ARTH 411 (CRN 17747 – 3 credits) Canadian Art and Race: Black Canadian Art Histories

Session: Fall 2020
Number of credits: 3
Time: Friday, 2:35 pm – 5:25 pm
Instructor: Dr. Joana Joachim
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Office Hours: Thursdays 12 PM – 1:30PM EST on zoom.

Course Description:
In this course, we will consider some of the key issues related to Black Canadian history as they relate to race and art history in Canada. We will examine the cultural and historical contributions by Black people and think critically about the disciplines of museology, curating and art history in Canada. We will develop an understanding of Black feminisms as well as harness skills to discuss art from critical perspectives considering issues around identity, gender, race, sexuality and class.

Course Objectives:
The goal of this course is to familiarize students with some basic principles of Black feminism, key aspect of Black Canadian history and how these apply to art history. This course will lead students to gain an understanding of key political and museological stakes of Black Art Histories in Canada and beyond. Students will be encouraged to question the practices which have led to the marginalization of these histories. At the end of the course students will be able to articulate these issues in a compelling manner and will have a general knowledge of Black Canadian art contributions from the nineteenth century to today. Students will also develop basic curatorial skills and learn how to facilitate conversations around Black Canadian contributions to art histories.

Keywords: Black Canadian history, Black Feminism, Black Canadian art, Critical Race Theory, Critical Museology.

Email communication Guidelines:
Students are encouraged to take advantage of office hours which will be hosted on zoom. The best way to speak with me is by email or during office hours on Thursdays from noon to 1:30 PM EST. Email communication should be polite with a clear question or request. Please make sure to verify that the answer to your question is not already outlined in the syllabus or in MyCourses on the Q&A discussion board. If it is not in the syllabus or on the discussion board, please clearly indicate where you require specification. Students may also request meeting with me if email communication is not enough and they are unable to reach me during office hours.

*McGill University occupies the traditional territory of the Kanien'kehá:ka, one of the founding nations of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy.*
September 4, 2020
Week 1: Introduction

Recommended Reading:


September 11, 2020
Week 2: Black feminist art histories (part 1)


September 18, 2020
Week 3: Black feminist art histories (part 2)


September 25, 2020
Week 4: Making Black Canadians Visible


Facilitators: _____________________      ______________________

October 2, 2020
Week 5: Black subjects in (white) Canadian art


Facilitators: _____________________      ______________________

October 9, 2020
Week 6: Erasure and Barriers in Canadian Institutions


Recommended Reading:

Facilitators: _____________________      ______________________

October 16, 2020
Week 7: Black Canadian Art History and Documentation

*Virtual guided visit at Artexte library and exhibition centre


October 23, 2020
Week 8: Canadian History Revisited


Facilitators: _____________________      ______________________

October 30, 2020
Week 9: Early Black Canadian Cultural Production


Facilitators: _____________________      ______________________

November 6, 2020
Week 10: Grappling with Painful Histories


Facilitators: _____________________      ______________________

November 13, 2020
Week 11: Claiming Space


Facilitators: _____________________      ______________________
November 20, 2020
Week 12: Black Canadian Curating
*Guest Lecture by Eunice Bélidor, Director FOFA Gallery, Concordia.


November 27, 2020 (Last class of term)
Week 13 - Curating Black Canadian Art


GRADING AND ASSIGNMENTS

1. Weekly Reading Logs: 10%  
2. Collective close reading: 10%  
3. Peer Facilitation: 10%  
4. Weekly Quizzes 20%  
5. Curatorial Proposal: 15%  
6. Final Exhibition project: 35%.

*The final exhibition project is broken down into 3 distinct assignments see below.

1. Weekly Reading Logs: 10%
In order to assess the students’ engagement and understanding of the weekly themes and readings, students will write a one paragraph reading response (5 to 7 sentences) every week except on weeks 3 and 7 of class (see collective close reading). These are to be submitted on MyCourses before the start of class each week. Each reading log should demonstrate the students’ ability to identify central arguments and key concepts from the readings and connect these to one or more artists or artworks discussed in class.

2. Collective close reading: 10% September 18 and October 16.
Students will collectively read and discuss two key texts on Perusall and will make three annotations or comments on each text. The annotations should be at different sections of the text and demonstrate critical engagement with the concepts discussed in the text. Acceptable annotations will pose pertinent questions, expand an idea or add another dimension to the discussion in the text or in a comment thread.

Each student must create a Perusall account (free) and enter the course code JOACHIM-6LWL9 in order to read and annotated the texts collectively. The first Perusall text (Kimberle Crenshaw) will be discussed in class on week 3 and the second text (Saidiya Hartman) will be discussed in class on week 7. Students are expected to arrive to class having read and annotated these texts. The texts will be both uploaded on Perusall and made available on MyCourses. The annotation period will be open for one week prior to the start of class. All 3 annotations should be made before the annotation period closes. Students are highly encouraged to begin their reading of the text prior to the annotation period to ensure they have enough time to complete this assignment.

3. Peer Facilitation: 10%. *Students will sign up in class on first day of class.
Students will facilitate one class discussion around the reading of the week. They will identify the key arguments and issues underlined by the author and bring forth artists (historical or contemporary) which represent or challenge these themes. Students are expected to present a key argument and pose one question in relation to the text. To get full marks students must both facilitate a discussion and be actively engaged in other discussions throughout the term. Active engagement includes responding to comments, answering or posing questions and making observations about the text or topic being discussed. Students unable to attend synchronous (live) seminars will have the option to facilitate discussions on MyCourses.

