Boylan Hall, Room 5313, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 3:40 - 4:55 PM

Instructor: Dr. Christopher Richards
c.richards66@brooklyn.cuny.edu
Instagram: bcmuseumed
Office: Boylan Hall, 5107, Office hours: Tues/Thurs 9:00 – 10:30 or by appointment
Course website: http://libguides.brooklyn.cuny.edu/womenafricanartrichards/home

Course Description:
This course offers a thematic examination of African art with an emphasis on the importance of women, a group recognized for their influence on and creation of artistic forms, yet seldom the exclusive focus of academic inquiry. Students will examine a diverse range of visual art forms throughout the African continent, in both historical and contemporary contexts. Although the course is organized thematically, students will be encouraged to interrogate these categories, exploring how specific art forms can fit into multiple categories. The thematic structure will allow students to compare similar art forms from different African cultures, such as pottery and masquerades. Lastly, this course will encourage students to question academic sources for potential biases, particularly in regards to the representation of women.

Course Requirements:
1. Students are required to regularly attend class and participate in lectures and discussions.
2. Students are expected to complete all assigned readings before class and to discuss the subject matter of the readings in class.
3. Students will have to visit one museum with the instructor during class. This date has been predetermined, so please make appropriate arrangements so that you can attend.
4. Students are responsible for writing a reflection paper (4 - 5 pages in length) and a research paper (5 - 7 pages in length). Further details will be provided during the semester.
5. There will be three quizzes, a midterm, and a final which all students must complete in-class (unless disability-related accommodations are applicable).

Course Materials:
Due to the specialized nature of this course, there is no required textbook. All readings for the course are available digitally, via the Open Education Resource (OER) website:
http://libguides.brooklyn.cuny.edu/womenafricanartrichards/home
Password for readings: 2255

Course Outcomes:
1. To gain a more nuanced understanding of African art by exploring how women have shaped and inspired African art forms.
2. To better understand the cultural, social, and historical significance of women in a variety of African cultures and historical/contemporary contexts.
3. To become familiar with iconic works of African art and to develop skills in discussing these artworks orally and in writing.
4. To engage with the literature of the field and to intellectually question primary and secondary source materials.
5. To demonstrate how art is embedded with specific cultural conceptions and values that can be read and interpreted through an art historical analysis.
6. To attend a museum to view and discuss original works of African art.
Method of Evaluation:
Students will be assessed through three quizzes, two papers (one reflection paper and one research paper), a midterm exam and a final exam. Graduate students will be required to submit longer research papers or an art project paired with a brief overview of the work (specifically for MFA students). LATE PAPERS/ASSIGNMENTS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED (unless there are extenuating, documented circumstances)! At least one opportunity for extra credit will be given during the duration of the course. The summary of your grade distribution is as follows:

Participation/Attendance - 10%
Quizzes (3) - 15%
Midterm - 20%
Final - 20%
Reflection paper - 15%
Research Paper - 20%

Grading Scale:

Attendance and Participation:
Regular attendance and participation are required. Four or more unexcused absences will be penalized by a lower final grade (one letter grade lower for each four absences, i.e. A to B, or B to C). Three unexcused tardies will equal one absence. Exams begin promptly at the start of class.

Classroom Etiquette
Come to class on time and prepared to participate in classroom discussion (which means having completed all reading assignments). Please turn your cell phone on silent before entering class and please DO NOT TEXT during lecture or group discussions (it is distracting and disrespectful). If you are using a computer to take notes, please DO NOT SURF THE INTERNET during class. Be respectful and attentive to your instructors and classmates.

Academic Integrity:
The faculty and administration of Brooklyn College support an environment free from cheating and plagiarism. Each student is responsible for being aware of what constitutes cheating and plagiarism and for avoiding both. The complete text of the CUNY Academic Integrity Policy and the Brooklyn College procedure for policy implementation can be found at www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/bc/policies. If a faculty member suspects a violation of academic integrity and, upon investigation, confirms that violation, or if the student admits the violation, the faculty member MUST report the violation.

Center for Disability Services:
In order to receive disability-related academic accommodations students must first be registered with the Center for Student Disability Services. Students who have a documented disability or suspect they may have a disability are invited to set up an appointment with the Director of the Center for Student Disability Services, Ms. Valerie Stewart-Lovell at (718) 951-5538. If you have already registered with the Center for Student Disability Services, please provide your professor with the course accommodation form and discuss your specific accommodation with him/her.

