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

Mondays & Wednesdays,
12noon - 1:15pm

Professor Richard J. Powell, Instructor

Introduction to Course

Readings from an assortment of books & journals (on Sakai, Duke University Libraries, & Amazon or Kindle purchase)
What is Black Atlantic culture?

Below left: Second Liners, New Orleans, LA, circa 1950s.

Right: Wayne Miller, South Siders watching the Bud Biliken Parade, Chicago, IL, 1947. Photograph.
4 artists of African descent representing their countries at the Venice Biennale, 2022, from lower left:
Wednesday, January 18: Lecture 2/
The Making of the Black Atlantic:
Transatlantic Slave Trade & Colonialism

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.

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

Wednesday, January 25: Lecture 4/ Kongo II. Thompson’s “Kongo Louisiana, Kongo New Orleans”

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*

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

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/

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*

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”


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”

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”

Wednesday, April 12/ Lecture 22: Contemporary Artist II, Thompson’s “David Hammons: ‘knowing their past’”

Monday, April 17/ Lecture 23: United States II, Thompson’s “Hip hop 101”

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)


Wednesday, April 26: Final Exam review

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