ALTERNATIVE ART HISTORY:
MAPPING FOR A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

COURSE SYLLABUS

Basic Info:

“Alternative Art History: Mapping for a Global Perspective.” ARTH – X 202
Spring 2016. ONLINE.
CRN: --
Level: Undergraduate
Type: Art History/Criticism
Pre-requisites: none
Credits: 3 Credit Hours

Instructor: Aja Mujinga Sherrard
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Course Description: To fully understand Art History—with the sheer volume of inspiring and significant works across the globe; the dense webs of influences, exchanges, and appropriations; not to mention the ongoing debate as what “Art” actually is—would be a little bit like attempting to sit down and read the entire Internet. How do you begin? In this course, we will follow the path drawn by Historian, Julian Bell in his Masterful book: Mirror of the World: A New History of Art, adding to and expanding on his selections and analyses as we go. Roughly chronological, we will touch on artworks from various places around the world in each era we “touch down” as we fly through the years between pre-history (before 31,000 BCE) all the way to the 1980s. Throughout, we’ll keep asking the big questions: Why do we make art? Why does it matter to us? And how do the complex networks of power continue to affect what we make, see, and remember?

Course Objectives: Upon completing this course, students will have a Broad and well-balanced understanding of Art History across the world. They will be able to identify specific works of art, the distinct style of certain artist, collectives, and art cultures. They will also have developed a sense of how these varied expressions of art across the world and across time are interconnected across the events and cultural shifts of their historic context. Most importantly, students will develop an intuitive suspicion of curated timelines and learn to look for missing factors, missing art, artists, and stories. Through regular writing projects and forum discussions, Students will also develop and improve their skills in analysis, observation, description, comparison, and transmission of ideas. In particular: they will become comfortable expressing their ideas through writing.
Required Text: *Mirror of the World: A New History of Art* by Julian Bell. Any additional readings will be made available to you.

Course Requirements: Students are expected to read all assigned materials, actively participate in discussion forums, and complete all assignments by their due date.

Attendance: There are no excused absences in this class.

Grading: Student grades will be calculated according to their weekly writing assignments (25% of the grade), participation in class forums (25% of their grade), midterm research paper (25% of your grade), and final project (25% of their grade). Students will also receive a short evaluative feedback to each writing assignment, in depth feedback on the midterm and final, and a final written evaluation.

Students With Special Needs: It is not at all out of the ordinary for various students to have unique needs and learning styles. Students with disabilities or unique needs should contact me as soon as possible to discuss potential strategies or solutions.

Academic Misconduct and the Student Conduct Code: All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The Code is available for review online at www.umt.edu/SA/VPSA/Index.cfm/page/1321.

Withdrawal Policy: Specifics available at this web address: http://www2.umt.edu/catalog/acpolpro.htm

Assignments:

- **WEEKLY WRITING ASSIGNMENTS 1-10:** Roughly 2-4 paragraphs each, these short written assignments will address your readings or the discussion topic at hand as a prompt for comparative analysis, interpretive analysis, or personal reflection. The description of each specific assignment will be made available the week it is assigned. Each weekly writing assignment must be completed by Monday of the following week and proofread before being handed in.

- **MIDTERM “SHADOW LECTURE” PROJECT:** This project is designed to help you find the gaps in any curation of history. In groups of 4 to 5, you will choose an era we have covered over the course of this class and go back in search of significant works we didn’t touch on. You will be responsible for 3-5 slides each, each slide must include the year the piece was finished, the Country/culture of origin, the name of the artist, the name of the artwork, Materials and scale, and permissions in addition to 1-2 paragraphs per slide that establish context, value, and interpretation. You will post the completed lecture for the class to review and answer questions posted on the associated forum.

- **FINAL PROJECT: RESEARCH PAPER:** in 8-12 pages, connect one of the pieces from our lectures (includ student “Shadow lectures”) to research in detail and connect to contemporary ideas, issues, or art practices. Must cite a minimum of 3 legitimate sources.
Course Outline:

WEEK 1 – Introductions: What is Art?
   Essay: "What is Art" by Diissanayake
   Breaking down sub-terms; global perspectives; subjectivity, and accountability
   Weekly Writing #1

WEEK 2: A critical look at History itself
   On Eurocentrism and the Argument for a global history (Gerardo Mosquera, “Marco Polo Syndrome”, “the subaltern” history. preface From Mirror to the World by Julian Bell)
   The “Reading the Internet” problem: narrowing in, glancing out
   The role of Foundations: mapping further research.
   Weekly Writing #2

