

**IDH2952: (Un)common arts course**

Fall 2022 (Sec. 1119)

Class meets on Tuesdays 3-3:50 pm

Harn classroom and galleries

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Office Hours: By appointment & Tues. 4-5 pm,  
Harn Room 132D

**Course Description and Goals:** This (un)common arts course is based around a single exhibition, [\*Speechless: Text & Image in Global Culture\*](#). The class will survey global themes (and variations) in the use of text and image in aesthetic messaging. Throughout the semester, we will look at African art, Asian art, modern and contemporary art, and photography and compare historical examples to our contemporary experiences. Assignments will include in-gallery discussions, visual analysis and comparison, selected contextual readings, and some creative writing/drawing tasks to be assigned. (No prior creative writing or drawing experience required, and no museum or art history experience is expected). Talks throughout the semester will include Harn curators and other guests who will speak about one or more works in the exhibition.

**Course Objectives:** Upon completion of this course, students will be able to communicate the depth of the use of the visual and textual historically. Students will use critical analysis of objects in the exhibition and on display in a museum setting to reflect on how perception and experience are influenced by the power of image & text.

**Texts and Readings:** All readings will be accessible through [eLearning - University of Florida \(ufl.edu\)](#).

**Requirements and Assignments:**

**Attendance & Participation 35%:** Attendance is mandatory, and participation is critical in this in-gallery class. Curators and subject-area experts will give gallery talks and conversations throughout the semester, and most of this content will not be available elsewhere. Students are expected to join the class discussion and readings should be completed before each class session. Please review the [UF Attendance Policies < University of Florida \(ufl.edu\)](#) for additional information on absences or makeup work.

**In-Class Assignments 25%:** Assignments that are assigned and completed during the class period.

**Speaker Prep/Other 25%:** In preparation for each guest speaker, students are required to compose two questions in advance based on the readings. These can be submitted through Canvas.

**Final Walkthrough Presentations 15%:** Throughout the semester, students will build a portfolio of materials that can be used to create a final presentation to the class. Final presentations on December 6<sup>th</sup> during the class period. No final exam.

## **Class Schedule:**

**Tuesday, August 30** – Introductions, syllabus review

“Note to Future Self” Assignment – In the exhibition

### **Tuesday, September 6: Multiple Messages in Ghanaian Textiles: Adinkra Symbols**

Guest Speaker: Professor James Essegbi, African Languages and Linguistics

\*Required Reading: Boateng, Boatema. *The Copyright Thing Doesn't Work Here : Adinkra and Kente Cloth and Intellectual Property in Ghana* /. Minneapolis :: University of Minnesota Press, 2011. (on Canvas)

\*Due before class: Compose two questions for the speaker based on the reading and submit them through Canvas.

### **Tuesday, September 13 – Reinventing the MUSEUM – Museums as Places of Authority**

\*Required Readings: Excerpts from *Reinventing the Museum: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on the Paradigm Shift*, ed. Gail Anderson, Altamira Press, 2004. (on Canvas)

Foster, Hal, “Subversive Signs,” in *Art in America*, 10 (November 1982): pp 88-93. (on Canvas)

### **Tuesday, September 20 – Mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century Photographs and Urban Design**

Guest Speaker: Carol McCusker, Curator of Photography, Harn Museum

\*Required Reading: [Photorealism](#). Examination of the photorealist works in the exhibition. (Article and image reproductions all available on Canvas)

\*Due before class: Compose two questions for the speaker based on the reading and submit them through Canvas.

### **Tuesday, September 27 - The Art of Memory**

Guest Instructor: Paige Willis, Harn Museum, Community Engagement, & Museum Interpretation Manager

### **Tuesday, October 4 - Get a Job! / Intro to Propaganda**

\*Required readings/video: Excerpt from *America at Work: Art and Propaganda in the Early 20th Century*. Gainesville: Harn Museum of Art, University of Florida, 2010. Watch “The Elevator Pitch”. (Both on Canvas)

## **Tuesday, October 11 – Typography as Art & Propaganda**

Guest Speaker: Assistant Professor Dori Griffiths, UF Graphic Design

\*Required readings (Choose 3): (all on Canvas)

[Nope to Hope: The Power of Graphics in Politics + Protest](#)

[How #BLM Uses Social Media to Fight the Power](#)

[W.E.B. duBois: Charting Black Lives](#)

[A Century of Posters Protesting Violence Against Black Americans](#)

[Who Are the Black Squares Really For?](#)

\*Due before class: Compose two questions for the speaker based on the readings and submit them through Canvas.

## **Tuesday, October 18 – Poetry Workshop, In the Exhibition**

Led by Harn Museum Docents: Lisa Jerry, Beverly Leibach, and Linda Nickel

\*Required reading: Descriptions of free verse, couplets, and *renga*. (on Canvas)

\*Due before class. Online prompt: Poetry in *Speechless*.

## **Tuesday, October 25 – Text & Image in Japanese Prints**

Guest Speaker: Associate Professor Ann Wehmeyer, Japanese and Linguistics

\*Required readings: Kabat, Adam. 2001. Monsters as Edo merchandise. *Japan Quarterly*, Jan-Mar 2001, Vol 48:1, 66-77 and excerpt from *Tokaido Texts and Tales: Tokaido goju-san tsui*, by Hiroshige, Kunisada, and Kuniyoshi, edited by Andreas Marks; with contributions by Laura Allen and Ann Wehmeyer. University Press of Florida, 2015.

\*Due before class: Compose two questions for the speaker based on the readings and submit them through Canvas.

## **Tuesday, November 1 – Multiple Meanings: Text, Image, and Form**

Guest Speaker: Tongyun Yin, Cofrin Curator of Asian Art, Harn Museum

\*Required readings: Museum labels from two objects in the exhibition, & To be Assigned (on Canvas)

\*Due before class: Compose two questions for the speaker based on the readings and submit them through Canvas.

## Tuesday, November 8 – Tour of Harn Museum Registration Department

Guest Speaker: Jessica Uelsmann, Senior Registrar, Harn Museum

## Tuesday, November 15 – What is the Point (of Art)?

\*Required readings: Selections from John Berger *Ways of Seeing*, Penguin Books 1972, 1990 and “What is the Point of Art?” in Alain de Botton and John Armstrong *Art as Therapy*, Phaidon, 2016. (on Canvas)

## Tuesday, November 22 -- Flex Class Session – Students’ Choice

Review of Final Assignment

Rubric and instructions also on canvas by October 18<sup>th</sup>.

## Tuesday, November 29 - Synesthesia and How Your Brain Looks at Art

\* Required video: [Beau Lotto: Optical illusions show how we see | TED Talk](#)

## Tuesday, December 6 – Class Presentations – In the Exhibition

Class presentations in gallery – 5-7 minutes per student

### **Class Policies:**

Cell phones, pagers, watch alarms, and all other noise-making devices must be turned off during class.

**No TM, IM, e-mail, internet gaming, or web browsing in class.** (Unless it’s part of the class!)

**Academic Honesty:** The very nature of higher education requires that students adhere to accepted standards of academic integrity. [Student Conduct Code | SCCR \(ufl.edu\)](#)

**UF Grading Policy:** [Grades and Grading Policies < University of Florida \(ufl.edu\)](#)

**Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):** Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center. [Click here to get started with the Disability Resource Center](#). It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

**Class Evaluation:** Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available [here](#).