

082:420 and 601 Index #, Spring Semester, 2021, Primitivism and reverse primitivism in Modern Western and Contemporary African Art, open to both undergraduates and graduates

Professor Sarah Brett-Smith, Wednesdays, 1:10 – 4:10 pm
Office hours are 10:30-12:30 on Thursday mornings, Email: brettsmi@arthist.rutgers.edu

No prerequisites **Final Paper**

Primitivism in Modern and Contemporary Art

01:082: 420 and 16:082:601

Prof. Brett-Smith

Wednesday

Zoom lectures

Primitivism in Modern Western and Contemporary African Art

You will need to present for 5-10 minutes on an article that we have all read to start off the discussion in the second half of each seminar meeting. You will also need to give a twenty minute presentation on your paper topic towards the end of the seminar. Finally you will need to write a fifteen to twenty page paper on a subject of your choice provided it falls within the parameters of the seminar. The topic must be discussed with me during office hours before you start research and writing. The papers will present a case of primitivism in one or several artists and will analyze the cultural, political and economic context in which primitivism became a useful strategy for the artist or artists in question.

Lectures and readings will be available for download on Sakai. Readings will be found under the Resources heading. All assigned readings are required and should be completed before class to enable your full participation.

Class Policies

Attendance: Students are expected to attend all classes; if you anticipate missing one or two classes, please use the University absence reporting website <https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/> to indicate the date and reason for your absence. An email is automatically sent to me and repeated absences will seriously affect your final grade. I endorse any religious absences.

Plagiarism and academic honesty

Please familiarize yourself with the definition of plagiarism in Rutgers's official policy statement on academy integrity: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml>. As a student in this course, you are responsible for understanding and thus avoiding the varieties of plagiarism in college writing outlined in this statement. Any student who plagiarizes will receive a zero for the given assignment and, in some cases, a failing grade for the course. Please see the end of this syllabus for further information regarding plagiarism.

Office Hours: My office hours are 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 lunch time on Thursdays. I prefer that students email me so that we can set up a specific time for an appointment. My email is brettsmi@arthist.rutgers.edu. Under normal conditions I should respond within 24 hours.

Special Needs

Please notify me if you have any documented disabilities or special circumstances that require attention, and I will be happy to accommodate you. Students with disabilities may also contact the Kreeger Learning Center directly: Kreeger Learning Center, 151 College Avenue, Suite 123, New Brunswick, NJ 08901, email: dsoffice@rci.rutgers.edu, 732-932-2848, Hours: Monday - Friday, 8:30am - 5:00pm.

Full disability policies and procedures are at <http://disabilityservices.rutgers.edu/>. Students with disabilities requesting accommodation must follow the procedures outlined at <http://disabilityservices.rutgers.edu/request.html>

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Expectations for lectures

- Arrive on Zoom before the start of the lecture
- All cell phones are to be shut off before the start of lecture
- Be considerate of others.
- No texting is allowed during the lecture
- No private conversations are allowed during the lecture
- Do the assigned reading so that you know the material & artists we are studying
- Be prepared by reading the assigned articles and participating in the discussion section of the class
- Please take notes by hand
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- The Department of Art History expects all its students to attend every class, except in cases of illness, religious necessity, serious family concerns, or other major problems. We expect that students will arrive on time, prepared to listen and participate as appropriate, and to stay for the duration of a meeting rather than drift in or out casually. In short, we anticipate that students will show professors and fellow students maximum consideration by minimizing the disturbances that cause interruptions in the learning process. This means that punctuality is a “must,” that cellular phones be turned off, and that courtesy is the guiding principle in all exchanges among students, faculty, and staff.

Study Tips

Start early, study hard, study often! You will be able to understand and process the information better if you keep up with the schedule laid out in the syllabus. Do not hesitate to ask any questions that may help your study process.

Read the books and articles listed!

