

INCL 255: THAI CULTURAL ARTS (3)

COURSE INSTRUCTOR: Michael Pucci, PhD (with various local lecturers & artists)

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course explores the Thai arts as both cultural expression and cultural epistemology (a way of engaging and knowing the world that differs from Western empiricism and consumerism). It provides hands on experience of the ways in which the arts can serve as agent of preservation as well as agent of transformation in culture. It seeks to guide students in the exploration of the spiritual, philosophical, social, and psychological drivers of the cultural arts in order to gain a deeper appreciation of diversity and human creativity. Students will be introduced to a broad array of artistic expression and media in Thailand under the guidance of local experts and artistes (including visual arts, music, hand crafts, culinary arts, dance, and other performing arts). Students will come to appreciate the unique role and effectiveness of the arts in culture (e.g. prophetic confrontation of injustice in the status quo, or communicating in ways that overcome linguistic barriers, etc.) and gain a new sense of value of the arts for their life and work. The course has high emphasis on participation and reflection.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

1. Recognize and appreciate the Thai cultural art forms introduced in class.
2. Grow in understanding of key concepts in cultural aesthetics and be able to discern the principles at work in their epistemology of and engagement with regional cultures and their own and culture.
3. Develop their artistic faculties as a tool for self and cultural awareness.
4. Gain guided practical experience of aesthetic expression and engagement with Thai culture.
5. Apply the skills and knowledge gained to an area of cultural communication, advocacy, conservation, or transformational development for a marginal people group.

COURSE READINGS:

Sayers, Dorothy, *The Mind of the Maker* (Continuum, 2004).

Heibert, Paul, *Transforming Worldviews: An anthropological understanding of how people change* (Baker Academic, 2008).

ADDITIONAL READINGS:

Segaller, Denis. *Thai Ways* (Silkworm Books, 2005).

Eubank, Allan L. *Dance-Drama Before the Throne: a Thai experience* (TCF Press, 2004).

Yoder, William J. *Christ on the Bangkok Road: the Art of Sawai Chinnawong* (OMSC, 2007).

Caldecott, Stratford. *All Things Made New: the mysteries of the world in Christ* (Angelico, 2011).

INCL 255: THAI CULTURAL ARTS (3)

Plantinga, Cornelius. *Not the Way It's Supposed to Be* (Eerdmans, 1995).

Chesterton, G.K. *The Ballad of the White Horse* (1911).

Wong, Debora, *Sounding the Center: History and Aesthetics in Thai Buddhist Performance, in Chicago Studies in Ethnomusicology* (U. of Chicago Press, 2001).

Tadie, Andrew A., and Michael H. Macdonald Eds. *Permanent Things: Toward the recovery of a more human scale at the end of the twentieth century.* (Eerdmans, 1995).

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS:

Reading and Class Participation: Students will be expected to do the readings outside of class in preparation for seminar style talks and discussions. The preparedness of students and readiness to interact with a variety of creatives is proportional to what they will learn.

Short Interpretative Papers: Each student will submit four weekly short papers (500 words) on a Mekong work of art which demonstrates understanding of one of the cultural forms explored in class. Papers are due each Monday of the last four weeks of class.

Art Project & Presentation: Each student will create an original work of art, demonstrating significant artistic input and employing one of the cultural art forms as well as present and discuss their work in terms of Sayer's trinitarian model (its visionary idea, experience with the medium, and intended impact) to the class.

Cultural Engagement Paper: Each student will write a longer paper (3000 words) that identifies an issue or area of application of the aesthetic theory and artistic cultural engagement explored in class. It could be a context that needs a new perspective or a posture afforded by an artistic epistemology or a political cause that needs artistic expression to raise awareness or a deeper issue of cultural or personal transformation that requires an act of redemptive creativity to experience renewal. The style should take the form of a proposal/pitch that mobilizes individuals or agencies to respond. It should cover all three aspects of the trinitarian model discussed in class (Idea, Incarnation, Impact). Further details about the paper will be given in class. Due on the last day of the course.

