

Academic Year	2024
ADM/SOH	
Course Title	Cities, Bodies, Memories, Art, and Everyday Life in Contemporary Singapore
Pre-requisite	
Contact Hours	13 Weeks

Course Aims

This course examines how artists make art in and with the city, where students will explore how the city-state of Singapore came to become an authentic site for artists and their artistic practice. In particular, the course is experiential and provides an authentic learning opportunity for students to evaluate how urban spaces, cultural policies, and artistic practices in the city intersect. Structured along two core experiences the conducting of fieldwork involving dialogues with researchers and artists follows the studying of art theories, urban studies, and anchored by an introduction to Singapore's urban and cultural development.

By taking this course, students will be able to situate Singapore (and therefore themselves) in a larger geographical history of art in relation to its space and cultural activities. Through such an engagement, students can then develop their own research methodologies in exploring the Everyday in Singapore as a concept in relation to cities, bodies, and memories.

Intended Learning Outcome

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

1. Understand how the Everyday has emerged differently in artistic practices.
2. Reflect on how art has evolved in Contemporary Singapore and its relation to its urban environment.
3. Evaluate the relationship between the Everyday, cultural policies and artistic practices in Singapore and present these ideas in-class.
4. Develop a research methodology for exploring how artistic practice has become a part of the Everyday in Singapore through bodies, memories, or the use of space.

Course Content

The course content provides an interdisciplinary introduction to developing a research methodology for exploring how artistic practice has become a part of the *Everyday* in Singapore. To do this, three big areas are examined before the field work component focuses more on experiencing current developments in Singapore's urban and cultural spheres. The second half of the course develops from these readings where the three big areas anchor and contextualises the sharing by Singapore's practicing artists.

Study of Singapore

Students will be introduced to readings by Southeast Asian urbanists on culture, space planning and the arts. An overview of Singapore's three decades of state policies, arts, and culture is important in contextualising the city-state's urban development in relation to how arts and cultural policies play a role in influencing the city-state's art ecology. This content area surfaces questions including: what roles do art events, biennales and major cultural institutions play in Singapore's form of city-making?

Study of Cities

Combining the reading of Singapore's cultural development with its rapid urban development, the readings and field studies enable students to understand the intersection of the social fabric of the city (Singapore) and artistic developments from the late 1970s. Urban development impacted the arts in Singapore greatly and by intersecting theoretical and practical example of urban cultures in Southeast Asia and other cities, students are better able to develop an analytical vision of how artists intervened and became integrated in the social fabric of the urban through their art.

Study of Art

In this course, students will be introduced to an overview of artistic practice and its relation to the city where the study of the *Everyday* is *one way* of focusing on art practice made in and with the space in relation to body and memory. The introduction to relevant cultural theories and art history enables a strong foundation in setting up a base for analysing and researching into Singapore's art and cultural history through a specific study of artistic practice, its archiving, documentation and its performativity.

It is through these three big areas that students can assimilate theory into conducting their fieldwork and communicating their responses to the course outline.

Research Methodologies

The course prepares students for the process of conceptualising their research methodology in examining artistic practices in Singapore. Through an introduction to the theoretical perspectives on artistic development since the 1970s and how artists interact with urban developments, students then experience fieldwork that includes interviews and dialogues with artists, architects, researchers, and curators in the cultural field.

Such an authentic learning opportunity enables students to learn empirically about art as they develop their methodology at the end of the 13-week course.

Class Assignments

The course has three assignments:

1. A **presentation** of each working group's research methodology of a fieldwork assigned to the working group. This includes a bibliography, research questions, an explanation of the group's methodology and a preliminary set of data findings.
2. A **project dossier** that includes the presentation as a *Field Report* of the field study (minimum 1000 words), Interview Questions (transcription and coding) and a Literature Review (source documents and bibliography).
3. Consistent active-in-class participation including discussions and feedback sessions.

These three assignments will demonstrate students ability to understand theoretical texts and develop an argument out of literature review. It also enables students to follow up with a group presentation that establishes a robust understanding of the topics and themes discussed.

