

**THE ARTS OF THE YORUBA DIASPORA**

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Class-Tuesday 3:00-4:55; Thursday 4:05-4:55 in FAC 201

Office hour: 10:00- 11:30 Wednesday or by appointment or drop in if I am working in the office.

***The Yoruba***

The Yoruba peoples of southwestern Nigeria and southern Benin are perhaps the most urban of all African groups. By the eleventh century AD, their founding city, Ile-Ife, was already a thriving metropolis, the center of an influential city-state. Over the ensuing centuries, numerous other Yoruba city-states both major and minor evolved all claiming descent from Ile-Ife. This urban tradition continues to this present day, when Yoruba cities may number in the hundreds of thousands. To emphasize this aspect of Yoruba culture, the course will be organized as a tour of major cities, and in each instance we will focus on one or more art topics. The impact of Yoruba culture has been felt among a number of West African groups, and it is one of the strongest and most easily traceable strains in the Western Hemisphere as well, especially in the cultures of the Caribbean and South America. We will explore this idea by selecting specific cities in West Africa, South America, the Caribbean, North America and Europe for exploring the arts of those who felt the impact of Yoruba ideas, Yoruba religion, Yoruba organizations, and Yoruba forms.

The Yoruba have been extremely productive in the production of a variety of art forms and media. In this class we will explore the archaeological arts of Ancient Ile-Ife and Owo, look at the kingship arts of the many Yoruba kingdoms that flourished into our own time, examine the arts associated with the worship of the orisha (the Yoruba gods), follow the Yoruba religion to the western Atlantic, and then explore the arts of contemporary artists of Yoruba descent in cities in Africa, the Caribbean, Europe and the Americas.

**DATES TO REMEMBER:**

<b>Exams and tests</b>	<b>Paper deadlines</b>
First content exam: 10/2.	September 19 – must have discussed topic with Dr. Poynor I cannot meet everyone on the last day. Please plan ahead!
Second content exam : Thursday, 11/2	September 26 – proposal, topic, first bibliography emailed October 24 – 2nd bibliography, hypothesis, outline emailed
Third content exam (final ): 12/17, 12:30-2:30.	November 25 – hardcopy paper turned in.

**GRADES:** Five components factor into your grade as follows:

Component	Points possible 350
Exam 1 . . . . .	80* points
Exam 2 . . . . .	100* points
exam 3 . . . . .	120* points
Paper . . . . .	100 points

Total . 400 points

\*Lowest test score exam counts as 80 points, highest score 120 points.

**GRADE CALCULATION**

Grade	Points required for grade	Grade	Points required for grade
A (exceptional).....	375-400	C (average).....	296-311
A- (very, very good)...	360-375	C- (low average).....	280-295
B+ (very good) .....	352-359	D+ (below average).....	272-279
B (good) .....	336-351	D (well below average).	256-271
B- (pretty good).....	320-335	D- (not good).....	240-255
C+ (high average).....	312-319	E (failing).....	239 and below

**TERM PAPER** A research paper of 1500 to 3000 word of text, in addition to footnotes, bibliography, scanned illustrations, etc. is required. The paper will address some aspect of art and its cultural context addressed in the course. It may have to do with the Yoruba of West Africa or with some aspect of the Yoruba Diaspora or contemporary art by a Yoruba artist or a Diaspora artist inspired by Yoruba history/religion/philosophy/iconography, etc. no two individuals may have the same topic, so see me early to insure you get the topic you want. Also, I cannot see everyone on the last day, so plan ahead!

You must consult with me prior to September 19 about an appropriate topic to make sure it is suitable and that there is enough material available for research. I reiterate: You must talk with me prior to September 19.

On September 26 a formal proposal will be emailed to me [[rpoynor@ufl.edu](mailto:rpoynor@ufl.edu)] and should include a digital photograph that has to do with your topic and a beginning bibliography to demonstrate that you have seriously looked for information on the subject. Five points off final grade for no consultation. Five points off for tardy topic proposal.

Second writing assignment deadline: October 24. An extensive bibliography building on your previous bibliography and a preliminary OUTLINE are due October 24, with implied evidence of conscientious research. Include again an appropriate scanned image. This version should include a thesis statement that clearly presents the point to be made in your paper. The title should allow the reader to have a good idea of the purpose of the paper. The bibliography should provide evidence that you have done much more research since your initial bibliography. Five points will be taken off for tardy outline/ bibliographies or for indication of lack of serious effort.

