

College of Visual Arts and Design, University of North Texas  
Spring 2017

AEAH 4824: Topics in Asian Art

Mughal Art of India  
MW 12-1:20

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Office Hours: MW 10:30-11; and W 1:30-3:30



**Course Description:** This course will explore the production of art and architecture during the reigns of the first six Mughal emperors of India (1526-1707). During this period, India's Mughal rulers established their presence across the subcontinent through the building of residential palaces, tombs, pleasure gardens, and mosques. The Mughal emperors of India also established court-appointed schools of painting that contributed to the development of royal portraiture and the circulation of religious and secular texts. As many of the artistic expressions that we will be concerned with in this class were created to serve both political and devotional functions, we will also be studying socio-religious aspects of Islam and Hinduism within India. Special attention will be paid to articulations of space, patronage, and the relationships between art, the royal courts, and religion.

**Course Content & Objectives:** This course is designed to familiarize students with the arts of Mughal India. By the end of this course the student will be able to identify selected works of art through their religious, regional and/or political affiliations and be able to associate these works within their larger historical contexts. In addition, the student will be able to accurately describe the function and/or meanings of these artworks given the time and place of their creation. By engaging in the visual cultures of India, students can cultivate a thorough knowledge of this important field within the discipline of art history, and, at the same time, foster the essential skills of critical looking, reading, and writing about art.

Goals of the course include:

- (1) to enhance critical reading skills
- (2) to refine writing skills
- (3) to recognize a variety of approaches and paradigms employed in the study of Indian art

**Course Structure:** This is a lecture course that meets two times a week for one hour and twenty minutes. Reading assignments for the course are listed below and in the lecture schedule.

**Textbook on Reserve:**

Catherine Asher, *Architecture of Mughal India*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992.

**Articles/Chapters on Blackboard Learn:**

Peter Gottschalk, "Indian Muslim Tradition," in Sushil Mittal and Gene Thursby, eds.

*Religions of South Asia: An Introduction* (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), 201-45.

James L. Wescoat, "Landscapes of Conquest and Transformation: Lessons from the Earliest Mughal Gardens in India, 1526-30." *Landscape Journal* 10/2 (1991): 105-114.

James L. Wescoat, "Picturing an Early Mughal Garden." *Asian Art* 2/4 (Fall 1989): 59-78.

- Glen D. Lowry, "Humayun's Tomb: Form, Function and Meaning in Early Mughal Architecture." *Muqarnas* 4 (1987): 133-148.
- Susan Stronge, "Illustrating the *Akbarnama*," from her book *Painting for the Mughal Emperor: The Art of the Book 1560-1660* (London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 2002), 58-85.
- Ebba Koch, "The Influence of the Jesuit Mission on Symbolic Representations of the Mughal Emperors," in C.W. Troll, ed. *Islam in India, Studies and Commentaries*, vol. 1 (New Delhi: 1982), 1-11.
- A. Azfar Moin, "The Painted Miracles of Jahangir" from his book *The Millennial Sovereign: Sacred Kingship & Sainthood in Islam* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), 189-210.
- Catherine Asher, "Fantasizing the Mughals and Popular Perceptions of the Taj Mahal." *Tasveer Ghar: A Digital Archive of South Asian Popular Visual Culture* (11 October 2010).
- Wayne E. Begley, "The Myth of the Taj Mahal and a New Theory of Its Symbolic Meaning." *The Art Bulletin* 61/1 (1979): 7-37.
- L.E. Parodi, "The Bibi-ka Maqbara in Aurangabad: A Landmark of Mughal Power in the Deccan?" *East and West* 48/3-4 (1998): 349-383.

### Course Requirements and Grading Criteria:

Exams (2 in-class; 1 take-home; @ 25% each).....	75%
Writing Assignment.....	15%
Attendance and Participation in Class Discussions.....	10%

**Description of In-Class Exams 1 and 2:** There will be a total of 2 in-class essay exams. Dates for these exams are highlighted in bold in the lecture schedule. At least one week prior to each in-class exam, 20-25 images will be available on Blackboard Learn for review. For the in-class exam, I will select 6-8 images. On the exam, I will provide the relevant information of each artwork (title, location, date), but you will need to answer specific questions relating to the images (either as a pair or individually). You will have approximately 15 minutes to write a response to each of the questions. It is imperative that you arrive to class on time, as I will not re-show the images once the exam is in progress.

