Course Description: Art History Senior Seminar explores research methodologies and practices of scholarship relevant to the study of a topic in art history. The course is organized and delivered as a seminar consisting of assigned readings, class discussion, and oral and written presentations. It is taught on a rotating basis by art history faculty. Prerequisite(s): ART 1200, 2350 and 2360; AEAH 4800; and 9 hours of advanced art history. Students enrolled in the course must be seniors within the major and have taken the art history entrance exam. In addition, students must have a degree plan on file.

Course Content & Objectives: This course examines selected artworks and monuments from India that continue to play an important role in Indian visual culture. These objects, including the world famous Taj Mahal, the Hindu temples at Khajurāho, and the Buddhist stūpa at Sāñcī, are not passive monuments that merely document India’s historic past, but are dynamic works of art that constantly impart new meanings when viewed in colonial, national, and international contexts. Throughout this seminar, we will employ what is known as a “biographical methodology” to these artworks, an approach that will allow us to view them as monuments with past, present, and future “lives.” Rather than serving as canonical “icons” of India with one meaning and one life, these monuments continue to communicate new meanings and identities. The readings for this course will highlight the historical context of these works as well as trace important changes in their societal/devotional/visual identities. We will consider shifting political authorities, transitions in worship practices, the physical relocation of objects, and conflicting cultural notions of what is represented, as impetuses for such change.

Goals of the course include:
(1) to foster critical thinking
(2) to refine writing skills
(3) to further develop research skills
(4) to enhance presentation skills and the articulation of ideas in the classroom

There is no assigned textbook for this course. However, weekly readings are available in one of three formats: (1) on reserve in the library; (2) on JSTOR; or (3) on Blackboard.

Course Structure: This seminar meets once a week for two hours and fifty minutes. The course is structured on the reading and discussion of publications on selected artworks and monuments of India. Some of the readings go beyond art historical concerns and introduce important aspects of archaeology, history, religion, and politics. Students will be assigned readings in common throughout the course but will also have the opportunity to pursue individualized research for their final paper.

Students are expected to have thoroughly read, and digested, the assigned readings. Moreover, it is the student-based discussion and response to these readings that make up the course. In other words, I do
not lecture. I encourage students to come and see me during office hours if they are having difficulty with the material or if they feel they are not expressing themselves adequately in class.

**Attendance Policy:** As this course meets only once a week, students are expected to attend *every* class. Attendance will be taken each week and students are allotted only 1 absence. Any absences thereafter will result in a lowering of the student’s participation/attendance grade by 5 points for each additional absence. If a student is absent on a day that an assignment is due, it is the student’s responsibility to email me the assignment during the designated class period. Otherwise, the assignment will be considered and graded as late. Late assignments will be marked down one full grade for each day it is late. Late assignments are not accepted after the Friday following Wednesday’s class.

**Course Requirements and Grading Criteria:**

Written analysis of readings (2 pages max; 5 at 5%) ......................................................... 25%
Abstract of Paper Topic ................................................................. 10%
Annotated Bibliography ........................................................................ 20%
Final Paper ......................................................................................... 30%
Weekly Presentations and Attendance ................................................... 15%

**Description of Written Analyses:** Five times during the semester, students are to turn in a written analysis of the assigned reading that they are presenting. The analysis must be turned in during this designated class period. Dates for assignments are marked in the schedule with an asterisk (*). The assignment must be double-spaced, with 1" margins, and a 12-point font. 2 pages maximum. No title page needed. Please cite page numbers when quoting or paraphrasing. Do not simply summarize (or rely too heavily on quotes), but address the main issues raised by the author in a critical, engaging manner. Think of this analysis as if you are writing a review. Also consider how the author’s approach raises further questions about the issues addressed. See the Grading Criteria on the last page of this syllabus.

**Abstract of Paper Topic:** Word count 250-500. The abstract should succinctly state what your topic is and how you plan to investigate it. Be sure to articulate what questions you will be trying to answer. Examples of an abstract will be distributed and discussed in class.

**Annotated Bibliography:** Towards the end of the semester, students will turn in an annotated bibliography. The bibliography should have a minimum of 10 scholarly sources (books and articles) that relate to the research topic. Online sources, such as webpages, must be approved by me in advance and will *not* be counted as part of the 10 sources. Examples of an annotated bibliography will be distributed and discussed in class.

**Final Paper:** Students will engage in independent research and writing on a topic of their choice. Guidelines for the paper (8-10 pages in length) will be discussed in class.

**Americans with Disabilities Act (Disabilities Accommodation):** The College of Visual Arts and Design is committed to full academic access for all qualified students, including those with disabilities. In keeping with this commitment and in order to facilitate equality of educational access, faculty members in the College will make reasonable accommodations for qualified students with a disability, such as appropriate adjustments to the classroom environment and the teaching, testing, or learning methodologies when doing so does not fundamentally alter the course.

If you have a disability, it is your responsibility to obtain verifying information from the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) and to inform me of your need for an accommodation. Requests for accommodation must be given to me no later than the first week of classes for students registered with
the ODA as of the beginning of the current semester. If you register with the ODA after the first week of classes, your accommodation requests will be considered after this deadline.

Grades assigned before an accommodation is provided will not be changed. Information about how to obtain academic accommodations can be found in UNT Policy 18.1.14, at www.unt.edu/oda and by visiting the ODA in Room 321 of the University Union. You also may call the ODA at 940.565.4323.

