Preliminary Syllabus - schedule subject to change and links to be activated

Professor: Jean Borgatti
Email: jborgatti@gmail.com, phone 508-615-4593
Office hours: M - 3-5
Class Time: M 5:30-8:30
Website: www.clarku.edu/~jborgatt

Let extraordinary African images from the distant past to the post-modern present stimulate your thoughts and challenge your imagination. We will take a thematic approach to the rich and diverse artistic heritage of this vast continent, punctuated by case studies of art in context. A thematic approach allows for an exploration of ideas that cut across many cultural zones. Case studies provide a more complex view of artworks, aesthetics, their communicative and symbolic functions within specific traditional societies.

Required Texts:
2) Willett, Frank, African Art, New York: Thames and Hudson. Use for assigned readings and illustrations.

Suggested Texts:
Organized geographically, encyclopaedic. Good for locating the cultural context of works discussed.
4) Kasfir, Sydney, Contemporary African Art, Thames and Hudson. Overview of contemporary art and its 'evolution' as a field of study in African Art history.

Requirements and Possibilities
1) Attendance. Please be on time.
2) Check your email - this is how I communicate with you.
3) Complete all the assigned readings before the class associated with the assignment.
4) Complete scavenger hunt at the MFA (Due on September 21).
5) Attend exhibit/program "Black Womanhood" -- exhibit opens in September at the Davis Museum, Wellesley. Programming not yet available.
6) 2 short papers, one on a traditional work and one on a modern or contemporary artist, with powerpoint summary for presenting and posting on website or wiki. Click for Traditional Work Template and Contemporary Artist Template.
   (guidelines below). Select topics from posted works - first come, first served. You may email your choice to me. The sooner you do this, the more likely you will get your first choice. Make a 2nd and 3rd choice for each category.
7) Students expected to react to/post critiques of powerpoints -- assessing how well each student fulfilled the assignment and engaged the class.
8) Reaction paragraphs to films, speakers, exhibitions, student powerpoints -- questions may be posed in relation to films/speakers. These are due within a week of seeing the film. You will not be reminded.
9) Final slide/map quiz based on 100 selected slides, posted on the website or wiki, for which you will be responsible.
10) Extra Credit opportunities: Appropriate lectures in the area (opportunities will be publicized); creative work based on your paper topic; (a critical review of an exhibition (not the MFA) of African art, a thoughtful or incisive report or reflection on news/current affairs on Africa which you consider pertinent to the content of the course -- try checking out articles on art in African newspapers on line, a comparative and critical review of a pair of websites (com vs. edu or org, for example). May earn up to 10% increase in your grade.
Grading
1) Class attendance/participation, posted commentary 20%
2) Reaction responses, scavenger hunt 20%
3) Extra Credit - 5% (maximum per opportunity)
4) 2 short research papers w/ powerpoints/presentations 20% each
5) Final Slide Quiz -20%

RESEARCH STRATEGIES
Use the bibliographies in your respective text books for sources. You have access to the Museum of Fine Arts Library made up of the William Morris Hunt Memorial Library, the W. Van Alan Clark Jr. Library at the SMFA, and nine curatorial department libraries. Their holdings may be found on-line through FLO -- Use ethnic group name, country name, and artist name as keywords. http://68.162.227.115/vwebv/searchBasic?sk=en_US. Use databases for articles. Google Scholar will give you information on articles. Also consult Smithsonian Institute Libraries On-Line Catalogue www.siris.si.edu. Wikipedia is possible, but unreliable. You must check all sources and information. Web-based sources for contemporary artists are quite useful, particularly if an artist has his/her own homepage.

Preparation for Sept. 8
Reading: Bohannon - Shakespeare in the Bush (http://www-static.cc.gatech.edu/people/home/idris/Essays/Shakes_in_Bush.htm)
Phillips: pp.11-20 (Introduction); 21-26 (Appiah); 479-483 (The Sahel & Savannah); 485-495 (Djenne plates);
Willett, pp. 9-25

Topic for Sept 8: Overview of Syllabus - Africa and Addressing Stereotypes
Film: Six Sketches of Mali
Sign up for meeting with Professor Borgatti to discuss paper topics Wednesday 12-2; Monday 3-5.

Preparation for Sept. 15
See: http://www.randafricanart.com/Fang_an_epic_journey.html
Reading: Gates in Phillips, pp.27-30
Reading: Susan Vogel, Introduction to Art/Artifact (on reserve)
Phillips:(Fang) 314-325, (Sherbro) 467-471
Suggested: Visona et al., A History of Art in Africa, pp.168-172
For Illustrations: Fagg & Bassani - African Art and the Renaissance;
W. Rubin: Primitivism in Modern Art

Topic for Sept 15:
From Curiosity Cabinet to Art Museum
Changing Perceptions of African Art
Video: Fang: An Epic Journey (8 minutes)
Both Paper Topics Due

Preparation for Sept.22: Scavenger Hunt
Reading: Arnold Rubin: “Accumulation: Power and Display in African Sculpture” in Berlo & Wilson, pp. 4-21 (book on reserve & article on e-reserve);
Phillips: pp.244-249 (Kongo); p.498 (Boli); p.278 (Kuba--Ngady); p.132 (Nubia-lyre); p.216 (Nguni beaded apron); 354-355 (Grassfields beaded sculpture). Willett; pp. 130-219
Recommend other examples of power/display figures from texts - post to wiki.

