

FACULTY OF ARTS
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
COURSE OUTLINE

Syllabus

English 607.84

Planetary Avant-Garde

Instructor: Dr. Larissa Lai

Session: Fall 2018

Time: W 12:30 - 15:15

Classroom: SS 1059

Office: SS1052

Office Hours: W 3:15 or by appointment

Email: larissa.lai@ucalgary.ca

Course Description:

In *Global Justice and Avant-Garde Political Agency*, Lea Ypi argues that we can't know what constitutes avant-garde activity until after the fact because we cannot know the direction in which history will unfold until it has already done so. If the avant-garde places artists and writers in the vanguard of the revolution, how do we recognize them, when we can't be sure in which direction history is headed? The course will examine several of its possible directions with an emphasis on the Asian, African, Caribbean, Arabic and Indigenous worlds, as well as upon non-Western practitioners in the Western world.

Required Texts:

Abel, Jordan. *Injun*. Vancouver: Talonbooks, 2016. (Bookstore)

Biddie, Jennifer Loureide. *Remote Avant-Garde: Aboriginal Art Under Occupation*. Durham: Duke U P, 2016. (Available online through our library)

Burger, Peter. *Theory of the Avant-Garde*. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1984. (Bookstore, Library Reserve)

Césaire, Aimé. *Solar Throat Slashed: The Unexpurgated 1948 Edition*. Middleton: Wesleyan U P, 2011. (Bookstore)

Cha, Theresa Ha Kyung. *Dictee*. Berkeley: U of California P, 2001. (Bookstore)

Harding, James Martin, and John Rouse. "From Cutting Edge to Rough Edges." *Not the Other Avant-Garde: The Transnational Foundations of Avant-Garde Performance*. (Available online through our library)

Howard, Liz. *Infinite Citizen of the Shaking Tent*. Toronto: McLelland & Stewart, 2015. (Bookstore)

Innes, Christopher. "The Politics of Primitivism". *Avant-Garde Theatre: 1892-1992*. Routledge, 1993. 5-18. (Available online through our library)

Kim, Myung Mi. *Commons*. Berkeley: U of California P, 2002. (Bookstore)

Kiyooka, Roy. *Pacific Windows*. Burnaby: Talonbooks, 1997. (Bookstore)

Mann, Paul. "Pataphysics." *Theory Death of the Avant-Garde*. Bloomington: Indiana U P, 1991. 3-19. (D2L, Library Reserve)

Moten, Fred. *In the Break: Aesthetics of the Black Radical Tradition*. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 2003. (Available online through our library)

Moure, Erin. *O Ciudadán*. Toronto: House of Anansi, 2002. (Bookstore)

Noland, Carrie. *Voices of Negritude in Modernist Print: Aesthetic Subjectivity, Diaspora and the Lyric Regime*. New York: Columbia U P, 2015. (Available online through our library)

Philip, Nourbese. *Zong!* Toronto: Mercury, 2008. (Bookstore)

Poggioli, Renato. *The Theory of the Avant-Garde*. Cambridge: Belknap/Harvard U P, 1968. (Bookstore, Library Reserve)

Proulx-Turner, Sharron. *Creole Métisse of French-Canada, Me. Neyaashiinigmiing: Kegedonce*, 2017. (Bookstore)

Valencia, Jacqueline. *There is No Escape Out of Time*. London: Insomniac, 2016. (Bookstore)

Wang, Dorothy. *Thinking Its Presence: Form, Race, and Subjectivity in Contemporary Asian American Poetry*. Stanford: Stanford U P, 2014. (Available online through our library)

Yu, Timothy. *Race and the Avant-Garde*. Stanford: Stanford U P, 2009. (Bookstore, Library Reserve)

Course Requirements:

1. Presentations (20% X 2 (one poetry book, one critical text)) (15 minutes each):

Briefly summarize the text you are presenting on (3-5 minutes). If it is a critical piece, tell us what the main arguments are. If it is a book of poetry, then the summary depends on the author's approach. It may be appropriate to talk about themes, or alternately the author's formal approach and the relationship between form and content. Use your best judgement, and by all means consult with me if you have concerns or feel unsure.

