



Utagawa Kunimaro (c. 1850–75), "Picture of a Ferocious Tiger Drawn from Life," 1860, multicolor woodblock print, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

## Excursion: East Asian Art Collections in the Netherlands

Autumn 2024

Prof. Dr. Ewa Machotka

## Excursion: East Asian Art Collections in the Netherlands

Instructor:	Prof. Dr. Ewa Machotka
Contact:	<a href="mailto:ewa.machotka@khist.uzh.ch">ewa.machotka@khist.uzh.ch</a>
Class time:	3 in-class sessions: 24.9.2024, 01.10.2024, 22.10.2024, 16.15-18.00
Location:	TBA
Language:	English
Format:	on campus & museums & Leiden University

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course explores the rich and distinctive collections of East Asian Art preserved in the Netherlands on both practical and theoretical levels, including a workshop jointly organized with Leiden University students. Through a series of museum visits and object-handling sessions guided by museum curators and private collectors, it offers students a firsthand and practical opportunity to engage directly with art objects.

Through a series of museum visits and object-handling sessions guided by museum curators and private collectors, it offers students a firsthand and practical opportunity to engage directly with art objects. The history of East Asian collections in the Netherlands is intertwined with centuries of trade, diplomacy, and cultural exchange between the Low Countries and East Asia. While the Dutch East India Company (VOC) played a significant role in establishing economic, political, and cultural connections, it is not the sole agent of this exchange. These interactions facilitated the acquisition of East Asian objects, which subsequently found their place in private collections, royal cabinets of curiosities, and eventually, public museums and institutions. The course aims to provide insight into these rich histories and their lasting effects.

By facilitating direct engagement with art objects, this course aims to enhance students' skills in visual analysis, interpretation, and critical thinking. It also seeks to deepen their contextual understanding of objects in museum settings, exposing how art and material culture intersect with historical narratives and cultural practices. Moreover, it provides insight into the operation of cultural heritage institutions by acquainting students with museum practices, exhibition design, and curatorial methodologies, essential for students' professional development.

The course will comprise of three in-class preparatory sessions in Zurich and a four-day on-site program (six days including travel time) featuring visits to various locations including the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam and the National Museum of Ethnology in Leiden. The course also includes a joint workshop titled "Animal Studies and East Asian Art" organized with Leiden University where students will have opportunity to collaborate with their peers from Leiden University.

Costs for travel and accommodation will be partially refunded.

**Application deadline: September 17, 2024**

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

The course aims to:

- Enhance students' practical engagement with art objects by providing them with hands-on experience in visual analysis and interpretation through direct interaction with East Asian art objects, guided by museum curators and private collectors;
- Develop students's professional competences by familiarizing them with the operation of cultural heritage institutions, private galleries and publishing houses.
- Deepen students' understanding of historical and cultural contexts by exploring the histories of trade, diplomacy, and cultural exchange between the Netherlands and East Asia and the impact of these interactions on the formation of East Asian art collections in Europe;
- Foster students' collaborative learning through presentation and discussion of their research on museum objects in a joint workshop with Leiden University peers.
- Support students in developing critical thinking skills and ability to communicate ideas effectively, both orally and in writing.

## **TEACHING AND EXAMINATION**

- The teaching consists of 3 seminars and excursion to the Netherlands.
- The students are expected to attend all sessions, read the assigned materials in time for classes and actively participate in class discussion.
- The course is examined by oral presentation and a written assignment.
- Oral presentations will be delivered by students during the excursion, at the joint workshop "Animal Studies and East Asian Art" organized at the Leiden University.
- Written assignment are to be submitted by Tuesday, January 7, 2025
- More information on the assignment will be provided in due course.

## **NOTE ON READINGS:**

- Course readings are listed below (see "Course schedule").
- Please find all required readings in OLAT.
- Students are asked to read all required reading before each class.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

- Participation in 3 preparatory sessions preceding the excursion.
- Reading of the required readings prior to the sessions and excursion.
- Participation in the excursion. During the planned activities in the museums, all participants are expected to actively engage in all activities.
- Delivering oral presentation (15 min with PPT) prepared beforehand and presented at the joint workshop with the Leiden University. Presentations are developed in teams of 2-3 students.

