# HAVC 118 CONTEMPORARY ART OF THE AFRICAN DIASPORA

Summer 2022 Session 1 (June 20 – July 22)



Mohau Modisakeng, Passage, 2017, Three Channel HD Video.

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Office hours: Friday, 10am-12pm PDT - via Zoom

- 10am-11am: collective office hour
- 11am-12pm: 15-min individual meetings please sign up for a slot here.

If you cannot make office hours and we are unable to clarify questions via email, I will be happy to make time to meet with you. You can always reach out to me to make an appointment or to express any question or concern that you may have. Please make sure to include HAVC 118 in the subject line.

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# **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This seminar covers a range of artistic practices, issues, ideas, and questions associated with the historical experience of slavery and its legacies in the present – what scholar Saidiya Hartman called the "afterlife of slavery." We will think about the ways in which contemporary African artists in diaspora use visual forms to engage with the traumatic past of slavery, and to envision more livable presents and futures. We will examine the visual production of artists such as Kara Walker, Yinka Shonibare CBE, Fred Wilson, Amandine Gay, Carlos Martiel, Wangechi Mutu, Titus Kaphar, Glenn Ligon, and jackie sumell.

The course is meant to provide you with the tools to better contextualize and understand some of the recurring themes and motifs emerging in the work of black artists in diaspora. While focusing on contemporary works of art, we will look back into histories of European colonialisms in Africa and plantation slavery in the United States to better illuminate current aesthetic production in the diaspora.

# **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

- Define, contextualize and problematize notions of "diaspora," "blackness," along with Saidiya Hartman's idea of an "afterlife of slavery."
- Become familiar with key texts and prominent artists, scholars, and works associated with the African diaspora.
- Analyze and interpret creative practices emerging in the contemporary African diaspora using the analytical skills and language of the art history/visual studies discipline.

- Think critically and transhistorically by drawing connections between the past and the present of the African diaspora, between slavery as a historical phenomenon and the current conditions of global antiblackness in order to make visible recurring phenomena and patterns of oppression.
- Develop research and writing skills that are central to scholarship in the arts and humanities.

# LEARNING OUTCOMES

The History of Art and Visual Culture Department has identified four program learning outcomes (PLO) for its B.A. program (http://havc.ucsc.edu/program/introduction). This class will fulfill the following PLO:

- <u>PLO 1</u> Breadth of Cultural Knowledge: Students will be able to demonstrate an appreciation for, and foundation in, visual studies grounded in a range of historical, social, cultural, and ideological perspectives.
- PLO 2 Critical Thinking: Students will be able to apply critical thinking skills that will enable them to analyze and solve problems through observation, experience, reflection, interpretation, analysis, evaluation, and/or explanation of visual, material, and historical cultural forms and values. Students will demonstrate critical thinking skills through oral and/or written communication.

# **CLASS POLICIES**

# **Email policy**

If you have a question or concern, please send a message to <u>axelle@ucsc.edu</u>. You should expect to receive a reply within 48 hours. If you have an emergency, please type "URGENT" in the subject line of the email and I will respond as soon as possible. **Communication is key**. If you are struggling to make a deadline, communicate with me and plan ahead.

## Late Assignments

Our lives, pedagogies, and work have been impacted by by two sets of interrelated circumstances: the global pandemic of Covid-19, and the rising violence directed at minorities, and ethnic minorities in particular. We will navigate this context together, and to do so, communication will be crucial.

Since we have to maintain forms of accountability in order to go collectively from one building block to another, there is a deadline for each assignment.

Because of the very fast pace of summer session, **timely completion of the assignments is highly appreciated by the teaching team**. However, if you are facing extenuating circumstances, and cannot submit an assignment on time, please notify me at least 24 hours in advance of the deadline and we will negotiate an alternative due date together.

#### Summer Session 2022 Deadlines

- Drop: Monday, June 27

- Request for "W": Sunday, July 10

Summer is unique. You will not be dropped for non-attendance or non-payment. You must drop yourself. Dropping before the deadline results in a full-tuition reversal/refund. Withdraw posts a W for the grade and full tuition is charged (no refund).

For all dates and deadlines, including 'change of grade option' (P/NP) and grades due, here is the summer academic calendar: https://summer.ucsc.edu/studentlife/index.html

For questions about dropping, requesting a W grade for a course, or withdrawing from the summer quarter, email summer@ucsc.edu.

### Respect for Diversity

Students from diverse backgrounds and perspectives are welcomed in this class in their own terms. I see **diversity as a strength**, an incredible resource that can benefit us all as it expands our perspectives and enriches our learning experience. In this course, I strive to present materials and activities that are respectful of difference—gender, sexuality, ability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, prior learning, etc.

