FIAT LUX SEMINAR CHICANA/O STUDIES 19 (SEM 2)

SPRING 2018

Tuesdays, 4-4:50 p.m., Sproul Lecture Room

The Immigration Experience through the Arts

This course reflects upon the experiences of immigrants to the U.S. as expressed through the arts. We will examine a variety of art forms -- a graphic novel, poetry, the visual arts, film, spoken word, performance art, a musical, digital art, and video games -- to address the varied immigration experiences of diverse peoples in the US -- from Latin America, Asia, Africa, Europe, and the Middle East. We will read UCLA's Common Book, The Best We Could Do, by Thi Bui, a powerful graphic novel recounting her family’s journey to the U.S. from Vietnam (available free of charge to students at the first class meeting). Several guest speakers will present on their areas of expertise. In the final class, we will discuss a short, theoretical reflection on hospitality as it pertains to immigrants and refugees by French deconstructionist philosopher Jacques Derrida, and view Alicia Keys’s powerful video, Let Me In -- We Are Here.

The course objectives are to understand the immigration experience in the U.S. as expressed in the arts and develop analytical tools to evaluate varied art forms. Specific topics include U.S. immigration law, current immigration debates, life as a refugee, immigration and intersectionality, language and assimilation, gender and sexuality, immigration and disability rights, the border crossing experience, and global migration. We examine all these topics through the lens of the arts, motivated by a belief in the power of the arts and humanities to articulate human experience in powerful and inimitable ways.

Finally, this is an experimental course, being co-taught for the first time by a UCLA Professor and a UCLA Student Affairs professional. We combine our content expertise and knowledge of student development. In addition, we will open some of the classes to students beyond the
class, to people in the residence halls, on campus, and members of the community. All students are welcome in this course, which will be taught on the Hill.

**Course Requirements**
Weekly attendance, preparation of required readings, participation in class discussion
You will be asked to sign an attendance sheet weekly.

**Required Readings**
Tuesday, April 24: Thi Bui, *The Best We Could Do* (UCLA’s Common Book, distributed Week 1)

Plus other optional/suggested readings and assignments

**Week 1. Introduction to the Course**
Tuesday, April 3

**Week 2. An Intersectional Approach to Immigration and the Arts**
Tuesday, April 10

Guest Speaker, Set Hernandez Rongkilyo (Undocumented immigrant filmmaker and organizer from the Philippines)

Optional Class Preparation:
Bring an object with you or story you wish to tell for “show and tell,” an act of resistance in which we remember our heritage and our personal histories.

View film by Set Hernandez Rongkilyo, Immigrant workers rebuild Houston
https://www.facebook.com/NDLON/videos/1937313619630269/

Read “Art for the People’s Sake: Emory Douglas Speaks at Fisk University,” *The Black Panther*, October 3, 1972, pp. 4-5  Art for the People’s Sake


**Week 3. Artists Address African Immigration**
Tuesday, April 17

* Class meets at UCLA’s Fowler Museum
Week 4. Vietnamese Immigration in Thi Bui’s *The Best We Could Do*
Tuesday, April 24

Class discussion of UCLA’s Common Book

*Required Reading:*
Thi Bui, *The Best We Could Do*
Consult discussion questions posted on the course website

Week 5. A South Asian Immigrant Experience through Poetry
Tuesday, May 1

Guest Speaker, Pavana Reddy (Poet, reading from her new book, *Rangoli*)

Week 6. Muralism and the Syrian Refugee Crisis
Tuesday, May 8

Guest Speaker, Joel Berger (on muralism in Syrian refugee camps)

Week 7. Watts Towers and the Italian American Immigrant Experience
Tuesday, May 15

Guest Speaker, Dr. Luisa del Giudice

Week 8. Latinx Immigration and the Arts
Tuesday, May 22

Lecture: Latinx Immigration in the Visual Arts, Performance Art, and Spoken Word, by Professor Charlene Villaseñor Black

Week 9. Digital Art and Video Games on Immigration
Tuesday, May 29
Guest Lecture, Gonzalo Alvarez (Video game creator)

**Week 10. Class Culmination: Discussion, Reflection, Celebration**

Tuesday, June 5

*Optional Extended Class Celebration until 6 pm with refreshments

**Required Reading and Class Preparation:**

View Alicia Keys, *Let Me In -- We Are Here*, video