ARTh-A454 ARTS OF THE WEST AFRICAN COAST: AFRICAN ART AND WRITING TRADITIONS

This course will be an overview of African written traditions south of the Sahara in their historical and social contexts. Concepts include what makes an "African Graphic Writing System", and how they are used as forms of visual art as well as markers of identity, religion, and moral philosophy. Civilizations to be covered include the Asante, Bamum, Ejagham, Yoruba, and Kongo. This course focuses on the arts and graphic writing traditions of the African sub-Sahara and aims to prepare students to identify parallel graphic traditions retained in the characteristics of the visual systems still used across the African Diaspora identity, including in Cuba, Brazil, Cuba, Haiti, Jamaica, Trinidad, Suriname and the southeastern United States.

Students will learn how to distinguish and discuss the objects made by various African cultural groups (including visual motifs and functions) within a historical and art historical context, attaining a visual literacy on the cultural production of African peoples before European contact, during the Atlantic slave trade and during European occupation. The students will examine and interpret the roots of African art, myth and folklore that are unearthed, preserved and reinterpreted by art historians, ethnographers, and anthropologists.

FALL 2018 CLASS # 37614
PROFESSOR BARBARO MARTINEZ-RUIZ
SPEA A335
TR 9:30-10:45