**ARTH 234 Introduction to African Arts**

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**Office hours:** online meetingby appointment

**Classes on Fridays: 8:30am – 11:30am**

The course aims to present an introduction to the arts and visual culture of the African peoples, encompassing traditional or classic African arts, as well as modern and contemporary African arts. It intends to explore not only how the concept of African art is not unanimous and has shifted over the years, but also in what ways objects related to specific African communities circulated and gained new meanings when outside the continent. Through theoretical and practical analysis, the students will be stimulated to reflect on how the African art field was shaped by scholars, curators, artists and public interaction and its main turning points.

**Intended learn outcome:**

Interpret and describe a variety of African art works, including archaeological finds and contemporary productions.

Summarize and critically analyze a broad material pertinent to the history of African art, visual culture, its criticism or understanding.

Organize library/research materials and produce a bibliography or inventory of relevant objects or texts associated with the course materials, beyond the assigned readings.

Compose essays or responses of various lengths to express your comprehension of the ideas, material and concepts of the course.

**Grading Scheme:**

**2 long assignments (30% each) worth 60% of final grade.**

**3 Short assignments in class (10% each) worth 30% of final grade**

**Participation worth 10% of final grade:** Regular discussion.

All marks will be given as letter grade, including the final course mark.

**Late Policy:** Both assignments will be submitted via the course OnQ page before midnight on the day the assignment is due. Late assignments will be penalized at the rate of one half-letter grade per day. Thus, an “A” paper will be downgraded to an “A-” if it late less than 24 hours. From one to two days late, an “A” will be downgraded to a “B”, and so forth. Weekends count as days. Unless there are extenuating circumstances such as an illness, accident, family crisis, etc, I will not accept assignments more than 7 days late. You will receive no points should this happen.

**Statement on Academic Integrity**

Queen’s students, faculty, administrators and staff all have responsibilities for supporting and upholding the fundamental values of academic integrity. Academic integrity is constituted by the five core fundamental values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility (see www.academicintegrity.org) and by the quality of courage. These values and qualities are central to the building, nurturing and sustaining of an academic community in which all members of the community will thrive. Adherence to the values expressed through academic integrity forms a foundation for the "freedom of inquiry and exchange of ideas" essential to the intellectual life of the University.

 Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with and adhering to the regulations concerning academic integrity. General information on academic integrity is available at Integrity@Queen's University, along with Faculty or School specific information. Departures from academic integrity include, but are not limited to, plagiarism, use of unauthorized materials, facilitation, forgery and falsification. Actions which contravene the regulation on academic integrity carry sanctions that can range from a warning, to loss of grades on an assignment, to failure of a course, to requirement to withdraw from the university.

**Accessibility Statement**

Queen’s is committed to an inclusive campus community with accessible goods, services, and facilities that respect the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities. (Your document/event/service, etc) is available in an accessible format or with appropriate communication supports upon request.

**Accommodations Statement**

Queen's University is committed to achieving full accessibility for persons with disabilities. Part of this commitment includes arranging academic accommodations for students with disabilities to ensure they have an equitable opportunity to participate in all of their academic activities. If you are a student with a disability and think you may need accommodations, you are strongly encouraged to contact Student Wellness Services (SWS) and register as early as possible. For more information, including important deadlines, please visit the Student Wellness website at: http://www.queensu.ca/studentwellness/accessibility-services/

**Weekly Schedule**

**Week 1(Jan. 13th) – African Art: What does it mean? – Welcome and Introduction to the course**

**Week 2 (Jan. 20th) - Early Civilizations, New Paradigms**

Suzanne Preston Blier. Art in Ancient Ife, Birthplace of the Yoruba. African Arts, Winter 2012, Vol. 45, No. 4, Gender and South African Art (Winter 2012), p. 70-85

Thurstan Shaw. The Nok Sculptures of Nigeria. Scientific American, Vol. 244, No. 2 (February 1981), p. 154-167

**Week 3 (Jan. 27th) - The Benin Kingdom: Art and Violence**

Kathryn Wysocki Gunsch. Art and/or Ethnographica?: The Reception of Benin Works from 1897-1935. African Arts, Vol. 46, No. 4 (Winter 2013), p. 22-31.