The final paper is due November 25 or before. No late papers will be accepted unless negotiated with me for appropriate reasons beforehand or documentation of appropriate grounds after the date

College papers are, of course, typed on white paper, double spaced with 12 point font such as Times New Roman. Spelling, grammar, punctuation and style will not be graded per se but it will affect your grade, since papers are assigned to give you experience in researching, learning about a specific topic in detail, and communicating what you have learned in a lucid manner. It is absolutely necessary that you proofread your work. If you use footnotes improperly or do not properly credit your sources or do not include appropriate illustrations tied to the text through references, I will not read your paper. Illustrations need to be credited with information similar to that in footnotes. I prefer that illustrations be inserted by scanning at the point at which they are introduced in the text.

Researching the arts of Africa is not as simple as researching those of the West. Bibliographical materials have a habit of hiding, waiting to be found in Library West or The Central Science Library rather than in the AFA Library, lurking under unknown headings in databases and catalogues, disguising themselves as anthropology, ethnology, archaeology, history or travel rather than art. use a variety of research tools to find appropriate sources. I will ask Tom Caswell, art history bibliographer for AFA Library, to talk to the class about appropriate approaches to research. Please be sure to get started immediately.

A source that will be very useful is African Arts (AFA: 709.6005 A258), a journal published by UCLA. Many AA articles are available on JSTOR. Other useful periodicals include Africa, (MAIN: 916 A258), Arts d'Afrique noire (AFA: NX 588.75 A77), and Man, (MAIN: 572.06 M2661). In addition to illustrations that you may scan from books and journals, it is possible to snip images from digital sources. ARTstor is a good source for images too.

Be cautious about using general websites. Many are superficial. Some are mediocre. Some are good. I'm always happy to help you out. We also have a good library staff that is more than willing to help you with databases and catalogues. Do not fear librarians. Ann Lindell and Tom Caswell in the AFA Library are always pleased to assist you. The Africanist bibliographers Dan Reboussin and Peter Malanchuk are located in Library EAST. I am willing to help you find appropriate materials if you ask.

The University now makes use of software to detect and to fight plagiarism. Be sure you are aware of what plagiarism is and how it can affect your college career. In light of that, I'd like each of you to read the following in its entirety. Have a printer ready to take the test and print out your certificate. Give me a copy of the certificate to assure me that you have read it and understand it:

<http://www.indiana.edu/~istd/definition.html>

### **UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA POLICIES**

**Academic Honesty:** As a result of completing the registration form at the University of Florida, every student has signed the following statement: "I understand the University of Florida expects its students to be honest in all their academic work. I agree to adhere to this commitment to academic honesty, and understand that my failure to comply with this commitment may result in disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion from the University."

See: <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/> .

**Acceptable Use Policy:** Please read the University of Florida Acceptable Use Policy. It is expected that you abide by this policy. See: <http://www.it.ufl.edu/policies/aupolicy.html>.

**Software Use:** All faculty, staff, and students of the University of Florida are required and expected to obey laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against University policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate.

**Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:** Students with disabilities, who need reasonable modifications to complete assignments successfully and otherwise satisfy course criteria, are encouraged to meet with me as early in the course as possible to identify and plan specific accommodations. Students WILL be asked to supply a letter from the Office for Students with Disabilities to assist in planning accommodations. Please see me outside of class time to discuss any accommodations you might need.

**University of Florida Counseling Services:** Resources are available on campus for students having personal problems or lacking clear career and academic goals that interfere with their academic performance. Problems in planning your study time or with test anxiety might be helped or alleviated by an appointment.

These resources include:

*University Counseling Center*, 301 Peabody Hall, 392-1575, personal and career counseling.

*Student Mental Health*, Student Health Care Center, 392-1171, for personal counseling.

*Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS)*, Student Health Care Center, 392-1161.

*Career Resource Center*, Reitz Union, 392-1601, career development assistance and counseling.

### **Readings:**

Given the nature of the course there is no text book. I have placed a number of books, chapters and articles on reserve. Some PDFs will be on reserve, and some I will email to you. You should read at least one source for each of the topics we discuss. There is a wealth of material on Yoruba and Yoruba-related arts. You must familiarize yourself with the readings listed on pages 4-6 below. I will not be checking to see if you are keeping up, but that will be evident on your discussion on exams.

