

HL0201: Images of Singapore: Literature, Film and Culture

Academic Year: 2021/ 2022 (Semester 2)

Lecture Day: Thursdays, 2:30-5:30pm (LT+20)

Academic Unit: 3 AU

Pre-requisite: NIL

Lecturer: Candice Balete (balete@ntu.edu.sg)

Course Description:

In large part, images – textual or visual – inform how we perceive the world around us. Especially in today's digital world, images proliferate our screens and lives, undoubtedly influencing how we comprehend the societal events happening around us.

The question that then follows is, to what extent do representations of Singapore inform our understanding of the workings of Singapore society? In the same vein, to what extent can one's current notions of contemporary Singapore help them appreciate how Singapore is depicted in literature and film – and by extension, the (trans)national, socio-political, and historical contexts in which they are produced?

Based on these lines of inquiry, this course explores various depictions of Singapore through the reading of literary and filmic texts, with the view of investigating how these representations either inform or challenge our understanding of the predominant narratives of Singapore's culture and identity.

Learning Outcomes:

Students will be expected to:

1. Identify and engage with the images associated with Singapore in literary and filmic texts.
2. Produce informed critical responses through close-reading and analysis, as well as application of secondary research, to their chosen text(s).

Course Assessment:

1. Midterm essay (**1300 words**, ±15% upper/lower limit): **50%**
 - a. Due Week 10, March 24, 2022, 11:59PM Singapore time (GMT+8)
2. Final Examination: **50%**
 - a. Online Examination, 26 April, 2022, 9AM-11AM (2hrs)

Required Texts (for purchasing):

1. *Hook and Eye: Stories from the Margins* (2018), Philip Holden (ed.) (<https://www.ethosbooks.com.sg/products/hook-and-eye-stories-from-the-margins>)
2. *Sugarbread* (2016) by Balli Kaur Jaswal (<https://epigrambookshop.sg/products/sugarbread>)

Texts may be purchased from Booklink at NTU or from the publisher’s website (either hardcopy or e-book). Poetry readings and other secondary material will be accessible from NTULearn.

Films: The films will be screened in LT+20 on their scheduled weeks – the film screenings will be followed by the content lecture for that week’s film.

Course Schedule:

Week	Topic	
Week 1 (Jan 13)	Introduction	
Week 2 (Jan 20)	Selected Poetry Readings (To be uploaded on NTULearn)	
Week 3 (Jan 27)	Selected Poetry Readings (To be uploaded on NTULearn)	
Week 4 (Feb 3)	Selected Short Stories from <i>Hook and Eye: Stories from the Margins</i> (2018)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Everest” by Balli Kaur Jaswal • “The Borrowed Boy” by Alfian Sa’at
Week 5 (Feb 10)	Film: <i>Singapore Dreaming</i> (2006)	Film screening in LT+20 at 2:30pm, followed by content lecture
Week 6 (Feb 17)	Novel: <i>Sugarbread</i> (2016) by Balli Kaur Jaswal	
Week 7 (Feb 24)	Novel: <i>Sugarbread</i> (2016) by Balli Kaur Jaswal	
Recess Week (Mar 3)		
Week 8 (Mar 10)	Essay consultation/ Writing skills week	
Week 9 (Mar 17)	Film: <i>7 Letters</i> (2015)	Film screening in LT+20 at 2:30pm, followed by content lecture
Week 10 (Mar 24)	Selected Short Stories from <i>Hook and Eye: Stories from the Margins</i> (2018)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The Boy with the Missing Thumb” by Felix Cheong • “Cave Man” by Clara Chow <p><i>**Midterm essay due 11:59PM on NTULearn</i></p>
Week 11 (Mar 31)	Selected Short Stories from <i>Hook and Eye: Stories from the Margins</i> (2018)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Identity” by Latha • “Rich Man Country” by Leonora Liow
Week 12 (Apr 7)	Film: <i>Unlucky Plaza</i> (2017)	Film screening in LT+20 at 2:30pm, followed by content lecture
Week 13 (Apr 14)	Conclusion/ Course Revision	