COURSE EVALUATION:

Reading & Class Participation	20%
Short Interpretative Papers	20%
Art Project & Presentation	30%
Cultural Engagement Proposal	30%
TOTAL	100%

GRADING SCALE:

95-100 A	85-88 B	75-78 C	65-68 D
92-94 A-	82-84 B-	72-74 C-	62-64 D-
89 -91 B+	79-81 C+	69-71 D+	0-61 F

INCL 255: THAI CULTURAL ARTS (3)

COURSE POLICIES:

Attendance is required at all class sessions. Success in the course depends heavily on your attendance, preparation and participation. Students shall practice academic honesty. All academic dishonesty, cheating, and plagiarism is prohibited, including, for example:

- giving or receiving aid during a quiz or examination;
- turning in written work prepared partially or wholly by another;
- presenting another's ideas or work as your own without proper citation;
- failure to cite sources used in a research paper or oral presentation.

If you are uncertain about how to comply with academic integrity standards, including how to avoid plagiarism, please ask. Students are expected to produce written work that is focused, well developed, organized, and relatively free of grammatical, punctuation and spelling errors. Papers that do not meet this standard will be returned to the student for revision within a reasonable time. At a minimum, the paper shall have:

- a clear thesis and maintain a focus;
- paragraphs that are well developed with topic sentences and adequate support;
- smooth transitions and flow of ideas;
- correct grammar and academic style;
- proper documentation of borrowed ideas using MLA (or other recognized) citation format.

Papers should be written with a logical flow, using headings and subheadings to organize your thoughts and the reader's attention. Additional criteria for papers will be discussed in class. All assignments are due on time. Late assignments will be penalized. Permission for extensions must be requested in advance of the due date, and the assignment is still subject to grade reduction. Assignments turned in late without a request for extension will not be graded.

LEARNING METHODS:

This course employs a variety of learning styles and makes full use of the rich cultural resources and facilities available to Go ED. Mekong. It follows a structure for learning intentionally designed to engage the head, hands and heart, which includes introduction to Principles, Art form, followed by Practice, Expression, and ending in Reflection. Classroom sessions will include lecture, discussion, and guest artists teaching hands on components. Reading assignments and secondary research will give students an academic and theoretical overview of the issues, and will be supplemented by practical experience in the form of workshop and studio activities. Papers, presentations, and art projects will enable students to internalize and apply what they learn.

COURSE OUTLINE

All dates are approximate. Lecture topics, reading assignments and due dates will be confirmed in class. This syllabus is intended to facilitate the exchange of information between the instructor and student and in no way should be construed as legal document or commitment.

INCL 255: THAI CULTURAL ARTS (3)

DAY	TOPIC	READINGS
1	Course Introduction/Expectations, Cultural Arts as Epistemology Different modes produce qualitatively different kinds of knowledge. Empirical vs relational/aesthetic knowledge --objectifying, materialism, reductionism, pragmatism, control, mechanistic determinism-- contrasted with aesthetic engagement-- subjectifying, humility, empathy, experience, authenticity, appreciation, respect, organic. Who or what is the small thing? Theological foundations of Cultural Arts (beauty and diversity in creation and culture, irreducibility of human creativity, made in the image of a maker God, sub-creation. All language about God about everything is Metaphor-Juxtaposition. Body metaphor in Thailand.	Sayers 2-4
2	Theological foundations of Cultural Arts (beauty and diversity in creation, irreducibility of human creativity, <i>Imago Dei</i> : made in the image of a Maker God, Sub-creation). Shaping Space, Time, Matter, Relationships. Trinitarian analog of creativity- (Father-Idea, Son-Incarnation, Spirit-Impact). Balanced Trinities and Wonky ones. Archetypes and root metaphors. Sub-creation and effoliation.). Cultural Forms-Everything mediated. First form is Word. Literal, Analogical, and Anagogical meanings.	Sayers 2-4 Segaller 4
3	INCARNATION: Artist loving the medium. With the grain of the medium. No Rope from sand. Response in the medium corresponds to its type (unconscious inanimate, unconscious animate, and conscious animate). Entropy and the white fence. Mastery of cultural arts-10,000 hours, Love Drives. Skin in the Game- Abraham. Chia Pets to Communities. Faithful in little. Experience of Artist not same as art (Skywriting). Suffering to Make Beauty. Mechanistic versus organic engagement with God, creation, others, self. How as important as what <i>Imitatio Christi</i> . Care about & Care for. Three levels of responsiveness in the medium corresponding to its type (unconscious inanimate, unconscious animate, and conscious animate).	Sayers 5-6 Chesterton
4	Creative Practicum: Lahu Weaving (Aj Namipan)	
5	IDEA: Truth & Reality, What is what? Hiebert Bounded, unbounded, extrinsic, intrinsic. Relational identity. Plato on tracing the Divine, The Anagogical and discovery, Western & Asian aesthetic experience. Impediments to true cultural engagement (Iconoclasm, rationalism, fear of feelings, relativism). Cultural arts & discernment. Off the shelf vs intentional forms. Short Paper 1 due	Heibert 1-2 Sayers 7-9
6	IMPACT: Measuring the Good. Thomas Midgley. Tangible and Intangible Impacts in human community as medium (you build what you love, Maslow on his head, Loving Pimilico, Rome & Greatness. Asian- western-ancient-modern notions of human flourishing, vision of life in all its fullness, trees in the desert cultural context, cultural resources, Difference (salt & light) in assessing transformational development. Redemptive Creativity. Restoring <i>Imago Dei</i> .	Sayers 7-9
7	Creative Practicum: Likay Dance (Aj Suchenda)	Wong, 3 Eubank, 4

