

*The Black Atlantic*  
*AAAS 329*  
*ARTHIST 383*  
*ICS 226S-01*

Mondays & Wednesdays,  
12noon - 1:15pm

Professor Richard J. Powell,  
Instructor

*Introduction to*  
*Course*

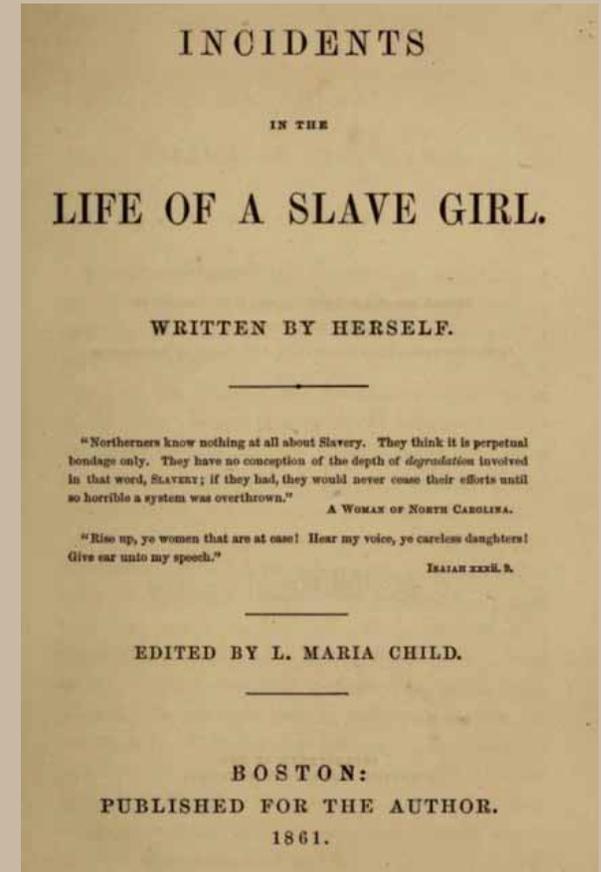
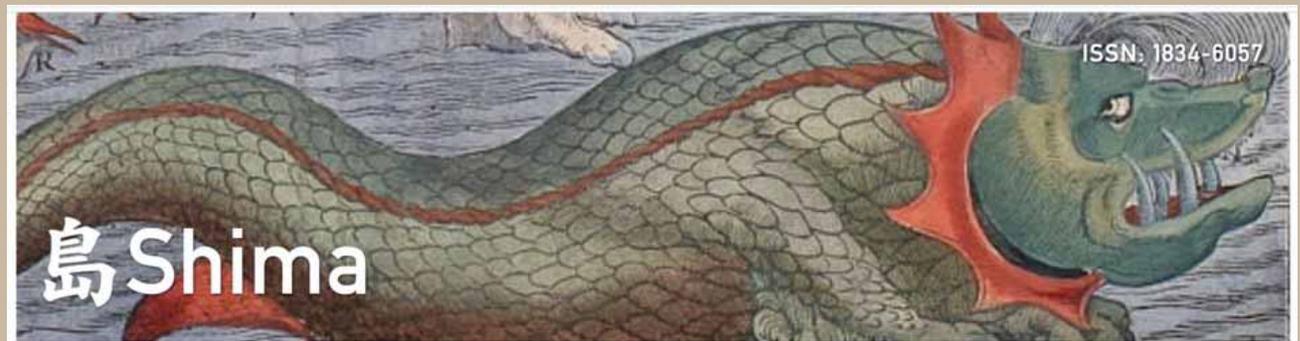
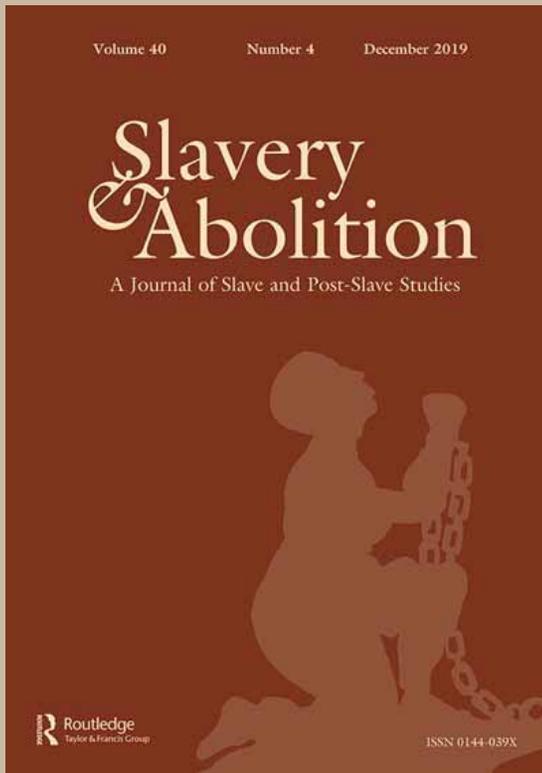


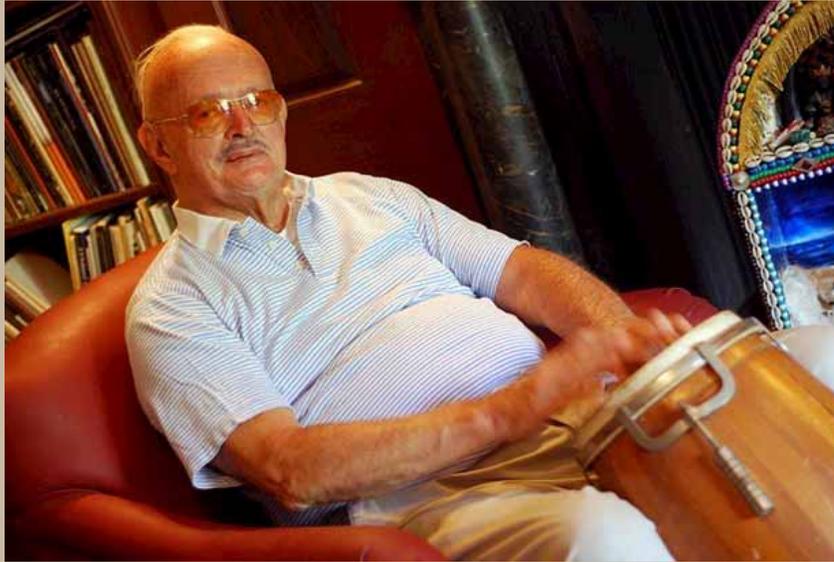
Frank Bowling, *Night Journey*, 1969-70. Acrylic on canvas.

