

Black and Latinx Art
AFPRL 290-92
ARTH 299-08
Fall 2021
Hunter College

Professor Lázaro Lima
Office: W1704
Meeting Time: M/Th from 2:45-4:00 PM
Location: W206
Communication: Blackboard e-mail list
Course Website: <http://www.lazarolima.com/black-and-latinx-art.html>

Course Description:

“When we think about aesthetics we associate its meaning with beauty or taste, but ‘aesthetic’ comes from ‘making aware’ — just the opposite of doctors anesthetizing their patients, artists aestheticize.”

—Teresita Fernández

Black and Latinx aesthetic expression refers to the artistic production of peoples of African American and Latin American descent in the U.S. This course asks fundamental questions related to Black and Latinx aesthetic production, its relation to the history of art in the U.S., as well as curatorial and museum practice. Among these: What constitutes Black and Latinx aesthetic expression? How has the discipline of art history understood Black and Latinx artistic expression in the U.S.? How have Black and Latinx identified artists and cultural agents engaged with and responded to cultural, historical, and institutional erasures?

In order to grapple with these questions, and many others, we will read about and analyze the work of Black and Latinx artists from the nineteenth century to the present in order to develop interpretive methods that can account for the artistic, historical, cultural, and political blind spots that have shaped art historical discourse. Interactive lectures will cover a range of material culture, including the built environment, ephemera, film, installations, painting, performance, photography, and sculpture. The course pays particular attention to themes related to Black and Latinx life and their connectedness to “American” history including migration, citizenship, social segregation, expatriation, gender norms, and the experience of racism, among many other topics.

The course is interdisciplinary in nature and will include interpretive methodologies and theoretical frames from art history, literary studies, anthropology, ethnomusicology, geography, history, and performance studies. As such this is not a survey course; rather, the course curates intersecting topics and themes that inform Black and Latinx aesthetic practice. We will use both primary and secondary sources to gain an understanding of the Black and Latinx experience as depicted through various art forms; the course readings will be coupled with music, poetry, and narratives.

Mode of Delivery

This course will meet in person. If the Covid-19 pandemic requires us to move instruction to an on-line mode of delivery, you will receive instructions for remote instruction via email. In the event the class moves to remote instruction, we will meet synchronously and you should come to "class" as you would any professional setting. Please note that CUNY policy allows for instructors to expect that your cameras are on and you to be visible.

Safety Considerations

We are living and learning in unprecedented times for which there is no simple template for how to survive a pandemic or how to optimize learning in the face of Covid-19. But we do have driving principles to guide us that are central to the Hunter College mission and my own pedagogy: "Mihi Cura Futuri," the care of the future is mine. Since we cannot have a future unless we take care of ourselves, and each other, I expect that all students will follow safety protocols as established by fact-based science, institutional policy, and common sense. As of the start of the semester, the policies related to pandemic learning can be found here (and may be subject to updates as necessary): <http://www.lazarolima.com/health-and-safety.html>.

Learning Objectives and Outcomes

Upon completion, students will be able to:

1. Develop the skills for interpreting Black and Latinx visual literacy through various methods of analysis
2. Demonstrate a fuller understanding of the historical development and social construction of Black and Latinx life and how art practice reflects that experience
3. Critique various artistic representations of canonical, and non-canonical, Black and Latinx aesthetic expression
4. Demonstrate knowledge and visual literacy about Black and Latinx expressive traditions, movements, and styles
5. Synthesize information from multiple sources in order to generate new insights

The course learning objectives are structured so that learning outcomes can be assessed through the course requirements listed below. The course learning outcomes seek to ensure that students will be able to:

1. Gather, interpret, and assess information from a variety of sources and points of view through class assignments,
2. Evaluate evidence and arguments critically or analytically,
3. Produce well-reasoned written and oral arguments using evidence to support conclusions by the following class assignment prompts, and
4. Achieve an understanding of major literary currents, themes and methods in literary and cultural analysis

Course Requirements

1. **Readings.** All students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss and analyze the material assigned for each class meeting. At a minimum, this means you should prepare short written summaries of each assigned primary text and related questions based on the assigned material. These short summaries will occasionally be collected for my review and commentary but will not be graded. Please

refer to section on "Homework Listed on the Syllabus" here for additional information: <http://www.lazarolima.com/general-course-policies.html>.)

