

# Request Form for MALS Concentration in Individualized Studies

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Enrollment in MALS: \_\_\_\_\_

**PROPOSED CONCENTRATION NAME:**

*Please attach a 1-2 page proposal on separate sheets.*

Proposed Core Courses		Semester Taken/ Will Take	
List of Possible Elective Courses from across the GC  Courses should have been offered within the past two academic years  Please consult <a href="#">the course schedule</a> .		Semester Last Offered	

**CONSULTING FACULTY MEMBER:**

<i>Signature</i>		<i>Date</i>	
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*I have reviewed and approved the proposed Individualized Studies Concentration.*

**MALS EO** \_\_\_\_\_ *Date* \_\_\_\_\_  
**MALS DEO** \_\_\_\_\_ *Date* \_\_\_\_\_

MALS Individualized Studies Statement  
Ann Adachi

Over the past seven years, through my experience of working at a major video art archive Electronic Arts Intermix (EAI), and through my work as a Program Coordinator of a global research initiative at The Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), I have become acutely aware of the differences of media archival practices between the U.S. and Japan. Compared to the United States and Western Europe, the practices of archiving and preserving moving image works—i.e., non-commercial artists' films, experimental film, video art, and animation—in Japan have lagged behind, which have now become an urgent issue faced with the reality of material deterioration of film and video tapes, especially those works that were made 50 or 60 years ago. Furthermore, scholarship on Japanese artists' moving image works, especially in the field of Japanese video art of the 1970s, or performance documentations, is an area that deserves serious, in-depth research, both within Japan, and in the international scholarly community.

This concern has led me to research Japanese experimental film, video, and animation made in the 1950s through 1970s, in order to better understand the current situation of preservation and distribution systems, as well as to learn about Japanese artists' filmmaking practice in general. I am working with Japanese museums, archives, universities, and individual artists in order to assess the locations and the conditions of Japanese moving image works. In April 2012, I went to Tokyo on a preliminary research trip during which I met with several artists, museum curators, gallerists, scholars, and archivists who are concerned with this topic. The result of this trip is the start of a discussion among Japanese individuals and organizations, to create a shared database in which people who are concerned about this issue can share information on collection holdings and preservation status of experimental film and video, in order to consider plans for media conservation in the future. The goal of this project is to create groundwork for local guardians of media work, in order to build a sustainable cultural infrastructure that would lead to conservation initiatives. My hope is to eventually create permanent access to these important historical media works to the Japanese public, as well as the international scholarly and artistic community, either as an online resource or an archive organization.

The study in **Digital Humanities Praxis** course taught by Professor Matthew Gold and Professor Stephen Brier is essential in understanding current discourse and projects that are taking place around the field of online archive, networked scholarship, and tools for the dissemination of information. I hope to utilize the knowledge acquired in this course to establish an online access to the archival resources. The Hong Kong-based non-profit organization, Asia Art Archive is a model from which I wish to pursue the online access portion of the project. AAA's mission is the enabling of access to archival material related to the histories of art in Asia. Their interest is not an acquisition of physical material, but focuses on digitizing archival material through forming a collaborative network of physical archives in these regions. I believe a first step in contributing to the preservation and raising awareness to Japanese experimental film and video catalog made available online.

At the same time, in the process of organizing a platform for exchange of moving image cultural resource in Japan, I aim to examine the discourse of Japanese artists films within the context of international and domestic art history and social and political history. I am particularly interested

in the subjects of cultural interpretation, influence, and the identification of authenticity, as they relate to postcolonial discourse and geopolitical power dynamic. A postcolonial examination is essential in studying the production of aesthetic taste of Japanese postwar art, as importation of Western cultural values became incorporated in the Japanese culture, intertwined with the ambiguous identification of Japanese postwar national identity that oscillates between the traditional and the forging of an industrialized, Westernized Japan. For this reason, I am interested in basing my studies in the Film Studies discipline. I took the **Aesthetics of Film** course with Professor Edward Miller, in Spring 2012.

I am also interested in studying the role of language in identifying authenticity in postcolonial discourse, specifically, the process of naming, categorization, and institutional infrastructure that governs these processes. The relationship of fixity and fluidity of definition of words may be useful when identifying authenticity of postwar Japanese works of art that use the style of Western art. These interests were explored in the **Introduction to International Studies** course taught by Professor Tomihisa Hattori in Fall 2010; Linguistic Anthropology taught by Professor Miki Makihara (Fall 2010); Theories of Interpretation course taught by Professor Vincent Crapanzano (Spring 2011); and Art History courses (Professor Hadler, Spring 2011; Professor Bishop, Fall 2013).

The abovementioned core courses in Film Studies and Digital Humanities serve as the core base for building my project, both practically, and theoretically. The other courses I have taken are also crucial to the way I theorize and understand the formation of infrastructural and artistic development in Japan, in relation to its political, economic, and artistic relation to the West.