**ARTH 476 (3) SEMINAR IN NORTH AMERICAN INDIGENOUS ART**

Instructor: Anthony Shelton

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Seminar: Thursday 2:00pm -5:00pm, MOA #233 (6393 NW Marine Dr.)

Office Hours: Fridays 9:00am – 12:00pm – MOA #245E (6393 NW Marine Dr.)

(Please schedule an appointment with my Assistant, Tara Pike [tara.pike@ubc.ca](mailto:tara.pike@ubc.ca) or 604-822-5052)

**Withdrawal Dates:**

Last day to withdraw without a W standing January 17, 2020

Last day to withdraw with a W standing February 14, 2020

**Course Overview:**

The course examines the historical entanglements and developments of complementary but distinct visual cultures in the southwestern United States, central Mexico and Yucatan. It traces the role of art history and archaeology in defining specific historical styles and cultural cannons and their political mobilization through travel, popular writing and exhibitions in the construction and denial of national and regional identities. It discusses varied Indigenous responses to European religious and cosmological thought and their appropriation in strategies of resistance and resilience against European and American colonization.

**Pre-requisites and Course Requirements:** None.

**Learning Outcomes:**

By the end of the course students should be able to:

1. Identify and differentiate some of the major Indigenous art styles of the American Southwest, Central Mexico and Yucatan.
2. Gain a comparative understanding of the relationship between Indigenous and different schools of art in these three areas.
3. Obtain a critical appreciation of the politics underlying the appropriation and political manipulation of the arts in these three areas.
4. Gain an historical appreciation of the arts as a tool in articulating different strategies of resistance against marginalization and colonialization.
5. Understand selected aspects of Indigenous epistemologies, ontologies and visions of colonialization in Hispanic North America.

**Course Format**

The course is divided into three sections, each of which focuses on similar but different ways the institutionalization and deployment of visual cultures have been articulated and expressed in one of three areas. After a course overview in week 1, weeks 2-5 will focus on the histories and contexts of the development of Southwestern Indigenous and Chicana/o arts; weeks 6-10 will focus on pre-Hispanic and modern central Mexican visual cultures, and weeks 11-12 will focus on the southern Mexican state of Yucatan. Week 13 will review some of the wider interpretive problems in analyzing the distinct art worlds of these three areas.

Each three hour workshop is structured as a workshop. The course leader will first give an overview of each subject, followed by a brief break. Part two of the workshop will consist of short student presentations of between 15-20 minutes based on course readings. These will be followed by group discussion.

**Assignments, Readings & Assessment:**

The course participants will be assessed by a major end of term paper due 9th April (5,000 words), 60%; a critical review essay due 24th February (2,000 words), 20%, and an evaluation of your seminar presentation and class participation, 20%. Students are expected to demonstrate analytical and critical acumen and scholarly grasp of pertinent literature. All students will be expected to have read the core readings that have been capped at two per workshop.

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| % | 0-49 | 50-54 | 55-59 | 60-63 | 64-67 | 68-71 | 72-75 | 76-79 | 80-84 | 85-89 | 90-100 |
| Letter | F | D | C- | C | C+ | B- | B | B+ | A- | A | A+ |

**PLEASE NOTE. STUDENTS SHOULD HAVE READ THE READING FOR THE FIRST CLASS PRIOR TO COMMENCING THE COURSE. SOME WORKSHOPS INCLUDE ADDITIONAL READINGS. THESE ARE NON-ESSENTIAL COURSE READINGS MEANT AS A GUIDE TO FURTHER STUDY.**

**Plagiarism:** will not be tolerated. Please refer to Faculty of arts plagiarism guide at <http://www.arts.ubc.ca/doa/plagiarism.html>.

**Course Readings:**

**\*\* All course readings are available via UBC Library course reserve**

**INTRODUCTION.**

**WEEK 1 – January 9, 2020: Course Introduction.**

Overview of course and explanation of structure. Critical evaluation of the concept of an ‘art world’. Reading and allocation of presentations.

**Primary Reading for Week 1**

Becker, Howard S. 2008. *Art Worlds*. Berkley, University of California Press. Chapters 1, 2, 3 (pp. 1-39, 40-67, 68-92) and Epilogue (pp. 372-386).

**PART ONE. THE AMERICAN SOUTHWEST. ENTANGLEMENTS OF INDIGENOUS, HISPANIC AND ANGLO VISUAL REGIMES.**

**WEEK 2 - January 16, 2020: Mutual Entanglements: Regional histories, styles, commodification and resistance.**

**Howard Becker’s concept of art worlds will be critically evaluated in relationship to the production of regional identities in early 20th century American Southwest and central Mexico textual and visual cultures. The workshop will examine the production of the idea of spiritualized landscapes and their manifestation through the work of certain canonical artists to reveal the psychic characteristics specific nation-states, as well as the ideological operations of museum collections and exhibitions to reinforce them.**

**Primary Reading for Week 2**

Udall, Sharyn Rohlfsen. 2000. *Carr, O’Keeffe, Kahlo places of their own*. New Haven, Yale University Press. Pp. 9-79.