# The North Carolina Historical Review

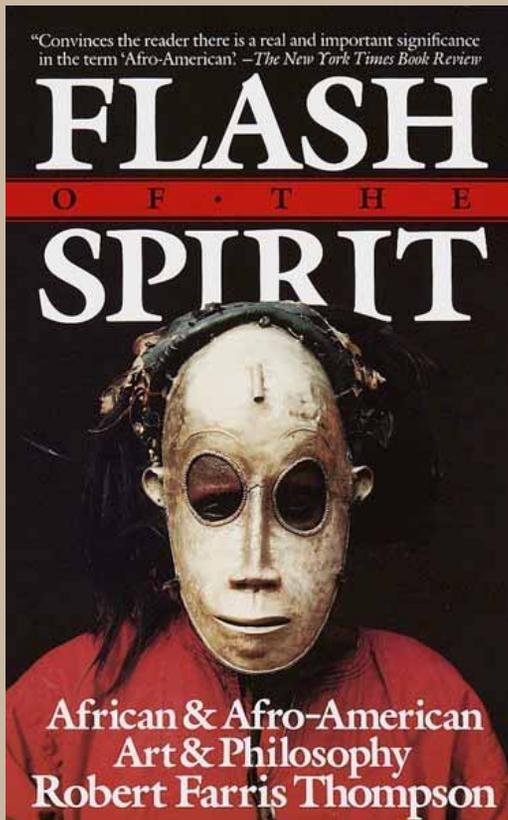
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Readings from an assortment of books & journals (on Sakai, Duke University Libraries, & Amazon or Kindle purchase)

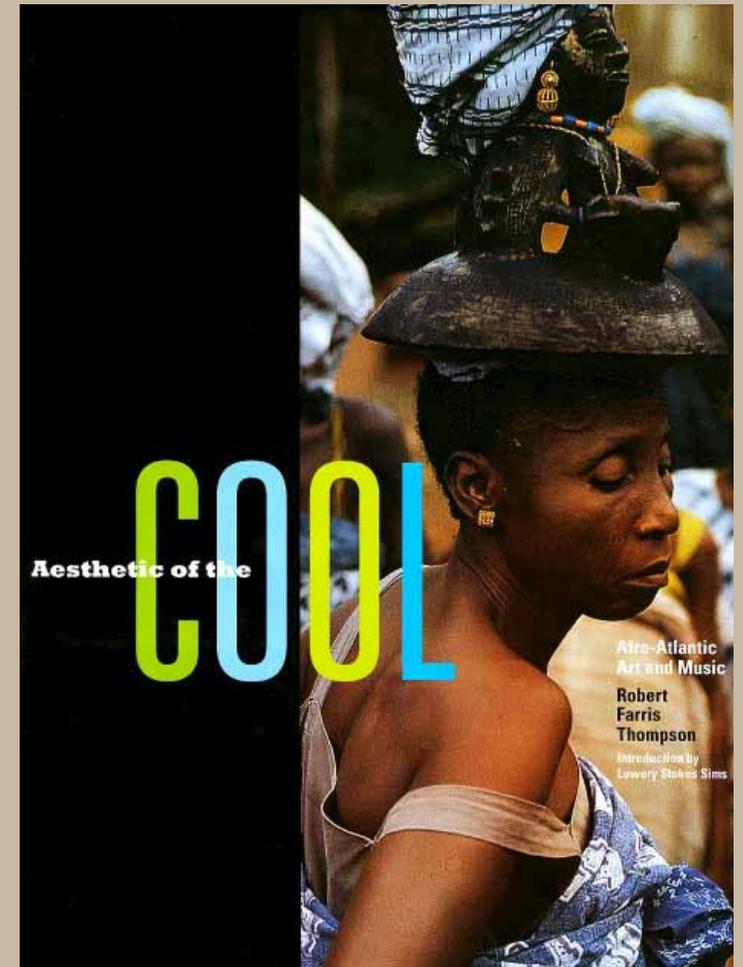




Books on Sakai, Duke University Libraries, & Amazon or Kindle purchase



Robert Farris Thompson (1932-2021), Pioneering art historian of the Arts of the African Diaspora. Left: *Flash of the Spirit: African & Afro-American Art & Philosophy* (New York: Random House, 1983). Above: Robert Farris Thompson, *Aesthetic of the Cool: Afro-Atlantic Art and Music* (New York: Periscope Publishing, Ltd., 2011)



**What is Black  
Atlantic culture?**



Above: Benjamin Henry Latrobe, detail of a *bamboula*, Congo Square, New Orleans, LA, February 19, 1819. Drawing. Below: Film still from *Beyonce: Black is King* (2020), with a copy of Robert Farris Thompson's *Black Gods and Kings* (1971). Right: Hip-hop artist Young Thug, 2018. Photograph by Petra Collins.





Clockwise from upper left: Woman winnowing rice in a coil-grass basket, Charleston, SC, 1980s. Ricky Moore, chef & owner of the Saltbox, Durham, NC, 2022 winner of the James Beard award. Shrimp Etoufee, classic Louisiana stew.





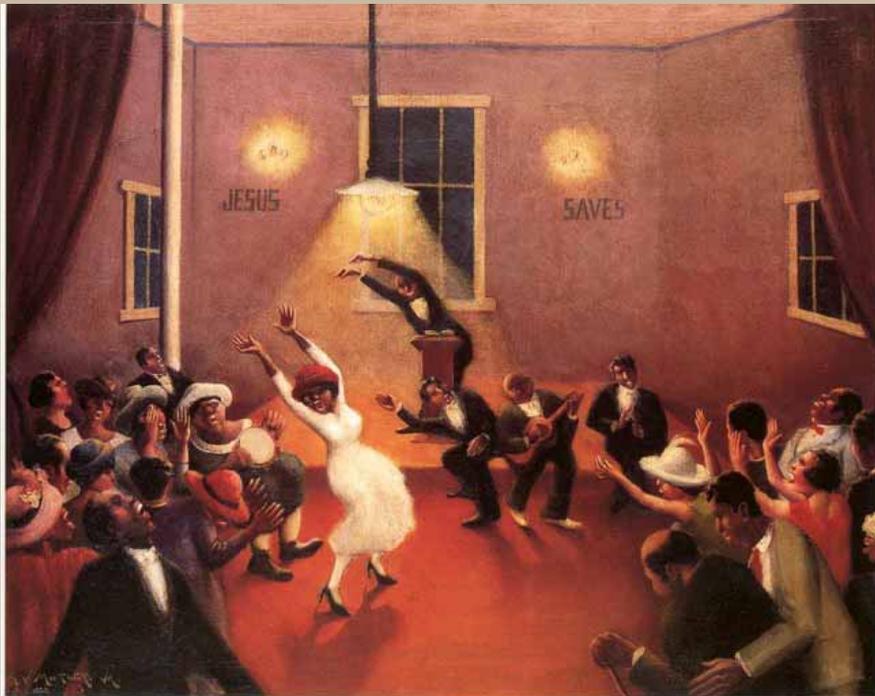
Above: Slave quarters, Horton Grove, Stagville Plantation, Durham County, NC, 1850s. Below: National Museum of African American History & Culture, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., opened in 2016. Right: NMAAHC architect of record Phil Freelon (1953-2019) & NMAAHC designer David Adjaye, circa 2016.