Topics for Sept.22:
Materials - Form - Meaning
1st Working Biblio Due
Scavenger Hunt Due by Sept.21
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<tr>
<th>Preparation for Sept. 29</th>
<th>Topics for Sept. 29:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Phillips, p. 419 (Olowe)</td>
<td>(1) The African Artist</td>
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<th>Preparation for Oct. 6:</th>
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<td>Reading: Rachel Hoffman, “Seduction, Surrender and Portable Paradise: Dogon Art in Modern Mali&quot; in Nooter (ed.) <em>Secrecy: Art that Conceals; Art that Reveals</em>, pp. 223-233.)</td>
<td>Social Contexts of Masks: Examples from West Africa - Community Organization (Bamana, Senufo, Dan); Honoring the Dead (the Dogon, Yoruba); Harnessing the power of the Wild (the Bwa of Burkina Faso; the Ijo/Ijaw of the Niger Delta</td>
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<td>Suggested: Visona, et al., pp. 115 (Ntomo and Tyi Wara); 1119 (Komo &amp; Kono); 121 (Kore, Secular Masquerades, Puppetry); 130-144 (Western Sudan &amp; Dogon); 143 (The Senufo); 144 (Poro); 148 (Masks and Masquerades); 156 (Bwa Masquerades); 179 (Women's &amp; Men's Societies); 183 (Masks &amp; Sacred Authority); 252-256 (Yoruba Msq); 140-143 (Dogon Msq); 310-313 (Ijaw Festivals &amp; Masks).</td>
<td>Paper Draft Due</td>
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<td>Reading: Visona, et al., pp. 179-183 (Mende); 371-375 (Yaka and the Suku); pp. 196-207 (Ashanti); 413-416 (Legga) Phillips, pp. 432-445 (Ashanti), 300-301 (Legga)</td>
<td>(1) Masks as symbolic structures: MENDE AND YAKA</td>
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<td>Reading: Phillips, pp. Figs. 2.19-20, 4.45, 4.47, 4.48, 4.74a-c, 7.37a-e. Find and post examples of body and textile art in sculpture Reading: Textiles: Visona, et al., pp. 207-209 (Akan); 387-389 (Kuba) See also illustrations (Chapter &amp; illustration #) 1-20, 3-23, 3-29, 3-34, 3-35; 4-21, 4-26, 4-26; 7-11, 7-12, 7-13, 7-40; 8-18, 8-49, 8-63, 8-64; 9-57; 11-3, 11-12, 11-52, 11-59, 11-60, 11-61; 12-36; 13-40, 14-33; 14-34; 15-15. Body Arts: Visona et al., pp. 97-102 (Fulani); 457-461 (Nuba/Masaii et al.) Architecture: Visona et al., pp. 162-164 (Nankani), 486-487 (Nguni) Suggested: Adams, &quot;Kuba Embroidered Cloth&quot; in Berlo &amp; Wilson, ppl 133-152</td>
<td>African 2-D Design: Textiles, Bodies and Walls</td>
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<td>Film extracts: Nuba body arts.</td>
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<th>Topic for Nov10</th>
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(2) Yoruba Art and Aesthetics  

**2nd Paper Draft Due** |
| **Preparation for Nov. 17**  
Reading: Phillips, pp. 231-239 (Central Africa), 240-243, 250-252 (Kongo); 265-270 (Chokwe); 271-282 (Kuba), 285-299 (Luba); Visona, et al., pp. 350-362 (Kongo); pp. 363-371 (Lunda-Chokwe); pp. 385-394 (Kuba); pp. 400-410 (Luba).  
Suggested: Blier: Royal Arts of Africa – any chapters | **Topics for Nov17**  
CENTRAL AFRICAN KINGDOMS - Kongo, Kuba, Luba, Chokwe |
| **Preparation for Nov 24**  
Reading: Visona et al. pp. 123-129 (Arts of the Home; 20th & 21st century Art in Senegal, Artists in Bamako); 190-192 (Cross-Currents and Hybrid Forms); 224-226 (Lives Well Lived: Contemporary Funeral Arts); 264-271 (Art and Modernity); 287-291 (Recent and Contemporary Igbo Arts); 451-452 (Makonde Export Art); 461-463 (Contemporary Artists of Uganda, Tanzania and Kenya); 484 (Women's Workshops);  
Suggested: Kasfir, pp. 9-17 (Intro) 18-47 (Inventing Popular Culture); 48-63 (Transforming the Workshop); 64-101 (Patrons and Mediators); 102-123 (Art and Commodity); 166-189 (The Idea of a National Culture: Decolonizing African Art). | **Topics for Nov24**  
Modern Art: Colonial & Post Independence periods  
Workshop Traditions & Art Movements  
Video: Nigerian Art: Kindred Spirits |
| **Preparation for Dec. 1**  
Reading: Kasfir: pp. 124-165 (The African Artist: Shifting Identities in the Post Colonial World); 190-213 (Migration and Displacement)  
Review: [www.nmafa.si.edu](http://www.nmafa.si.edu) (Any of the virtual exhibits from Contemporary Galleries 1 & 2). Visona et al. pp. 40-43 (Contemporary Art of North Africa); 72-75 (Contemporary Artists of Sudan and Ethiopia); 192-195 (Contemporary Arts in Abijan...); 226-227 (Artists and Academies in Ghana); 395-399 (Art in Kinshasa and Brazzaville); 489-497 (Art and Contemporary Issues in South Africa).  
Suggested: Oguibe: “Art, Identity, Boundaries: Postmodernism & Contemporary African Art”, in Reading the Contemporary, pp. 16-29  
Oguibe, “Finding a Place: Nigerian Artists in the Contemporary Art World,” in ART JOURNAL 58(2) 1999:30-41 (JStor Full Text) | **Topics for Dec.1:**  
PostModern Moments  
William Kentridge Video |