Syllabus:
ARTH 104/SAST 200/SAST 500
Spring 2010
Introduction to the Art of South Asia
TR 3-4:30
Instructor: Professor Michael W. Meister
Jaffe B-17
Teaching Assistant: Nachiket Chanchani

ReVisions, Indian Artists Engaging Traditions
Peabody-Essex Museum, Salem MA
http://www.pem.org/exhibitions/18-revisions_indian_artists_engaging_traditions

Course Description: “Art of South Asia” is a survey of painting, sculpture, and architecture in the Indian sub-continent from 2300 B.C.E., touching on the present. It attempts to explore the role of tradition in the broader history of art in India, but not to see India as ‘traditional' or ‘unchanging'. The Indian sub-continent is the source for multi-cultural civilizations that have lasted and evolved for several thousand years. Its art is as rich and complex as that of Europe, and as diverse. This course attempts to introduce the full range of artistic production in India in relation to the multiple strands that have made the cultural fabric of the sub-continent so rich and long lasting.

Methodology: Textbooks and image-study pages on-line provide a substantial outline of the material covered. My role as teacher is to think through the material with you. The Teaching Assistant, Nachiket Chanchani, will lead discussion sections and arrange visits to museum collections.

Image study pages for ARTH 104: are available on the Web.
These provide a range of images to review and study:
http://dept.arth.upenn.edu/104/review.html
[for larger images, click thumbnail, use “arthistory” as ID & “!jaffee!” as password]
Sections: Sections will meet in alternate weeks on Tuesday during class hours. Participation in sections and visits to museums are essential.

Written Assignments: There will be short written assignments for sections throughout the course and one short research oriented paper.

Required Texts: Available from Penn Book Center, 34th street
Recommended:

General Reference: Other significant texts that can provide other perspectives:
Coomaraswamy, Ananda K. History of Indian and Indonesian Art. 1927.
Zimmer, Heinrich. Myths and Symbols in Indian Art and Civilization. 1946.

Additional readings: will be assigned during the semester. These will be on reserve in the Fischer Fine Arts Library or available on Blackboard.

Course requirements: Participation in sections; short written exercises for sections; one hour exam; one short research paper (8-10 pp.) and a final exam

Outline of Lecture Topics, 2010: (subject to change)

Introduction (ReVisions, Indian Artists Engaging Traditions)
Indus Valley Civilization and Its Art
Imperial Art Under the Mauryas
Section 1: ReVisions conversation

Shunga Art and Buddhist Populism
Buddhist Caves and Urbanism
Buddhist Caves and Narrative Art
Section 2: University Museum, Buddhist Gallery

Sanchi and the Stupa
Kushan Art: Mathura & Gandhara
Gupta Art: Sacred and Secular
Section 3: Midterm Review

Beginnings of Temple Hinduism
MIDTERM EXAM: Tuesday, March 2
(Spring Break, March 5-14)
Fundamentals of Temple Form
Temples as Cosmic Mountains
Section 4: “Membrane of Tolerance”

Crossings and Categories
Sultanate Kingdoms in South Asia
Mughal Art & Architecture under Babur, Humayun, & Akbar

Section 5: Visual Literacy

Mughal Art under Jahangir, Shah Jahan & Aurangzeb
Miniature Paintings in the Hindu Courts
Painting in the Hills

Section 6: Review

British India and Multiple Modernities
last day of classes, 27 April 2010