Is English your second or third language? (English is my second language and that has definitely impacted my learning and my experience in the American academic context) Are you taking care of a child? Are you in a different time zone? Are you feeling triggered by the material that is presented in class? I invite you to come meet with me during office hours early on in the course to discuss any conflict or challenge that you may encounter during this course. I also encourage you to try your best to foster a collaborative and inclusive environment, to learn from one another, and to bring your own skills, knowledge, and experience to the table with sincerity and care.

As the teacher of this course, I commit to working towards more inclusivity in my teaching. I **welcome your suggestions** on how to improve the effectiveness of this course for you personally, but also for other students or student groups.

#### **DRC Remote Accommodations**

In line with my statements on diversity and inclusion, I commit to providing support and reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities. According to the Disability Resources Center (DRC), a reasonable accommodation is a modification or adjustment to a course that enables a student with a disability to have an equal opportunity to enjoy the benefits, opportunities, and privileges that are available to all students with or without disabilities. If you need accommodations, you have a right to have these met.

The DRC determines who qualifies to these accommodations. Contact the DRC at **drc@ucsc.edu** to make appointments, or if you have questions or concerns about exam accommodations or any other disability-related matter. You can then contact me privately to submit your Accomodation Authorization and to discuss how I can support you in this course.

## **Academic Dishonesty**

Academic integrity is the cornerstone of a university education. Academic dishonesty tarnishes the value of a UCSC degree. As a student in this course, I ask that you participate in fostering an environment of trust and honesty by presenting original work that is truly your own.

A student who is found in violation of the UCSC Academic Integrity policy may face both academic sanctions imposed by the instructor of record, and disciplinary sanctions imposed either by the provost of their college or the Academic Tribunal convened to hear the case. Violations of the Academic Integrity policy can result in dismissal from the university and a permanent notation on a student's transcript.

For the full policy and disciplinary procedures on academic dishonesty, students and instructors should refer to the Academic Integrity page at the Division of Undergraduate Education.

#### Title IX

The university has instituted a number of measures designed to protect its community from sex and gender-based discrimination. These include sexual harassment, sexual violence, discrimination based on pregnancy/lactation and family status. The Title IX Office is the structure in charge of protecting all campus affiliates (staff, faculty, students, and anyone else affiliated with UCSC) against these forms of discrimination, to make sure that no one is denied access to any educational program or activity on the basis of sex or gender.

If you want to report an incident or request a consultation, you can use the <u>online reporting</u> <u>link</u>.

#### **Technical Assistance**

ITS Support Center 831-459-HELP (9-4357) help@ucsc.edu https://its.ucsc.edu/get-help/index.html

#### Canvas Support and Resources

24/7 assistance is available from Instructure. Just click on the "Help" option in your Canvas course.

#### Helpful Links

Canvas Student Getting Started Guide

Canvas Student Guide

Canvas Student Video Guide

Canvas by Instructure Android Guide

Canvas App for Android Phone (Video)

Canvas App for Android Tablet (Video)

Canvas by Instructure iOS Guide

Canvas App for iPad (Video)

Canvas App for iPhone (Video)

# STUDENT HOURS

UC Senate Regulation 760 specifies that 1 academic credit corresponds to 3 hours of work per week during a 10-week quarter. Since this is a 5-credit course, to be completed within a 5-week quarter, you should expect to spend 30 hours per week working on coursework, including: viewing recorded lectures, reading, watching assigned films, and completing assignments. Please also make sure to check your email regularly, to avoid missing important announcements.

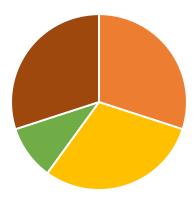
#### Note: I offer weekly synchronous discussions (via Zoom)

- **Every Friday, 10am-11am PDT**: these <u>collective office hours</u> are <u>not mandatory</u> but I highly recommend you attend as we will be preparing the upcoming assignments together and addressing any question that you may have about the course, the readings or the assignments.
- **Friday, July 15**<sup>th</sup>: there will be <u>individual meetings with the instructor or TAs</u> to discuss the research proposal (to be scheduled in advance) in lieu of the collective office hour.

# **REQUIREMENTS**

This course requires a <u>high level of self-motivation</u>. I encourage you to try your best to keep up with the course material dispensed in the bi-weekly modules. If you would like further clarification on anything covered in class, please reach out to me as soon as possible.