Readings: You can find the required and optional readings on Sakai under the course number and the heading, Resources, or in the Art Library reserve under the course number. You will not be able to make sense of the lectures without reading this material.

Grading

Grade distribution:

Two Papers = 66^{2/3%}

Class Participation in Discussion: 33^{1/3%}

Grading Scale:

A = 90 - 100

B+ = 87-89

B = 80-86

C+ = 77-79

C = 70 - 76

D = 65 - 69

F= 64 and Below

To pass this course, you must hand in the final paper, do a short class presentation on an article we have all read, and do a 20 minute presentation on your paper topic. You should also participate in class. In other words, failure to turn in the final paper, poor or non-existent attendance, and failure to make the oral presentations required of every student will result in a failing grade.

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Class Time: Each class will be divided into two halves with a break in the middle for coffee etc. In the first half I will lecture. In the second half several students will present the assigned reading in about ten minutes and we will have a general discussion about the article. This can included deciding that it is a terrible article as long as we discuss why it is so bad.

Description of Paper Assignment

The final paper will be fifteen to twenty pages on a topic worked out by the student in consultation with the professor. You must consult me before you begin to research a topic. You will need to give me an outline at the 2nd consultation and this should be based on preliminary research. You should then move ahead to in depth research before setting aside about two weeks for creating a new outline and writing the final paper. Papers must be handed in on the last day of class. You will need to speak with me twice to progress in a positive way with your paper.

Required and Optional Readings

Each section will have specific readings, either sections of books, or articles assigned to accompany it. It is your responsibility to read these materials so that you can participate in the class discussion.

You will be able to find the assigned materials either on reserve in the Art History Library or on Sakai. Readings on Sakai are often posted under an abbreviation of the title or under the author's name. Please be aware of this when looking for a reading.

Week 1, Introduction, January 20, 2021

Lecture: Introduction to the history of Primitivism

First half of class

Read: Gill, Perry. "Primitivism and the 'Modern,'" in *Primitivism, Cubism, Abstraction The Early Twentieth Century*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, pp. 2-22.

2nd part of class

Be prepared to discuss the following articles in class

McEvelley, Thomas. 1994. "An Interview with Ouattara," in *Fusion: West African Artists at the Venice Biennial*. New York: Museum for African Art, 71-81, 95-6.

Enwezor, Okwui. 1995. "Ouattara: Beyond Shamanism," in *Nka*, 2, 25-9.

Week 2, January 27 – Gauguin

First half of class

Read: Gill, Perry, "Primitivism and the 'Modern,'" in *Primitivism, Cubism, Abstraction The Early Twentieth Century*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, pp. 22-43.

2nd half of class

Be prepared to discuss the following article in class

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Read: Varnedoe, Kirk, “Gauguin,” in *“Primitivism” in 20th Century Art*, Vol. I, ed. William Rubin, New York, The Museum of Modern Art, 1984, pp. 178-209.

Week 3 – February 3, 2021

First half of class - Matisse

Read: Gill, Perry “Primitivism and the ‘Modern,’” in *Primitivism, Cubism, Abstraction The Early Twentieth Century*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press pp. 46-67.

2nd half of class

Read: Flam, Jack D., “Matisse and the Fauves,” in *“Primitivism” in 20th Century Art*, Vol I, ed. William Rubin, New York, The Museum of Modern Art, 1984, pp. 211-239.

Week 4 – February 10th, 2021 - Picasso

First half of class

Read: Perry, Gill, “Primitivism and the ‘Modern,’” in *Primitivism, Cubism, Abstraction The Early Twentieth Century*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, Bottom p. 104 to top of p. 123.

2nd half of class

Read: Rubin, William, “Picasso,” in *“Primitivism” in 20th Century Art*, Vol I, ed. William Rubin, New York, The Museum of Modern Art, 1984, pp. 240-292.

