

Museum Assignment (Paper #1)

Art History 121: Renaissance through Modern (Sections A and B)
College of Visual Arts
Spring 2007

The first short paper in this course, due **Monday, Feb. 12**, will be an analysis of Asian art and architecture based on a visit with your assigned small group to the Minneapolis Institute of Arts. Schedule your visit **before Wed., Jan. 31**. Plan to stay about one hour.

Before the museum visit, read the following assignment: Gardner, pp. 762-72 and 778-86, and “The Art of Asia/Architecture,” an interactive feature on the MIA Web site, www.artsmia.org. Follow the link to “Interactive Media” and click on “Architecture.”

Your visit to the museum will focus on two rooms: the Wu Family Reception Hall (China) and the Formal Audience Hall, or Shoin (Japan). Carefully observe these two rooms, their artworks, and their furnishings. Take advantage of any available information in the way of brochures, wall labels, or interactive media to broaden your understanding. Discuss what you see and learn with your group and record your observations—both visual and verbal—in your resource journal.

Try to answer the following questions about each room:

- ♣ When and why was it constructed?
- ♣ What was its intended function?
- ♣ Is such a room typically part of a larger structure?
- ♣ What materials and methods of construction were used?
- ♣ What artworks, decorative objects, and furniture does it contain?
- ♣ What are the stylistic qualities of these objects?
- ♣ What social, spiritual, or cultural meanings can be found in the room and its contents?

Your paper will compare and contrast the two rooms. Consider the rooms as a whole but also select one object in each room to write about in more detail (each member of the group should choose a different pair of objects). Choose objects that you consider particularly significant in terms of each culture. Also choose objects that can be readily compared, such as a Chinese painting and a Japanese painting, or a Chinese ceramic object and a Japanese ceramic object.

Meet with your group at least one more time to discuss your observations and ideas for the paper. Your participation in this group work will be graded by your fellow students with a rubric (attached). Help each other as much as you can. *But you must write your own paper*, which will reflect your understanding of the similarities and differences in these two important Asian cultures.

Form: each paper must be approximately 4-5 word-processed pages (1,000 to 1,250 words). It should be in standard academic language, that is, formal in tone, with no contractions or slang. Note:

- Use Microsoft Word and Times New Roman 11 or 12-point font. Double-space the text and use one-inch margins on all sides. Staple your paper; do not put it in a cover.
- Include images of the specific works you choose to write about.
- Document your sources with the MLA citation system. See the *Bedford Handbook*,

section 57, or go to Sue Short's excellent citation guide at <http://shortstreet.net/mlacites.htm>.

- Include images in your paper. Cite all image sources as instructed in the citation guide.
- Write several drafts of your paper to be sure you have expressed your ideas clearly and economically.

Criteria for grading:

- ♣ Level of use of information and ideas in text materials
- ♣ Quality of first-hand observation
- Thoroughness of the comparison
- Depth of critical analysis
- Participation in group work
- Presence of in-text citations and list of works cited
- Presence of properly documented images
- Logic of organization
- Clarity of expression
- Correctness in grammar and mechanics
- Length (not too short or too long)

A = excellent (shows clear understanding of information and ideas, presents excellent comparison with appropriate images, demonstrates critical thinking and independent thought; well-reasoned and carefully written)

B=above average (shows understanding of information and ideas, presents above-average comparison with appropriate images, shows critical thinking; written in a manner that shows careful thought)

C=average (shows an adequate understanding of information and ideas; presents an average comparison with images; written in an adequate manner)

D=below average (may miss major points in the assignment, present an inadequate comparison without images, lack evidence of using assigned materials, or be written carelessly, with poor reasoning)

F= not satisfactory (fails to meet the assignment)

Policy on late papers: Papers must be turned in on time, which means at the beginning of class on the date they are due. Late papers will be penalized one grade level per day (for example, A to B, B- to C-). Malfunction of a computer or printer is not an acceptable excuse for lateness. Note: late papers will not be accepted five or more days after the due date.

Academic integrity: You are expected to abide by the provisions of the CVA Honor Code (see Student Handbook or syllabus for this course). Papers submitted in this and all other courses at CVA must be your work and not plagiarized from sources written by another. Plagiarism, or the unacknowledged use of another person's words, ideas, or images, will not be tolerated in this class. If you use a passage written by someone else, you *must* give credit with appropriate documentation as described above, even if you make small changes in the passage or paraphrase the ideas. Verbatim quotations from Internet sources are readily traceable and, in any case, will not fulfill these assignments. Penalties for breaches of academic integrity include an F on the assignment, an F in the course, or suspension from the college.