Left: Gucci reproduction of Harlem fashion designer Dapper Dan's jacket design, using Gucci fabric, 2017. Center: Pyer Moss, Fall/Winter 2021/2022 collection. Right: Virgil Abloh, Louis Vuitton Fall 2021 Men's collection.

Right: John Antrobus, *Plantation Burial*, 1860. Oil on canvas. Below: Archibald J. Motley, Jr, *Tongues (Holy Rollers)*, 1929. Oil on canvas. Below right: The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., speaking at the March in Washington for Jobs & Freedom, August 28, 1963. Photograph.



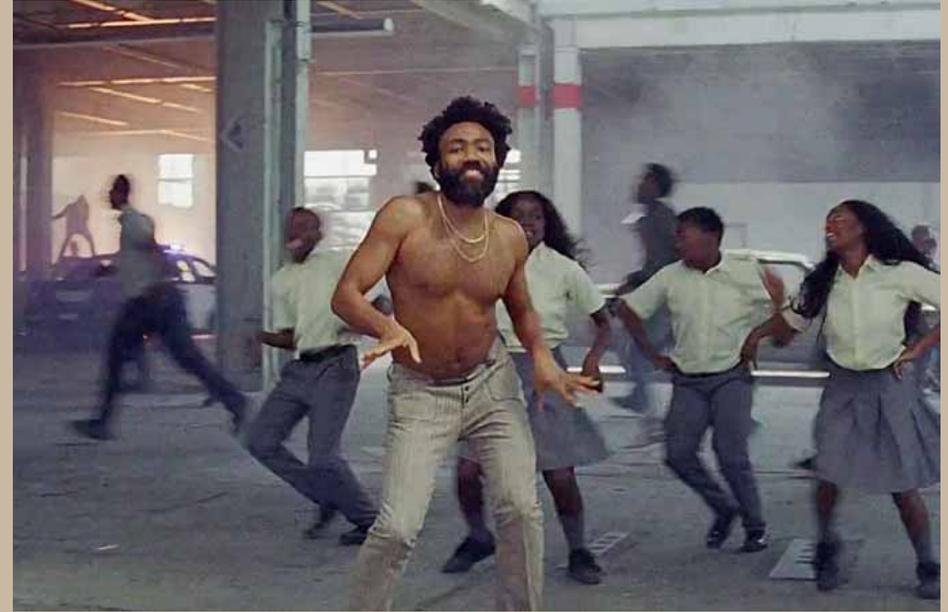


Clockwise from upper left: Zion Williamson scoring during the Duke versus Syracuse basketball game, March 15, 2019. Kylian Mbappe, football player for France, 2021. The Jamaican Women's Relay Team celebrating after their victory at the Tokyo Olympics, August 2021.

Right: Wayne Miller, South Siders watching the Bud Biliken Parade, Chicago, IL, 1947. Photograph.



Above: A member of the "Black Indians," Mardi Gras, New Orleans, LA, circa 1970s.  
Below left: Second Liners, New Orleans, LA, circa 1950s.

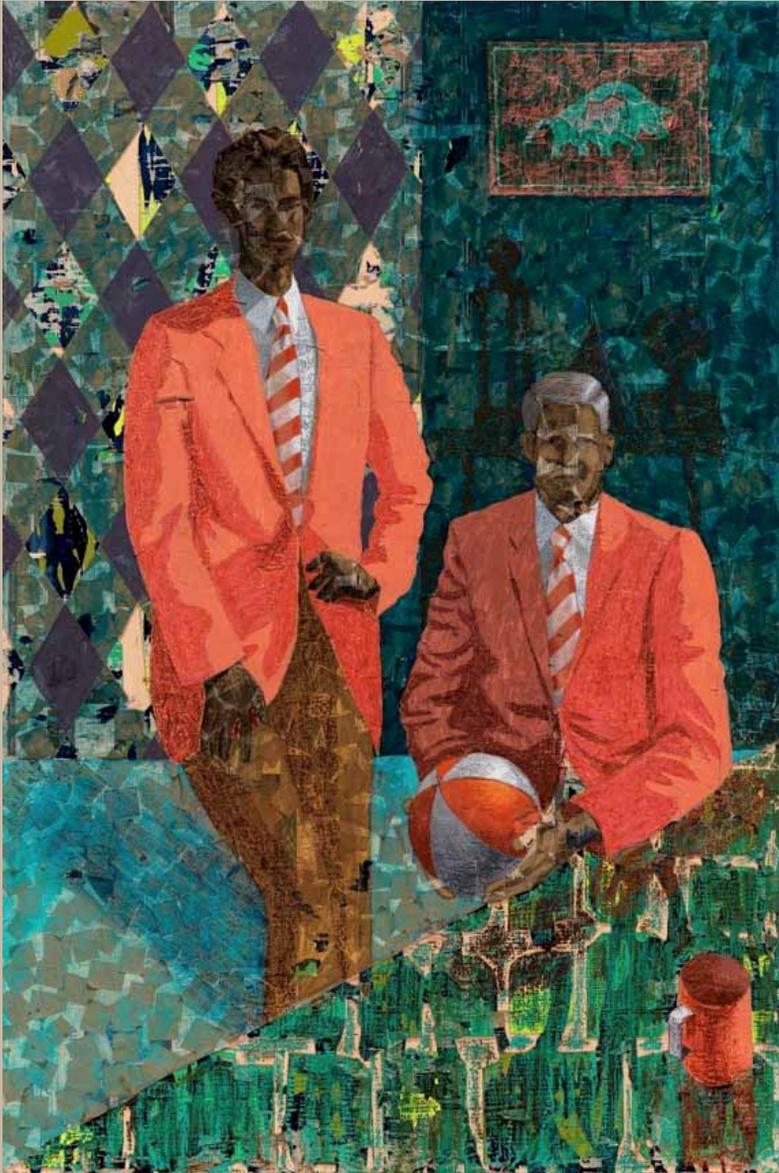


Clockwise from upper left: Director Jordan Peele on the set of *Get Out!* (2017). Childish Gambino (Donald Glover) performing in the music video *This is America* (Hiro Murai, 2018). Director Gina Prince-Blythewood on the set of *The Woman King* (2022). Film still from director Steve McQueen's *Lovers Rock* segment of *Small Axe* (2020).