2. **Writing assignments.** Visual or literary texts designated by an asterisk ("*") in the syllabus will require a short writing assignment of 250-500 words (1-2 pgs.) following a method for formal commentary called "TCI methodology" (TCI: Text + Context = Interpretation) that will be explained in class and that we will practice during the course of the semester. Please see "TCI Method" here: <http://www.lazarolima.com/tcimethod.html>.

3. **Class Participation.** This course meets twice a week. Class participation involves voluntary contributions on behalf of the student. All students must participate by actively speaking about the topics the assigned materials raise in relation to previous readings and class discussions. Attendance without participation counts as an absence. Please refer to section on "Class Participation" for an explanation of participation grade here: <http://www.lazarolima.com/general-course-policies.html>.

4. **Attendance.** You are required to get notes, announcements, or any missed material from your classmates before consulting with your professor. More than two absences after add-drop period stands to affect your grade negatively as you will not be able to participate, contribute, or learn from the class discussions. Please refer to section on "Attendance" here: <http://www.lazarolima.com/general-course-policies.html>.

5. **Presentations.** There will be two separate student presentations during the course of the semester (either in groups or pairs). The first presentation will be a formal extension of a theme, topic or artists' work covered in the course. The second will be based on the final curatorial project (see below). The presentations are not to simply repeat information found in the assigned texts or assignments but rather an opportunity to connect the presentation topic at hand with previous class readings and discussions. Presentations are timed and will last approximately 10-12 minutes (additional time will be allotted for questions and discussion). Since select information from each presentation may appear on examinations, it is to your benefit, and that of your classmates, to cogently and clearly explain your topic to the class. I encourage students to meet with me in person or virtually prior to assigned presentations. Additional presentation details will be posted on our class website.

6. **Final Curatorial Project.** Students will work in groups of 3-4 in order to curate a digital exhibition related to any of the themes or topics covered in the course. The curated exhibit may cross genres (e.g., photography, painting, performance, etc.) but must tell a cogent theoretically and methodologically informed story about the historical development of Black and Latinx aesthetic expression. (Groups may opt to focus singularly on either Black or Latinx aesthetic expression as opposed to both). Students will present their final curatorial projects at the end of the semester.

7. **Exams.** There will be a midterm and a cumulative final exam for the course.

8. **Quizzes.** There will be two short unannounced quizzes during the course of the semester. Quizzes are based on assigned readings, class lectures, and conversations.

Evaluation and Grading

EVALUATION:

Active Class Participation	15%
Writing Assignments	15%
Presentations	15%
Quizzes	10%
Midterm	15%
Final Exam	15%
Final Project	15%

GRADING SYSTEM:

A+= 97.5-100
 A = 92.5-97.4
 A- = 90-92.4
 B+= 87.5-89.9
 B = 82.5-87.4
 B- = 80-82.4
 C+= 77.5-79.9
 C = 70-77.4
 D = 60-69.9
 F = 0 = 59.9

Required Texts

Note: Most primary and secondary texts listed in the syllabus are accessible as linked via our class website.

Arlene Dávila. *Latinx Art: Artists, Markets, and Politics*. Duke University Press: New York and London, 2020.

David C. Driskell. *Two Centuries of Black American Art*. New York: Random House, 1976.

Mark Godfrey, Zoé Whitley, et al. *Soul of a Nation: Art in the Age of Black Power*. London: The Tate Collection, 2017.

Regina A. Perry, ed., *Nineteenth-Century Afro-American Art*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1976.

Edward Sullivan, *From San Juan to Paris and Back: Francisco Oller and Caribbean Art in the Age of Impressionism*. New Haven and London: Yale UP, 2014.

Email Policy

You are expected to check your email regularly for course updates. Email is also useful for short exchanges, short questions. However, longer exchanges should be conducted during office hours or other by appointment. Please see me during office hours if your questions require elaboration. I respond to e-mail within 48 hours during regular business hours (9:00-5:00 pm). If your e-mail is time sensitive, please keep these parameters in mind and plan accordingly. If you have a doubt about what constitutes

appropriate email exchanges please see here:

<http://web.wellesley.edu/SocialComputing/Netiquette/netiquetteprofessor.html>.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

"Hunter College regards acts of academic dishonesty (e.g., plagiarism, cheating on examinations, obtaining unfair advantage, and falsification of records and official documents) as serious offenses against the values of intellectual honesty. The college is committed to enforcing the CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity and will pursue cases of academic dishonesty according to the Hunter College Academic Integrity Procedures." This means not only automatic failing of the course but possible expulsion from Hunter College.

