Intro to Sub-Saharan African Art

Rhodes College
Spring 2006
ART 265
T/TH 11:00-12:15
Gena Hill-Thomas

Course Description

This course will explore the art of Sub-Saharan Africa from ancient sculpture to modern textile techniques. It will emphasize late 19th and early 20th century arts from four main regions: West Africa, Central Africa, Eastern Africa, and South Africa. We will spend more time in West and Central Africa because this is where the majority of research on African art has been done. By the end of this course, you will have a solid base of the art of several renown peoples, a working knowledge of the context in which the objects were used, and an overall idea of the current issues and theories within the field.

Format and Requirements

This course will consist of lectures, readings assignments, class discussions, and two small writing assignments. Students will be expected to attend all classes and abide by the Rhodes Honor Code. We will meet twice a week, from 11:00 until 12:15. Special meetings may be scheduled for study sessions, in which case attendance is not required. We will also arrange special meeting for an outing to the Memphis Brooks Museum of Art to view the collection of African Art; attendance is HIGHLY ENCOURAGED. If you cannot attend a class due to extenuating circumstances, please contact me in advance by e-mail (gena_hill@yahoo.com) or by phone (216-225-5137).

There will be four exams throughout the course, the first and third being rather small, the second counting as a midterm, and the fourth counting as a final. Your grades will be weighted as follows:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Written Assignment 1</th>
<th>5 %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exam 1</td>
<td>10 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam 2, Midterm</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written Assignment 2</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam 3</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam 4, Final</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I have a ZERO TOLERANCE policy for plagiarism. Not only is it a violation of the Rhodes Honor code, but it is also a crime. Plagiarism includes – but is not limited to – quoting sources without citing them, paraphrasing sources without citing them, cutting and pasting from the internet, and claiming someone’s original ideas as your own. If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism, do not hesitate to ask me. For all written assignments, you may only use the journal of *African Arts* for research unless you obtain permission from me. This publication is available online through the Rhodes library website. Your bibliography should follow the format of cited works in *African Arts*.

**Texts**

There is only one required text for this course:


I suggest that you purchase this text, as it is a wonderful resource and will most likely be of use to you in the future whenever you have a question about African art. Copies are available at the campus bookstore. Other required and optional readings will be placed on reserve in the library. Please bring the book and any pertinent required readings to class every day.
Office Hours/ Contact Information

Office hours will be held directly after class on Tuesdays in 410. Feel free to e-mail me or call me with ANY questions or comments pertaining to the course or the topic of the course. E-mail me at gena_hill@yahoo.com or call at 216-225-5137. This is my personal cell phone, so please do not call this number past 10 PM!

Tentative Schedule of Classes

Week 1
1/12 – Course Introduction, Important Concepts in West African Art
   Required Reading: VISONA, p.14-23

Week 2 – West Africa: Nigeria
1/17 – Ancient Cultures: NOK, IFE-IFE, and OWO
   Required Reading: VISONA, p.228-238

1/19 – BENIN
   Required Reading: VISONA, p.310-327

Week 3 – West Africa: Nigeria, Mali
1/24 – YORUBA
   Writing Assignment #1 – Explanation of the assignment.
   Required Reading: VISONA, p.239-259

1/26 – DJENNE-DJENO, BAMANA, and the TAUREG
Required Reading: VISONA, p.106-124


Week 4 – West Africa: Mali, Burkina Faso
1/31 – TELLEM, DOGON, and the SENUFO
   Required Reading: VISONA, p.130-152

2/2 – BWA, MOSSI
   Required Reading: VISONA, p.155-162

Week 5 – West Africa: Guinea, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Côte d’Ivoire
2/7 - BAGA, MENDE, and the DAN
   Writing Assignment #1 due
   Required Reading: VISONA, p. 176- 189

2/9 – BAULE and the AKAN
   Writing Assignment #2 – Explanation of the assignment.
   Required Reading: VISONA, p. 194-216, 218-220

Week 6 – East Africa: Kenya, Tanzania
2/14 – Exam 1, Concepts of East African Art
2/16 – MAASAI
   Required Reading: VISONA, p. 456-469

Week 7 – East Africa and beyond: Mozambique, Madagascar
2/21 – MAKONDE

2/23 - MALAGASY

Week 8 – West Africa and East Africa
2/28 – REVIEW for Midterm Exam

3/2 – Exam 2 - MIDTERM

Week 9 – Southern Africa: Zimbabwe, South Africa
3/7 – GREAT ZIMBABWE and the SHONA
   Required Reading: VISONA, p.478-487

3/9 – NDBELE and the ZULU
   Required Reading: VISONA, p.487-493
SPRING BREAK WEEK
3/14 – NO CLASS!
3/16 – NO CLASS!

Week 10 – Central Africa: Cameroon, Gabon
3/21 – CAMEROON GRASSLANDS

Bibliography for Writing Assignment #2 due
Required Reading: VISONA, p.336-352

3/23 – FANG and the KOTA
Required Reading: VISONA, p.355-364

Week 11 – Central Africa: Congo Basin
3/28 – Exam 3

3/30 – KONGO and the YOMBE
Required Reading: VISONA, p.366-378

Week 12 – Central Africa: Congo Basin
4/4 – CHOKWE
Required Reading: VISONA, p.379-385

4/6 – YAKA, SUKU and the PENDE
Required Reading: VISONA, p.385-394

**Week 13 – Central Africa: Congo Basin**

4/11 – KUBA

Required Reading: VISONA, p.396-406


4/13 – NO CLASS – EASTER!

**Week 14 – Central Africa: Congo Basin**

4/18 – LUBA, HEMBA, and the TABWA

**Writing Assignment #2 due**

Required Reading: VISONA, p.412-422


4/20 – SONGYE, LEGA, BEMBE and the MBOLE

Required Reading: VISONA, p.422-429


**Week 15 – Art of the Diaspora**

4/25 – The United States

Required Reading: VISONA, 500-518

4/27 – The Caribbean
FINAL EXAM: Tuesday, May 2\textsuperscript{nd}, 5:30 pm