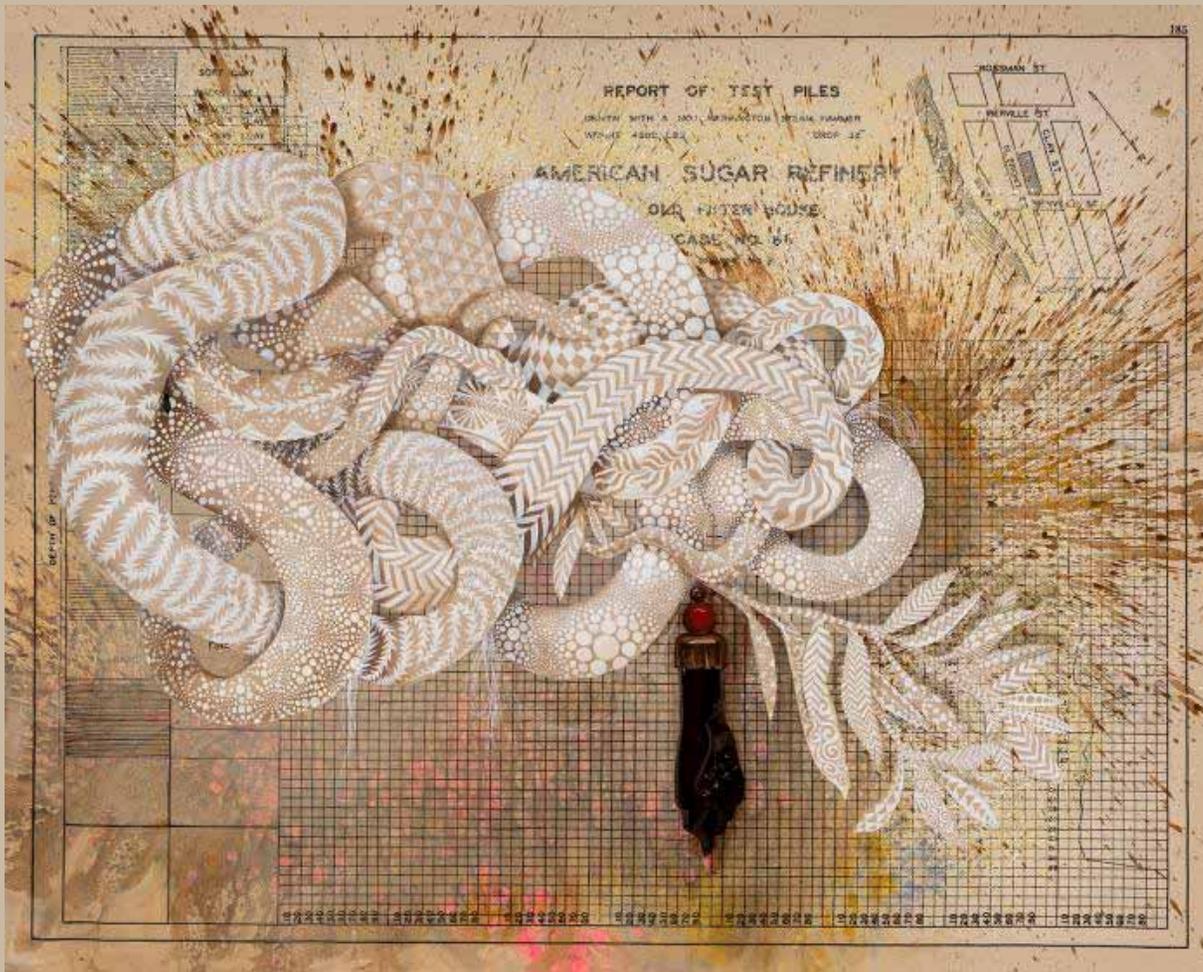




4 artists of African descent representing their countries at the Venice Biennale, 2022, from lower left: Sonia Boyce (United Kingdom), 2022; Zineb Sedira (France), *The Lovers*, 2008. C-print; Stan Douglas (Canada), *Doppelganger*, 2019. Video installation; and Simone Leigh (United States), *Working on the clay model for Brickhouse*, 2019. Sculptural installation.



Left: Derek Fordjour, *Signing Day*, 2019. Acrylic, charcoal, oil pastel & foil on newspaper mounted on canvas. Above: Sanford Biggers, *Quilt #15, Harmonics 2*, 2012. Fabric treated acrylic, spray paint & cotton on repurposed quilt.



Left: Firelei Baez, *Tignon for Ayda Weddo (or that which a center can not hold)*, 2019. Acrylic & oil on archival printed canvas. Right: Beverly McIver, *Defiant*, 2020. Oil on canvas.

Wednesday, January 18: Lecture 2/  
The Making of the Black Atlantic:  
Transatlantic Slave Trade & Colonialism

**\$200 REWARD!**

 **RANAWAY** from the subscriber, living in Fayette county, 7 miles from Lexington on the Maysville Turnpike, sometime in May last, a Negro Woman named **CELIA**. She is about 28 or 30 years of age, heavy, stout made, of copper complexion, and is quick-spoken.

I purchased said woman of **GEORGE WARE**, dec'd, and she may be in the neighborhood of her former owner's, or of **Clintonville, Bourbon county**.

I will give a reward of \$100, if taken any where in the State of Kentucky, or \$200, if taken out of the State, and delivered at **L. C. ROBARDS' jail** in Lexington.

**M. H. PARKER.**

Fayette county, nov 17 59



Upper right: Runaway Slave announcement, Fayette County, Kentucky, 1859. Lower right: Photograph of West Indian immigrants at Victoria Station, London, England, 1956.

