

# Representations of Asia in Popular Culture

## Performing Asian America

### Section 1

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#### 【Course Outline / Description】

This course examines the ways in which the image of Asia or the theme of “Asian-ness” have been manipulated and consumed through contemporary (Western/American) plays, musicals, and other versions of popular culture. In this context, we will explore what is to be done in order to situate and perform a dramatic literature in a certain public arena; and how thematic variations in theatre and literature convey new meanings through different styles of performance.

### Section 2

#### 【Course Objectives/Goals/Learning Outcomes】

This course aims to explore to what extent literature and theatrical performance can be a cross-cultural, ethnographic representation. And more broadly, through different genres of culture/art such as musical theatre and film, the course explores how the notion of “Asia” and/or “Asian-America” has been received and consumed in American contemporary pop culture.

### Section 3

#### 【Class Schedule/Class Environment, Literature and Materials】

**(Note: Some of the contents and the schedule are subject to change)**

#### **Week 1 Introduction**

Class 1: Explain syllabus, introduction

Class 2: Rodgers and Hammerstein, *South Pacific* (Read Script)

#### **Week 2 Rodgers and Hammerstein, *South Pacific* (The Musical)**

Class 3: Rodgers and Hammerstein, *South Pacific* (Read Script)

Class 4: Rodgers and Hammerstein, *South Pacific* (Read Script)

#### **Week 3: *South Pacific* (The Musical)**

Class 5: Rodgers and Hammerstein, *South Pacific* (Read Script)

Class 6: Rodgers and Hammerstein, *South Pacific* (Read Script)

#### **Week 4: Rodgers and Hammerstein, *King and I* (The Musical)**

Class 7: Rodgers & Hammerstein, *King and I* (Read Script)

Class 8: Rodgers & Hammerstein, *King and I* (Read Script)

#### **Week 5: *King and I* (The Musical)**

Class 9: Rodgers & Hammerstein, *King and I* (Read Script)

Class 10: Rodgers & Hammerstein, *King and I* (Read Script)

**Week 6: King and I (1999 movie version)**

Class 11: Andy Tennant, *Anna and the King* (1999)

Class 12: Andy Tennant, *Anna and the King* (1999)

**Week 7: *King and I* (1999 movie version)**

Class 13: Andy Tennant, *Anna and the King* (1999)

Class 14: Andy Tennant, *Anna and the King* (1999)

**Week 8: Rodgers & Hammerstein, *Flower Drum Song* (The Musical)**

Class 15: Rodgers & Hammerstein, *Flower Drum Song* (Read Script)

Class 16: Rodgers & Hammerstein, *Flower Drum Song* (Read Script)

**Week 9: Madama Butterfly**

Class 17: Puccini, *Madama Butterfly* (opera) [explained in-class]

Class 18: Puccini, *Madama Butterfly* (opera) [explained in-class]

**Week 10: M. Butterfly**

Class 19: Henry David Hwang, *M. Butterfly* (read script), film version shown in-class.

Class 20: Henry David Hwang, *M. Butterfly* (read script), film version shown in-class.

**Week 11: M. Butterfly**

Class 21: Henry David Hwang, *M. Butterfly* (read script), film version shown in-class.

Class 22: Henry David Hwang, *M. Butterfly* (read script), film version shown in-class.

**Week 12: Miss Saigon & Beyond**

Class 23: Boublil & Schonberg, *Miss Saigon* (musical)

Class 24: Boublil & Schonberg, *Miss Saigon* (musical)

**Week 13: Miss Saigon & Beyond**

Class 25: Boublil & Schonberg, *Miss Saigon* (musical)

Class 26: Boublil & Schonberg, *Miss Saigon* (musical)

**Week 14: Japan & U.S.**

Class 27: Joshua Logan, *Sayonara*

Class 28: Joshua Logan, *Sayonara*

**Week 15: Wrap-up**

Class 29: Wrap-up

Class 30: Final exam review, practice

**【Textbooks/Reading Materials】**

All Scripts and readings available on Blackboard

Rodgers and Hammerstein, South Pacific

R&H, King and I

R&H, Flower Drum Song

C.Y. Lee, The Flower Drum Song  
Henry David Hwang, M. Butterfly (1988)  
Puccini, Madama Butterfly  
Boublil and Schonberg, Miss Saigon (1989)

#### Section 4

【Learning Assessments/Grading Rubric】

##### 1. Weekly short-response papers/Group work, etc.: 40%

\*Short Response Papers with comments and/or questions about the readings/movies: Students are required to submit **7 (minimum)** short response papers evenly throughout the semester. These are informal response papers aimed to show how actively you have been involved in the readings and films. You are free to write either/or short responses, confusions, questions that arose while you were doing the class readings (or after watching the films).

**A) Length of each short response paper: Maximum of 300 words.**

**B) One 300 words-response paper counts as ONE submission.**

**C) You CANNOT submit these short-responses (7 or more) in lump-sum at the end of the term.** The purpose of these response papers is to assist in the class discussion at a time when it happens. So old responses will not help at all.

##### 2. Writing Assignment: 30% (Prompt will be distributed ahead of time)

##### 3. Final Exam: 30%

#### Section 5

【Additional Information】

**How to make this course productive**

- 1) All readings will be available on Blackboard. Students are required to download, read, and digest the assigned readings before coming to class
- 2) Active class participation is mandatory. Your expressive, energetic communication skills and preparations for in-class discussions will be expected
- 3) You won't be able to make up for any in-class writing activities, tests, etc. you have missed caused by your absence