Consideration of Religious Observance:
Students are allowed to be absent from school to observe religious holidays, however they are responsible for any and all material they may have missed. It is the individual student’s responsibility to ensure that they are provided with this material. Students should contact the professor directly in these instances.
Aug. 29: Review syllabus and overview of course


**LAST DAY TO ADD A COURSE**

**Sept. 4:** Labor Day Holiday (Monday) – College closed

Sept. 5: Women as Subjects – The Colonial Gaze, postcards
(Geary “The Black Female Body, the Postcard, and the Archives”)

Sept. 7: Women as Subjects – The Colonial Gaze, Saartje Baartman
(Strother “Display of the Body Hottentot”)

Sept. 12: Women as Subjects – Masks and Masquerades, the Yoruba *Gelede*
(Lawal “Gender and Social Harmony through Gelede” and McClusky “The Ultimate Spectacle for Powerful Mothers")

**QUIZ 1 - MAP QUIZ**

Sept. 14: Women as Subjects – Masks and Masquerades, the Mende *Sowo Wui* Part 1

Last day to drop a course without a grade of “W”

Sept. 19: Women as Subjects – Masks and Masquerades, the Mende *Sowo Wui* Part 2
(Boone “Chapters 1 & 2”)

Sept 20 – 22: **COLLEGE CLOSED (NO CLASSES)**

Sept. 26: Women as Subjects – Masks and Masquerades, the Baga *D’mba*
(Lamp “Foundations of a New Society”)

Sept. 28: Women as Subjects – Masks and Masquerades, the Igbo Maiden Spirit/*Adamma*
(Cole/Aniakor “Beauty and Bravery” and Hufbauer/Reed “Adamma: A Contemporary Igbo Maiden Spirit”)

**REFLECTION PAPER DUE**

Oct. 3: Women as Subjects – Sculptural Forms, Maternal figures in West Africa
(Cole “Maternity and Abundance: The Woman and Child”)

Oct. 5: Women as Subjects – Sculptural Forms, the Benin Empire
(Kaplan “Women in Benin Society and Art”)

**QUIZ 2**

Oct. 9: Columbus Day, **COLLGE CLOSED (NO CLASSES)**

Oct. 10: Women as Subjects – Sculptural Forms, Part 2: Mangbetu Art
(Schildkrout “Gender and Sexuality in Mangbetu Art”)

Oct. 12: Midterm Review
Oct. 17: MIDTERM

Oct. 19: Women as Creators – Pottery: the Mande
(Frank “Recovering the Past”)

Oct. 24: Women as Creators – Pottery: the Togolese
(LaDuke “Tsevie, Togo, Earth Magic”)

TOPIC AND INTRODUCTORY PARAGRAPH FOR RESEARCH PAPER DUE IN CLASS

Oct. 26: Women as Creators – Pottery as “Fine Art”: Ardmore Pottery
(Scott “Ardmore: An African Discovery”)

Oct. 31: Women as Creators – Pottery as “Fine Art”: Magdalene Odundo
(Cooksey “Magdalene Odundo”)

Nov. 2: Women as Creators – Beadwork in South Africa, Intro
(Klopper “Women’s Work, or Engendering the Art of Beadwork” and Saitowitz “Towards a History of Glass Beads”)

Nov. 7: Women as Creators – Beadwork in South Africa, the Ndebele and the Zulu
(Powell “Ndebele: A People & Their Art” and Leeb-du Toit “Women’s Creative Authority”)

QUIZ 3

Nov. 9: Women as Creators – Contemporary Artists, South Africa: Penny Siopis

Nov. 14: Women as Creators – Contemporary Artists, South Africa: Diane Victor

RESEARCH PAPER ROUGH DRAFT DUE

Nov. 16: Women as Creators– Contemporary Artists: Sokari Douglas Camp and Wangechi Mutu

Nov. 21: NO CLASS, COVERSION DAY, (FRIDAY SCHEDULE)

Nov. 23 – 26: Thanksgiving Holiday, COLLEGE CLOSED (NO CLASSES)

Nov. 28: Women as Consumers – Dan Wunkirmian
(Fischer “The Arts of the Dan” and Johnson “Four Dan Sculptors”)

Nov. 30: Women as Consumers – Wax print and Senegalese film Faat Kiné
(Gott “Asante High-timers”)

FINAL RESEARCH PAPER DUE

Dec. 5: Women as Consumers – Ghanaian Fashion and An African City, viewing followed by discussion
(Richards “The Models for Africa”)

Dec. 7: Grad Student Presentations

Dec. 12: LAST DAY OF CLASS, Review for Final (and remaining presentations)

FINAL EXAM: TUESDAY, DEC. 14, 1PM – 3PM