Thursday, January 19, 5:30pm-7pm

Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University

*The Franklin Humanities Institute presents a roundtable discussion around Wangechi Mutu's **MamaRay**, the first sculpture commissioned by the Nasher Museum*

The event brings together several Duke faculty members, including Gustavo Furtado, Michaeline Crichlow, Felwine Sarr, Priscilla Wald, and Richard J. Powell, who along with Nasher Museum Director Trevor Schoonmaker will offer responses to *MamaRay* as a starting point of critical reflection and provide a context for its interpretation. Followed by a reception.

Wangechi Mutu, *MamaRay*, 2020. Bronze. Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University.

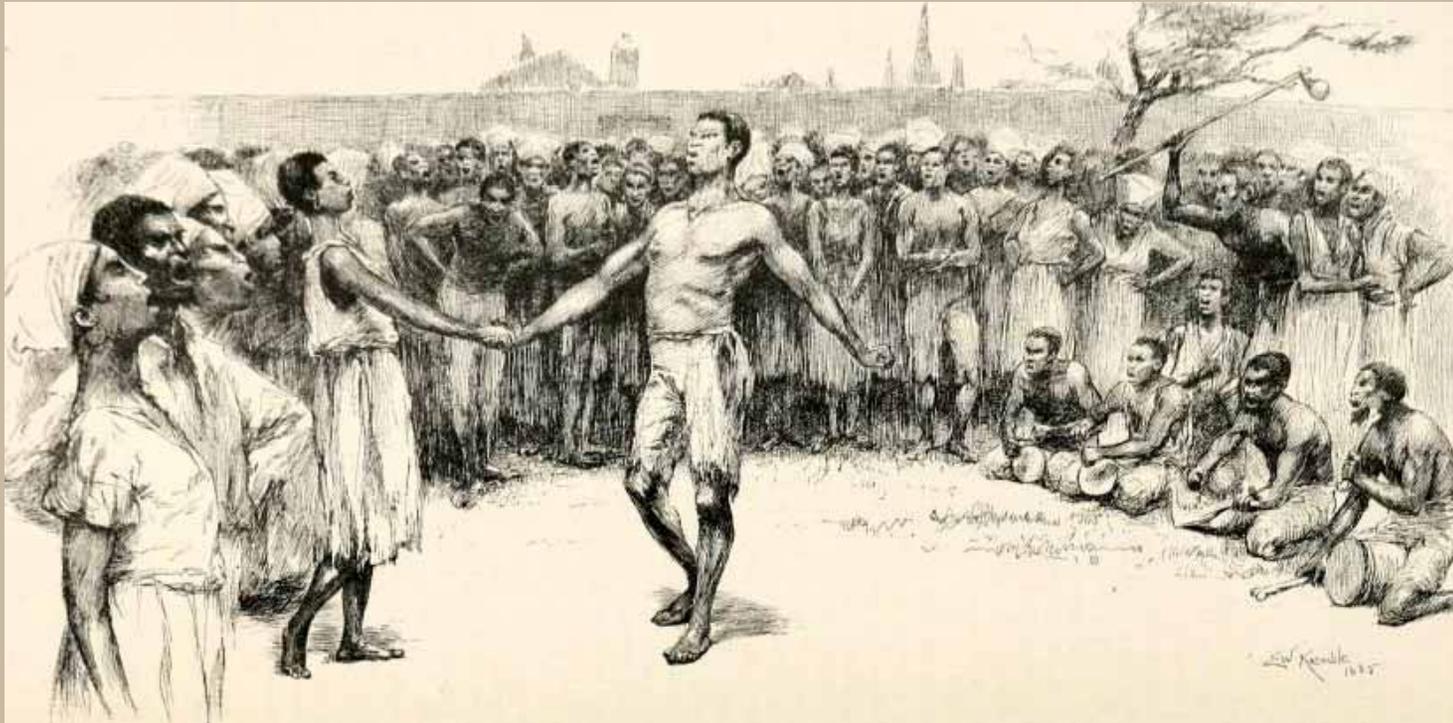


Monday, January 23: Lecture 3/Kongo I. Thompson's *Flash of the Spirit*



Yombe peoples, Democratic Republic of Congo, *Power figure (nkisi nkondi)*, 1905.

Wednesday, January 25: Lecture 4/Kongo II. Thompson's "Kongo Louisiana, Kongo New Orleans"



E.W. Kemble, *Dancing in Congo Square*, 1885. Ink drawing.



Monday, January 30:  
Lecture 5/Yoruba I. Thompson's  
*Flash of the Spirit*

Yoruba artist (attributed to Adugbologe, Nigeria),  
*Ancestor/Hunter headdress (Ere Egungun Olode)*,  
before 1922.

Wednesday, February 1: Lecture 6/  
Yoruba II. Thompson's *Flash of the  
Spirit*



Phyllis Galembo, Devotee of Shango, Recife, Brazil,  
1980s. Photograph.