Access/Ability

In compliance with the American Disability Act of 1990 (ADA) and with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Hunter College is committed to ensuring educational parity and accommodations for all students with documented disabilities and/or medical conditions. Students with documented disabilities (emotional, medical, physical, and/or learning) should provide the instructor documentation after consultation from the Office of AccessABILITY by the second week of the semester. The office is located in Room E 1214B. For further information and assistance call the office of AccessABILITY: (212) 772-4857 or (212) 650-3230.

Miscellaneous

We will cover issues pertinent to the course that span the depth and breadth of human diversity including representations of race, gender, sexuality, politics, violence, and related themes and topics that require analytic distance and evidence-based evaluation and analysis. Engaging productively with course readings, discussions, materials, presentations and related course content are required to successfully complete the course. Please familiarize yourself with course materials in the syllabus by reviewing it, and/or speaking with your instructor, in order to avoid unexpected surprises or material that may be triggering to certain sensibilities.

Changes to Syllabus

This syllabus is subject to change as needed (e.g., student intellectual interests, potential transition to remote delivery, etc.). All changes will be announced via our class website or email.

Syllabus	Readings and Assignments (Please Refer to Class Website for Links to Readings, Assignments Prompts, Realia, and Visual Media)
Dates	Topics
Thursday, August 26	Introduction: Art and National Identity <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is historically, and culturally constitutive of Black and Latinx aesthetic expression? 2. Review of class website and archive

Monday, August 30	<p>3. Introduction to basic terminology for visual culture studies: periodicity, canonicity, critique, "Art-in-general," and TCI methodology</p> <p>4. Introductory comparative case study and analysis of Kehinde Wiley, "Equestrian Portrait of the Count-Duke Olivares" (2005); Diego Velázquez, "Equestrian Portrait of the Count-Duke Olivares" (c.1635) and "Las Meninas" (1656)</p> <p>5. Representative "erasures" as method, analysis of Johannes Zoffant, "The Family of Sir William Young," (c. 1767-69)</p> <p>The Black Atlantic: Manifest Destiny, Slavery, and the Construction of Black and Latinx Art</p> <p>1. John O'Sullivan, "The Great Nation of Futurity" (1839) and "Annexation" (1845)</p> <p>2. Antonio Benítez-Rojo, "Introduction" from <i>The Repeating Island</i> (1992)</p> <p>3. Anthony Aiello and Jason Miller, "African American Artists before the Twentieth Century" (2021)</p> <p>4. John Calhoun, "The Government of a White Race" (1846)</p> <p>5. José Martí, "Our América" (1891)</p> <p>6. Analysis of John Gast, "American Progress" (1872); Emanuel Leutze, "Westward the Course of Empire Takes Its Way" (1862); Robert S. Duncanson, Valley Pasture (1857); Francisco Oller, "The Sugar Mill" (1890) (see selected paintings class website)</p>
Thursday, September 2	<p>1. Paul Gilroy, <i>The Black Atlantic</i>, Chapter 1, "The Black Atlantic as a Counterculture of Modernity" (1992 and ss.)</p> <p>2. Alice George, "Sculptor Edmonia Lewis Shattered Gender and Race Expectations in 19th-Century America," <i>Smithsonian Magazine</i> (2019)</p> <p>3. Analysis of Edmonia Lewis, "The Death of Cleopatra" (1876) and "The Old Arrow Maker" (1866-1872); Henry Ossawa Tanner, "The Thankful Poor" (1884) and "The Annunciation" (1898) (see selected paintings class website)</p> <p>4. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, "Introduction" from <i>Song of Hiawatha</i> (1885)</p>
Monday, September 6	<p>College Closed</p>
Thursday, September 9	<p>Grating Against the Canon: Reframing the Art Historical Canon</p> <p>1. Regina A. Perry, ed., <i>Selections of Nineteenth-Century Afro-American Art</i>. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1976.</p> <p>2. Student presentations of individual artists featured in Regina A. Perry's <i>Selections of Nineteenth-Century Afro-American Art</i></p>
Monday, September 13	<p>1. Student presentations of individual artists featured in Regina A. Perry's <i>Selections of Nineteenth-Century Afro-American Art</i> continued</p>

