

Introduction to African Art
(ARH 2930)



Tabita Rezaire, *Deep Down Tidal* (still), 2017.



Church of Saint George, Lalibela, Ethiopia, 13th century.

Mondays | Period 8: 3:00 PM - 3:50 PM
Wednesdays | Period 8 and 9: 3:00 - 4:55 PM

Location: online or FAC 0201

Credits: 3

Prerequisite: None

Additional Course Fees: \$12.94

Instructor: Dr. Álvaro Luís Lima

Contact: lima@ufl.edu or (352)294-0556 (e-mail preferred)

Office Hours: Mondays | Period 6: 12:50 PM – 1:40 PM and by appointment

Course Canvas Website: <https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/417607>

Course Description: This course introduces African art by highlighting its diversity and complexity. It examines historical and methodological questions to contextualize works of art from across the continent ranging from as early as Ancient Egypt, seen in the eyes of Cheikh Anta Diop, to the Afrofuturism of contemporary artists such as Tabita Rezaire. The course is organized in four parts to situate the broad scope of content. Part one questions what constitutes an African identity. Part two considers the location of Africa by looking at the way in which diasporic cultures, North Africa, and Europe, have been essential to the history of African art. Part three shows the role of African art traditions beyond the museum. The course concludes with part four, which looks at modern and contemporary liberation struggles and their aftermath. Non-majors are welcome.

Course Objectives:

- Familiarity with basic methodological questions about researching African art through class readings, discussion, and writing assignments.
- Attribute major artistic traditions to geographical regions of Africa through quiz and class lectures.
- Expand skills to interpret African art objects from diverse cultural backgrounds and functions by class comparisons, visual analysis and readings.
- Develop oral presentation skills by making a presentation on an art object.
- Expand visual literacy by class activities and discussion centered on formal analysis.
- Polish skills in writing about art through short writing assignments.

Required Readings: Required readings will be posted on the Canvas e-Learning Course Website and should be done in preparation for classes. It is recommended that students print hard copies of texts to allow optimal reading and participation on Zoom. Input in class discussion of the readings will be an essential part of the participation grade.

Requirements and Grading

Assessments:

- 10%: Attendance and participation in class
Attendance and participation in class discussions. For a full grade, participation is essential.
- 10%: African map quiz (1/25)
Students are expected to identify the name of all countries in the African continent.
- 10%: Five-minutes presentation a work of art (scheduled throughout the semester)
Students will present a work of art of their choice from a list shared by the instructor.
- 40%: In-class writing assignment (20% each, 2/17 and 3/22)
A list of essay questions will be distributed in advance of the exam for preparation. One of such questions will be part of the in-class writing assignment.
- 30%: Writing assignment (4/23)
Students will write an essay in response to a question distributed by the instructor.

Submission of Assignments: All written assignments should be submitted at the beginning of the class in which they are due. Delays may incur in a grade penalty. Written assignments must be in Times New Roman 12-point font, double-spaced, with 1-inch margins when applicable. Any citations must be done in Chicago-style. Further details on all assignments and exams will be provided during the semester.

Chicago Manual of Style Quick Guide for Citations:

https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html Please consult the Writing Studio with any questions about proper citations and paper formatting.

Please note:

- Completion of all assignments and exams is necessary to pass the course.
- Any grade of C- or below will not count toward major requirements.
- For more information on UF's grading policies and assigning grade points, see: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

Letter Grade	% Equivalency	GPA Equivalency
A	93 and above	4.00
A-	90 to 92	3.67
B+	87 to 89	3.33
B	83 to 86	3.00
B-	80 to 82	2.67
C+	77 to 79	2.33
C	73 to 76	2.00
C-	70 to 72	1.67
D+	67 to 69	1.33

D	63 to 66	1.00
D	60 to 62	0.67
E, I, NG, WF	59 and below	0.00

Course Instructions and Policies

Attendance: Attendance to all classes is expected as there will be no recording of classes. Students are expected to have their video on while attending class meetings via Zoom. Absences will affect the participation grade, unless the instructor is provided with appropriated documentation such as a doctor's note. Beyond attendance to weekly meetings, students are also required to participate in the following events:

- HESCAH Lecture by Suzanne Blier, "Picasso, Decay, and the Surrealist Colonial Gaze," March 18, 6pm.
- Panel Discussion with Kiluanji Kia Henda, April 22, 11am-2pm (details to be announced).

Electronic communication: Announcements about the class may be sent by e-mail, so please check it regularly. All electronic communication regarding the class should be made should via Canvas. I will answer your e-mails as quickly as I can, but please allow forty-eight hours for replies.

Plagiarism and other malpractices: UF's policies regarding academic honesty, the Honor Code, and student conduct related to the Honor Code will be strictly enforced. This means that cheating and plagiarism will be penalized, and a report will be filed with the Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution office. For more information on the Honor Code, see: <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/>. If you have any questions or concerns on this, please feel free to speak to me.