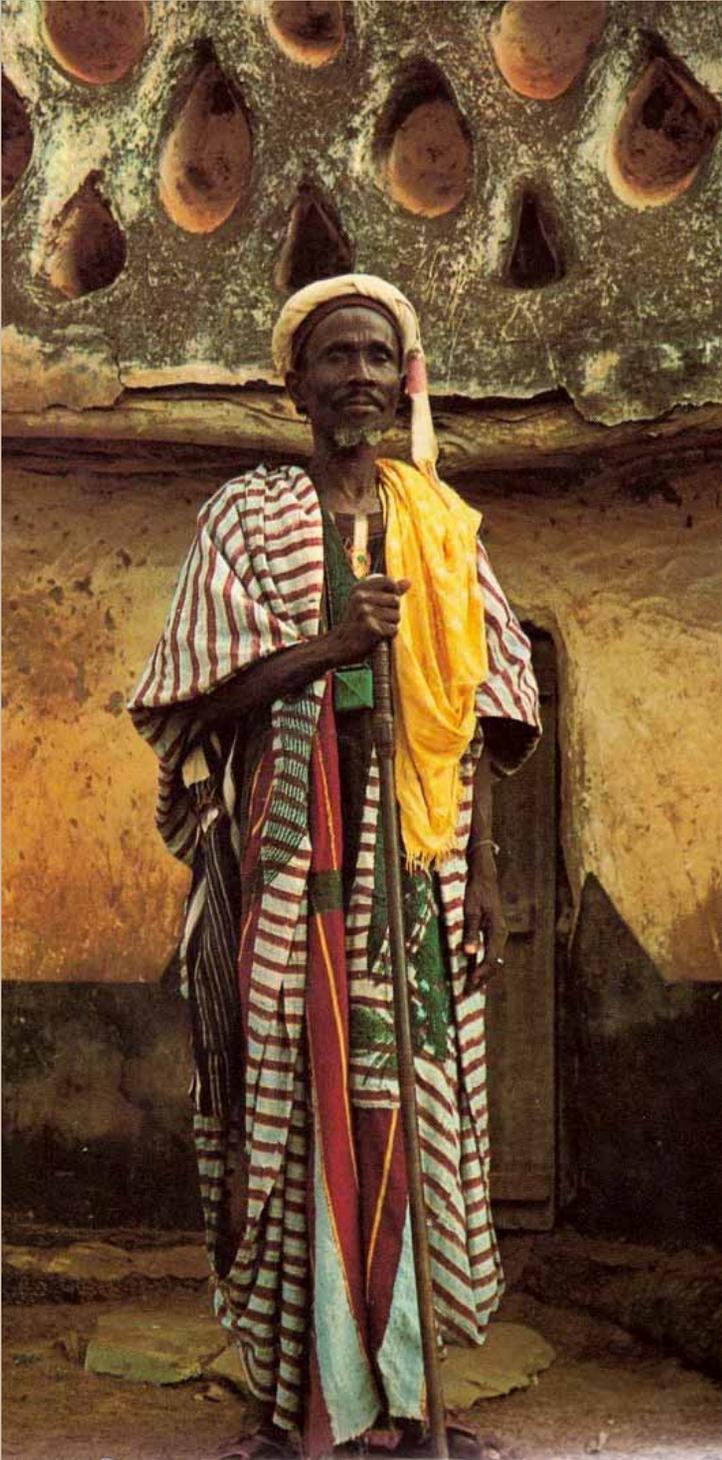
Monday, February 6: Lecture 7/Fon.  
Thompson's *Flash of the Spirit*

Fon peoples (Akati Akpele Kendo) (Republic of Benin),  
Warrior Figure, ca. 1858-89. Iron.

Wednesday, February 8: Lecture 8/Ejagham.  
Thompson's *Flash of the Spirit*



Phyllis Galembo, *Ngar Ball Masqueraders, Cross River area, Southeastern Nigeria, 2004.*



Monday, February 13/Lecture 9: Mande/Akan.  
Thompson's *Flash of the Spirit*

Roy Sieber, *Keeper of the Larabanga Mosque, Ghana, 1967*. Photograph.

**Wednesday, February 15/Midterm Review**

**Monday, February 20/Midterm Exam**

Wednesday, February 22/Lecture 10: Carnival & Spectacle, Marcel Camus,  
*Orfeu Negro (Black Orpheus)* (France/Italy, 1958)

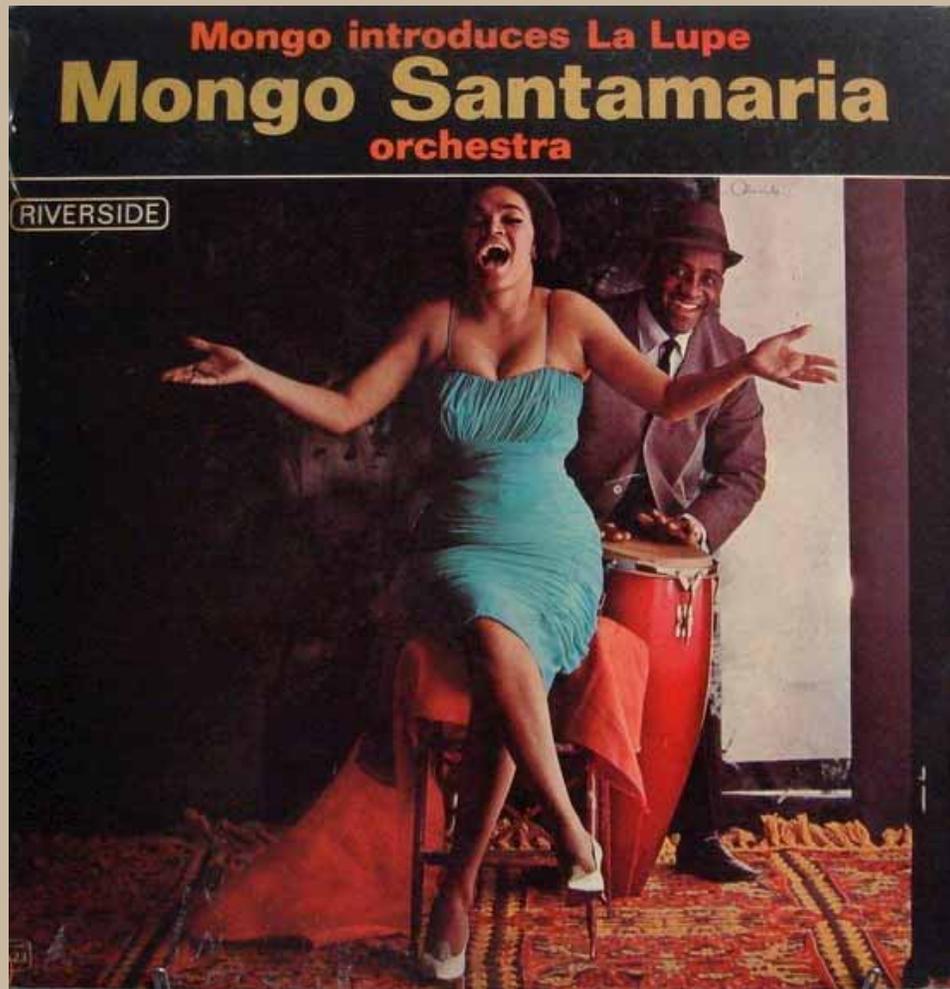


Film still from *Orfeu Negro (Black Orpheus)*, featuring actress Marpessa Dawn (1958).

**Monday, February 27/Lecture 11: Thompson's "An Introduction to black Atlantic history" & Thompson, "Face of the gods"**



**Afro-Cuban priestess, Luyano, Cuba, 1980s.**



Wednesday, March 1/  
Lecture 12: Afro-Cuban Music,  
Thompson's "The Afro-Cuban  
departures of Mongo  
Santamaria," "New voice from  
the barrios," & "Nueva York's  
salsa music"

Album, *Mongo introduces La Lupe/Mongo Santamaria Orchestra*  
(1963).

Monday, March 6/Lecture 13: Tomas Gutierrez Alea, *La Ultima Cena* (*The Last Supper*) (Cuba, 1976)



Upper & lower right: Film stills from *La Ultima Cena* (*The Last Supper*) (1976).