Week 5 – February 17, 2021 - Picasso

Suzanne Blier, *Picasso’s Demoiselles The Untold Origins of a Modern Masterpiece*, Duke University Press, Durham, North Carolina, 2019.

2nd half of class

Leighten, Patricia, “The White Peril and Art Negre: Picasso, Primitivism and Anticolonialism.” *Art Bulletin* 72 (4): 609-630.

Week 6 February 24, 2021 - Dada and Surrealism

First half of class

Read: Maurer, Evan, “Dada and Surrealism,” *“Primitivism” in 20th Century Art*, Vol I, ed. William Rubin, New York, The Museum of Modern Art, 1984, pp. 535-593.

2nd half of class

To be announced

Week 7, March 3, 2021 - Giacometti

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First half of class

Read: Kraus, Rosalin, “Giacometti,” in *“Primitivism” in 20th Century Art*, Vol I, ed. William Rubin, New York, The Museum of Modern Art, 1984, pp. 502-534.

Week 7, March 3, 2021 - Giacometti

2nd half of class

Read: Pressly, William, “The Praying Mantis in Surrealist Art,” *Art Bulletin*, 55, Dec 1973, pp. 600-615.

Week 8 – March 10th – Dada, Surrealism and Max Ernst

First half of class

Read: Maurer, Evan, “Dada and Surrealism,” in *“Primitivism” in 20th Century Art*, Vol I, ed. William Rubin, New York, Museum of Modern Art, 1984, pp. 535-595

Second half of class

To be announced

March 17, 2021 – spring break

Week 9, March 24th, 2021 - Introduction to German Expressionism and its use of the ‘primitive’

First half of class

Read: Lloyd, Jill, *German Expressionism Primitivism and Modernity*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1991, pp. 3-49.

Second half of class

Lloyd, Jill, *German Expressionism Primitivism and Modernity*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1991, pp. 85-101.

Week 10, – March 31st, 2021 Emil Nolde

First part of class

Read: Lloyd, Jill, *German Expressionism Primitivism and Modernity*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1991, pp. 161- 212.

Second part of class

Read: Lloyd, Jill, *German Expressionism Primitivism and Modernity*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1991, pp. 213-234.

Week 11 - March 28th, Jackson Pollock and American Expressionism

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First part of class

Varndoe, Kirk, "Abstract Expressionism," in *"Primitivism" in 20th Century Art*, Vol I, ed. William Rubin, New York, The Museum of Modern Art, 1984, pp. 615-660.

Second part of class

Week 11 - March 28th, Jackson Pollock and American Expressionism

To be announced

Week 12, April 7th, 2021 – The painters of Senegal in the 1950's – Can an African be a primitivist?

Harney, Elizabeth. *In Senghor's shadow: art, politics, and the avant-garde in Senegal, 1960-1995*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2004. xxv, 316pp. illus. (pt. color), bibliog. (pp. 289-311).

Harney, Elizabeth. "Ecole de Dakar: Pan Africanism in paint and textile," *African Arts* 35 (3), 13-90B.

First Part of class

Read: Shonibare, Yinka. 2002. "Yinka Shonibare," in *Art Journal*, 61:2, 82-3.
Enwezor, Okwui. 1997. "The Joke is on You: The Work of Yinka **Shonibare**," in *Nka*, 6-7, 10-11.
Castro, J.G. 2006. "In Art, Anything is Possible: Yinka Shonibare," in *Sculpture*, 25:6, 22-27.

Second part of class

To be announced

Week 13 – April 14th – Student presentations

Week 14 – April 21st Student presentations

Week 15 – April 28th, Student presentations and wrap up

No reading assignment, Papers due

PLEASE NOTE: This schedule is tentative and subject to change at any time.

