Universität Zürich[UZH]

Chair in East Asian Art History

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Rämistrasse 73
8006 Zurich
www.khist.uzh.ch/ostasien



The Baur Foundation, Museum of Far Eastern Art, Geneva

Excursion
Spring 2025

Excursion: East Asian Art Collections in Geneva

Prof. Dr. Ewa Machotka
Dr. Stephanie Santschi

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Excursion: East Asian Art Collections in Geneva (06SM642m003)

Instructors:	Prof. Dr. Ewa Machotka
	Dr. Stephanie Santschi
Contact:	stephanie.santschi@khist.uzh.ch
Class time:	Wednesday, June 11 to Thursday, June 12, 2025
Locations:	UZH (TBC)
	Geneva (TBC)
Language:	English
Format:	preparatory meeting on campus, 2-day excursion to Geneva
Grading scale:	pass/fail
Module no.:	06SM642m003

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course explores the rich collections of East Asian Art objects at several museums in Geneva: the Musée d'ethnographie de Genève, the Musée Ariana and the Fondation Baur.

The three institutions keep diverse art objects produced in East Asia related to different cultural, social, spatial and temporal contexts. Through guided tours and hands-on art sessions led by museum professionals, students will engage directly with art objects, improving their object-handling skills while enhancing their abilities in visual analysis, interpretation, and critical thinking. By facilitating direct engagement with art objects, this course also seeks to deepen students' contextual understanding of objects in a museum setting, demonstrating how art and material culture intersect with historical narratives and cultural practices related to diverse institutional contexts (e.g. art and ethnographic museum, public and private collection). For example, the course will invite reflections on the entanglements of art collections and diplomacy, a theme arising from Geneva's historical and current relevance to the globally oriented dialogue. Moreover, it provides insights into the operation of cultural heritage institutions by acquainting participants with museum practices, exhibition design, and curatorial methodologies, essential for future professional development.

The excursion will be complemented by a preparatory session before trip, as well as preparatory assignments through which students will familiarize themselves with the objects and collections kept by the three institutions, and the academic discourses relevant for the study of the objects and institutions in question.

Costs for travel and accommodation will be partially refunded.

Interested participants should contact Stephanie Santschi by email (stephanie.santschi@khist.uzh.ch) by March 15, 2025, to register for the excursion.
Application deadline: March 15, 2025.

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COURSE OBJECTIVES:

The course aims to:

- Enhance students' practical experience in handling, visual analysis and interpretation of art objects produced in East Asia by providing them with hands-on-art sessions led by museum curators;
- Deepen students' understanding of the role of historical and cultural contexts for art interpretation and historiography, by examining the histories of trade, diplomacy, and cultural exchange between Switzerland and East Asia, and their influence on the development of East Asian art collections in Europe
- Support students in developing critical thinking skills and ability to communicate ideas effectively, both orally and in writing.

TEACHING AND EXAMINATION:

- In-person teaching consists of a preparatory session and the two-day excursion to Geneva.
- Asynchronous teaching consists of assignments for self-study posted on OLAT (available from March 16th). Students are expected to work on these assignments to effectively prepare for the excursion and the final paper.
- The course is examined through the asynchronous pre- and post-excursion assignments, a spotlight presentation at one of the institutions in Geneva, and the object-analysis-based essay (incl. peer review) to be submitted after the excursion.
- For details see Course Requirements. More details will follow on March 16.

NOTES ON READINGS:

- Please find preliminary readings posted on OLAT.
- The excursion-focused research library on OLAT will also be expanded through the students' contributions.

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COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Besides participation in the excursion and the final paper, this course also contains asynchronous preparatory tasks aimed at strengthening the students' research-, communication- and critical reflection skills. While part of these assignments can and should be done independently by each course participant, some group collaboration is expected. These collaborative assignments will train students self-organization as well as effective peer-communication. The groups will be assigned by the instructors, and all details will be shared via OLAT on March 16.

A. Pre-Excursion Phase

Details on the preparatory assignments will be available on OLAT starting March 16th. These assignments will involve research on a selected object, the institutions housing it, and the specific roles of museum professionals engaged with East Asian artworks. All materials are to be submitted via OLAT Forum.

B. Excursion

Students are expected to actively participate in all planned excursion activities and deliver an impromptu object discussion (spotlight presentation) in front of a selected artwork at one of the visited institutions.

C. Post-Excursion Phase

Following the excursion, students are required to submit an object-analysis-based essay, structured around a clear research question that integrates their observations from the excursion and insights gained from the preparatory assignments. Before submitting the final version to the instructor, students will exchange drafts with an assigned writing 'buddy'—paired automatically via OLAT—to provide and receive constructive feedback. After incorporating the feedback, students must submit a revised essay along with a brief reflection on the peer-review process.

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COURSE SCHEDULE

The course consists of preparatory assignments, one preparatory meeting preceding the excursion (participation is compulsory), the two-day excursion to Geneva and the final written assignment (paper).

Session (Date/Time)	Topic	Notes
Monday, March 16— Monday, May 19, 2025	Pre-Excursion Phase	More information on the asynchronous preparatory assignments will be shared on March 16 via OLAT**.**
Tuesday, May 20, 2025 14:15–15:45	Preparatory meeting	Review of preparatory assignments, communication of excursion details.
Wednesday, June 11, 2025 (full day)	Musée Ariana (morning) * Musée d'ethnographie de Genève (afternoon)	Independent travel to Geneva Suggested: 6:32 Zürich HB – 9:25 Genève 9:32 Gare Cornavin —Genève Appia **Musée Ariana** Transfer **Musée d'Ethnographie de Genève** Overnight stay in Geneva
Thursday, June 12, 2025 (full day)	Morning visit tbc * Fondation Baur (afternoon)	**Fondation Baur** Collection visit (14:00-17:00) Independent return travel
Friday, June 13— Tuesday, July 7, 2025	Post-Excursion Phase	More information on the post-excursion phase will be shared on March 16 via OLAT**.**
Tuesday, July 7, 2025, 23:59	Final Report submission	Upload to OLAT

This preliminary schedule is subject to change.