Wednesday, March 8/Lecture 14:  
Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*



**\$100 REWARD**  
**W**ILL be given for the apprehension and delivery of my Servant Girl **HARRIET**. She is a light mulatto, 21 years of age, about 5 feet 4 inches high, of a thick and corpulent habit, having on her head a thick covering of black hair that curls naturally, but which can be easily combed straight. She speaks easily and fluently, and has an agreeable carriage and address. Being a good seamstress, she has been accustomed to dress well, has a variety of very fine clothes, made in the prevailing fashion, and will probably appear, if abroad, tricked out in gay and fashionable finery. As this girl absconded from the plantation of my son without any known cause or provocation, it is probable she designs to transport herself to the North.  
The above reward, with all reasonable charges, will be given for apprehending her, or securing her in any prison or jail within the U. States.  
All persons are hereby forewarned against harboring or entertaining her, or being in any way instrumental in her escape, under the most rigorous penalties of the law.  
**JAMES NORCOM.**  
*Edenton, N. C. June 20*

Right: Harriet Jacobs (1813-1897). Above: Advertisement for Runaway Slave, Harriet Jacobs, Edenton, NC, 1835.

**Friday, March 10: Spring Break begins**

**Monday, March 20: Spring Break ends**

Monday, March 20/Lecture 15: Jamaica & Jonkonnu. Fenn, "A Perfect Equality Seemed to Reign": Slave Society and Jonkonnu" & Smalligan, "'An Effigy for the Enslaved': Jonkonnu in Jamaica and Bellisario's *Sketches of Character*"



Left: Isaac Mendes Belisario, *Red Set-Girls, and Jack-in-the-Green*, 1837. Color Lithograph. Right: Winslow Homer, *Dressing for the Carnival*, 1877. Oil on canvas.

Wednesday, March 22/Lecture 16: Abolitionism & Resistance,  
Haile Gerima, *Sankofa* (USA/Ghana/Jamaica, 1993)



Film still from *Sankofa*, featuring actress Oyafunmike Ogunlano, Jamaica (1993).

Monday, March 27/Lecture 17: Haiti. Thompson's "Tap-tap, Fula-Fula, Kia-Kia: the Haitian bus in Atlantic perspective"



Photograph of a Haitian bus, Port-au-Prince, 1980s.



Wednesday, March 29/Lecture 18:  
Maya Deren, *Divine horsemen:*  
*the Voodoo gods of Haiti* (USA, 1947-54)

Upper & lower left: Film stills from Maya Deren's *Divine Horsemen*. Above: Maya Deren (1917-1961) and a Haitian woman, circa 1948.



Monday, April 3/Lecture 19:  
United States I, Thompson's  
"Special projects for eternity,"  
"Prodigal son Alice's boy," &  
"From the first to the final  
thunder: African American  
quilts"



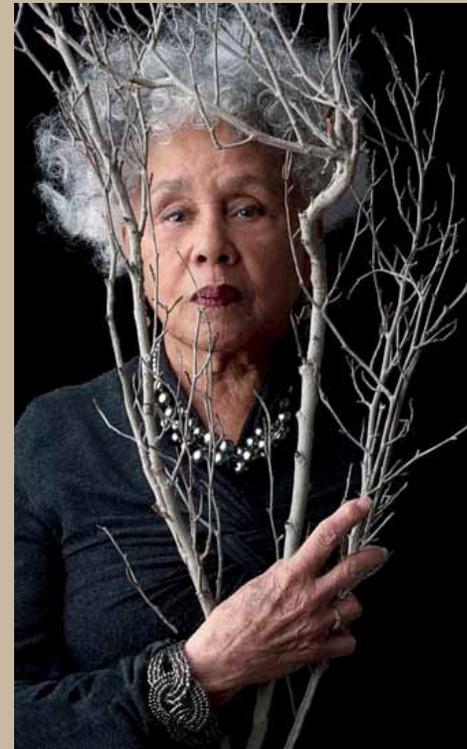
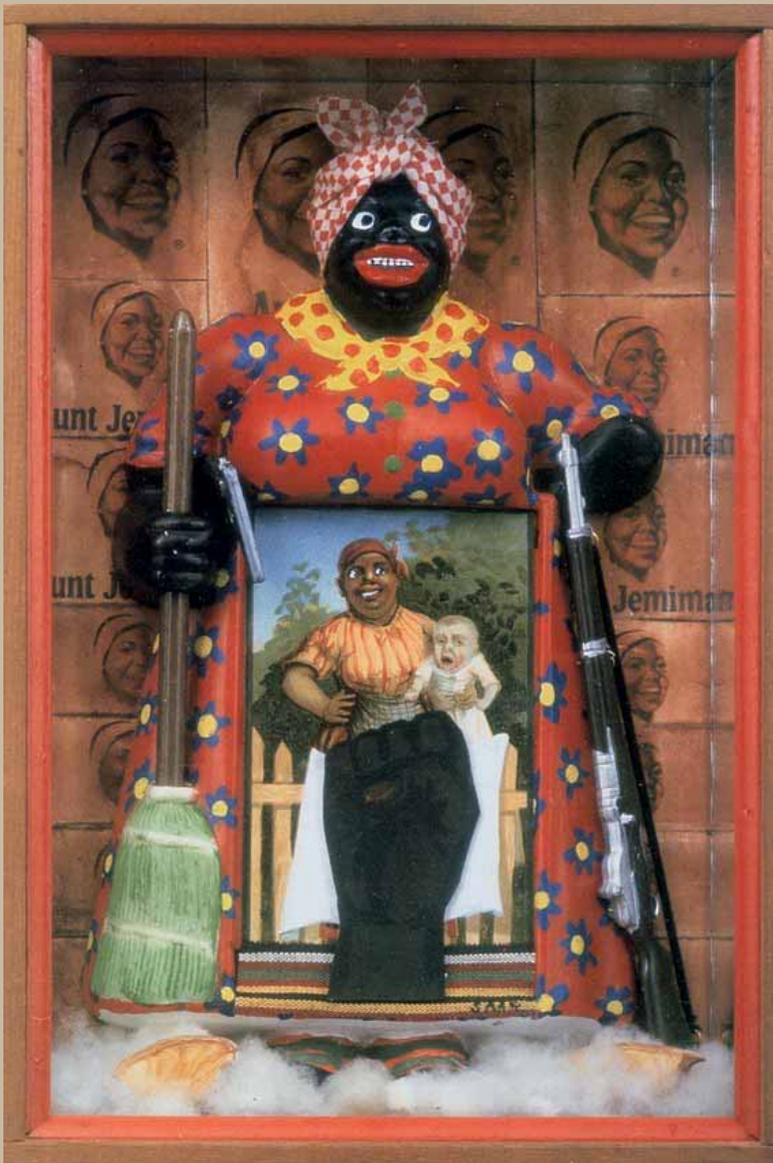
Above: Henry Dorsey, artist (1897-1973). Right:  
Lucinda Toomer, *Quilt*, 1975. Cotton, corduroy,  
flannel, velvet & wool.