- Reading Responses, Questions, and Comments (30 pts)
- Visual Analysis Papers (30 pts)
- Research Proposal (10 pts)
- Final Research Paper/Artwork (30 pts)

For each assignment, see detailed guidelines on Canvas: Canvas > Files > Assignment Guidelines.

## Drawing Response: 2 points

In Module 1a, you are asked to *draw* a visual response to Edouard Glissant's text, "The Open Boat." The drawing response will be posted on Canvas under 'Discussions' on the day indicated in the Course Schedule.

If you have a visual impairment or if you feel so inclined, you have the option to *record* your aural response to the Glissant text.

<u>Note</u>: this exercise is meant for you to develop alternative, creative reading practices. You will <u>not</u> be graded on the aesthetic qualities of your drawing, but will automatically get **2 points** upon submission of the assignment.

# Reading Responses and Comments: 20 points

<u>Four reading responses</u> are due in the course of this class. Each reading response should mention <u>every text</u> assigned for that particular module. Each response should be about a page and a half (min. 250 words). The responses will be posted on Canvas under 'Discussions' on the day indicated in the Course Schedule.

You are <u>also</u> required to write <u>a comment</u> on one of your classmates' reading responses. Comments should express your thoughtful engagement with the work of your classmates. If you disagree with your classmate's opinion, please do so respectfully and clearly express the reasons for your diverging opinion. Each comment should be 4-5 sentences long. The comments are to be posted on Canvas under 'Discussions' on the day indicated in the Course Schedule.

Each set of (reading response + comment) is worth **5 points**.

# Reading Questions and Comments: 8 points

<u>Two sets of 3 readings questions</u> are due in the course of this class. The questions should engage <u>all of the texts</u> discussed in the module. They may also engage artists and artworks discussed in lecture. The questions will be posted on Canvas under 'Discussions' on the day indicated in the Course Schedule.

You are <u>also</u> required to write <u>1 answer</u> to one of your classmates' reading questions. Your answer should be 4-5 sentences long (minimum). The answers are to be posted on Canvas under 'Discussions' on the day indicated in the Course Schedule.

Each set of (3 reading questions + 1 comment) is worth 4 points.

# Visual Analysis Papers: 30 points

<u>Two visual analysis papers</u> are due in the course of this class. For these papers, you will write a visual analysis of a work of art selected by the instructor. You will find a list of guiding questions and a rubric to help you write your paper on Canvas under Files > Assignment Guidelines > Visual Analysis.

Visual analysis #1 should be 1,5 pages double-spaced minimum (300-500 words). Visual analysis #2 should be about 2 pages double-spaced (min. 500 words).

Each visual analysis paper is worth 15 points.

# Research Proposal: 10 points

The research proposal paper provides an introduction to your research topic and the artwork(s) you will be analyzing or creating, while also sketching out the questions you will address in your final paper.

The proposal should feature a bibliography of 2 references minimum, including at least one reading from the course.

#### You will automatically receive 10 points for both:

- Submitting the proposal and attendant bibliography
- Meeting with me or your TA during Week 4 to discuss and finalize your topic. Make sure to carefully integrate the feedback that you will receive from your reviewer in the preparation of your final assignment.

# Final Research Paper/Artwork: 30 points

For the final assignment, you are given the option to write a research paper or create an artwork (informed by research).

- <u>For the research paper</u>: you will choose an image or artwork (or two) and analyze it using the topics, concepts and other analytical tools introduced in the course readings, lectures or discussions. The final paper should be about five pages (min 1,200 words), and no more than seven pages (max. 1,750 words). It should be typed in Arial or Times New Roman, 12 pt. font, with 1-inch margins, double spaced, and it must include page numbers.
- <u>For the artwork</u>: you will create an artwork related to the themes introduced in the course readings, lectures or discussions. The artwork will be accompanied by a statement of 2-3 pages (500-750 words) explaining your topic, argument, choice of medium and materials. You have the option to record this statement and submit it as an audio file.

<u>Requirements</u>: your paper or artwork must **connect the present to the past**. For both the research paper and the artwork, a bibliography of at least 3 references is to be included, one of which should be from the syllabus.