Assessment

Assignment 1

Literature Review (40%)

- Written Format 20%
- Class Presentation 20%

Assignment 2:

Fieldwork (40%)

- Proposed methodology and written analysis 20%
- Presentation 20%

Continuous Assessment:

Participation: 20%

For this component students are to maintain a consistent dossier consisting of **bi-weekly** reflections and three sets of literature reviews.

Literature Reviews:

1. Small Group Literature Review *In-class Presentation*
2. Individual Literature Review *Individual Dossier*
3. Final Group Literature Review *Group Dossier*

Reading and References

Primary Reading List

For the purpose of this outline, the content has been divided into areas of studies in aligned to the lecture sequence. Readings in **bold** are primary text and will be covered in class. In the section 'Study of Art', Whitechapel Gallery's Documents of Contemporary Art series *The Everyday* has been selected as a key reference in exploring this turn to the ordinary and how artists create situations in creating art's presence in the city. Other additional readings have been provided after discussions with personal contacts with Singapore's practicing artists and theorists.

Study of Art

Kee, Joan. (2001). Envisaging Hollowness in Contemporary Singapore. *Art Journal*. 60. 66. 10.2307/778138.

Low, Y. (2011). Positioning Singapore's Contemporary Art. *Journal of Maritime Geopolitics and Culture*, 2(1&2), 115-137.

Chang, T. C. (2008). Art and Soul: Powerful and Powerless Art in Singapore. *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space*, 40(8), 1921–1943.

Widrich, M (2016). The Naked Museum: Art, Urbanism, and Global Positioning in Singapore, *Art Journal*, 75:2, 46-65.

Say, J (2019). Groundbreaking: The Origins of Contemporary Art in Singapore, *Biblioasia*, 15, 2

Doherty, C. (2009). *Situation*. London: Whitechapel.

Lacy, S. (ed.) (1995). *Mapping the Terrain: New Genre Public Art*. Seattle: Bay Press.

Study of Cities and The Everyday

Paperstergiadis. N (2001) Everything that surrounds. *Third Text*, 15:57, 71-86.

Highmore B. (2002). *Everyday life and cultural theory : an introduction*. Routledge.

De Certeau, Michel. *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Berkeley, Los Angeles: University of California.

E. Lebas, & E. Kofman (Eds.), *Henri Lefebvre: Key writings* (pp. 238–254). New York: Continuum.

Johnstone, S. (2008). *The Everyday*. London: Whitechapel.

Bishop, R., Phillips, J., & Yeo, W. W. (2013). *Postcolonial Urbanism: Southeast Asian Cities and Global Processes*. Hoboken: Taylor and Francis.

Borden, I. (2002). *The unknown city: Contesting architecture and social space : a Strangely Familiar project*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press.

Evers, H. D., & Korff, R. (2000). *Southeast Asian Urbanism: The Meaning and Power of Social Space* (Vol. 7). LIT Verlag Münster.

Studies of Singapore

Chang, T.C and Lee, W, K. (2003). *Renaissance City Singapore: a study of arts spaces*. *Area* 35.2, 128–141.

Goh, D. (2013). Walking the Global City: The Politics of Rhythm and Memory in Singapore. *Space and Culture*, Vol 17, Issue 1, pp. 16–28.

Hee, L. (2017) *Constructing Singapore Public Space*. Singapore: Springer Science+Business Media.

Joanne, L. (March 01, 2010). The Future of Nostalgia: Reclaiming Memory in Tan Pin Pin's Invisible City and Alfian Sa'at's A History of Amnesia. *The Journal of Commonwealth Literature*, 45, 1, 115–130.

Kong, L. and Yeoh, B. (2002). *The Politics of Landscape in Singapore Constructions of 'Nation'*. New York: Syracuse University Press.

Kwok, K.-W., Waterson, R. (2013). *Contestations of Memory in Southeast Asia*. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian.

Lim, W. S. W. (2004). *Architecture, Art Identity in Singapore: Is there Life after Tabula Rasa?* Singapore: Select Books.