Thursday, September 16	College Closed
Monday, September 20	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Edward Sullivan, <i>From San Juan to Paris and Back: Francisco Oller and Caribbean Art in the Age of Impressionism</i> (selected chapters) (New Haven and London: Yale UP, 2014) 2. Ken Johnson, "Francisco Oller, Core of 'Impressionism and the Caribbean,' at the Brooklyn Museum," <i>NYT</i> (2015) 3. Analysis of Francisco Oller, "The Wake" (1893), "The School of Master Rafael Cordero" (circa 1890); "Paul Cézanne Painting Out of Doors" (c. 1864) 4. Edward Sullivan (virtual Zoom visit)
Thursday, September 23	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Arthur A. Schomburg "José Campeche, 1752-1809: A Puerto Rican Painter" <i>The Latino Reader</i> (1997)* 2. Vanessa K. Valdés, selections from <i>Diasporic Blackness: The Life and Times of Arturo Alfonso Schomburg</i> (2017) 3. Analysis of José Campeche, "The Rescue of Don Ramón Power y Giralt" (1790), "Portrait of a Lady" (disputed attribution to Francisco Goya) (c.1800-5); Niño Juan Pantaleón Áviles (1808) (see selected paintings class website) 4. Romare Bearden and Harlem Renaissance Painters (see selection of works and realia in class website) 5. C.J. Janovy, "With Powerful Murals, Hale Woodruff Paved the Way for African-American Artists," <i>NPR Online</i> (2015) <p>The Body in the Archive: Racial Terror, AIDS, #BLM and Other Black and Latinx Topoi for "the Tears of Things" (Lacrimae Rerum)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ken Gonzales-Day, "Introduction: Searching for California's Hang Trees," from <i>Lynching in the West: 1850-1935</i> (2006) 2. Analysis of Ken Gonzales-Day, "Erased Lynching Series" (2004-2006) (see selected paintings class website) 3. Equal Justice Initiative, ed. collective, selections from <i>Lynching in America: Confronting the Legacy of Racial Terror</i> (Montgomery, AL: EJI, 2017) 4. Analysis of #BLM performances of freedom (see selected videos, memes and ephemera on class website)
Monday, September 27	
Thursday, September 30	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Patrick Martínez, "What Resonates: Southland at Charlie James Gallery" (2016) [on Patrick Martínez, et al.] 2. Analysis of paintings and videos by Patrick Martínez (see class website) 3. Robin Pogrebin, "Amy Sberald Directs Her Breonna Taylor Painting Toward Justice," <i>NYT</i> (2021) 4. Miles Pope, "Amy Sberald On Making Breonna Taylor's Portrait" (2020) 5. Analysis of Amy Sberald's portraits (see selected paintings class website)
Monday, October 4	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Joshua Bennett, "I Will Not be Taught How to Behave," <i>Art in America</i> (2021) [on Deborah E. Roberts]

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Deborah E. Roberts (virtual Zoom visit) 3. Analysis of Deborah E. Roberts, "We Are Soldiers" (2019), "Between Them" (2019), "An Act of Power" (2018), and "The Sleepwalkers (2017)" 4. Analysis of John L. Spivak collection, "Convict Leasing" (c 1932)
Thursday, October 7	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Douglas Crimp, "AIDS: Cultural Analysis/Cultural Activism," <i>October</i> (1987) 2. Alex Greenberger, "How Felix González-Torres's Unabashedly Political Art Lent Minimalism a New Context," <i>Art in America</i> (2021) 3. Analysis of Felix González-Torres works/installations; 4. Joey Terrill, "About the Still-Life Series," artist's website (see class website for links) 5. Analysis of 1) "Still-Life Series" images, emphases on "The Sweeter the Juice" (2003), "Still-Life with Crixivan" (1997-98), 2) Terrill's work in Getty's <i>Pacific Standard Time: LA/ LA</i> (2017) and related short videos (see class website for prompts)
Monday, October 11	College Closed
Thursday, October 14	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Museo del Barrio, "Fearless Latin/x America: AIDS + Violence + Action," curated by Eugenio Echeverría (2017) (view and analyze video on class website) 2. Dylan Rodríguez, "'I Used Her Ashes': Multiculturalist White Supremacy/Counterinsurgency/Domestic War" from <i>White Reconstruction: Domestic Warfare and the Logics of Genocide</i> (2020) 3. Poem, "Wakiesha's Ashes" (collective exercise, see class website for instructions on performance and ephemera)
Monday, October 18	1. Midterm Exam
	Does Art Have a Sexual Orientation?: The Queer, Feminist, and Gendered Particularisms of Black and Latinx Aesthetics
Thursday, October 21	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Jane Blocker, "Introduction" and chapter 3 "Exile and 4 "Body" in <i>Where is Ana Mendieta</i> (1990) 2. Maya Gurantz, "Carl Broke Something: On Carl Andre, Ana Mendieta, and the Cult of the Male Genius," <i>LARB</i> (2017). 3. Eric Wayne, "Carl and Ana: Art, Suicide, Murder, Belief," <i>Art and Crit</i> (2017)
Monday, October 25	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lenard Buder, "Sculptor Accused of Pushing Wife Out the Window to Death" <i>NYT</i> (1985) 2. Analysis of Ana Mendieta, "Silueta Series" (1973-1981) (see selections on from the MCA as noted on the class website)
Thursday, October 28	1. Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" (1935)