WEEK 3: pre-31,000 BCE- 4,000BCE
   Inclu: Western Europe, Americas, Australia, South and Central Africa, South-West Asia, Japan, Polynesia, Scotland and others.
   Reading: Ch 1: “Horizon,” from Mirror of the World: A New History of Art, Julian Bell
   Weekly Writing #3

WEEK 4: 3,000 BCE – 800 BCE
   Inclu: China, Central Asia, Mexico, Peru, India, Iraq, Egypt, Greece and others.
   Reading: Ch 2: “Shaping Civilization,” from Mirror of the World: A New History of Art, Julian Bell
   Weekly Writing #4

WEEK 5: 800 BCE – 150 CE
   Inclu: China, North and Central Asia, Syria, Iraq, Greece, Iran, India, Italy and others.
   Reading: Ch 3: “Classical Norms,” from Mirror of the World: A New History of Art, Julian Bell
   Weekly Writing #5

WEEK 6: 1 CE – 1250 CE
   Inclu: Mexico, North Africa, India, Italy, Syria, British Isles, Central America, Indonesia, China, (Islam, Christianity) Cambodia, Japan, Nigeria and others.
   Reading: Ch 4: “Medieval Worlds,” from Mirror of the World: A New History of Art, Julian Bell
   Weekly Writing #6

WEEK 7: 970 CE – 1520 CE
   Inclu: Mexico, Iran, China, Germany, Italy, France, Spain, Indonesia, Flanders, and others.
   Reading: Ch 4: “Doorways and Windows,” from Mirror of the World: A New History of Art, Julian Bell
   Weekly Writing #7
WEEK 8: 1490 CE – 1600 CE
Inclu: Mexico, Italy, the Netherlands, India, Spain, Africa and others.
Reading: Ch 6: “Re-creating the World,” from Mirror of the World: A New History of Art, Julian Bell
MIDTERM PROJECT

WEEK 9 – 1530 CE – 1670 CE
Inclu: China, Southern India, the America, Italy, Rome, Northern Europe, Iran, Spain, the Netherlands, Mexico, Benin, and others
Reading: Ch 7: “Theatrical Realities,” from Mirror of the World: A New History of Art, Julian Bell
MIDTERM PROJECT

WEEK 10 – POST “SHADOW LECTURES”
Reading: Review all “Shadow Lecture” presentations.
FORUM: Shadow Lectures Q & A
Weekly Writing #8

WEEK 11: 1660 CE – 1780 CE
Inclu: Mexico, France, Italy, Mali, Japan, China, Korea, Germany, Britain, Russia and others
Reading: Ch 8: “Settlement, Enlightenment,” from Mirror of the World: A New History of Art, Julian Bell
Weekly Writing #9

WEEK 12: 1780 CE – 1850 CE
Inclu: Bolivia, France, Brazil, Japan, Italy, Spain, Iran, Britain, Germany, New Zealand, and others
Reading: Ch 9: “A changed Truth,” from Mirror of the World: A New History of Art, Julian Bell
Weekly Writing #10

WEEK 13: 1840 CE – 1900 CE
Inclu: France, Germany, Britain, USA, India, New Zealand, West Africa, China, Denmark, Mexico, Norway, and others
Reading: Ch 10: “Industry’s Momentum,” from Mirror of the World: A New History of Art, Julian Bell
FINAL PAPER

WEEK 14: 1900 CE – 1945 CE
Inclu: Mexico, USA, Germany, Russia, Cuba, Japan, Nigeria, South Africa, and others
Reading: Ch 11: “Breakthrough/Breakdown,” from Mirror of the World: A New History of Art, Julian Bell
FINAL PROJECTS

WEEK 15: 1945 CE – 1980’s CE
Inclu: USA, Britain, France, Tanzania, Nigeria, Argentina, Italy, China, India, Australia, Canada, and others
Reading: Ch. 12 “Foreground” from Mirror of the World: A New History of Art, Julian Bell
FINAL PROJECTS

Week 16 – POST FINAL PAPERS
Reading: classmate research Papers
FORUM: Peer reviews and Q &A
FORUM: Moving forward, exit plans

**This syllabus may be subject to change at any point. Pay attention to classroom announcements and email notices to stay up to date**