Ong, Khim, Roger Nelson, and Ute Meta Bauer. (2020). *The impossibility of mapping (urban Asia)*. Singapore: World Scientific Publication.

Wee, H. K., Chia, J., & Lim, W. S. W. (2016). *Singapore Dreaming: Managing Utopia*, Singapore: Select Books.

Singapore Cultural Policy Documents

Advisory Council on Culture and the Arts (ACCA). (1989). *Report of the Advisory Council on Culture and the Arts*. Singapore: Advisory Council on Culture and the Arts.

Economic Committee. (1986). *The Singapore economy: New directions. Report of the Economic Committee*. Singapore: Ministry of Trade and Industry.

Ministry of Information and the Arts. (2000). *Renaissance City Report: Culture and the Arts in Renaissance Singapore*. Singapore: Ministry of Information and the Arts.

Ministry of Information and the Arts. (2005). *Renaissance City 2.0*. Singapore: Ministry of Information and the Arts.

Ministry of Information and the Arts. (2008). *Renaissance City Plan III*. Singapore: Ministry of Information and the Arts.

National Arts Council. (2012). *Report of the Arts and Cultural Strategic Review*. Singapore: National Arts Council.

Weekly Schedule

Week	Topic	LO	Readings/ Activities
1	<p>Making Art in and with the City (Overview)</p> <p>An overview of artistic practice and its relation to the city. This lecture delves into the Everyday and positions it as one way of focusing on art practice made in and with the space in relation to body and memory.</p> <p>Focus is on 'Study of Art'. Course readings on the 'Study of Art', 'Study of Cities, and 'Study of Singapore' will be introduced. Fieldwork and assignments will be discussed.</p>	1, 3	<p>Introductory Lecture</p> <p>In-class Dialogue</p> <p>Students to introduce their personal background, current understanding of art in Singapore and what they hope to learn from this module.</p>

<p>2</p>	<p>Making Art in and with the City (Part 2) An overview of artistic practice and its relation to the city. This lecture delves into the Everyday and positions it as one way of focusing on art practice made in and with the space in relation to body and memory.</p> <p>Focus is on 'Study of Art'. Course readings on the 'Study of Art', 'Study of Cities, and 'Study of Singapore' will be introduced. Fieldwork and assignments will be discussed.</p>	<p>1, 2</p>	<p>Introductory Lecture</p> <p>Students share their responses to the class reading and engage in active discussion in working group.</p>
<p>3</p>	<p>Study of Cities: Urbanism and Everyday Life Urban development impacted the arts in Singapore greatly. This lecture presents a theoretical and practical example of urban cultures in Southeast Asia and other cities.</p> <p>Different global case studies prepare students for the next lecture on Singapore.</p>	<p>1, 3</p>	<p>Introductory Lecture</p> <p>In-class <i>Dialogue</i> on Readings</p> <p>Students to share their responses to the class reading and engage in active discussion based on working groups.</p>
<p>4</p>	<p>Study of Singapore: Incomplete Urbanism? An overview of Singapore's three decades of policies, arts, and culture. This lecture discusses the city's urban development in relation to how arts and cultural policies came to establishing the city-state's art ecology. Focus is on 'Study of Singapore'.</p> <p>Continued discussion on course readings on the 'Study of Art', 'Study of Cities, and 'Study of Singapore' will be introduced. Fieldwork and assignments will be discussed.</p>	<p>1, 3</p>	<p>Introductory Lecture</p> <p>In-class <i>Dialogue</i> on Readings</p> <p>Students to share their responses to the class reading and engage in active discussion based on working groups.</p>

