

HL0201: Images of Singapore: Literature, Film and Culture

Academic Year: 2020/ 2021 (Semester 2)

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

Academic Unit: 3 AU

Pre-requisite: NIL

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

Course Description:

Especially in today's digital world, images proliferate our screens and our lives, indubitably influencing our understanding of societal events. The question that then follows is, to what extent do representations of Singapore (be it visual or textual) further inform one's understanding of Singapore society? In the same vein, to what extent can one's understanding of contemporary Singapore add value to one's appreciation and engagement with literary and filmic representations of Singapore, 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 and representations of Singapore through the reading of literary and filmic texts, and investigates 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 representations 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).

Course Assessment:

1. Midterm essay (1300 words, $\pm 15\%$ upper and lower limit): **50% (due Week 10, March 25)**
2. Final Examination: **50% (Apr 27, 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://shop.epigrambooks.sg/products/sugarbread>)
3. *The Riot Act* (2018) by Sebastian Sim (<https://shop.epigrambooks.sg/products/the-riot-act>)

Texts may be purchased from Booklink at NTU or from the publisher's website (either hardcopy or e-book). Poetry readings will be uploaded on NTULearn. Details on film screenings will be announced via NTULearn.

Course Schedule:

Week	Reading	
Week 1 (Jan 14)	Introduction/ Selected Poetry Readings (To be uploaded on NTULearn)	
Week 2 (Jan 21)	Selected Poetry Readings (To be uploaded on NTULearn)	
Week 3 (Jan 28)	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 4 (Feb 4)	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
Week 5 (Feb 11)	Film: <i>Singapore Dreaming</i> (2006)	
Week 6 (Feb 18)	Novel: <i>Sugarbread</i> (2016) by Balli Kaur Jaswal	
Week 7 (Feb 25)	Novel: <i>Sugarbread</i> (2016) by Balli Kaur Jaswal	
Recess Week (Mar 4)		
Week 8 (Mar 11)	Film: TBA	
Week 9 (Mar 18)	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 10 (Mar 25)	Novel: <i>The Riot Act</i> (2018) by Sebastian Sim	Midterm essay due
Week 11 (Apr 1)	Novel: <i>The Riot Act</i> (2018) by Sebastian Sim	
Week 12 (Apr 8)	Film: <i>Unlucky Plaza</i> (2017)	
Week 13 (Apr 15)	Conclusion and Revision	