



EASC 360: GLOBAL EAST ASIA JAPAN - TOKYO

Instructor: Miya Elise Desjardins, Adjunct Associate Professor of Art History and EALC

Location: USC, Tokyo, and Kiyosato

Course Title: Japanese Society and Design Thinking

Dates: May 15, 2023 - June 9, 2023

Travel Dates: May 25, 2023 – June 9, 2023

**Program details are subject to change.*



Course Description:

This course examines contemporary Japanese design beyond the material culture of the everyday, reframing it as a form of social engagement that exists across various media and disciplines. We will explore, from a transdisciplinary perspective, the ways in which the practice of design engages with social problems and contributes to social transformation. From interior furnishings to exterior landscapes, spanning real and virtual environments, design plays a significant role in the creation of national infrastructure. Specific attention will be paid to the global dimensions of Japanese design and its transnational migration,

adaptation, and instances of exchange and collaboration that have emerged between Japan and our locale, Los Angeles, by surveying a selection of design practices. The activity of “designing” can be practiced and appreciated by anyone, and we will survey a selection of design practices that are present all around us: advertising and branding design, architecture and spatial design, community and social design, environmental design, fashion design, food design, floral and garden design, graphic design and typography, industrial design, lighting design, and product design.

The 4-week course will be held for 2 weeks in Los Angeles and includes visits to museums and galleries, businesses, Japan House-LA, gardens and other cultural venues that feature iterations of Japanese design, and 2 weeks in Tokyo, conducting fieldwork. In Tokyo, the class will explore design not only as a set of industries and professions, but experience it firsthand as an everyday and accessible practice.

LOS ANGELES:

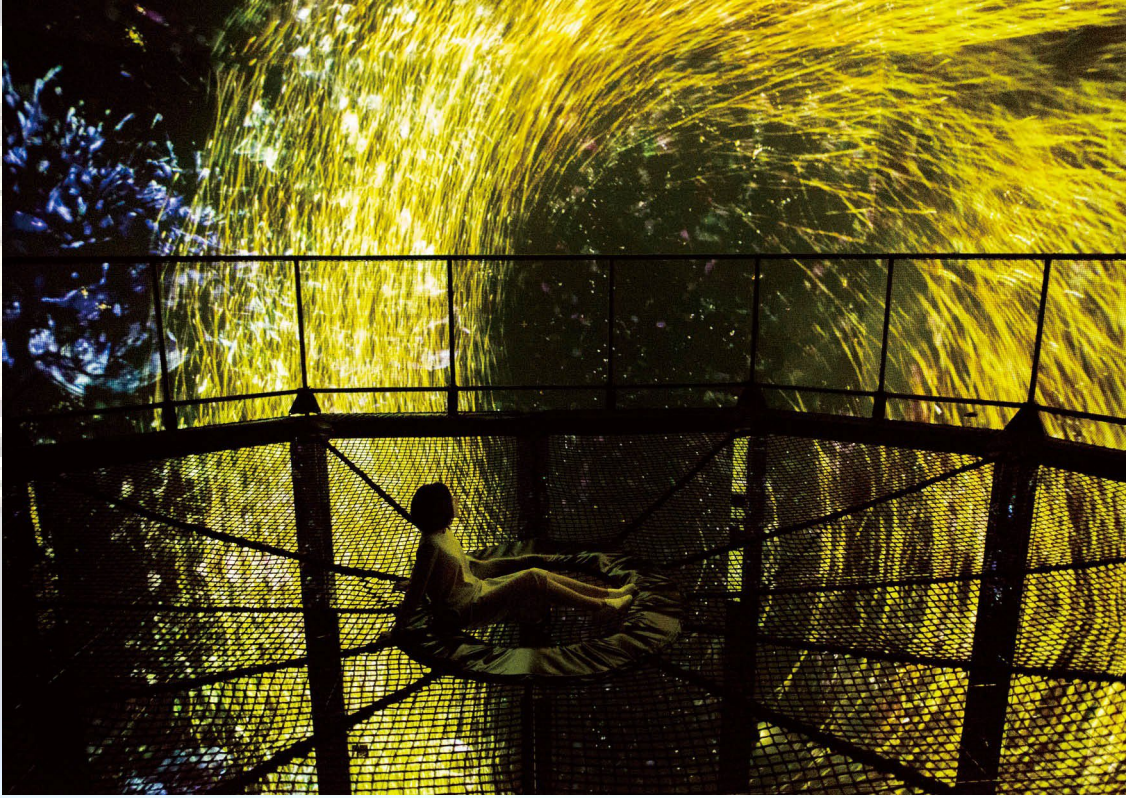


Class will meet on campus Monday, Wednesday, and Fridays from 10-1 for a lecture by the instructor followed by discussion and a group activity. On Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10-3 we will visit various sites relating to Japanese design in Los Angeles.