### **Class Topics:**

#### **August**

26 Introduction to class procedures

26 The creation of the world

26 Yoruba cosmology – Orunmila & Eshu

28 Ife – archaeology

#### **September**

2 small groups discuss ori inu and ori ode – discussion with Osi Audu

2 Migrations from Ife - Owo

4 A Yoruba mystery - Esie

9 Researching yoOur topic – Tom Caswell, Art History Bibliographer for UF Libraries  
 The Oyo Empire - Shango & Ibeji  
 11 Egungun  
 16 Ketu and Western city-states - Gelede  
 18 Abeokuta – carving families Ogboni carved objects  
 23 Ijebu – Oshugbo & Ekine  
 25 Ekiti Kingdoms (Efon Alaiye) – the palace  
 End exam 1 material  
 Exam on October 2

Begin exam 2 material

### ***October***

7 Oshogbo – Oshun - Wenger and the Oshun Grove  
 9 Oshogbo – Beier and Mbari: Twins Seven Seven Buraimoh, Nike Okundaye  
 14 Lagos – The Brazilian Style  
 16 Lagos: introduction of modernism  
 21 Abomey – A Fon city  
 23 Benin – A Yoruba dynasty over an Edo Empire – Ndubuisi Ezeluomba as guest speaker  
 28 continue Benin  
 End exam 2 material  
 Exam On November 2  
 Begin exam 3 material  
 28 the slave trade and melding of cultural idea  
 30 Bahia - Candomblé

### ***November***

4 Havana - Santeria  
 11 Port au Prince - Vodou  
 13 New Orleans – Shotgun Houses  
 18 Miami – Lucumi thrones and altars  
 20 Brooklyn beads  
 25 Oyotunji SC shrines

### ***December***

2Archer creating an environment / Crescent City Ifa Foundation  
 4 Yoruba in London: Yinka Shonibare; Chris Ofili, Rotimi Fani-Kayode  
 9 Yoruba in London: Yinka Shonibare; Chris Ofili, Rotimi Fani-Kayode review

**December 17, 12:30-2:30 final exam**

### ***Readings for topics:***

Preparation

Poynor, “Yoruba and Fon,” in Visona, Poynor and Cole, A History of Art in Africa, 2008.

Ile-Ife– archaeology

Willett, Ifé in the History of West African Sculpture, (732.2096692/W713i), passim.

Drewal and Pemberton, Yoruba: Nine Centuries of African Art and Thought, section on Ife.  
 (N7399.N52 Y68 1989)

Eyo, Treasures of Ancient Nigeria, (N7399.N5/E94/1980), 10-14, 32-39, 90-112.

Royal arts 239-243

Thompson, "The Sign of the Divine King," AA, 3(3): 8-17, 74-80.

Ogboni 243-245

Ojo, "Ogboni Drums," AA, 6(3):50-52, 84, (709.6005/A258).

Yoruba cosmology – Orunmila and Eshu

Pemberton, "Eshu-Elegba: The Yoruba Trickster God," AA, 9(1): 20-27, 66-70.

Poynor, Nigerian Sculpture, Bridges to Power, Introduction.

Witte, Ifa and Esu, (BF1779.I4/W57/1984) (Illustrations)

Owo

Eyo, Treasures of Ancient Nigeria, (N7399.N5/E94/1980), 14-17, 19-21, 39-42, 46-48, 114-126, 146-152.

Poynor, "Edo Influence on the Arts of Owo," AA, 9(4):40-45, 90.

Esie

Eyo, Treasures of Ancient Nigeria, (N7399.N5/E94/1980), 21-2, 48.

Allison, African Stone Sculpture, (730.966/A439a), 11-24.

Stevens, The Stone Images of Esie, (DT513/.S83), passim.

Egungun

Issue of African Arts, 11(3) (April 1978). Passim.

Shango

Armstrong, "Oshe Shango and the Dynamic of Doubling," African Arts, 16(2):28-32.

Ibeji

Stoll, Ibeji: Zwillingsfiguren der Yoruba: twin figures of the Yoruba, 1980.

Houlberg, "Ibeji Images of the Yoruba," AA, 7(1):20-27, 91-92.

Orisha oko

Fagg, Yoruba beadwork: art of Nigeria, 1980

Gelede

Drewal and Drewal, Gelede. passim.

Oshugbo

Beier, Ulli, The return of the gods: the sacred art of Susanne Wenger, 1975

Ekine

Drewal, Henry John; et al, Center for African Art [New York] Yoruba: nine centuries of African art and thought. 1989.

Abeokuta – carving families and Ogboni carved objects

Slogar, Christopher, "Carved Ogboni Figures from Abeokuta, Nigeria," African Arts, 35(4) (Winter, 2002): 14-92.

Ekiti area (Efon Alaiye) – Olowe of Ise

Walker, Roslyn, "Olowe of Ise: A Yoruba Sculptor to Kings, African Arts, 33(1) (Spring 2000): 88 - 89

Oshogbo – Oshun - Wenger and the Oshun Grove

Beier, Ulli, Thirty Years of Oshogbo Art. Lagos: Iwalewa, 1991.