Dubin, Margaret D. 2001. *Native America Collected: The Culture of An Art World*. Albuquerque, University of New Mexico Press. Pp 11-64 and 101-123.

**WEEK 3 – January 23, 2020: An American Orient. Southwest ecological and cultural diversity and US Occupation.**

**This week’s workshop will look at how early to middle 20th century mainstream media – travel literature, advertising, film, and museums, created the idea of ‘otherness’ within the continental USA. We shall examine the essentialization of cultural traits and visual cultures, before describing how, when taken together, the institutions supporting these medias depoyed Orientalist tropes as part of a strategy to commoditize and market non-Anglophone cultures and visual regimes to the majority society.**

**Primary Reading for Week 3**

Weigle, Marta. 1996. “Insisted on authenticity”: Harveycar Indian Detours, 1925-1931. In Marta Weigle and Barbara Babcock (eds.), *The Great Southwest of the Fred Harvey Company and the Santa Fe Railway*. Phoenix, the Heard Museum. Pp. 47-59.

Shelton, Anthony. 2005. The Imaginary Southwest. Commodity Disavowal in an American Orient. In M. Coquet, B. Derlon and M. Jeudy-Ballini (eds.), *Les cultures à l’ouvre Recontres en art*. Paris, Biro éditeur. Pp 75-96.

**Additional Reading**

Estevez-Gonzalez, Fernando. 2018. Museopatías. Edited by Mayta Henríquez and Mariano de Santa Ana. Tenerife, Foundacíon César Manrique (Bilingual English/Spanish edition).

**WEEK 4 – January 30, 2020: The Imaginary Southwest. Visual cultures, archaeology, travel writing and trade.**

**We shall review the relationship between anthropology and archaeology and the commoditization of visual and material culture in the American Southwest during the late 19th and the first half of the 20th century – trading posts, the role of the Fred Harvey Company and the work of early anthropologists as agents and collectors for the Company; the classification and essentialization of type objects (e.g. Navajo carpets, Pueblo katsinam), the development and organization of specialized markets in Santa Fe, and the production and importation of foreign cultural goods as cost-effective substitutes for what Sally Ethrington has described as the category of ‘authentic primitive art’.**

**Primary Reading for Week 4**

Wilson, Chris. 1997. *The Myth of Santa Fe: Creating a Modern Regional Tradition*. Albuquerque, University of New Mexico Press. Chapter 5: Mexicano, Spanish-American: Chicano, Hispanic (Pp. 146-168), Chapter 6: From Fiesta to Fourth of July (Pp. 181-231) and Conclusion: A Myth Worth Believing (Pp.311-329).

Howard, Kathleen. 1996. “A most remarkable success”: Herman Schweizer and the Fred Harvey Indian Department. In Marta Weigle and Barbara Babcock (eds.), *The Great Southwest of the Fred Harvey Company and Santa Fe Railway*. Phoenix, the Heard Museum. Pp. 87-101.

**WEEK 5 – February 6, 2020: Aztlán. Chicano art, politics and resistance.**

**The workshop will explore a wide panoply of inter-related subjects including the 1845 Annexation of Texas and 1846-1848 Mexico-US War, land grabs and marginalization of Indigenous and Mexican peoples; the growth of border culture and the Hispanicization of Los Angeles, San Antonio and other metropolitan regions of the southern USA; the politics of migration and the formation of Chicana/o identities in southern California; permeable nature of border cultures and their reinforcement, reproduction and transformation through visual and performative cultures, consumption and fashion.**

**Primary Reading for Week 5 – February 6, 2020**

Carrasco, Davíd. 2008. Imagining a Place for Aztlan: Chicanismo and the Aztecs in Art and Resistance. In E. Brumfiel and Gary Feinman (eds.), *The Aztec World*. New York, Abrams Books. Pp. 225-240.

Elenes, Alejandra. 2011. *Transforming Borders. Chicana/o Popular Culture and Pedagogy*. Lanham, Rowman & Littlefield Publishing. Chapter 1. From Historical Borderlands to Borderlands/La Frontera: Border Studies and Borderland Theorization. Pp. 21-46.

Gómez-Peña, Guillermo. 1993. *Warrior for Gringostroika: Essays, Performance Texts and Poetry*. St Paul, Graywolf Press. Pp. 37-63.