Extra credit: Extra credit may be offered upon completion of additional assignments stipulated by the instructor. Extra credit assignments are always optional, and credit is granted at the instructor's discretion.

For students with disabilities: If you need course adaptation or accommodations because of a disability you should first register with the Disability Resource Center [(352) 392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/] by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter that must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

Diversity statement: This course is committed to respecting difference, including of ability, age, culture, ethnicity, gender identity, nationality, race, religion, sexuality, and socioeconomic status. As part of this effort, the intent is to present content that explores diverse points of view. As a class, we should strive to create an atmosphere in which students from all backgrounds and perspectives will be well-served by the course, and different backgrounds and perspectives will be used as a resource, strength, and benefit. It will be both my responsibility and yours to accomplish these goals. Your suggestions are encouraged and appreciated.

For students registered in the face to face section: In response to COVID-19, the following policies and requirements are in place to maintain your learning environment and to enhance the safety of our in-classroom interactions.

- You are required to wear approved face coverings at all times during class and within buildings. Following and enforcing these policies and requirements are all of our responsibility. Failure to do so will lead to a report to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution.
- This course has been assigned a physical classroom with enough capacity to maintain physical distancing (6 feet between individuals) requirements. Please utilize

designated seats and maintain appropriate spacing between students. Please do not move desks or stations.

- Sanitizing supplies are available in the classroom if you wish to wipe down your desks prior to sitting down and at the end of the class.
- Follow your instructor's guidance on how to enter and exit the classroom. Practice physical distancing to the extent possible when entering and exiting the classroom.
- If you are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms ([Click here for guidance from the CDC on symptoms of coronavirus](#)), please use the UF Health screening system and follow the instructions on whether you are able to attend class. [Click here for UF Health guidance on what to do if you have been exposed to or are experiencing Covid-19 symptoms](#).
 - Course materials will be provided to you with an excused absence, and you will be given a reasonable amount of time to make up work. [Find more information in the university attendance policies](#).

Faculty evaluations: Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at: <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at: <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>.

Schedule:

Part I: African Who?

1/11: Introduction

1/13: The Politics of Authenticity

1/18: **No Class, Martin Luther King Day**

1/20: Problems Defining African Art

1/25: Hybridity

1/27: Roots of African Cultures?

2/1: Négritude

2/3 Négritude & its Critics

2/8: Queerness

2/10: Afrikaner

Part II: Where is Africa?

2/10: Primitivism

2/15: Primitivism

2/17: North Africa

2/22: Mami Wata

2/24 No Class, Recharge and Research Break

3/1: Yoruba

3/3: Yoruba across the Atlantic

3/8: Diaspora

Part III: Art Beyond White Walls

3/10: Ethiopia

3/15: Kongo

3/17: Kongo

3/18, 6pm: HESCAH Lecture, Suzanne Blier. Attendance Required

3/22: Benin

3/24: No Class, Recharge and Research Break

3/29: Adobe Architecture

3/31: Baule

Part IV: Resistance and Liberation

4/7: Photography from Mali

4/12: Socialisms

4/14: Resistance against Apartheid

4/19: Afrofuturism

4/21: Final Thoughts

4/22, 11am-2pm: Panel Discussion, Kiluanji Kia Henda. Attendance Required

Campus Resources

Health and Wellness:

- U Matter, We Care: If you or a friend is in distress, please contact “U Matter, We Care” so that a team member can reach out to the student. Email: umatter@ufl.edu. Phone: (352)392-1575. Website: <http://www.umatter.ufl.edu>.
- Counseling and Wellness Center: Address: 3190 Radio Road, Gainesville, FL 32611 Phone: (352)392-1575. Website: <https://counseling.ufl.edu/>.
- Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS), at the Student Health Care Center: Phone: (352)392-1161. Website: http://www.umatter.ufl.edu/sexual_violence.

Academic:

- The Writing Studio, 302 Tigert Hall and 339 Library West, offers help with brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers, as well as online tutoring. Phone: (352)846-1138. Website: <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>
- E-learning Technical Support: Email: learningsupport@ufl.edu. Phone: (352)392-4357 (select option 2). Website: <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>.
- Library Support, for assistance in using the libraries and finding resources. Contact: <http://answers.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>. Phone: (352)273-2805. Website: <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>.
- Teaching Center, SW Broward Hall, for tutoring and strengthening study skills. Email: teaching-center@ufl.edu. Phone: (352)392-6420. Website: <https://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/>.
- Harn Museum of Art, 3259 Hull Road, excellent collection on campus with more than 10,000 works of art; offers free student memberships that include admission to 75+ museums nationwide, invitations to museum events, and more. Email: membership@ufl.edu. Phone: (352)392-9826. Website: <http://harn.ufl.edu/>