Tentative Site Visits:

Frank Lloyd Wright's Hollyhock House
Huntington Japanese Garden
Japan House
Japanese American Cultural and Community Center
Japanese American National Museum
Schindler House
Yamashiro

TOKYO:



Week 1: We will visit design sites in Tokyo together daily as a class, ending with a retreat hosted by Meiji University in Kiyosato, Yamanashi Prefecture.

Week 2: Class trips are optional; students are encouraged to explore Tokyo based on their research interests.

Tentative Site Visits:

21_21 Design Site
Aoyama Fashion House
Japan Folk Crafts Museum Mingeikan
Kiyosato
Meiji Jingu
Neutra VDL Studio
Nezu Museum
Olympic Stadiums (1964 and 2020)
Sahsya Kanetanaka
teamLab Borderless studio

Readings:

Scholar Essays

- “Design and Society in Modern Japan: An Introduction” (Review of Japanese Culture and Society) (2016)
- Christine Guth, “Hokusai's Great Waves in Nineteenth-Century Japanese Visual Culture” (2011)
- Yoko Akama, "Ba of Emptiness: A Place of Potential for Designing Social Innovation" (2016)
- David W. Marx, selections, *Ametora: How Japan Saved American Style* (2015)
- Lisa Skov, "Fashion Trends, Japonisme and Postmodernism" Or "What Is So Japanese About Commes des Garcons?"(1996)
- Anne Allison, "Japanese Mothers and Obentos: The Lunch Box as Ideological State Apparatus" (1991)
- Noriko Murai, "Contemporary Ikebana and the Potential of Art: History at the Boundary of Art" (2009)
- Christine Yano, selections, *Pink Globalization: Hello Kitty's Trek across the Pacific* (2013)

Designer Essays

- EKUAN Kenji, "World of Tools" (1969)
- Kaoru MENDE, “Designing with Shadow,” “The Objectives of Lighting Design,” and “Ten Thoughts on Architectural Lighting” (2000)
- HARA Kenya, selections, “The Origins of Japanese Design” (2014), “The Discovery of White” and “Back to White” (2007)

Fiction

- AKUTAGAWA Ryūnosuke, "The Ball" (1910)
- KAJII Motojiro, "Lemon" (1924)
- TANIZAKI Jun'ichiro, "In Praise of Shadows" (1933-34)
- Yoko ONO, selections, *Grapefruit* (1964)

Books

- Marie Kondo, *The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up: The Japanese Art of Decluttering and Organizing* (2014)
- AKASEGAWA Genpei, *Hyperart Thomasson* (2010)
- <https://kaya.com/books/hyperartthomasson/>

Research project:

Students will have the option of submitting a 10 to 12-page research paper or a creative project.

Grading Breakdown

Attendance and Participation—Los Angeles	10 points (0.5 per class session) *2 freebies	10%
Daily Class Response & Reading Response Journals	10 points (0.5 per class session) *2 freebies	10%
Research Proposal Meeting—Abstract (2-paragraphs) & Preliminary Bibliography (1-2 pages)	5 points	5%
Finalized Research Prospectus (2 pages) and Bibliography (2-3 pages)	5 points	5%
Los Angeles Site Visit Blog Contribution (in Teams)	5 points	5%
Attendance and Participation—Tokyo	10 points (2 per class session) *1 freebie	10%
Los Angeles Self-Evaluation and Mid-Program Reflection Statement (2 pages)	5 points	5%
Tokyo Site Visit Blog Contribution (in Teams)	5 points	5%
Research Progress Meeting (Updated Prospectus and Bibliography)	10 points	10%
Final Presentation (10-15 minutes)	10 points	5%
Final Research Project	15 points	20%
Culminating Self-Evaluation and Reflection Statement (2 pages)	10 points	10%
		TOTAL: 100