

The Master of Arts in Liberal Arts and Sciences
MALAS MA Comprehensive Exam | May 3, 2013

The MALAS Comprehensive MA Exam questions allow students to demonstrate their familiarity with the specific works on the reading lists they have developed in conjunction with their faculty field advisors. As MALAS is an interdisciplinary studies program, graduate students should attempt to address phenomena in ways that demonstrate their mastery of ideas, theories, methods, and conventions associated with more than one field. Although students preparing for the exam will be encouraged to read as much of the relevant criticism as is feasible, they will not be held specifically responsible for knowing any particular criticism of individual works; that said, showing familiarity in the responses with dominant critical debates in and across fields is welcome.

Grading Guidelines

I. Distinction: A superior exam

- is a clearly focused response to the topic in fluent, dynamic prose
- is well-organized and well-developed
- has unified and coherent paragraphs
- incorporates specific and appropriate references to texts that were part of the graduate students' MA exam list.
- demonstrates the graduate students' command with the subject matter in more than one specific discipline—in other words, the student shows strong familiarity with the material in ways that demonstrate a distinctive command of interdisciplinary studies and/or cultural studies protocols, practices, and traditions.

2. Pass: An adequate exam

- demonstrates a thoughtful response to the topic within an overall plan, even if the treatment of some points is only perfunctory
- logically develops ideas in ordered paragraphs
- may have lapses in providing transitions
- may occasionally rely on unsupported assertions and generalizations.
- demonstrates the graduate students' familiarity with the subject matter in more than one specific discipline.

3. Fail: An inadequate exam

- discusses the topic only generally or does not directly respond to the topic
- does not follow a reasonable or appropriate pattern of development
- lacks specific textual support for assertions and generalizations
- fails to develop appropriate examples
- demonstrates no command of the subject matter in more than one specific discipline.

Area I Feminist art: self representations

adviser: nericcio

1. Frances Borzello's Seeing Ourselves, Women's SelfPortraits
2. Mirror Mirror: Self Portraits by Women Artists, Liz Rideal
3. Marsha Meskimmon's The Art of Reflection, Women's Artist's Self-portraiture in the Twentieth Century.
4. John Berger, ways of seeing
5. uses of the erotic, the erotic as power- Audre Lorde
6. Reflections on Self- Portraiture in Photography by Ina Loewenberg
7. Gender in the mirror: cultural imagery and women's agency by Diana T. Meyers

Area II curatorial theory: curating in the third space

adviser: Catherine Gleason (art dept)

1. Forms of Resistance, Corridors of Power: Public Art on the Mexico-U.S. Border by Jose Manuel Valenzuela Arce
2. A Re-Imagined Public Art on the Border by Nestor Garcia Canclini
3. The Portable Border: Site-Specificity, Art and the U.S.- Mexico Frontier by Claire F. Fox
4. inSITE 94 - exhibition catalogue
5. Fugitive Sites- inSITE 2000 - 2001 - exhibition catalogue
6. Borderlands / La Frontera by Gloria Anzaldua
7. Of Museums and Memory by Susan Crane

Area III redefining chicana

sexualities: santas y putas.

adviser: Roberto Hernandez (chicano studies dept)

1. Trujillo, Carla. *La Virgen de Guadalupe and Her Reconstruction in Chicana Lesbian Desire*
2. Our Lady of Controversy by Alicia Gaspar de Alba
3. Goddess of the Americas: Writings on the Virgin of Guadalupe. Ed. Ana Castillo
4. Alarcón, Norma (1982), "Chicana's Feminist Literature: A Re-vision Through Malintzin/or Malintzin: Putting Flesh Back on the Object"
5. Entering into the Serpent by Gloria Anzaldua
6. Pérez, Laura E. Chicana Art: The Politics of Spiritual and Aesthetic Alterities.
7. Perez, Laura, "El desorden, Nationalism, and Chicana/o Aesthetics,"

COMPREHENSIVE EXAM

MALAS | Master of Arts in Liberal Arts and Sciences

Friday, May 3, 2013

Exam Question I: **Feminist art: self representations**, 8am to 9:50 am

You MAY, if you wish, use a laptop today, however, all connections to wi-fi **MUST BE DISABLED**--I have a thumb-drive to ferry your finished responses to my own workstation for printing. If your laptop does not have a USB-compatible port, you will be allowed to log-on to SDSU wi-fi at the end of each session to zap your responses to me (memo@sdsu.edu) for printing. You are also welcome to bring a blue book and several pens/markers. This is a closed-book, no notes examination—do not consult any other files on your laptop or in your possession during the exam.