Beier, Ulli, The Return of the Gods: the Sacred Art of Susanne Wenger. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1975, 120p, ill, maps, 23cm

Oshogbo – Beier and Mbari

Twins Seven Seven Buraimoh, Nike Okundaye

Vaz, Kim, The Woman with the Artistic Brush: A Life History of Yoruba Batik Artist Nike Davies, M.E. Sharpe, 1995.

On the Coast (Lagos) – The Brazilian Style

Lagos modernism

Abiodun, Rowland; Drewal, Henry J; Pemberton, J, *The Yoruba Artist New Theoretical Perspectives on African Arts* ed by Rowland Abiodun, Henry J Drewal, and John Pemberton III. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1994.

#### Abomey – A Fon city

Adams, "Fon Appliquéd Cloths," AA, 13(2):28-41, 87.

Bay, Asen: Iron Altars of the Fon People, *passim*.

Blier, Suzanne, "Dahomey: "Leopard" Rulers and the Arts of Dynastic History," pp. 98-123, in The Royal Arts of Africa, Abrams, 1998.

#### Benin – A Yoruba dynasty over an Edo Empire

Eyo, Treasures of Ancient Nigeria, (N7399.N5/ E94/1980), 17-19, 42-46, 128-144.

Ben-Amos, The Art of Benin, (N7399/.N52/B453/1980), *passim*.

Ezra, Royal Art of Benin, (N7399.D3 E97 1992), *passim*.

#### Bahia - Candomblé

Cleveland, Kimberly, Review of *Manipulating The Sacred*.by Mikelle Smith Omari-Tunkari, African Arts, 40(2) (Summer2007): 94-95.

#### Port au Prince - Vodun

Cosentino, Donald (editor), Sacred Arts of Haitian Vodou, Los Angeles, Calif.: UCLA Fowler Museum of Cultural History, 1995.

#### New Orleans – Shotgun Houses

Vlach, John Michael, The Afro-American tradition in decorative arts, Cleveland: Cleveland Museum of Art, 1978. (Chapter on Shotgun Houses)

#### Cuba (Havana) - Santeria

Miami -- Brown, David H. "Thrones of the Orichas: Afro-Cuban Altars in New Jersey, New York, and Havana," African Arts, 26(4) (Oct., 1993): 44-59+85-87.

#### Brooklyn

Drewal, Henry and John Mason, Beads, Body, and Soul: Art and Light in the Yoruba Universe, Los Angeles: UCLA Fowler Museum of Cultural History, 1998

#### Oyotunji SC

Omari, Mikelle, "Completing the Circle: Notes on African Art, Society, and Religion in Oyotunji, South Carolina" African Arts 24(3) (July 1991)

#### Hawthorne Ogun

Barnes, Sandra (editor), Africa's Ogun, 1989.

#### Crescent City Ifa Foundation

Poynor, "Visual Ifa in Ormond Beach, Florida," PowerPoint on reserve

#### Yinka Shonibare

Court, Elsbeth, "Yinka Shonibare: Finalist, Barclays Young Artist Award." African Arts 26(1) (1993): 79-81.

Enwezor, Okwui. "Tricking the Mind: The Work of Yinka Shonibare." *Yinka Shonibare: Dressing Down*. Birmingham, UK: Ikon Gallery, 1999, 8-19.

Fisher, Jean. "The Outsider Within: Shonibare's Dandy and the Parasitic Economy of Exchange." *Yinka Shonibare: Double Dress*. Jerusalem: The Israel Museum, 2002, 27-35.

#### Rotimi Fani-Kayode

Nelson, Steven, "Rotimi Fani-Kayode, Art Journal, 64(1) (Spring2005): 4-19.

**FURTHER BIBLIOGRAPHY:**

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- Abiodun, Rowland; Drewal, Henry J; Pemberton, J, *The Yoruba artist new theoretical perspectives on African arts* ed by Rowland Abiodun, Henry J Drewal, and John Pemberton III. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1994, ix, 275p, col ill, 27cm
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- Lawal, Babatunde, *The Gẹ̀lẹ̀de Spectacle: Art, Gender, and Social Harmony in an African Culture*
- Omari-Tunkara, Mikelle Smith, *Manipulating The Sacred: Yoruba Art, Ritual, and Resistance in Brazilian Candomble*
- The Woman with the Artistic Brush: A Life History of Yoruba Batik Artist Nike Davies*
- Yoruba oral tradition: selections from the papers presented at the Seminar on Yoruba Oral Tradition: Poetry in Music, Dance and Drama*. Ile-Ife: Department of African Languages and Literatures, University of Ife, 1975, xvii, 1093p.
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- Osogbo: model of growing African towns. Ibadan: Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan, 1995.
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