

Art 215 CHINA ART NOW
Exploratory, 1000 words
due November 19 @ 10 pm

This assignment gives you the opportunity to practice art history. It has four parts.

1. Choose one work of art, design or architecture dating from 1976 to the present.
2. Do a formal analysis of the work. Describe it so that someone who is not able to see it can still visualize it in her mind's eye.
3. Think through and develop a *meaningful, provocative* question that you wish to pose of it. In your short essay, use formal analysis to explain how the work begs the question you are asking – how it encourages you to ask that question, and not another.
4. Finally, talk about the value of the question you're posing within the context of historical, social, art historical, economic, or political problems identified in the lectures or readings for the course. In other words, what are the stakes in raising this question? Why is it an important question?

A few pointers:

- Any sentence that begins with the words “The Chinese are...” or “The Chinese think...” is not one you are going to be able to finish without being wrong. Avoid generalizations.
- If English writing is not one of your academic strengths, take the draft of your essay to the Centre for Writers for some aid in editing before the due date of November 19. The URL for the Centre for Writers is: <http://c4w.ualberta.ca/>
- Feel free to compare the main visual work of your essay with other works of art, design, and architecture. These can be by the same artist or designer, by other artists and designers in China, or you might choose to do a cross-cultural comparison by comparing it with works of art and design from Canada or elsewhere. The comparative works can date to any era. This is not a requirement of the paper, but it might help you to clarify the question you are posing of the focal object.
- Do not simply draft a generalized, simple statement of the question (an example would be something along the lines of “what does this painting tell us about China today?); I want to see evidence of your deliberate and reasoned approach to evolving a nuanced and thoughtful question. Why are you asking this question? and not another question?