It is your responsibility to keep yourself informed about any changes

Cheating and Plagiarism

Longer version: Cheating on tests or plagiarizing materials in your papers deprives you of the educational benefits of preparing these materials appropriately. It is personally dishonest to cheat on a test or to hand in a paper based on unacknowledged words or ideas that someone else originated. It is also unfair, since it gives you an undeserved advantage over your fellow students who are graded on the basis of their own work. In this class we will take cheating very seriously. All suspected cases of cheating and plagiarism will be automatically referred to the Office of Judicial Affairs, and we will recommend penalties appropriate to the gravity of the infraction. The university's policy on Academic Integrity is available at <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-policy>¹ I strongly advise you to familiarize yourself with this document, both for this class and for your other classes and

¹ This web link was corrected on Sept. 13, 2015. S. Lawrence

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future work. To help protect you, and future students, from plagiarism, we require all papers to be submitted through Turnitin.com.

Since what counts as plagiarism is not always clear, I quote the definition given in Rutgers' policy:
Plagiarism: Plagiarism is the use of another person's words, ideas, or results without giving that person appropriate credit. To avoid plagiarism, every direct quotation must be identified by quotation marks or appropriate indentation and both direct quotation and paraphrasing must be cited properly according to the accepted format for the particular discipline or as required by the instructor in a course. Some common examples of plagiarism are:

- Copying word for word (i.e. quoting directly) from an oral, printed, or electronic source without proper attribution.
- Paraphrasing without proper attribution, i.e., presenting in one's own words another person's written words or ideas as if they were one's own.
- Submitting a purchased or downloaded term paper or other materials to satisfy a course requirement.
- Incorporating into one's work graphs, drawings, photographs, diagrams, tables, spreadsheets, computer programs, or other nontextual material from other sources without proper attribution.²

A SPECIAL NOTE: Students often assume that because information is available on the Web it is public information, does not need to be formally referenced, and can be used without attribution. This is a mistake. *All* information and ideas that you derive from other sources, whether written, spoken, or electronic, must be attributed to their original source. Such sources include not just written or electronic materials, but people with whom you may discuss your ideas, such as your roommate, friends, or family members. They deserve credit for their contributions too!

Judgments about plagiarism can be subtle. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask for guidance from your Professor

Student-Wellness Services:

Just In Case Web App

<http://codu.co/cee05e>

Access helpful mental health information and resources for yourself or a friend in a mental health crisis on your smartphone or tablet and easily contact CAPS or RUPD.

Counseling, ADAP & Psychiatric Services (CAPS)

(848) 932-7884 / 17 Senior Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901/ rhscaps.rutgers.edu/

CAPS is a University mental health support service that includes counseling, alcohol and other drug assistance, and psychiatric services staffed by a team of professional within Rutgers Health services to support students' efforts to succeed at Rutgers University. CAPS offers a variety of services that include: individual therapy, group therapy and workshops, crisis intervention, referral to specialists in the community and consultation and collaboration with campus partners.

Violence Prevention & Victim Assistance (VPVA)

(848) 932-1181 / 3 Bartlett Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901 / vpva.rutgers.edu/

² <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-policy/> Updated with the University's current language on July 13, 2012 and web link was corrected on Sept. 13, 2015. S. Lawrence.

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The Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance provides confidential crisis intervention, counseling and advocacy for victims of sexual and relationship violence and stalking to students, staff and faculty. To reach staff during office hours when the university is open or to reach an advocate after hours, call 848-932-1181.

Scarlet Listeners

(732) 247-5555 / <http://www.scarletlisteners.com/>

Free and confidential peer counseling and referral hotline, providing a comforting and supportive safe space.

Disability Services

(848) 445-6800 / Lucy Stone Hall, Suite A145, Livingston Campus, 54 Joyce Kilmer Avenue, Piscataway, NJ 08854 / <https://ods.rutgers.edu/>

The Office of Disability Services works with students with a documented disability to determine the eligibility of reasonable accommodations, facilitates and coordinates those accommodations when applicable, and lastly engages with the Rutgers community at large to provide and connect students to appropriate resources.