CHOOSE ONE OF THE FOUR FOLLOWING PROMPTS:

1. What happens when a woman is juxtaposed with a mirror? What if this encounter is further complicated by the presence of an artist (a voyeur with paint and canvas). Imagine then, a further complication, a further intrusion—another interloper, this one with a camera; and another, perhaps, with a video camera! Using the works you surveyed and your own knowledge of self-portraiture in contemporary Latina art, explore the complications at work as person is transformed into art.

OR

2. What did John Berger get right in *WAYS OF SEEING*? What did he get wrong? Making use of the diverse materials on your list, lead us on a tour of Post-Bergerian reflections on self-representation in women's art.

OR

3. Drawing on your recent curatorial work and the readings on this list, author a State of the Union soliloquy on the phenomena of self-portraiture in Latina art. Somewhere in the piece, try to grapple with the meanings/complications at work in the word "Feminist."

OR

4. Combine/alter/fuse any parts of the three questions above into a new question. Write this new question down and respond to it in the time remaining.

COMPREHENSIVE EXAM
MALAS | Master of Arts in Liberal Arts and Sciences
Friday, May 3, 2013

Exam Question II: CURATORIAL THEORY, 10am to 11:50am

You MAY, if you wish, use a laptop today, however, all connections to wi-fi **MUST BE DISABLED** --I have a thumb-drive to ferry your finished responses to my own workstation for printing. If your laptop does not have a USB-compatible port, you will be allowed to log-on to SDSU wi-fi at the end of each session to zap your responses to me (memo@sdsu.edu) for printing. You are also welcome to bring a blue book and several pens/markers. This is a closed-book, no notes examination—do not consult any other files on your laptop or in your possession during the exam.

RESPOND TO THE FOLLOWING PROMPT:

You have consulted a body of research that surveys the terrains of curatorial theory and third space/border theory. In a well-crafted essay, investigate the intersection of these theoretical realms. Though a portion of your response should address the ideas of key, compelling critics and theorists currently writing in these areas, you should also make time in your essay to discuss your own critical position as related to your research on non-traditional exhibitions.

COMPREHENSIVE EXAM

MALAS | Master of Arts in Liberal Arts and Sciences

Friday, May 3, 2013

Exam Question III: redefining chicana sexualities: santas y putas., 12noon-1:50pm

You MAY, if you wish, use a laptop today, however, all connections to wi-fi **MUST BE DISABLED** --I have a thumb-drive to ferry your finished responses to my own workstation for printing. If your laptop does not have a USB-compatible port, you will be allowed to log-on to SDSU wi-fi at the end of each session to zap your responses to me (memo@sdsu.edu) for printing. You are also welcome to bring a blue book and several pens/markers. This is a closed-book, no notes examination—do not consult any other files on your laptop or in your possession during the exam.

CHOOSE ONE OF THE TWO FOLLOWING PROMPTS:

1. The Madonna-Whore complex first developed by Freud placed the “complex” as one experienced by men in their ability or lack thereof to love/desire particular women. This the critique of this idea became the basis for the articulation of a virgin/whore dichotomy as one of the pillars of patriarchy, and as such gained wide circulation in feminist circles. In what ways is the Chicana articulation of a virgin/puta or santa/puta dichotomy related and/or different than its counterpart? What accounts for such difference? Using the readings from your comprehensive exam list, critically discuss the historical, social, and political basis for the specific Chicana invocation, redefinition and challenge to such dichotomy.

OR

2. The Virgen de Guadalupe and Malintzin Tenepal have been two prominent tropes that are used often in much Chicana Feminist theorizing. Discuss the particularities and significance of these two figures, why and how they are of importance to redefining Chicana identities and sexualities. How do the gender analyses and critiques offered by the authors from your comprehensive exam list address the relationship and/or parallels between a racial/colonial indigenous problematic and that of sexism, patriarchy and heteronormativity? Critically discuss not only the historical significance of these figures, but their contemporary invocations.