The bulk of your presentation (10-12 minutes) should be a critical assessment of the text from an angle chosen to generate interest and complex, engaged discussion. Some questions you may wish to consider: What is the historical/social/political/personal context of this text? How does the text address (or otherwise inflect) the problem of the avant-garde? What other knowledge or community formations does this text speak to? How does the form/structure of the text reflect the author's interests and concerns? Is this an "embodied" text? How so? Is this text a form of situated knowledge? How so? Or why not? Is there a drive towards meaning in this text? If not, why not? Is the text beautiful and/or excellent? If yes, how so? If not, why not? What other kinds of aesthetic, social, political or thematic concerns might be at work in this text? Does the text aim to transparently represent experience? How? Or alternately, why not? Is the text a call-to-action? What kind of action?

Please close the presentation with two well-thought-out questions designed for discussion purposes. We may refine one or both of them, then take them/it up for further elaboration in class. For the presentation, please give me and your classmates a visual aid, so we can follow you. This may be a handout, Powerpoint/Keynote/Prezi slides or some other aid of your choice. Please also put your discussion questions on the handout or slides.

Students will be penalized for going under the 12-minute mark or over the 20-minute mark, so **time your presentation carefully**. The key is to draw out a few important ideas; you do not need to be comprehensive. If there are two texts up for presentation on a given day and two presenters, each presenter must present on a different text. On days when there are two presenters and on the same text, presenters must coordinate in advance to ensure they are offering sufficiently different presentations.

After your presentation, you will hand in a 3- 5 page précis (concise summary) of your presentation. Précis due: one week after you present. Write the précis in the present tense, as though it were the presentation. ie. "I argue that..." rather than "In my presentation last week I argued that..."

3. Final assignment (12 - 15 pages) (40%):

The final assignment may take one of three forms:

- a) The final assignment may be a polished, substantive revision of one or more of

your presentations. It should deepen, complicate and elaborate upon the presentation content. Please do not simply add on to what you presented in class. **The revision must be substantive.**

b) The final assignment may be a new, conventionally-structured academic paper, 12 - 15 pages in length. It may emerge from one of your own questions or comments in relation to course material, or questions or comments from me or a classmate. You are strongly encouraged to come discuss this with me before you embark on it.

c) The final assignment may be a critical-creative project of your own devising that addresses the concerns of the course. It should require the equivalent labour of 12 - 15 page paper. Its content must be your original work. It may take the form of a chapbook, a zine, a video, a monologue, or another structure of your choice. Please come to my office hour or make a separate appointment to discuss this project with me before you embark on it.

Final assignment due: Friday, Friday, Dec. 14, 2018. Since this is not a class day, please hand the paper in at the front desk of the English Department main office on the 11th Floor of the Social Sciences Tower. **The final assignment must be submitted in hard copy. No emailed assignments will be accepted.**

4. Participation and Participation Portfolio (20%):

You will earn your participation grade in the following manner: Two days before we meet, i.e., every Monday, you will email one question to me in relation to the text(s) under discussion for that week. In order to keep this exercise from getting out of control, or getting too onerous, please make your contribution clear, concise and to the point. A single paragraph of two to six well-considered sentences is plenty. One sentence is not enough. More than six sentences is too much. I will make a handout consisting of all the submitted questions, which will then form the basis for class discussion.

Your general in-class participation will also be taken into consideration. Good participation entails active contribution to class discussion. In both your questions and comments, please strive for clarity of expression. You may, if it is pertinent, introduce texts and ideas from outside the syllabus; however, if you do so, you are required to explain that text or idea to the class in a way that those who are unfamiliar with the text or idea can clearly make sense of what you are saying. Ideally, you make intellectual space for productive response. "Star" behaviour, name-dropping, intentional obfuscation and other forms of academic bullying are strongly discouraged and will be penalized. A good seminar participant has done all the reading in time for class and given it serious thought. She/he/they voice thoughts, opinions and responses regularly, though always at an appropriate moment. She/he also has regard and respect for the ideas and language of classmates, the ideas and language of the texts, and the contexts from which both texts and classmates emerge. They, he or she listens actively, and does not monopolize conversations. Students are expected to have read to the end all poetry books listed for the date of the seminar. For the longer critical texts, there will be selected chapters

suggested or else reading tips for careful skimming offered in advance to the discussion date. You will be expected to read the shorter critical texts from beginning to end.