4. Weekly Quizzes 20%
Throughout the term students will be quizzed on the content provided asynchroneously. These are to be low stake knowledge and comprehension checks to ensure students learning remotely grasp the course content and readings. Quizzes in the first 3 weeks of class (September 4 to September 24) are mandatory but will not be included in the student’s final grade. Quizzes starting from week 4 (September 25 onward) will count toward the student’s final mark.
Students will write a 500-word curatorial statement outlining the general themes of their exhibition along with key theories or concepts the exhibition will be engaging with. Each statement should also draw connections from the core concepts of the exhibition with three Black Canadian artists including one woman, trans and/or non-binary artist.

6. Final Exhibition project: 35%. October 30, November 13 and December 9.
Throughout the semester students will work to develop an exhibition based on their curatorial proposal. Students will create an annotated bibliography of five texts which they will use for their curatorial essay. Each annotation should be 100 words and present the key questions, arguments and findings of the text. No texts presented in the course outline will be accepted in these annotated bibliographies. (25% of final project grade) Annotated bibliographies are due October 30

Student exhibition projects will include a selection of 15 artworks as well as a minimum of 5 didactic panel texts. The panels should give a general overview of the individual artist and artwork as well as provide context on how the selected work connects with the overall exhibition theme. (25% of final project grade) Didactic panels and artwork selection are to be submitted on November 13.

Each student will also submit a 1000-word curatorial essay expanding on the curatorial proposal and drawing connections between the selected artworks and artists in relation to each other and in relation to the exhibition theme. Students will be evaluated on their ability to connect the exhibition theme to issues touched on in class and their ability to coherently put the artworks in conversation with these subjects. Each essay should include a minimum of 3 sources from the syllabus as well as 3 sources from their annotated bibliography. (50% of final project grade) Essays are to be submitted on December 9.
Guidelines for Submitting Assignments:
Submit all assignments on MyCourses per McGill University specifications. The text must be typed and double-spaced using a standard font, such as Times New Roman or similar, at size 12pt or equivalent must be used. Margins must be a standard 1 - 1.25 inches. Students must submit all papers in Chicago style for citations and bibliographic references. Image credits must be provided and include the name of the artist, the medium, size, date and collection of the work. In accord with McGill University’s Charter of Students’ Rights, students have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded.

Expectations Regarding Due Dates and Exams:
Students are expected to submit their assignment on the day it is due, before the start of class. Failure to do so will result in the deduction of 1 letter grade taken per day that an assignment is late (i.e. A to A-). Extensions will only be granted in the case of an emergency with appropriate documentation. Students are required to make arrangements with the instructor before the due date has passed. All assignments are on MyCourses and will be made visible to students once they meet the appropriate progress checkpoints as they review course content on MyCourses. According to Senate regulations, instructors are not permitted to make special arrangements for final exams. Please consult the Calendar, section 4.7.2.1, General University Information and Regulations at www.mcgill.ca

Attendance Policy:
This course will be delivered remotely in both synchronous (live) and asynchronous (not live) formats to accommodate student attendance. Students able attend synchronous (live) classes are expected to have completed the readings and viewed all relevant content on MyCourses before class. Students must inform the professor in advance if they cannot attend synchronous (live) sessions. Students are expected to complete all readings and activities on MyCourses on a weekly basis whether they attend synchronous (live) sessions or not for assignments to be released. See Course Delivery Guide for specifications.

Plagiarism:
McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see www.mcgill.ca/integrity for more information).

“Plagiarism” means the representation of another’s work as one’s own or assisting another in representing another’s work, published or unpublished, as their own. No student shall represent another person’s work, published or unpublished, as their own in any writing, such as an essay, thesis, research report, project or assignment submitted in a course or a program of study, or represent as their own the work of another, whether the material so represented constitutes a part or the entirety of the work submitted. No student shall contribute any work to another student with the knowledge that the latter may submit the work in part or whole as their own. Receipt of payment or other forms of compensation for work contributed shall be cause for presumption that the student had such knowledge. (Source: https://www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/academicrights/integrity/cheating)
Chicago Citation Guide: https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide/citation-guide-1.html
Notes to Students:

1. More than one test, quiz or assignment scheduled on the same day does not constitute a conflict. Plan your schedule in advance.

2. Failure to complete assigned readings and materials or to attend seminars does not constitute a valid reason for postponing an exam or assignment of any kind.

3. Make-up quizzes/exams will only be given in cases of illness or provable personal crises. Appropriate written documentation (i.e. a medical note) is required for all missed tests/assignments. The medical note or other documentation must be valid for the period in question. The make-up test will then be scheduled as soon as possible thereafter.

4. If a student fails to attend any type of test/assignment due to illness or other credible cause, they must contact the professor within 48 hours. If you fail to do so the grade of F will stand.

5. Failure to participate in presentations/seminars without proof of illness or other credible cause will result in the grade of F.

6. Students are responsible for all course materials in all classes whether they are in attendance live or not.

7. All assignments should be submitted on MyCourses.

8. Make-up exams/assignments will not be given if students are absent because of vacation or any other reason deemed illegitimate by the professor.

9. In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University’s or professor’s control, the content, schedule and/or evaluation scheme in this course may change.