Monday, November 1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Nicole R. Fleetwood, "Carceral Aesthetics: Penal Space, Time, and Matter" from <i>Marking Time: Art in the Age of Mass Incarceration</i> (2020) 3. Fleetwood, "Interior Subjects: Portraits by Incarcerated Prisoners" from <i>Marking Time</i> 4. Analysis of James Yaya Hough images from JTT Gallery exhibit, "Process" (on class website) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Monica Castillo, "Meet the Formerly Incarcerated Artist in Residence Who Hopes to Transform the Philadelphia DA's Office," <i>Hyperallergic</i> (2020) [on James Yaya Hough] 2. Analysis of MoMa PS1 exhibit, "Marking Time" (2021) 3. Comparative analysis of John L. Spivak's photographs from "Captive Leasing" collection, and selected artists from <i>Marking Time</i> (see class website for details)
Markets, Archives, and Other Mnemonic Devices	
Thursday, November 4	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Arlene Dávila, "Making Latinx Art," and selected chapters from <i>Latinx Art: Artists, Markets, Politics</i> (2020) 2. Arlene Dávila (virtual Zoom visit)
Monday, November 8	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Nicole Martínez, "How Kehinde Wiley's Portraits Won Over the Art Market," <i>Art Market</i> (2021) 2. Graham Bowley, et al., "The National Museum of African American History and Culture: 'I, Too, Sing America'," <i>NYT Multimedia</i> (2016).
Museum Practice: Curating Identities and Other Anxieties of Influence	
Thursday, November 11	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Arlene Dávila, "Critics and the Slippery Terrain of Latinx Art," <i>Latin American and Latinx Visual Culture</i> (2019) 2. David C. Driskell, Introduction and selections from <i>Two Centuries of Black American Art</i> (1976) 3. Analysis of images from <i>Two Centuries of Black American Art</i> (as listed on the class website) 4. Kriston Kapps, "Kenneth Young is Finally Getting His Due" (2017); optional, Emily Steer, "Ross Bleckner Captures the Raw Vulnerability of Human Life in Paint," <i>Elephant</i> (2020) 5. Comparative analysis and critique of Bleckner's AIDS paintings and Young's "Untitled" series (1970-73) (see class website for assignment prompts)
Monday, November 15	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mark Godfrey, Zoé Whitley, et al. Selections from <i>Soul of a Nation: Art in the Age of Black Power</i> (2017) (see class website for details) 2. Analysis of selected artists from <i>Soul of a Nation</i> 3. Rebecca Steel, "The Art of Jean-Michel Basquiat" (2019) 4. Immersive virtual visit to Brant Foundation exhibit, "Jean-Michel Basquiat" (2019) (see assignment details in class website)

Thursday, November 18	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Kerr Houston, "How "Mining the Museum' Changed the World" (2017) [on Fred Wilson]* 2. Analysis of select images and artifacts from "Mining the Museum" (1992)
Monday, November 22	<p>Black and Latinx Provocations or Art as Device v. 2</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Laural Reed Pavic, "Hank Willis Williams: How to Unmake Race" (2019) 2. Analysis of images from Hank Willis Williams from "Unbranded" (2006-10) and "In Search of the Truth/Truth Booth" (2014) (see class website) 3. Nadja Sayej, "Andrés Serrano: 'Some People Bristle When They Hear My Name'" (2020) 4. Analysis of images from Serrano's series "Bodily Fluids" (see class website)
Thursday, November 25	College Closed
Monday, November 29	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Yxta Maya Murray, "Laura Aguilar Was a Proud Latina Lesbian, and She Flaunted It" (2019) 2. Analysis of select Laura Aguilar installations and photographs (see class website)
Thursday, December 2	<p>The Extreme Contemporary of Black and Latinx Aesthetics</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assignment, "Found Objects: Part 1" (see class website for details)
Monday, December 6	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assignment, "Found Objects: Part 2" (see class website for details)
Thursday, December 9	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Student group presentations of final curated exhibits
Monday, December 13	<p>Last day of class</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Remaining student group presentations of final curated exhibits and final exam review