**PART TWO. CENTRAL MEXICO. ASPECTS OF PRE-COLUMBIAN, COLONIAL AND INDEPENDENCE PERIOD VISUAL REGIMES**

**WEEK 6 – February 13, 2020: Battlefield of the Gods. A visual and critical history of pre-Columbian Central Mexico.**

**This workshop focuses on the surviving Indigenous accounts of the Spanish conquest of Mexico. We will see that the conquest was never uniform throughout the territory and that pockets of resistance continued to survive well into the early 20th century. Certain pre-Hispanic categories such as that of ‘men-gods’ survived the conquest and become focal points for leadership against the Spanish colonialism. Students will also look at the post-Conquest development of masked dance dramas which perform widely different Indigenous versions of the Spanish aggression.**

**Primary Reading for Week 6**

Gruzinski, Serge. 1992. *Painting the Conquest. The Mexican Indians and the European Reanaissance*. Paris, Flammarion.

Kemp, Lysander; León-Portilla, Miguel (ed.) 1962. *The Broken Spears. The Aztec Account of the Conquest of Mexico*. Boston, Beacon Press.

**WEEK 7 - THURSDAY FEBRUARY 20, 2020 – READING BREAK – NO CLASS**

**WEEK 8 – February 27, 2020: Turquoise and Fire. Pre-Columbian material symbols.**

Reflective surfaces – worked pyrite mirrors, polished turquoise ceremonial objects and regalia, and iridescent feathers, were endowed with political significance and so ebullient with supernatural force that they were considered ‘material symbols’. These often rare materials, obtained through long-distance trade,evoked the transmission and endowment of supernatural forces. Although few survived the Spanish aggression, they provide deep insights into Mesoamerican aesthetic and ontological categories. Comparison will be drawn between the Mesoamerican use of these materials and the Inca, Chimu and post-Conquest Indigenous qualities associated with silver and gold, especially during the later period and its employment in Christian religious paintings.

**Primary Reading for Week 8**

Keraudren, Patrick Johansson. 2012. Teoxihuitl: Turquoise in Aztec thought and Poetry. In J.C.H King, M. Carocci, C. Cartwright, C. McEwan and R. Stacey (eds.), *Turquoise in Mexico and North America*. London, Archetype Publications. Pp. 135-144.

Wolf, Gerhard. 2015. Incarnations of Light: Picturing Feathers in Europe/Mexico. Ca 1400-1600. In A. Russo, G. Wolf and D. Fane (eds.), *Images Take flight. Feather Art in Mexico and Europe 1400-1700*. Munich, Hirmer Publishers. Pp. 65-99.

**Additional Reading**

Stanfield-Mazzi, Maya. 2013. *Object and Apparition. Envisioning the Christian Divine in the Colonial Andes*. Tucson, University of Arizona Press. Chapter 1: Dissolution and Reconfiguration (Pp. 9-32), Chapter 2: Early Christianity in the Altiplano (Pp. 35-58) and Chapter 7: Statue Paintings (Pp. 137-176).

Shelton, Anthony. Alan. 2012. Luminescence. Silver and World-Views in the Andes 1400-2000. In A. Shelton (ed.), *Luminescence. The Silver of Peru*. Lima, Patronato Plata del Peru. Pp. 73-102.

**WEEK 9 – March 5, 2020: Mestizaje, Art History and the Making and Remaking Mexican Identity.**

**Following the Revolution, both as a leading intellectual and as minister of education, José Vasconcelos mobilized the Mexican state to synthesise a unique national identity drawn from the fusion of its bicultural Indigenous and European racial inheritance. Nevertheless, for many other artists and writers it was the Indigenous past that outweighed European culture and archaeology, anthropology and folk art were emblazoned on walls, made the subject of exhibitions and popularized through film and literature. The art of Rivera, Kahlo, Siqueiros and O’Gorman was a celebration of what was described as the country’s singular Indigenous history, which was in sharp contrast to modernists and surrealists which incorporated Indigenous history and sculpture for very different projects and competing conceptions of identity.**

**Primary Reading for Week 9**

Schaefer, Claudia. 1992. *Textured Lives: Women, Art and Representation in Modern Mexico*. Tucson, University of Arizona Press. Chapter 1, Frida Kahlo's Cult of the Body: Self-Portrait, Magical Realism, and the Cosmic Race (Pp. 3-36).

Schmidt, Arthur. 2001. Making it Real Compared to What? Reconceptualizing Mexican History Since 1940. In G. Joseph, A. Rubenstein and E. Zolov (eds.), *Fragments of a Golden Age. The Politics of Culture in Mexico Since 1940*. Durham, Duke University Press. Pp 23-68.

**Additional Reading**

Flores, Tatiana. 2013. Mexican Revolutionary Avant-Gardes from Estridentismo to ¡30–30!. Yale University Press. Ch.5, Paradox of the Primitive and the Modern (Pp. 160-205).

