FA 173b: Art in Shanghai  
Fall 2017  
Tue/Fri: 11:00am-12:20pm

Professor: Aida Yuen Wong  
Office: 212, Mandel Humanities Center  
Office hours: Tue: 1:00am-3:00 pm (or by appointment)  
E-mail: aid@brandeis.edu  
Office phone: x62670

Course Description
Shanghai in the Chinese imagination is a site, a symbol, and an attitude. It is synonymous with modernization, fashionableness, and cosmopolitanism. This course examines the fine arts and visual culture of Shanghai since the city rose to prominence in the late nineteenth to the early twentieth centuries. As a refuge from the Taiping Rebellion in the mid-1800s, Shanghai which had a large foreign population also attracted talented Chinese from around the country. Understanding the city’s cultural hybridity with reference to various art forms sheds light on the central issues in Chinese modernity. Integral to this course will also be art education, consumerism, nationalism, and the radical transformation of the urban landscape.

The course is divided into three parts: 1) 1840s to 1920s; 2) 1920s to 1980s; 3) 1980s to the present. Part 1 focuses on the intermingling of traditional arts and modern imports, with special attention to the effects of photography and print culture, as well as early architectural hybridity. Part 2 considers the glamorous “Old Shanghai” era and its transition into the darkening moods of World War II and the Cultural Revolution through fashion, architecture, advertising, film, painting, the Art Deco movement, etc. Part 3 turns to the rebirth of Shanghai as China’s most iconic metropolis in the last three decades, looking into the frenzy of building skyscrapers and museums as well as contemporary art communities and practices.

Requirements
Attendance and Participation
You are expected to attend all classes. You may be excused if 1) you have a health emergency; 2) you are celebrating an ethnic or religious holiday; 3) other urgencies, in which case, you must provide a written reason with relevant documentation.

Be an active participant. Follow closely all reading assignments (uploaded on LATTE) so you will be in the position to intervene in class discussions. Your lecture notes and readings are your primary study materials. There is no textbook. Please be prepared to take notes at every lecture. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to catch up by borrowing notes from your classmates.

If you have more than three unexcused absences, your final grade will be negatively affected. No make-up exams will be granted without legitimate and documented excuses. Late-comers to examinations will not be given extra time. These conditions are non-negotiable.

Examinations and Grade Distribution
There will be two mid-term exams and no final exam. A term paper is due towards the end of the semester.  
Attendance and participation: 15%  
First Exam: 25% (September 29)  
Second Exam: 25% (November 10) (non-cumulative)  
Term Paper: 20% Write an 8-10-page paper on a topic related to Shanghai visual culture. More instructions will be distributed (due December 5)  
Homework: 15%
Taking Notes and Computer Protocol
It is important that your notes be legible and as detailed as possible. Master specialized terms and be able to use them in the description and analysis of works of art. Downloadable readings will be assigned on LATTE. Refrain from using your computer in class for purposes other than those related to the course.

Expected Workload
Success in this four-credit course is based on the expectation that students will spend a minimum of 9 hours of study time per week in preparation for class (e.g. readings, studying, reviewing, researching, and writing, etc.).

Slides for each class will be posted on LATTE weekly

Topics to be Covered (subject to change; check LATTE regularly for updates)
Overview of Shanghai’s Developments
Treaty Port Culture and Architecture
Rise of Photography and Pictorials
“Shanghai School” of Painting, Calligraphy and Seal Carving
Art Education and Imported Avant-garde
Art Deco Architecture and Interiors
Cinema (architecture and films)
Art during the Fifteen-Year War (1931–44)
Onset of Communism
Contemporary Art and Architecture
Shanghai Nostalgia

Readings (subject to change; all readings will be uploaded on LATTE gradually)


Reed, Christopher A. “Re/Collecting the Sources: Shanghai’s ‘Dianshizhai Pictorial’ and Its Place in Historical Memory, 1884–1949.” Modern Chinese Literature and Culture 12, no. 2, Visual Culture and Memory in Modern China (Fall 2000): 44–71.


-----.

If you are a student with a documented disability on record at Brandeis University and wish to have a reasonable accommodation made for you in this class, please provide the relevant documentation immediately.

You are expected to be honest in all of your academic work. The University policy on academic honesty is distributed annually as section 5 of the Rights and Responsibilities handbook. Instances of alleged dishonesty will be forwarded to the Office of Campus Life for possible referral to the Student Judicial System. Potential Sanctions include failure in the course and suspension from the University. If you have any questions about my expectations, please ask.