Wednesday, April 5/Lecture 20: Possession & Performance, George T. Nierenberg, *Say Amen, Somebody* (USA, 1982)



Photograph of the *Say Amen, Somebody* film crew photographing the Barrett Sisters, a gospel singing group, St. Louis, MO, 1981.

Monday, April 10/Lecture 21: Contemporary Artist I, Thompson's "Betye Saar: chance and destiny"

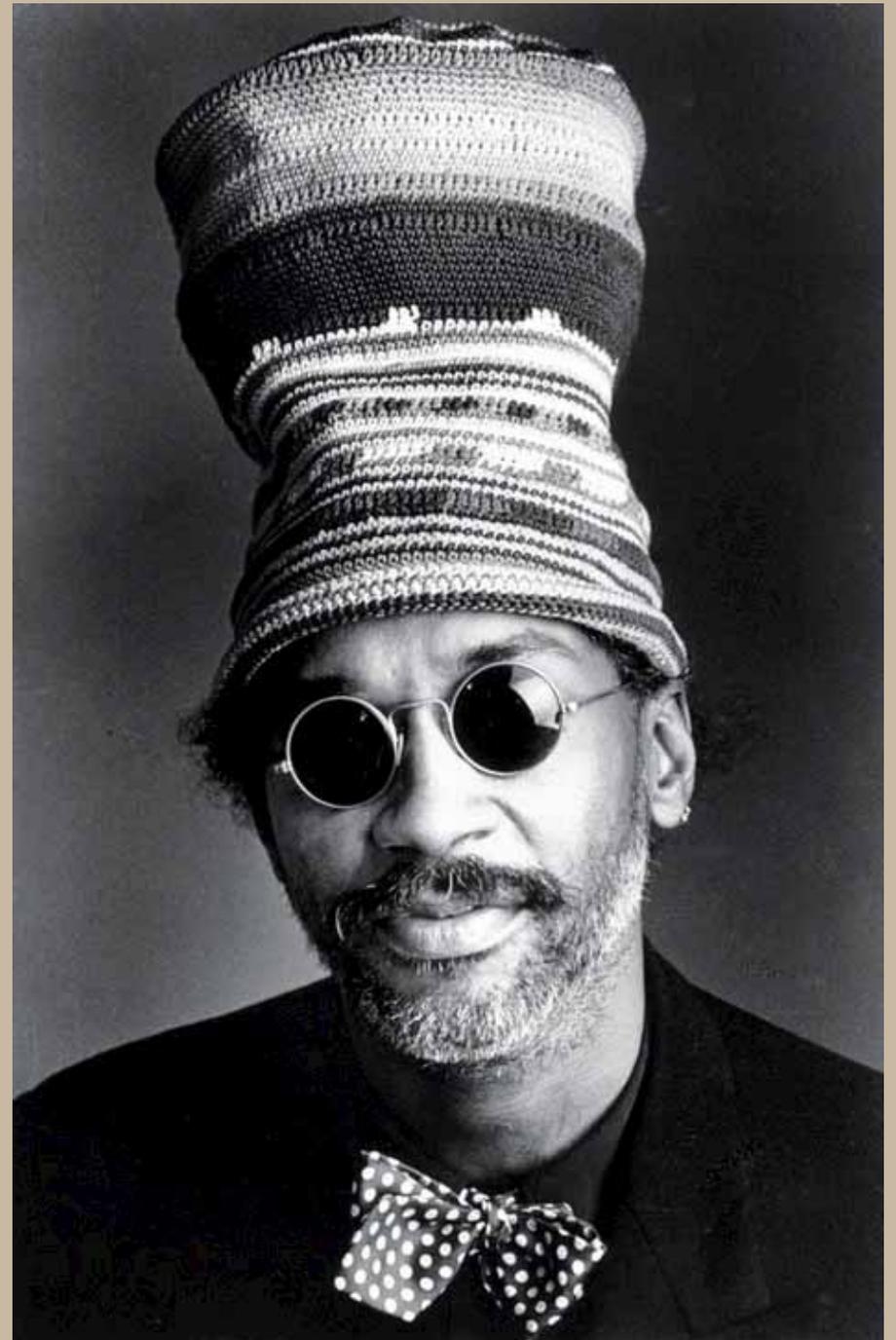


Left: Betye Saar, *The Liberation of Aunt Jemima*, 1972. Mixed media assemblage. Above: Betye Saar (b. 1926).

Wednesday, April 12/Lecture 22:  
Contemporary Artist II, Thompson's  
"David Hammons: 'knowing their past'"



Above: David Hammons, *Untitled*, 2000. Crystal, brass, frosted glass, light fixtures, hardware & steel. Right: David Hammons (b. 1943).



Monday, April 17/Lecture 23: United States II, Thompson's "Hip hop 101"



Left: Album, *The Message*, Grandmaster Flash & the Furious Five (1982). Right: Photograph of the New York Breakers, circa 1980s.

Wednesday, April 19/Lecture 24: Contemporary Artist III. Braun, "Tales from the Congo River: Catching Mami Wata." Class will meet at the Nasher Museum of Art in the lobby, in front of Wangechi Mutu's *MamaRay* (2020)



Left: Wangechi Mutu (b. 1972). Right: Wangechi Mutu, *MamaRay* (2020), Bronze. Installed in the plaza of the Legion of Honor, San Francisco, CA.



Monday, April 24/Lecture 25:  
Contemporary Artist IV. Thompson's  
"Activating heaven: the art of Jean-  
Michel Basquiat" & "Jean-Michel  
Basquiat: royalty, heroism, and the  
streets"



Left: Jean-Michel Basquiat, *Flexible*, 1984. Acrylic &  
oil-stick on wood. Above: James Vanderzee, *Jean-  
Michel Basquiat* (1960-1988). Photograph.

**Wednesday, April 26: Final Exam review**

**Friday, May 5, 9am-12noon: Final Exam**