In addition, ***there will be no make-ups for the in-class exams***. If you miss an exam, you will receive a ***zero*** on that test unless you provide proper documentation for a University-sanctioned absence (e.g., documented illness, team event, religious observance, family emergency, etc.). You must contact me within 24 hours of the missed exam. If, after reviewing your documentation, I agree to schedule a make-up exam with you, it must be taken within one week of the missed test.

**Description of Take-Home Exam 3:** The third exam (Exam 3) will be distributed as a take-home exam and due on the scheduled final exam day for this class, **May 10, 10:30-12:30**. The dates for distribution and submission are highlighted in bold in the lecture schedule. You will be able to access the textbook on reserve, assigned essays, and class notes. This exam will require computer-generated essay responses. The take-home exam (and the Writing Assignment below) will be graded on content *and* the quality of writing.

**Description of Writing Assignment:** Towards the end of the semester, students are to turn in a written analysis of a scholarly article that will be graded both on content and quality of writing. The assigned reading and date of discussion are highlighted in bold in the lecture schedule. ***This analysis must be turned in at the beginning of class*** and the student must stay for the lecture. In other words, do not simply drop off your paper and leave. If you do so, I will not accept the paper. In addition, ***emailed submissions are not accepted under any circumstances***.

Late work is also not accepted unless there is a documented emergency. As with the exams, the student must notify me about the situation within 24 hours of the due date of the assignment. If I agree to accept a late assignment, it will be marked down 10 points per *day* (not class) that it is late.

**Format of the Writing Assignment:** The assignment must be a minimum of 3 full pages with a maximum of 4, double-spaced, with 1" margins, and a 12-point font. No title page needed. Parenthetical citation is required. Specific content guidelines will be distributed at the appropriate time in the semester. Check the lecture schedule for discussion and due date and read over the Grading Criteria on the last page of this syllabus.

**Attendance Policy:** Attendance WILL be taken via a sign-up sheet that is passed around during each class. It is up to you to make sure that you have signed the roster. You are allowed two absences without penalty. After that, your attendance grade (which is initially recorded as 100% A) will be lowered by half a letter grade for each absence over those two. It is also important for you to attend class as the exams are based on lectures and the visual material presented. In many cases, I do not completely agree with the information provided in the readings and so I will offer alternative interpretations of selected artworks and include supplemental visual comparisons during lecture. Since you will be responsible for this material when preparing for and taking exams, it is imperative that you come to class and participate fully if you wish to do well. Should you miss a class lecture, it is up to you to get notes from a classmate. I do not respond to emails asking "what did I miss" nor do I repeat entire lectures during my office hours.

**Posting of Grades:** Grades will be posted on Blackboard Learn one day after exams or assignments are handed back. It is your responsibility to verify that the posted grade corresponds with the grade recorded on the assignment/exam. If you are not satisfied with the grade you earned, you can come and see me for a re-grading. However, you must realize that a re-grading can either raise or lower your original score. Once the assignment or exam is passed back, you have a window of two weeks to talk to me about your grade. In other words, at the end of the semester, I will not look over past material for you. I would also suggest that you hold onto all of your graded work until you receive the final grade for the class.

**Student Behavior in the Classroom:** Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at [deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct](http://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct)

**Academic Integrity Standards and Consequences:** According to UNT Policy 18.1.16, Student Academic Integrity, academic dishonesty occurs when students engage in behaviors including, but not limited to cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, forgery, plagiarism, and sabotage. A finding of academic dishonesty may result in a range of academic penalties or sanctions ranging from admonition to expulsion from the University.

**Plagiarism:** 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.

**Sexual Discrimination, Harassment, and Assault:** UNT is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. If you (or someone you know) has experienced or experiences any of these acts of aggression, please know that you are not alone. The federal Title IX law makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses. UNT has staff members trained to support you in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more.

