Japanese Animations and TV Anime (FA488.04)

This course introduces some of the most prominently explored topics in Japanese animation classics and TV anime, placing them in a historical context and a media environment of both local and global scales. In addition to providing informations on the origins and the current dynamics of Japanese animations and TV anime, this course aims to reveal a web of connections between various media (including but not limited to manga, games, and cinema) and cultural phenomena.

By the end of the semester, students are expected to gain a basic understanding of the practice of anime making, as well as a broad perspective on the factors shaping the media in question.

Classes will feature lectures followed by discussions. Visual material will be provided for each class. Students are highly encouraged to raise questions and participate in discussions.

Throughout the semester, three short reports on weekly reading assignments will be handed in.

In the last two sessions of the semester, students will give presentations in class. Based on the presentations, a research paper will be submitted by the end of the term.

**Important reminder:** Full screenings will be held in extra sessions.

**Evaluation criteria**

Attendance and Participation 30%

* Preparation for the class (three short reports on selected weekly reading assignments will be submitted during the semester)

Midterm Exam 25%

Class Presentation 20%
Present an outline of your end of term paper to the class for discussion.

End of Term Paper 25%
Hand in a research paper based on your presentation.
Schedule and reading assignments

1. Introduction / Anime vs. Animation

2. Anime’s Transnationality

Screening: Shirobako
Reading: “Consuming Production: Anime’s Layers of Transnationality and Dispersal of Agency as Seen in Shirobako and Sakuga-Fan Practices” by Stevie Suan

3. Imagining the past - I (Early Japanese history)

Screening: Rurouni Kenshin / Samurai Champloo / Gintama
Readings: “Otaku Consumption, Superflat Art and the Return to Edo” by Marc Steinberg

4. Imagining the past - II (World War II)

Screening: Barefoot Gen
Reading: “Facing the Nuclear Issue in a ‘Mangaesque’ Way: The Barefoot Gen Anime” by Jaqueline Berndt

5. Imagining the past - III (World War II)

Screening: The Wind Rises
Reading: “Re-viewing Thomas Lamarre’s The Anime Machine After Hayao Miyazaki’s The Wind Rises: On the Critical Potential of Anime” by Selen Çalık

6. Imagining the West

Screening: Rose of Versailles
Reading: “Imagining the Global: Transnational Media and Popular Culture Beyond East and West” by Fabienne Darling-Wolf

7. Imagining the future - I (Post-war / Post-apocalypse / Post-human)

Screening: Akira

8. Imagining the future - II (Cyborgs and robots)

Screening: *Ghost in the Shell*
Reading: “Sex and the Single Cyborg: Japanese Popular Culture Experiments in Subjectivity” by Sharalyn Orbaugh

9. Imagining the future - III (Mecha anime)

Screening: *Gundam*
Reading: “World and Variation: The Reproduction and Consumption of Narrative” by Ōtsuka Eiji

10. A turning point for the mecha genre and for narrative consumption

Screening: *Evangelion*
Readings: Excerpts from *The Anime Machine: A Media Theory of Animation* by Thomas Lamarre and *Otaku: Japan’s Database Animals* by Hiroki Azuma

11. High school fantasies in real world settings: anime tourism

Screening: *Your Name*
Reading: “The potential of anime for destination marketing: fantasies, otaku, and the kidult segment” by Vincent Wing Sun Tung, Suna Lee & Simon Hudson

12-13th classes - Student presentations