**WEEK 10 – March 12, 2020: Continuities and Ruptures. Performative and visual modes of Indigenous resistance.**

**Nowhere was the struggle between Indigenists and acculturationists fought more passionately than between anthropologists and the competing agendas of Moisés Sáenz and Manuel Gamio and the two institutions they directed. Archaeological visual culture and contemporary Indigenous rituals and religious practices were manipulated both to demonstrate the rupture with the past and employed as evidence for its continuity. Historical explanations competed with conjecture on the reptition of architypes which essentialized and trapped Mexican history into a timeless drawn-out present which denied its dynamism and the wider forces which conditioned it. Images played a key role in the reproduction of this archetypal view of Mexican exceptionalism along with literary-philosophical works such as Octavio Paz’s “Labyrinth of Solitude” and José Lopez Portillo’s “Quetzalcoatl”.**

**Primary Reading for Week 10**

Bonfil Batalla, Guillermo. 1996. *México Profundo. Reclaiming a Civilization*. Austin, University of Texas Press. Chapter 1: A Land of Millenarian Civilization (Pp. 3-18), Chapter 5: The Colonial Order (Pp. 70-93) and Chapter 8: The Paths of Indian Survival (Pp. 129-152).

Lafaye, Jacques. 1976. *Quetzalcoatl and Guadalupe. The Formation of Mexican National Consciousness 1531-1813*. University of Chicago Press. Pp. ix-xxii and 211-230, 231-253, 254-273, 274-298, 299-300, and 301-311.

**Additional reading**

Oleszkiewicz-Peralba, Malgorzata. 2013. “Holy Death, Our Protectress: The Mexican Santa Muerte /Święta Śmierć, Nasza Opiekunka: Meksykańska Santa Muerte.” Etnografia nowa /The New Ethnography 5 (2013): 119-139.

**PART THREE. POLTICAL IMMOBILIZATION AND COMMODIFICATION OF VISUAL CULTURE IN YUCATAN.**

**WEEK 11 – March 19, 2020: Mayan Egypt. Indigeneity, Visual Culture and Regional Identity in Yucatan.**

Since Indpendence in 1824, Yucatan has four times declared its Independence from Mexico. While the federal government long deployed a vast repertory of archaeological images and pre-Columbian material culture to define national identity, Yucatan never mobilized the prolific, powerful and distinct visual markers of its own Maya history to counter the dominant visual regime. This workshop discusses whether Yucatan’s failure to mobilize its own pre-Columbian history (expressed through Maya archaeological sites and material culture) was because its claim to independence was never more than a maneuver for mid-term gain or whether successive state-level governments disassociated the Peninsula’s modern identity from its past.

**Primary Readings for Week 11**

There are no readings for this class

**Week 12 – March 26, 2020: From Sites to Sights. Commodification, Travel and Tourism in southern Mexico.**

This penultimate workshop looks at changing views of Maya history as expressed in John Lloyd Stephen’s and Frederick Catherwood’s texts and illustrations in Incidents of Travel in Central Mexico, Chiapas and Yucatan (1841), Incidents of Travel in Yucatan (1843), and Case’s 1901, Views of Yucatan. The transformation in foreign and local perceptions of the Peninsula’s archaeological heritage from curiosities completely divorced from then contemporary Indigenous communities to illustrations of an intrinsic en-situ phase of Indigenous civilization, also coincides with changes in the evaluation of Maya monuments as valueless to their re-classification and deployment as commodities within a tourist economy.

**Primary Reading for Week 12**

Castañeda, Quetzil E. 2001. The Aura of Ruins*.* In G. Joseph, A. Rubenstein and E Zolov (eds.), *Fragments of A Golden Age. The Politics of Culture in Mexico Since 1940*. Durham, Duke University Press. Pp *452-467*.

Stephens, John L. 1843 (2008). *Incidents of Travel in Yucatan*. London and New York, Dover Books. (Read sections as desired)

**WEEK 13 – April 2, 2020: Arcadias, Pharmacopias and Essences; Plants, Bodies, Sickness and Fertility in the Mesoamerican World.**

**This final workshop offers a summation of Mesoamerican world-views, as expressed through monolithic sculpture, imperial collections, and gardens and explores contemporary thought on alternative ontological lenses through which their significance might be reconstructed and better understood.**

**Primary Reading for Week 13**

Peterson, Jeanette Favorot. 1993. *The Paradise Garden Murals of Malinalco: Utopia and Empire in Sixteenth Century Mexico*. Austin, University of Texas Press. Introduction and conclusion.

Houston, Stephen. 2014. *The Life Within. Classic Maya and the Matter of Permanence*. New Haven, Yale University Press. Chapter 3: The Life Within (Pp. 75-123).