# COURSE SCHEDULE

Week	Module	Date	Topic & To-Do List	Assignment
1	1a	Monday 06/20	Watch recorded lectures: - Introduction & Course Overview - The Slave Ship  Read: - Glissant - Finley	Drawing Response **due by Wednesday 06/22** (11:59pm PDT)  Draw (or record) your response to Glissant's poetic rendering of the Middle Passage. Your drawing/record might be related to a word, phrase, sentence, or to the whole text — as you wish. It might translate your overall impression of the text. It might convey the bodily sensations that you experienced while reading. It might be realistic or abstract, simple or intricate.  (Note: This exercise is meant for you to develop alternative, creative reading practices. You will not be graded on the aesthetic qualities of your production. You will automatically get 2 points for submitting the assignment on Canvas > Discussions)
	1b	Wed. 06/22	Watch recorded lecture: Key Concepts — Diaspora & Blackness  Read: - Nelson - Shonibare - Fanon	Guided Reading Response **due by Saturday 06/25** (11:59pm PDT)  Write an answer to *one* of the two following sets of questions (min. 250 words):  1. How do diasporas destabilize the nation-state? In your response, consider a concrete illustration of your argument. What are some of the common characteristics and problematics of "diasporic art?" Why is coming up with a definition of "diasporic art" challenging?  2. What is the experience of
	Collective office hour (via Zoom)	Friday 06/24 10-11am PDT	During this collective office hour, we will look at the drawing responses, and collectively prepare the reading response due the next day (to be posted on Canvas under "Discussions"). This	diasporic blackness according to Du Bois, Fanon, Shonibare, and Gay? How do their experiences of blackness differ? How are they similar?  (Note: You are only required to answer

			session is non-mandatory, but your attendance is highly recommended.	one set of questions of your choice. At the beginning of your response, please specify which set of questions you decided to tackle)  [See "Reading Response Guidelines" in Canvas > Files > Guidelines]
2	2a	06/27	Watch:  - Recorded lecture:     Visualizing Histories of     Colonialism in Africa  - Artist Spotlight: Sammy     Baloji, Virginia Museum     of Arts,     https://youtu.be/TQY4-     2lRaW8  Read: - Rodney - D'Alleva (method for     visual analysis)	Reading Questions **due by Wednesday 06/29** (11:59pm PDT)  Write 3 questions about:  1. Rodney's text 2. The work of Yinka Shonibare CBE 3. The work of Sammy Baloji  Write a response to one of your classmates' reading questions, **due by Thursday 06/30** (11:59pm PDT)  [See "Reading Questions Guidelines" in Canvas > Files > Guidelines]
	2b	06/29	Watch:  - Recorded lecture: Visual Regimes of Racial-Sexual Domination  - Artist Spotlight: Kara Walker's Fons Americanus, Tate, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tV L3fceGN A&feature=youtu.be  Read: - McClintock - Becker  Schedule appointment with instructor or TA to discuss topic for final assignment.	Visual Analysis Paper #1 **due by Sunday 07/03** (11:59 PDT).  [See "Visual Analysis Guidelines" in Canvas > Files > Guidelines]
	Collective office hour (via Zoom)	07/01 10-11am PDT	Method: Writing a Visual Analysis	
3	3a	07/04	Recorded lecture: The Afterlife of Slavery	Reading Response **due by Wednesday 07/06** (11:59pm PDT)

	3b	07/06	Read: - Hartman - Sharpe - Finley, Raiford & Raphael-Hernandez  Recorded guest lecture: Slavery, Prison & Abolition, by Rachel Nelson.  Read: - Browne - Davis	Comment on one of your classmates' reading response, **due by Thursday 07/07** (11:59pm PDT)  [See "Reading Response Guidelines" in Canvas > Files > Guidelines]  Reading Questions **due by Saturday 07/09** (11:59pm PDT)  Write a response to one of your classmates' reading questions, **due by Sunday 07/10** (11:59pm PDT)
	Collective office hour (via Zoom)	07/08	Method: How to Do Research	Research Proposal, **due by Sunday 07/10** (11:59pm PDT)  (250-500 words)  [See "Proposal Guidelines" in Canvas > Files > Guidelines]
4	4a	07/11	Recorded lecture: (Un)Visibility  Read: - González - Raiford	<ul> <li>Guided Reading Response **due by Wednesday 07/13** (11:59pm PDT)</li> <li>What are some of the strategies implemented by Fred Wilson to make visible what has been buried in the museum collections?         Mention at least 2 strategies and explain how they function for the museum audience.</li> <li>Compare and contrast the visibility projects of Fred Wilson on the one hand, and Kerry James Marshall and Ken Gonzalez-Day on the other hand.</li> <li>(min. 250 words)</li> </ul>
	4b	07/13	Recorded lecture: Vision & Justice  Read: - Cole - hooks - Chayka	Visual Analysis Paper #2: Compare & Contrast **due by Saturday 07/16** (11:59pm PDT)  - Rolling Stone's July 2020 cover by Kadir Nelson - Eugène Delacroix, Liberty Leading the People, 1830 (min. 500 words)

