

Japanese Design

Aesthetics and Visual Culture

Section 1

Instructor/Title	Dr. Seonga Kim-Lee / Assistant Professor
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【Course Outline / Description】

This course aims at understanding Japanese aesthetics, culture, and society through the twentieth-century design. Students will examine broad range of design examples in terms of reflective of the social, political, and economic culture of the time. The course will begin by exploring Japanese aesthetics and prewar design and continues by discussing contemporary design with regard to the emergence of design, made in Japan, pop culture, and disaster and design. Students need to be familiarized with Japanese terms related to aesthetics and culture at the beginning of this course in order to understand how religion and philosophy are reflected in Japanese art and design. Through lectures, discussions, presentations, and field trips, students will understand how traditional Japanese aesthetics reflected on contemporary design and how individual Japanese designers uniquely delivered traditional aesthetics to international style.

Section 2

【Course Objectives/Goals/Learning Outcomes】

At the end of this course students will be able to:

- Take design as a key tool for understanding Japanese aesthetics, culture, and history.
- Perceive a brief history of Japanese design in the twentieth century and demonstrate specific issues affected Japanese design.
- Clarify the difference between Japanese and western aesthetics in design.
- Demonstrate how traditional Japanese culture reflected in the contemporary design.

Section 3

【Class Schedule/Class Environment, Literature and Materials】

Lecture 1:

Introduction

Read page 3- 18 and understand the contents.

Naomi Pollock, "Introduction," *Made in Japan: 100 New Products*, (Merrell, 2012), 9-23.

Lecture 2:

Aesthetics of Japanese Art and Design

Read page 19-43, 48-53 and understand the contents

Patricia J. Graham, *Japanese Design: Art, Aesthetics, and Culture*, (Tuttle Publishing, 2014), 16-45.

Lecture 3:

Aesthetics of Japanese Art and Design

Unit Assignment and Discussion #1: *wabi-sabi*

Read page 54-60 and prepare for the discussion in class.

Roger J. Davies and Osamu Ikeno ed., "wabi-sabi," *The Japanese Mind*, 223-232.

Lecture 4:

Japanese Culture and Design

Read page 61-64 and understand the contents.

Matthias Dietz and Michael Monninger, "Furoshikibility," *Japan Design*, (Taschen 1992), 11-14.

Lecture 5:

Japanese Culture and Design

Unit Assignment and Discussion #2: *itokodori*

Read page 65-68 and prepare for the discussion in class.

Roger J. Davies and Osamu Ikeno ed., "Itoko-Dori: Adopting Elements of Foreign Culture," *The Japanese Mind*, 127-133.

Unit 2: The emergence of design

Lecture 6:

Modernization and Westernization

Read page 71-77 in the textbook and understand the contents

Felice Fischer, "Japanese Design: from Meiji to Modern," *Japanese Design*, 8-13.

Lecture 7:

Modernization and Westernization

Read page 71-77 in the textbook and understand the contents

Felice Fischer, "Japanese Design: from Meiji to Modern," *Japanese Design*, 8-13.

Lecture 8:

Occupation and American Influence

TBA

Lecture 9:

Emergence of Design

Read page 101-107 in the textbook and understand the contents

Takuo Hirano, "The History of Japanese Design: A Personal View," *Japan 2000*, 95-99.

Lecture 10:

Made in Japan

Read **page 108-111** in the textbook and understand the contents

Pat Kirkham and Susan Weber, ed. *History of Design*, (Bard Graduate Center 2013), 506-508.

Lecture 11:

Design and Marketing

Read **page 112-115** in the textbook and understand the contents

Motoo Nakashi, "Design and Marketing," *Japanese Design*, 22-24.

Lecture 12:

Unit Assignment #3 and Discussion

Unit 3: Pop culture and design

Lecture 13:

Metabolism Architecture

Read **page 119-134** in the textbook and understand the contents

Michael Ross, "Megastructuring: Urban Structures for the Expanding Metropolis," *Beyond Metabolism*, (McGraw-Hill, 1978), 23-38.

Lecture 14: Tuesday, October 16

Pop Culture and Design

Read **page 135-143** in the textbook and understand the contents

Pat Kirkham, "Economic Growth and Rising Dissent, 1960-1975," *History of Design*, (Bard Graduate Center 2013), 509-511.

Lecture 15: Thursday, October 18

Japanese Toys and Plastics

Read **page 144-149** in the textbook and understand the contents

Andrew Davey, "Artificial Emotion: Heroes of an Idealized World," *Detail: Exceptional Japanese Product Design*, 15-19.

Lecture 16: Tuesday, October 23

Unit Assignment #4 and Discussion

Unit 4: Emptiness and Simplicity

Lecture 17:

Emptiness in Architecture

Read **page 153-159** in the textbook and understand the contents

Hara Kenya, "The Origin of Japanese Design," *Wa: The Essence of Japanese Design*, 11-17.

Lecture 18:

Emptiness in Architecture

Read **page 160-166** in the textbook and understand the contents
Arata Isozaki, "Ma (Interstice) and Rubble," *Japan-ness in Architecture*, 81-100.

Lecture 19:

Emptiness and Simplicity: Light, Thin, Short, Small

Read **page 177-187** in the textbook and understand the contents
Kenji Ekuan, *The Aesthetics of the Japanese Lunchbox*, MIT Press, 2000, 125-139.

Lecture 20:

Emptiness in Marketing

Read **page 188-212** in the textbook and understand the contents
Hara Kenya, "Muji," *Designing Design*, Lars Mueller, 2015, 227-281.

Lecture 21:

Unit Assignment #5 and Discussion

Unit 5: Designers and contemporary design

Lecture 22:

Japanese Fashion Designers in Paris

Read **page 215-226** in the textbook and understand the contents
Yuniya Kawamura, "The Japanese Fashion Phenomenon in Paris since 1970," *Japanese Revolution in Fashion*, 91-123.

Lecture 23:

Designers in Postmodernism

Read **page 227-244** in the textbook and understand the contents
Matthias Dietz and Michael Monninger, "Introduction," *Japan Design*, Taschen 1992, 9-23.

Lecture 24:

Disaster and Design

Read **page 245-253** in the textbook and understand the contents
Esther Charlesworth, "Shigeru Ban," *Humanitarian Architecture*, Routledge, 2014, 19-30.

Lecture 25:

Bubble Economy and Community Design

Read **page 254-270** in the textbook and understand the contents
Naomi Pollock, "Designing for the Japanese Public," *Japan 2000*, 31-47.

Lecture 26:

Emotional Design

Read **page 271-327** in the textbook and understand the contents

Hara Kenya, "Re-Design," *Designing Design*, (Lars Mueller, 2015), 22-47.

Hara Kenya, "Haptic," *Designing Design*, Lars Mueller, 2015, 70-149.

Unit 6: Presentation and discussion

Lecture 27:

Presentation and discussion

Lecture 28:

Presentation and discussion

Lecture 29:

Presentation and discussion

Lecture 30:

Review

Final Exam: TBA

【Textbooks/Reading Materials】

Texts of reading materials will be provided by the instructor.

Section 4

【Learning Assessments/Grading Rubric】

Grading Criteria

Class Participation 20%

Unit Assignments 40% (#1+#2 =10%, #3=10%, #4=10%, #5=10%)

Final Exam 20%

Final Presentation 20%