student will present 10-15 minutes (with slides) in class on their final paper. The presentation can be a summary or key highlights of the object discussed in the final paper; however, in the presentation, the student must attempt to answer the five questions posed for the research, which is stipulated above in the requirements for the Final Paper. A grading rubric for the Presentation will be provided by the instructor during class.

### Grading:

Your performance in this course will be assessed through the following, and your final grade will be determined by the percentages indicated:

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Attendance, Class Preparation, Discussion and Participation - 10%

Mid-Term Exam – 20%

Response Papers for Museum Visits and Readings (12 total) – 20%

Final Paper - 25%

Final Presentation - 25%

Alliance programs utilize the follow standard grading policy well accepted by most US institutions.

Excellent	A	93-100%	Good	B+	87-89%	Acceptable	C+	77-79%	
	A-	90-92%		B	83-86%		C	73-76%	
				B-	80-82%		C-	70-72%	
						Unsatisfactory	D+	67-69%	
							D	63-66%	
							D-	60-62%	
							Failing	F	<60%

## COURSE POLICIES

### Deadlines:

All work must be completed and handed-in on time in order to receive full credit. If you are ill and are not able to hand an assignment in on time, you should notify the instructor by email before the deadline in order for alternative arrangements to be considered.

### Academic Integrity:

Any academic endeavor must be based upon a foundation of honesty and integrity. Students are expected to abide by principles of academic integrity and must be willing to bear individual responsibility for their work while studying abroad. Any academic work (written or otherwise) submitted to fulfill an academic requirement must represent a student's original work. Any act of academic misconduct, such as cheating, fabrication, forgery, plagiarism, or facilitating academic dishonesty, will subject a student to disciplinary action.

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Please refer to the Alliance for Global Education Code of Academic Integrity for a full description of Alliance standards of academic integrity, procedures for upholding these standards, and processes for violations of academic integrity. The Code of Academic Integrity is available at [http://allianceglobaled.org/files/upload/pdf/code\\_of\\_academic\\_integrity.pdf](http://allianceglobaled.org/files/upload/pdf/code_of_academic_integrity.pdf).

### Exams and Assignments:

Students are required to take all regularly scheduled exams in courses for which they are registered, and to submit all assignments on time. Any compelling academic, personal, or medical reason that might justify a rescheduled exam or assignment must be brought up to both the Resident Director and course faculty. Failure to take scheduled exams or submit the requisite assignments for a course will adversely affect your grade as per the stated grading criteria for each course.

### Classroom Conduct:

Student punctuality is extremely important in China. Please do not be late for classes or other activities, as it is considered impolite to do so. It is improper to eat in class, to engage in other activities such as texting, or to slump or nap. Students are expected to be alert and engaged as a sign of respect for their professors.

### Attendance:

Class attendance is mandatory. It is essential that the students participate fully in the coursework and all required academic activities. Authorized absences may only be approved by the Resident Director, and students are expected to make up any missed work. Unauthorized absences will adversely affect a student's grades.