INCL 255: THAI CULTURAL ARTS (3)

DAY	TOPIC	READINGS
8	Shaping Relationships, Patronage, would first century Christians recognize me as one? Towards a Christian Aesthetic of sub-creation: Idea, Incarnation, Impact assessed by Truth, Beauty, & the Good arrived at through epistemology of Faith, Love, and Hope shaping our Philosophy/Theology, Aesthetic, and Ethics. Thine is the Kingdom, the Power, & the Glory. Error of judging by the wrong mode (form by truth, truth by form, etc)	Sayers 10-12
9	Creative Practicum: Thai Painting (Aj Suwai)	Yoder
10	Injustice and the Garden-restoring an organic metaphor for shaping relationships of justice (select and deselect, cleave/flee, give/take away, affirm/reject, plenty/poverty). Activity and passivity in contexts of injustice inequality. Justice as intervention, making space for the weak and strong to co-exist, making for the possibility of diversity. Cultural Arts and Transformation, the forms and freedom, innovation and renewal, redemption and the creative act-making all things new, culture making. Short Paper 2 due	Hiebert 3-4 Plantinga 1-3
11	Creative Practicum: Hilltribe Basket weaving (Village Ajarns)	
12	Self and others as part of the medium. The banality of Evil and necessity of forgiveness (Hannah Arendt). Triple nature of Temptation: alternative goods, alternative truths, alternative beauties. Cultural Arts and Preservation against global pop culture, cultural imperialism, brand colonialism, Disney tourism, dominant economic values, Christian stewardship and the responsibility to preserve cultural diversity. Pilgrim status.	Hiebert 5-6
13	Sacred in imagery in Buddhist and Christian art. Treatment of evil and suffering. Cultural Arts and the Anagogical (religion and the numinous, mystery, image, aesthetic sensuality). Truth and Liturgies (sacred and desecrated). Jacques Ellul Technology shaping forms for us, robbing human creativity & freedom, displacing the sacred with desecration.	Heibert 7-8 Caldecott 2
14	Creative Practicum: White Temple Short Paper 3 due	
15	Cultural Arts as Expression (identity and image, the individual in community, aesthetic engagement and the other). Cultural Arts and Advocacy (prophetic voice, truth telling, marginality, liminality, voicelessness, aesthetics and politics). Culture Making & artistic responsibility, artistic personalities & processes. Cultural Arts and the communication of the Gospel (nonlinguistic cultural entry points, cross-cultural bridge building, branching, universal languages, lowered barriers, high degree of ownership and reception in audience-shared content).	Kreeft, Sims, <i>Permanent Things</i> Sayers 1
16	Creative Practicum: Thai Cooking (Ajarn Sorn)	

INCL 255: THAI CULTURAL ARTS (3)

DAY	TOPIC	READINGS
17	Cultural Arts and Branching, Communication (non-linguistic cultural entry points, cross-cultural bridge building, branching, universal languages, lowered barriers, universality of music/dance and similar forms, high degree of ownership and reception in audience-shared content), Art as change agent, worldview and self awareness in the artist Cultural Arts and vocation. Mapping from current poverties, loves and commitments.	Heibert 9-11
18	Cultural Arts Discernment (developing capacities and faculties, making space, exegesis of Art, exegesis of own cultural forms, posture of listening, cultural ideals, tastes and excellence). Cultural Arts and Life (moving beyond discernment to design), artistic personalities, giftings, motivation, choice, (skin in the game), taking it back home. The Art of the Small. Great to Good. Short Paper 4 due	Chesterton Heibert 9-11
19	Art Project & Presentation due	
20	Big Cultural Engagement Paper due	