

Faculty of Arts and Letters



ARKE2640 History of African Arts

[30h] 4 credits

This two-yearly course is taught in 2006-2007, 2008-2009,...

This course is taught in the 2nd semester

Teacher(s): Clementine Madiya Nzuji
Language: French
Level: Second cycle

Aims

Allow the students to enter the world of non-European art, through the arts of Black Africa. The first step is one of mutual observation: see and be seen. Shake off one's prejudices, look with the eyes of the other party. The second step is to learn to apply the rigorous methods of archaeologists and art historians to a specific area of the African arts. And finally to show the students quality works of art by arranging visits to museums.

Main themes

Main themes of the course: The first part of the programme is devoted to some general, basic ideas, and lays down the major hermeneutic principles that favour access to the understanding of African art and its aesthetic reality. (Idea of primitivism, of African art and of "black" art, sense of beauty in Africa. Reminder of auxiliary disciplines such as geography, society, main anthropological trends, concept of the artist. Access to the sources of sacredness in the African arts. Bibliography with comments. Still in Part I of the course but in another section, study of the purpose of African art. Where can it be found? (broad survey of the traditional arts in Black Africa). What methods should be used to study this art? (Above all an ethno-morphological approach and a knowledge of signs and symbols). The meaning of history permeates the lectures. Lastly, passage from artistic techniques to consideration of the vision of man (proportions, isometrics, and so on). Part II of the course consists of a closer examination of one aspect of African arts - Zairian, Nigerian or Malian. Method based on the premise that students preparing a degree know little about the physical and human geography of Black Africa, or about anthropology and the reciprocal approach to cultures as developed by Transcultura. They must discover the meaning of a traditional society, the appreciation of sacredness, how a work of art is born in this context.

Content and teaching methods

Some hermeneutic principles that make it easier to grasp African aesthetic realities are discussed in the light of a mutual knowledge of cultures (primitivism, negritude Importance of knowing the auxiliary disciplines - geography, linguistics, anthropological trends, history, place of the artist. Sources of sacredness in Africa: fundamental signs and symbols. Next, the purpose of African art is studied in itself: where can it be found? Survey of the traditional arts; role of museums and collections. What analytical methods should be adopted? (ethno-morphological method, synchronic approach, diachronic approach). Technique and vision of man (wood, patina, sculpting techniques, proportions, isometry). Finally, a region of black Africa is examined in more detail, depending on the year: arts of Zaire, of West Africa, of Nigeria.

Programmes in which this activity is taught

ARKE2M1 Master en histoire de l'art et archéologie, orientation générale
DVLP3DS/AF Diplôme d'études spécialisées en études du développement (études africaines)
FLE3DS Diplôme d'études spécialisées en enseignement du français langue étrangère ou seconde

Other credits in programs

ARKE21	Première licence en histoire de l'art et archéologie	(4 credits)
ARKE22	Deuxième licence en histoire de l'art et archéologie	(4 credits)
ARKE2M1	Master en histoire de l'art et archéologie, orientation générale	(2 credits)
COMU22/AM	Deuxième licence en information et communication (Analyse des médias)	(4 credits)
DVLP3DS/AF	Diplôme d'études spécialisées en études du développement (études africaines)	(4 credits)
FLE3DS	Diplôme d'études spécialisées en enseignement du français langue étrangère ou seconde	(4 credits)
HIST21	Première licence en histoire	(4 credits)
HIST22	Deuxième licence en histoire	(4 credits)