**ADA Accommodation Statement:** UNT makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide a student with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding one's specific course needs. Students may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the ODA website at [disability.unt.edu](http://disability.unt.edu)

**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, particularly the reading schedule and assignments, if necessary. © 2017 Lisa N. Owen

Jan 18 (W): Introduction to the Course; Islam in South Asia

Jan 23 (M): *Sources of Mughal Inspiration: Delhi Sultanate Architecture*  
Readings: Gottschalk "Indian Muslim Tradition"; and Asher 1-18

Jan 25 (W): *Sources of Mughal Inspiration*

**Jan 30 (M):** *The Early Mughals: Babur (r. 1526-30)*; **class contract due**  
Readings: Wescoat "Landscapes of Conquest and Transformation"; and Asher 19-30

Feb 01 (W): *The Early Mughals: Babur*  
Reading: Wescoat “Picturing an Early Mughal Garden”

Feb 06 (M): *The Early Mughals: Humayun (r. 1530-40; 1555-56)*  
Readings: Asher 30-36

**Feb 08 (W): Exam 1**

Feb 13 (M): *Art during the reign of Akbar (r. 1556-1605)*

Feb 15 (W): *Art during the reign of Akbar*  
Readings: Asher 39-67; and Lowry “Humayun’s Tomb”

Feb 20 (M): *Art during the reign of Akbar*

Feb 22 (W): *Art during the reign of Akbar*

Feb 27 (M): *Art during the reign of Akbar*  
Reading: Stronge “Illustrating the Akbarnama”

Mar 01 (W): *Art during the reign of Akbar*

Mar 06 (M): *Art during the reign of Akbar*

**Mar 08 (W): Exam 2**

**Spring Break—Mar 13 to Mar 19**

Mar 20 (M): *Art during the reign of Jahangir (r. 1605-1627)*  
Reading: Asher 99-118

Mar 22 (W): *Art during the reign of Jahangir*  
Readings: Koch “The Influence of the Jesuit Mission”; and Moin “The Painted Miracles of Jahangir”

Mar 27 (M): *Art during the reign of Jahangir*

Mar 29 (W): *Art during the reign of Jahangir*  
Reading: Asher 127-33

Apr 03 (M): *Art during the reign of Shah Jahan (r. 1628-1658)*  
Readings: Asher 209-215; Asher “Fantasizing the Mughals” online essay:  
<http://tinyurl.com/anf5kdt>

**Apr 05 (W): *Art during the reign of Shah Jahan*; instructions for Writing Assignment distributed in class (Begley “The Myth of the Taj Mahal”)**

Apr 10 (M): *Art during the reign of Shah Jahan*  
Reading: Asher 169-74 and 178-209

**Apr 12 (W):** *Art during the reign of Shah Jahan*; **Writing Assignment due at the beginning of class**

Apr 17 (M): *Art during the reign of Shah Jahan*

Apr 19 (W): *Art during the reign of Shah Jahan*

Apr 24 (M): *Art during the reign of Shah Jahan*

Apr 26 (W): *Art during the reign of Aurangzeb (r. 1658-1707)*

Readings: Asher 252-66; and Parodi “The Bibi-ka Maqbara”

**May 01 (M):** *Art during the reign of Aurangzeb (r. 1658-1707)*; **take-home Exam 3 distributed**

May 03 (W): Last class

**May 10 (W): Take-home Exam 3 due in my office (ART 210) during our scheduled final period—  
10:30-12:30**

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### **Grading Criteria for Written Assignments**

**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 considered the author's use of evidence.

**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.

**Please fill out the following and return it to me by Monday, January 30**

I \_\_\_\_\_ (print name) acknowledge that I have read the course syllabus. I understand the course structure, criteria for grading, attendance policy, scheduled dates for exams and assignments, and expected academic integrity standards and behavior in the classroom. I also understand the risk factor rating of 1 for this class. I hereby agree to the syllabus and its provisions.

Topics in Asian Art: Mughal Art of India

AEAH 4824

Risk Rating Category 1

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student email address

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date