

University of Nairobi
College of Humanities and Social Sciences
Institute of Anthropology, Gender and African Studies
B. A. Anthropology

NAF 209: Introduction to the Arts

Course Outline 2013/2014

Instructor: Mulu Muia

Purpose and Objectives of the Course

The course is tailored to provide students with insights into the various definitions, orientations and leanings in the study of art. The course further delves into conceptual, theoretical and practical aspects of the interface between art and culture.

Course content

1. Introduction and conceptual definitions
 - What is art?
 - Artefacts and Material culture

2. Problems in definitions of artistic concepts
 - Art and anthropology
 - Theoretical approaches to the study of art
 - Ethnic and ethnographic arts
 - Universality of art
 - Art as science

3. Sub-fields of art
 - Verbal/ Performing arts
 - Dance, song, drama
 - Culinary arts
 - Graphic arts
 - Architecture
 - Sculpture
 - Visual arts

4. Art and society
 - Styles of art
 - The language of art
 - Imagination and imagery
 - The creative drive
 - The value of art

5. Art as an aspect of cultural heritage
 - Transmission of arts in culture
 - Transmission of arts in modern society

- Aesthetics in Western art
- Application of Western aesthetics to African art
- Children art
- Art and gender
- Touristic art

References

Chappel, J. S. H. 1977

Decorated gourds in north-eastern Nigeria. *Ethnographica: The Nigerian Museum*.

Lagat, K. and J. Hudson (Eds.) 2006

Hazina: Traditions, trade and transitions in Eastern Africa, Nairobi and London: National Museums of Kenya and The British Museum

Leggat, A. 1988

Shakespeare's political drama: The history plays and the Roman plays. Routledge: London.

Nenburg, V. E. 1977

Popular literature: A history and guide, Penguin Books: Auckland.

Panker, R. and G. Pollock 1981

Old mistresses: Women, art and ideology, Pantheon Books: New York

Steiner, C. B. 2001

African art in transit, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge

Steiner, Wendy (Ed) 1981

The sign in music and literature, University of Texas: Austin

Wheale, Nigel (Ed) 1995

The post-modern arts: An introductory reader, Routledge: London.

Mode of Presentation

1. Lectures and class discussions and debates
2. A personal take home assignment on an area to be given will account for 10% of the total of continuous assessment tests.
3. A sit-in Continuous Assessment Test will account for 20% of the total score.
4. A final examination will account for 70% of the total score
5. Students are encouraged to undertake wide reading from various sources on the anthropology of art.