Please note that critical texts and poetry books under consideration each week have been selected for dissonance rather than consonance. This is to keep us thinking broadly and relationally, rather than thinking about theory as a direct map for poetic texts. We may or may not talk about each session's two texts together. They could be separate conversations, but they don't have to be. Conversations may also spill over from one week to the next.

Attendance will also be considered.

The participation portfolio should contain questions emailed to me and any comments prepared for class. A key component of the portfolio for this class is the questions prepared by Monday for class discussion on Wednesday. These should be both punctual and well-considered. You may include in addition any other material that offers evidence of good participation, though this is not required. To be clear, then, you are required to submit each discussion question twice: Every Monday by email for class discussion, and again at the end of the course **in hard copy**, neatly organized in a single portfolio. This is to facilitate fair and accurate grading.

Portfolio due: Friday, December 14, 2018.

Grading system:

Grades are calculated according to the 4 point scale used in the *Graduate Calendar*:

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/grad/current/gs-g-1.html>

Grade	Grade Point Value	Graduate Description
A+	4.00	Outstanding
A	4.00	Excellent-superior performance showing comprehensive understanding of the subject matter
A-	3.70	Very good performance
B+	3.30	Good performance
B	3.00	Satisfactory performance
B-	2.70	Minimum pass for students in Faculty of Graduate Studies
C+	2.30	All grades below B- are indicative of failure at the graduate level and cannot be counted towards Faculty of Graduate Studies course requirements.
C	2.00	
C-	1.70	
D+	1.30	
D	1.00	
F	0.00	

Please note: A B- is considered a minimum pass for students in the Faculty of Graduate Studies.

Although the A+ is solely an honorific that entails no additional points in the four-point system, the course instructor will employ this mark to distinguish superlative work that exceeds expectations in style, correctness, intellectual depth and breadth, sophistication, and originality.

In the case of Instructors using numerical marks in the grading of term work, the departmental conversion chart applies.

90 + %	A+	4.0
85 – 89 %	A	4.0
80 – 84 %	A–	3.7
77 – 79 %	B+	3.3
74 – 76 %	B	3.0
70 – 73 %	B–	2.7
67 – 69 %	C+	2.3
64 – 66 %	C	2.0
60 – 63 %	C–	1.7
55 – 59 %	D+	1.3
50 – 54 %	D	1.0
0 – 49 %	F	0

Plagiarism:

Using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it is a serious academic offense. Consequences include failure on the assignment, failure in the course and possible suspension or expulsion from the university. Please refer to the following information and make sure you are familiar with the statement below on plagiarism.

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k-5.html>

English Department Website:

For more information about courses, programs, policies, events and contacts in the Department of English, please go to our website at <http://english.ucalgary.ca/graduate>. Please note that the course outlines posted on the English Department website constitute the official course outline for purposes of appeals. Students should verify any hard copies against this posted version. For courses which employ numerical grades, the official departmental percentage to letter grade conversion scale is also posted on the department website.

Writing support:

The Student Success Centre offers both online and workshop writing support for U of C students. <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>

Library and Research Support:

Melanie Boyd Librarian for English, offers research support to students, including strategies for finding articles, books, and other library materials. Contact: maboyd@ucalgary.ca.

Find The English Pages research guide here:

https://library.ucalgary.ca/sb.php?subject_id=52619

Follow the Department of English on Facebook & Twitter:

**Academic regulations and schedules:**

Consult the Department of English's graduate website for courses, departmental deadlines, and other related program information at <http://english.ucalgary.ca/node/245>. Consult the Faculty of Graduate Studies Calendar for university and faculty regulations, dates, deadline, fees, and schedules, student, faculty and university rights and responsibilities. The homepage for the Faculty of Graduate Studies Calendar is <http://grad.ucalgary.ca>.

For registration (add/drop/swap), paying fees and assistance with your Student Centre, contact the Graduate Office at 403 220 5484 or visit us in Social Sciences Tower 1148 in the first instance.

For program planning and advice, contact the Graduate Program Administrator at enggrad@ucalgary.ca to make an appointment with Dr. Suzette Mayr, Graduate Program Director.

Grade appeals:

Consult the following University Calendar link and request advice from the English Department office, SS 1152. Please note that "mere dissatisfaction with a decision is not sufficient grounds for the appeal of a grade or other academic decision."

