

# 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 economical 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:

##### **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:

##### **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:

##### **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%