<p>5</p>	<p>Study of Art in the City: Contemporary Art and its Discursive Form in the City</p> <p>Introducing students to the field of art theory, forms of contemporary art that respond to spatial, cultural, and social changes.</p> <p>This lecture delves into artists making art in <i>'The Everyday'</i>, creating <i>'Situations'</i> and intervening in public space. Other content areas include curatorial forms of presenting cities in exhibitions and art events.</p>	<p>1, 2, 3</p>	<p>Introductory Lecture</p> <p>In-class <i>Dialogue</i> on Readings</p> <p>Students to share their responses to the class reading and engage in active discussion based on working groups.</p>
<p>6</p>	<p>Study of Cities: Critical Urban Theory and Practice</p> <p>This lecture prepares students for fieldwork, where they explore the role of discourse in Singapore's urban development. Each working groups utilises the readings presented in structuring themes for their investigation.</p> <p>Key questions include: <i>Public Space and how did artist use them? Can art change lives? Cultural policies, were they any impact?</i></p>	<p>1, 2, 3, 4</p>	<p>Introductory Lecture</p> <p>In-class <i>Dialogue</i> on Reading of <i>'The Right to the City'</i>.</p> <p>Students to share their responses to the class reading and engage in active discussion in working group: Each group assigned different readings related to art and culture in Singapore.</p>
<p>7</p>	<p>Fieldwork 1: Independent Space and Artistic Practice</p> <p>Workgroup to journal their observations gathered from visit to an independent artist's studio space. This field trip introduces students to artists, their practice and work space.</p>	<p>1, 2, 3, 4</p>	<p>Fieldnotes as observational studies to be gathered and in-situ interviews and subjects to be conducted.</p>

	<p>Introduction by artist-archivist Koh Nguang</p> <p>How on the running of 'Singapore Art Archive Project' (SAAP) across his studio space(s).</p>		<p>off-site <i>Dialogue with subjects and teacher.</i></p>
8	<p>Fieldwork 2: Public Space and Public Art in Singapore</p> <p>Workgroups to journal their observations and research gathered from research into an artists' collective.</p> <p>This field trip introduces students to the National Gallery Singapore's Rotunda Library and Archive. Introduction by the gallery's archivist relates to Singapore's urban development and how the plans shaped Singapore's sustainability and cultural development.</p>	1, 2, 3, 4	<p>Fieldnotes as observational studies to be gathered and in-situ interviews and subjects to be conducted. An artist to be invited for students to present their ideas and questions.</p> <p>off-site <i>Dialogue with subjects and teacher.</i></p>
9	<p>Fieldwork 3: Performative Practice & Interdisciplinary project space.</p> <p>Workgroups to journal their observations gathered from visit to a collaborative and interdisciplinary initiative, event venue, and practitioners' space.</p> <p>This field trip introduces students to an art event, exhibition or artistic practice taking place in Singapore.</p>	1, 2, 3, 4	<p>Fieldnotes as observational studies to be gathered and in-situ interviews and subjects to be conducted.</p> <p>off-site <i>Dialogue with subjects and teacher.</i></p>
10	<p>Fieldwork 4: Alternative Artistic Practice</p> <p>Workgroup to journal their observations gathered from visit to an independent artist's studio space or a visit by the artist.</p>	1, 2, 3, 4	<p>Fieldnotes as observational studies to be gathered and in-situ interviews and subjects to be conducted. An artist to be</p>

	<p>This field trip introduces students to the artist Amanda Heng, her practice and work space. The introduction and sharing by the artist focus on her work with the community, in public space(s) and the social dimension(s) of her artistic practice.</p>		<p>invited for students to present their ideas and questions.</p> <p>off-site <i>Dialogue</i> with subjects and teacher.</p>
11	<p>Student Presentation 1: Students to present and conclude findings both in theory and practice. Teacher will discuss and give professional feedback individually and collectively.</p>	1, 2, 3, 4	<p>Working Groups and <i>Dialogue</i>: Students to discuss their methodologies and consult teacher.</p>
12	<p>Student Presentation 2: Students to present and conclude findings both in theory and practice. Teacher will discuss and give professional feedback individually and collectively.</p>	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	<p>Workgroup presentations of assigned research methodologies and findings Teacher's and Group Feedback</p>
13	<p>Conclusion: Making Art in and with the City? Summary lecture concludes and provides an overview of the key themes covered, both in theory and practice.</p> <p>A final feedback round will give students the opportunity to discuss open questions, personal challenges and give feedback to all.</p>	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	<p>Summary Lecture</p>