

Nora Annesley Taylor
Personal Statement

Research

Over the past five years, I have been working on expanding my research into areas that broaden the disciplinary scope of the field of Southeast Asian art history. Specifically, through articles, an edited volume and a book-length manuscript, I have been exploring the intersections between visual anthropology, cultural studies and art history in Southeast Asia. This examination of methodologies across disciplines has resulted in the completion of a manuscript forthcoming at the University of Hawaii Press. The manuscript, entitled, *Painters in Hanoi: from Colonial Subjects to Global Objects* analyses the social, economic, political and cultural contexts in which 20th century Vietnamese artists work and live. It challenges certain assumptions made by scholars of Asian Art such as the idea that Asian artists are either anonymous or passive recipients of political and social change. An analysis of the economic forces behind the marketing of art in Vietnam reveals that, on the contrary, artists in Vietnam form a community that actively participates in major political movements and creates economic and social transformations that affect national politics. By using ethnographic material, and through interviews with artists and on-site field research, the manuscript highlights the ways in which artists participate in and produce Vietnamese visual culture. This emphasis on the artist as actor in Vietnamese society and my interest in different aspects of Vietnamese visual culture appear in other articles such as "Framing the National Spirit" and "Other Attractions in Vietnam." Over the next few years, I hope to develop and expand these ideas further through a project entitled *The Globalization of Vietnamese Art*. This future book will expand on my previous research and discuss the artist's role in the international art market and the international distribution of Vietnamese art. It will also touch on issues related to my interest in the art market's role in shaping perceptions of Asian Art in Europe and America. My article on the painter Tran Trong Vu ("Raindrops on Red Flags") is a preliminary attempt to frame these issues within the context of globalization. This fall I have been offered an A.T. Steele grant from the Center for Asian Studies at ASU to travel to Japan to view Vietnamese art in the second Triennial for Contemporary Asian Art and the exhibition of modern Vietnamese art at the Fukuoka museum of Art. This research will considerably expand on the ideas articulated in *Painters in Hanoi* and actively contribute to the growing literature on the art of post-colonial societies and the critique of "first world" art historical biases. I will be presenting these ideas at a workshop in Singapore in January 2003.

Teaching

The courses that I have taught in the Interdisciplinary Humanities Program at Arizona State University reflect both my research interest in crossing disciplines and my efforts at offering students a multicultural perspective on the Humanities. Toward this latter end, I have devised a concentration for the Humanities major that provides students with a background in the field of Asian studies through literature, art history and cultural studies. Through my classes, students have learned to challenge their preconceptions

about art and society (Art and Politics); studied the literature and art of a country they may know little about (Vietnam, Art and Culture); experienced the art of an area of the world through its local lens (Southeast Asian Art and Society); and learned to differentiate "Buddhism" as it is presented in a museum through a sculpture or painting from the ways in which it appears in a temple in Asia (Buddhist Art.) Last year, I taught a class on Gender Theory for graduate students that provided a multidisciplinary and multicultural view of women's studies and social, political, cultural and historical constructions of gender categories. Similarly, this fall I created a new approach to the introduction to Humanities course generally entitled "Contemporary Issues in the Humanitie"s by using texts that enable students to reflect on literature, art, music, drama and film in intercultural contexts. Next year, I will be adding a new course on Asian Art: The Art of India and altering my Art and Politics class to focus solely on Asia. This year I will also be constructing a new course for the Program in Southeast Asian Studies, an introduction to Southeast Asia through the arts and humanities. The course has received Department of Education funding and will comprise an on-line component. While only some of these classes are directly related to my area of research, all contribute to my interest in interdisciplinary studies and the potential for Asian studies to contribute to the Humanities. I hope to continue offering classes in this general direction.

Service

Within the department, besides coordinating the Asian Studies and Humanities concentration, I have served on one search committee, several graduate thesis committees and am now a member of the graduate committee; I have also organized an international conference in collaboration with the Program for Southeast Asian Studies and give an annual brown-bag lecture for both the Humanities Program and the Program for Southeast Asian Studies. At ASU, this year I have served on the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Dean's Task Force for the Humanities. I also serve as a member of the executive committee for the Center for Asian Studies and generally contribute to the promotion of both Asian Studies and Southeast Asian Studies. I have been nominated as a faculty fellow (which I declined for maternity reasons.) I also entertain professional relations with the School of Art and contribute to the PhD program. Two students currently are preparing PhD theses on topics pertaining to Southeast Asian art under my supervision. I am also a member of a PhD thesis committee in architecture. In the community, I serve on the board of the Asian Arts Council of the Phoenix Art Museum and have given several lectures to docents and members of both the Phoenix Art Museum and the ASU Museum as well as the Alliance Francaise of Pheonix. Nationally, my service to the field includes being elected Chair of Vietnam Studies Group for three years starting in 2002, and election to the Southeast Asia Council of the Association for Asian Studies for a three year term that started in 2000. I have presented lectures in Oakland and Santa Ana, California, in conjunction with a traveling exhibition of Vietnamese contemporary art; at the University of Michigan, Cornell University, in Stockholm and Singapore. In 2003, I will lecture at the Denver Art Museum, participate in an international conference on Vietnamese culture in New York City, the International Conference for Asian Studies in Singapore and a conference in Newcastle, England on Indochina and India: Post-Colonial perspectives.