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/i.html>

Deferral of term work and final examinations:

Should you require an extension for completion of term papers or assignments beyond the deadline of five days after the end of lectures, an Application of Deferment of Term Work form must be completed. The University also has regulations governing the deferral of final examinations. See Calendar: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-6.html>, <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-7.html>.

Student Accommodations:**ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS**

The student accommodation policy can be found at: ucalgary.ca/access/accommodations/policy.

Students needing an Accommodation because of a Disability or medical condition should communicate this need to Student Accessibility Services in accordance with the Procedure for Accommodations for Students with

Disabilities <http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy.pdf>.

Students needing an Accommodation based on a Protected Ground other than Disability, should communicate this need, preferably in writing, to the course instructor.

The full policy on Student Accommodations is available at http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy_0.pdf

Emergency Evacuation/Assembly Points:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>;

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/legalservices/foip/>

“Safewalk” Program:

Campus Security will escort individuals day or night: call 220-5333 for assistance. Use any campus phone, emergency phone or the yellow phone located at most parking lot pay booths.

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/safewalk/>

Contact for the Graduate Student Association: <http://gsa.ucalgary.ca/>

Contact for Students Ombudsman’s Office:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds>

Universal Student Ratings of Instruction (USRI):

"At the University of Calgary, feedback provided by students through the Universal Student Ratings of Instruction (USRI) survey provides valuable information to help with evaluating instruction, enhancing learning and teaching, and selecting courses

(www.ucalgary.ca/usri). Your responses make a difference - please participate in USRI Surveys."

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is an extremely serious offence. Please read the following information carefully. The penalty routinely recommended by the English Department for documented plagiarism is failure of the course in which the offence occurred; academic probation is also routinely applied at the Faculty level. Suspension or expulsion can result from severe or repeated plagiarism.

The University Calendar states:

1. Plagiarism - Essentially plagiarism involves submitting or presenting work in a course as if it were the student's own work done expressly for that particular course when, in fact, it is not. Most commonly plagiarism exists when:

- (a) the work submitted or presented was done, in whole or in part, by an individual other than the one submitting or presenting the work (this includes having another impersonate the student or otherwise substituting the work of another for one's own in an examination or test),
- (b) parts of the work are taken from another source without reference to the original author,
- (c) the whole work (e.g., an essay) is copied from another source, and/or,
- (d) a student submits or presents work in one course which has also been submitted in another course (although it may be completely original with that student) without the knowledge of or prior agreement of the instructor involved.

While it is recognized that scholarly work often involves reference to the ideas, data and conclusions of other scholars, intellectual honesty requires that such references be explicitly and clearly noted.

Plagiarism occurs when direct quotations are taken from a source without specific acknowledgement, or when original ideas or data from the source are not acknowledged. Citing your sources in a bibliography is not enough, because a bibliography does not establish which parts of a student's work are taken from other sources. MLA (Modern Language Association) documentation or other recognized forms of citation must be used for this purpose. Advice on adequate documentation can be found at the following web sites:

<http://www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/>

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH STATEMENT ON PRINCIPLES OF CONDUCT

According to the University Calendar,

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/j.html>

"The University of Calgary community has undertaken to be guided by the following statements of purpose and values: to promote free inquiry and debate, to act as a community of scholars, ..., to respect, appreciate, and encourage diversity, [and] to display

care and concern for community”. The Department of English, like the university as a whole, is committed to a “positive and productive learning and working environment.” This environment is characterized by appreciation and encouragement of diversity and respect for the dignity of all persons: students, support staff, and faculty. The department will not tolerate unacceptable behaviour, such as threatening gestures, threatening or abusive verbal or written communication (including e-mails), or any conduct that “seriously disrupts the lawful education and related activities of students and/or university staff”. Any cases of such misconduct should be reported immediately to the department Head, who, depending on the nature and severity of the incident, may then take further appropriate action.

Reading:

It is your responsibility to have read the text under discussion on the day it is discussed in class. Longer texts will not necessarily be discussed in a linear fashion. Expect spoilers.