Charles Gore. Casting Identities in Contemporary Benin City. African Arts, Summer, 1997, Vol. 30, No. 3, Special Issue: The Benin Centenary, Part 1 (Summer, 1997), p. 54-61+93

**Week 4 (Feb. 03rd) - Statues in Focus: Forms and Meanings**

Dunja Hersak, Reviewing Power, Process, and Statement: The Case of Songye Figures. African Arts, Vol. 43, No. 2 (summer 2010), p. 38-51.

Elisabeth L. Cameron. In Search of Children: Dolls and Agency in Africa. African Arts, Spring, 1997, Vol. 30, No. 2 (Spring, 1997), pp. 18-33+93.

**Week 5 (Feb. 10th) - The Universe of African Masks I**

Ruth B. Phillips. Masking in Mende Sande Society Initiation Rituals. Africa: Journal of the International African Institute, 1978, Vol. 48, No. 3 (1978), p. 265-277.

Polly Savage. Playing to the Gallery: Masks, Masquerade, and Museums. African Arts, Winter, 2008, Vol. 41, No. 4 (Winter, 2008), pp. 74-81.

**Week 6 (Feb. 17th) – The Universe of African Masks II**

Lisa Homman. Controversy and human agency in 'portrait masks' from the studio of André Sanou. Africa: The Journal of the International African Institute, Volume 88, Number 4, November 2018, pp. 768-801.

Dunja Hersak. On the Concept of Prototype in Songye Masquerades. African Arts, Summer 2012, Vol. 45, No. 2 (SUMMER 2012), p. 12-23

**Week 7 (March 03rd)- Authorship and African art**

Mary Nooter Roberts. The Naming Game: Ideologies of Luba Artistic Identity. African Arts, Vol. 31, No. 4, Special Issue: Authorship in African Art, Part 1(Autumn, 1998), pp. 56-73+90-92

Alisa LaGamma. Beyond Master Hands: The Lives of the Artists. African Arts, Autumn, 1998, Vol. 31, No. 4, Special Issue: Authorship in African Art, Part 1 (Autumn, 1998), p. 24-37+89-90

**Week 8 (March 10th) – Assignment**

**Week 9 (March 17th) - Modernism in Africa**

Rasheed Araeen. “Modernity, Modernism, and Africa's Place in the History of Art of Our Age”. Third Text: Critical Perspectives on Contemporary Art and Criticism, London, v. 19:04, n. 75, 2005, p.411-417.

Salah Hassan. The modernist experience in African art: visual expressions of the self and cross-cultural aesthetics. In:Okwui Enwezor; Olu Oguibe (Ed.). Reading the contemporary: African art from theory to the marketplace. London: Institute of International Visual Arts; Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1999, p. 214-235.

**Week 10 (March 24th) - Contemporary African Art in Perspective**

Okwui Enwenzor; Chika Okeke-Agulu. Situating Contemporary African Art: Introduction. In: \_\_\_\_. Contemporary African Art Since 1980. Bolonha: Damiami, 2009, p. 10-17.

Sidney Littlefield Kasfir. *Contemporary African Art*. NY: Thames and Hudson, 1999, p. 9-47

**Week 11 (March 31st) - African art Exhibitions that Shaped the Field**

Susan Mullin Vogel. Always true to the object, in our fashion. Ivan Karp & Steven Lavine, eds. Exhibiting Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display. Washington & London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991, pp. 191-204.

Mary (Polly) Nooter Roberts. Tradition Is Always Now: African Arts and the Curatorial Turn. African Arts, Vol. 45, No. 1 (SPRING 2012), p. 1, 4-7.

**Week 12 (April 07th)- Final Assignment**