**Center for Student Rights and Responsibility:** Students in this course are subject to the University of North Texas code of student rights and responsibilities available at www.unt.edu/csrr.

**Academic Dishonesty -- Plagiarism:** It is very important that you understand what plagiarism is and recognize that it is a serious academic offense. When you use other people’s ideas or other people’s words without giving acknowledgement, this is plagiarism. According to the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities (www.unt.edu/csrr), “the term plagiarism includes, but is not limited to:

(a) the knowing or negligent use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgement and/or
(b) the knowing or negligent unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or by an agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.”

Plagiarism necessitates that I file an incident report to the appropriate authorities and this may result in your failing the assignment, failing the course, or being expelled from the University. Please consult the University’s Code of Student Conduct or ask me if you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism and how you should give proper acknowledgement to your sources in your written work.

**Course Risk Factor:** According to University Policy, this course is classified as a category 1 course. Students enrolled in this course will not be exposed to any significant hazards and are not likely to suffer any bodily injury. Students in this class will be informed of any potential health hazards or potential bodily injury connected with the use of any materials and/or processes and will be instructed how to proceed without danger to themselves or others.

**Emergency Procedures:** In case of emergency (alarm will sound), please follow the building evacuation plans posted on each floor of your building and proceed to the nearest parking lot. In case of tornado (campus sirens will sound) or other weather related threat, please go to the nearest hallway or room on your floor without exterior windows and remain there until an all clear signal is sounded. Follow the instructions of your professor and act accordingly.

**Schedule**

**Please Note:** The professor reserves the right to alter this syllabus if necessary. © 2011 Lisa N. Owen

**Aug 31: Introduction to the Course; Assign Groups**

**Sept 7: Past to Present Glory: The Sārnāth Capital**

**Everyone read:** Frederick Asher, “Imperial State and Peripheral Kingdoms, 400-150,” in Frederick Asher, ed. *Art of India: Prehistory to the Present* (Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, 2003), 29-33. On reserve


**Sept 14: Past to Present Glory: The Didārgañj Yakṣī**


*Sept 21: Explorations of the Erotic: Khajurāho; Analysis 1 due in class*


*Sept 28: Explorations of the Erotic: Censorship of Modern and Contemporary Art; Analysis 2 due in class*


**G1:** Online sources for artist Subodh Kerkar: [http://tinyurl.com/ngohs7](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/expat/6062265/Artist-gets-death-threats-for-depicting-Ganesh-naked.html); and [http://tinyurl.com/3r63ec2](http://www.hindujagruti.org/news/7636.html#0)

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**Oct 5: Discussion of Paper Topics, Abstract, and Annotated Bibliography**

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**Oct 12: Appropriating and Recasting the Past: The Taj Mahal; Analysis 3 due in class**


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**Oct 19: Appropriating and Recasting the Past: Traditional and Modern Dichotomies; Abstract due in class**


**G3:** Myra L. Engelhardt, ed. *Jamini Roy: Bengali Artist of Modern India* (Gainesville, Fla.: Samuel P. Harn Museum of Art, 1997). On reserve

**G2:** Anupa Mehta, *India 20: Conversations with Contemporary Artists* (Vadodara, India: Mapin Publishing, 2007), 178-87. On reserve; and online articles on the artist Subodh Gupta on The Saatchi Gallery website: [http://tinyurl.com/3bgnl9g](http://www.saatchi-gallery.co.uk/artists/subodh_gupta_articles.htm)


*Oct 26: Past and Present Worship: Meanings of Sāncī Stūpa; Analysis 4 due in class


*Nov 2: Past and Present Worship: Meanings of a Śiva Naṭarāj; Analysis 5 due in class


Nov 9: Past and Present Worship: Meanings of Ayodhya; Annotated Bibliography due in class


Nov 16: Annotated Bibliography Returned to Students and Individual Meetings

Nov 23: No class – work on final paper

Dec 7: Papers due in my office by 5pm

Grading Criteria for Written Work:

A = Such a grade indicates that the student assessed the reading(s) and did so with rigor and clarity of thought. An ‘A’ paper means that there were little to no errors in grammar/spelling and that the introduction and conclusion were clear as was the development of the body of the paper. An ‘A’ paper also demonstrates that the student not only carefully read the entire assignment, but thought about the larger issues and critically considered the author’s use of evidence to support his/her argument.

B = Such a grade indicates that the student was able to execute the assignment with diligence and forethought, though some main issues in the reading(s) were not addressed fully by the student. A grade of ‘B’ also usually indicates that there were limited structural, spelling, or grammatical problems.

C = This is similar to the ‘B’ description, but the number of problems is more extensive. These may include significant grammatical or structural problems, adding irrelevant material or new material inappropriately, too many generalities, and/or not addressing the main issue(s) in the assigned reading(s). ‘C’ papers often contain too many quoted passages.

D = A grade of ‘D’ indicates that the student did a poor job in demonstrating that s/he read the assignment. Further, grammatical/structural problems make a ‘D’ essay quite difficult to follow. There are usually far too many generalities and a lack of analysis.

F = This either indicates that the assignment was not done or what was done was simply unacceptable for any number of reasons. This includes any indication of plagiarism, which may entail further academic penalty. See the description of plagiarism in this syllabus.