Class Schedule:

Week 1: Introduction: Self-Reflections

Sept. 12

Introduction to the course
Icebreakers

Refund period ends Sept. 13, 2018
Last day to add a course Sept 14, 2018

Week 2: Jordan Abel

Sept. 19

Abel, Jordan. *Injun*. Vancouver: Talonbooks, 2016. (Bookstore)

Harding, James Martin, and John Rouse. "From Cutting Edge to Rough Edges." *Not the Other Avant-Garde: The Transnational Foundations of Avant-Garde Performance*. (Available through our library)

Presentation (Abel): _____

Presentation (Martin and Rouse): _____

Week 3: Jacqueline Valencia

Sept. 26

Valencia, Jacqueline. *There is No Escape Out of Time*. London: Insomniac, 2016. (Bookstore)

Wang, Dorothy. *Thinking Its Presence: Form, Race, and Subjectivity in Contemporary Asian American Poetry*. Stanford: Stanford U P, 2014. (Available online through our library)

Presentation (Valencia): _____

Presentation (Wang): _____

Week 4: Catch up, Read Ahead

Oct. 3 Dr. Lai in Brno

Week 5: Theresa Ha Kyung Cha

Oct. 10

Cha, Theresa Ha Kyung. *Dictee*. Berkeley: U of California P, 2001. (Bookstore)

Innes, Christopher. "The Politics of Primitivism". *Avant-Garde Theatre: 1892-1992*. Routledge, 1993. 5-18. (Available online through our library)

Presentation (Cha): _____

Presentation (Innes): _____

Week 6: Sharron Proulx-Turner

Oct. 17

Proulx-Turner, Sharron. *Creole Métisse of French-Canada, Me. Neyaashiinigiing: Kagedonce*, 2017. (Bookstore)

Biddie, Jennifer Loureide. *Remote Avant-Garde: Aboriginal Art Under Occupation*. Durham: Duke U P, 2016. (Available online through our library)

Presentation (Proulx-Turner): _____

Presentation (Biddie): _____

Week 7: Myung Mi Kim

Oct. 24

Kim, Myung Mi. *Commons*. Berkeley: U of California P, 2002. (Bookstore)

Moten, Fred. *In the Break: Aesthetics of the Black Radical Tradition*. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 2003. (Available online through our library)

Presentation (Kim): _____

Presentation (Moten): _____

Week 8: Nourbese Philip

Oct. 31

Philip, Nourbese. *Zong!* Toronto: Mercury, 2008. (Bookstore)

Mann, Paul. "'Pataphysics.'" *Theory Death of the Avant-Garde*. Bloomington: Indiana U P, 1991. 3-19. (D2L, Library Reserve)

Presentation (Philip): _____

Presentation (Mann): _____

Week 9: Erín Moure

Nov. 7

Moure, Erín. *O Ciudadán*. Toronto: House of Anansi, 2002. (Bookstore)

Poggioli, Renato. *The Theory of the Avant-Garde*. Cambridge: Belknap/Harvard U P, 1968. (Bookstore, Digital Reserve)

Presentation (Moure): _____

Presentation (Poggioli): _____

Reading Break Nov. 11 - 17

Week 10: Roy Kiyooka

Nov. 21

Kiyooka, Roy. *Pacific Windows*. Burnaby: Talonbooks, 1997. (Bookstore)

Noland, Carrie. *Voices of Negritude in Modernist Print: Aesthetic Subjectivity, Diaspora and the Lyric Regime*. New York: Columbia U P, 2015. (Available online through our library)

Presentation (Kiyooka): _____

Presentation (Noland): _____

Week 11: Aimé Césaire

Nov. 28

Césaire, Aimé. *Solar Throat Slashed: The Unexpurgated 1948 Edition*. Middleton: Wesleyan U P, 2011. (Bookstore)

Yu, Timothy. *Race and the Avant-Garde*. Stanford: Stanford U P, 2009. (Bookstore, Library Reserve)

Presentation (Césaire): _____

Presentation (Yu): _____

Week 12: Liz Howard

Dec. 5

Howard, Liz. *Infinite Citizen of the Shaking Tent*. Toronto: McLelland & Stewart, 2015. (Bookstore)

Burger, Peter. *Theory of the Avant-Garde*. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1984. (Bookstore, Library Reserve)

Presentation (Howard): _____

Presentation (Burger): _____

Final Paper due Friday, Dec. 14, 2018.