## **COURSE STRUCTURE:**

The course comprised of preparatory sessions preceding the excursion, excursion to the Netherlands, and joint workshop organized together with the Leiden university. Students are expected to attend the preparatory sessions.

Preparatory in-class sessions: 24.9.2024, 01.10.2024, 22.10.2024, 16.15-18.00  
Excursion to the NL: 27.10.2024-1.11.2024 (detailed schedule TBA)

### Short Programme:

27.10. – Arrival in the NL

28.10. – Amsterdam: Rijksmuseum

29.10. – Leiden: Siebold House, Hotei Japanese Prints gallery, private collection

30.10. – Leiden: National Museum of Ethnology

31.10. – Leiden: Joint workshop with Leiden University

01.11. – Departure from the NL

## **COURSE SCHEDULE**

### **Session 1: Course introduction**

**Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> of September**

Goal: Course instructor explains the structure and aims of the course. Students are divided into 2-3 teams (depending on the number of participants) to prepare their presentation for the joint workshop in Leiden.

### **Session 2: Introduction to Animal Studies in Art History**

**Tuesday, 1<sup>st</sup> of October**

Goal: Discussion of required readings on Animal Studies and their role in Art History.

Assignment: Before this session students are required to read required readings and select art objects for their investigation and oral presentation in Leiden. The objects could be selected from the museum collections to be visited during the excursion (accessible online). Instructor offers feedback on the selection.

### **Required readings:**

Brooks, Kit, Masaaki Arakawa, Masatomo Kawai, Martha McClintock, Barbara Ambros, Robert T. Singer, Federico Marcon, et al. *The Life of Animals in Japanese Art*. Princeton University Press, 2019. (selected chapter posted on OLAT)

Seeley, Joseph, and Aaron Skabelund. "Tigers—Real and Imagined—in Korea's Physical and Cultural Landscape." *Environmental History* 20:3 (2015): 475–503.

Zohar, Ayelet. "Camels: A Metonym for Asia in the Japanese Imagination". In *The Curious Case of The Camel in Modern Japan*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2022.

**Recommended readings:**

Calarco, Matthew. 2021. *Animal Studies: The Key Concepts*. London: Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group, 2021.

McHugh, Susan. "Animals." In: *After the Human: Culture, Theory and Criticism in the 21st Century*, edited by Vint S. Cambridge University Press, 2020, pp. 105-119.

**Session 3: Pre-workshop presentations****Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> of October**

Goal: Oral Presentation training session

Assignment: Students present their oral presentations and offer feedback to each other facilitating improvement of their work. Detailed instructions on presentations will be offered during session 2 and will be posted on OLAT.

**Excursion 27<sup>th</sup> of October-1<sup>st</sup> of November 2024****EXCURSION PROGRAMME****Day 1: Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> of October – arrival in Amsterdam**

We recommend departing for Amsterdam on Sunday to ensure that you are on time the next day when we start our excursion activities at the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam. Please note that only travel by train is eligible for the cost reimbursement.

**Day 2: Monday 28<sup>th</sup> of October – Amsterdam**

Morning: TBA

Museum tour and introduction to East Asian collections by the Rijksmuseum's curators. Confirmed speakers include: Dr. Menno Fitski, curator of East Asian art and head of Asian art at the Rijksmuseum and Dr. Marije Jansen, curator of Japanese prints.

Evening: transfer to Leiden

**Day 3: Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> of October – Leiden**

Morning: TBA

Guided tour at the Siebold House, Leiden and introduction to Siebold collection of Japanese art. Visit to the Hotei Japanese Prints Gallery, Leiden.

Afternoon: TBA

Introduction to the private collection of Ms. Larissa Alvin.

**Day 4: Wednesday 30th of October – Leiden**

Morning: TBA

Museum tour and introduction to East Asian collections of the Ethnology Museum by Dr. Daan Kok, curator of East Asian Art.

**Day 5: Thursday 31th of October – Leiden**

Joint-Workshop” Animal Studies and East Asian Art” organized with Leiden University where students will have opportunity to collaborate with their peers from Leiden University.

Morning: Students Session

Afternoon: Senior Scholars Session

**Day 6: Friday 1<sup>st</sup> of November – Departure for Switzerland**