

HL0201/HL5002: Images of Singapore: Literature, Film and Culture

Academic Year: 2022/ 2023 (Semester 1)

Lecture Day: Thursdays, 2:30-5:30pm, LT29

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 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 existing notions of contemporary Singapore help them appreciate depictions of Singapore 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 depictions of 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) in both a take-home essay (Midterm essay) and final examination setting.

Course Assessment:

1. Midterm Essay (**1300 words**, ± 15% upper/lower limit): **50%**
 - a. Due **Week 10, October 22, 2022 (Thu), 11:59PM** Singapore Time (GMT+8)
2. Final Examination: **50%**
 - a. Online Examination, **November 22, 2022 (Tue), 5-7PM**

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 the lecture (LT29) on their scheduled weeks. The week's content lecture be right after the film screenings.

Course Schedule:

Week	Topic	
Week 1 (Aug 13)	Introduction	
Week 2 (Aug 20)	Selected Poetry Readings (uploaded on NTULearn)	
Week 3 (Aug 27)	Selected Poetry Readings (uploaded on NTULearn)	
Week 4 (Sept 3)	Selected Short Stories from <i>Hook and Eye</i> (2018)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "Everest" by Balli Kaur Jaswal - "The Borrowed Boy" by Alfian Sa'at
Week 5 (Sept 10)	Film: <i>Singapore Dreaming</i> (2006)	Film screening in LT29 at 2:30pm, followed by content lecture
Week 6 (Sept 17)	Novel: <i>Sugarbread</i> (2016) by Balli Kaur Jaswal	
Week 7 (Sept 24)	Novel: <i>Sugarbread</i> (2016) by Balli Kaur Jaswal	
<i>Recess Week</i>		
Week 8 (Oct 8)	Essay consultation/ Writing skills week	
Week 9 (Oct 15)	Film: <i>7 Letters</i> (2015)	Film screening in LT29 at 2:30pm, followed by content lecture
Week 10 (Oct 22)	Play: <i>Those Who Can't, Teach</i> by Hareesh Sharma (2010) (out of print – uploaded on NTULearn)	**Midterm essay due 11:59PM on NTULearn
Week 11 (Oct 29)	Selected Short Stories from <i>Hook and Eye</i> (2018)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "Identity" by Latha - "Rich Man Country" by Leonora Liow
Week 12 (Nov 5)	Film: <i>Unlucky Plaza</i> (2017)	Film screening in LT29 at 2:30pm, followed by content lecture
Week 13 (Nov 12)	Conclusion/ Course Revision	