	Individual meetings with instructor or TA (to be scheduled in advance)	07/15 10-11am PDT	Discuss & finalize topic for final assignment.		
5	5a	07/18	Watch:  - Guest lecture: "Afro- and Africanfuturism," by Kelsey McFaul.  - Pumzi, dir. Wanuri Kahiu (2009), https://vimeo.com/46891859  - Artist Spotlight: Wangechi Mutu  Read: - Dery - Okorafor - Du Bois  [Please read the texts and watch Pumzi before you watch the guest lecture]	Guided Reading Response **due by Wednesday 7/20** (11:59pm PDT)  Write an answer to the following prompt:  Define Afrofuturism and Africanfuturism using textual evidence, and compare their vision of the future.  You must draw on <i>The Comet</i> , and/or <i>Pumzi</i> , and/or the work of Wangechi Mutu to illustrate your response.  (min. 250 words)  No comments due for this module!	
	5b	07/20	Recorded lecture: Impossible Futures?  Read: - Glissant - Hartman, "The End of White Supremacy, An American Romance"	Extra Credit: Final Reflections **due by Saturday 07/22**  Has your understanding of Glissant's text evolved? If so, how?  Consider the last sentence of each text: are they hopeful or pessimistic about the future?  How can art and visual tools foster social change?  (min. 250 words)	
	Collective office hour (via Zoom)	7/22	Workshop final paper & final thoughts		
	Final Paper or Artwork  **due by Sunday 07/23** (11:59pm PDT)				

# DETAILED READING SCHEDULE

# WEEK 1 Course Introduction & Key Concepts

#### **Module 1a:** The Slave Ship

#### Assigned readings:

- Edouard Glissant, "The Open Boat," in *Poetics of Relation* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press), 5-9.
- Cheryl Finley, "The Practice of Mnemonic Aesthetics," in *Committed to Memory: The Art of the Slave Ship Icon* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018), 1-19.

#### **Module 1b:** Key Concepts – Diaspora, Blackness

#### Assigned readings:

- Steven Nelson, "Diaspora: Multiple Practices, Multiple World Views" in Amelia Jones, ed., *Companion to Contemporary Art Since 1945* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006), 296-315.
- Frantz Fanon, "The Fact of Blackness," *Theories of Race and Racism: A Reader*, ed. Les Black and John Solomos (New York: Routledge Press, 2000), 257-266.
- —Yinka Shonibare CBE, "Fabric and the Irony of Authenticity."

#### WEEK 2 Historicizing the Black Diaspora

#### **Module 2a: Visualizing Histories of Colonialism in Africa**

#### Assigned readings:

- Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* (Washington, D.C: Howard Univ Pr, 1981), excerpts.
- Anne D'Alleva, "Formal Analysis," Look! Art History Fundamentals (Boston: Pearson, 2010).

#### **Module 2b: Visual Regimes of Racial-Sexual Domination**

#### Assigned readings:

— Anne McClintock, "Introduction," in *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Conquest* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 1-17.

— Carol Becker, "Kara Walker: The Memory of Sugar," in *Women Mobilizing Memory*, ed. Ayşe Gül Altýnay et al. (Columbia University Press, 2019), 65–83.

# WEEK 3: Diasporic Time is Out of Joint

#### **Module 3a:** The Afterlife of Slavery

#### Assigned readings:

- Saidiya Hartman, "Prologue: The Path of Strangers," *Lose Your Mother: A Journey Along the Atlantic Slave Route* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2008), 1–18.
- Christina Sharpe, "The Ship," in *In the Wake: On Blackness and Being* (Duke University Press, 2016), 25–67.
- Cheryl Finley, Leigh Raiford, and Heike Raphael-Hernandez, "Visualizing Protest: African (Diasporic) Art and Contemporary Mediterranean Crossings," *Journal of Transnational American Studies* 10, no. 1 (2019).

#### **Module 3b: Slavery, Prison and Abolition**

#### Assigned readings:

- Simone Browne, "Notes on Surveillance Studies: Through the Door of No Return," *Dark Matters: On the Surveillance of Blackness* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2015), 29-60.
- Angela Y. Davis, *Are Prisons Obsolete?* (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2003), excerpts.

# **WEEK 4:**The Aesthetics of Black Liberation

#### **Module 4a: (Un)Visibility**

#### Assigned readings:

- Jennifer González, "Fred Wilson: Material Museology," *Subject to Display: Reframing Race in Contemporary Installation Art.* Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2008.
- Leigh Raiford, "Photography and the Practices of Critical Black Memory," *History and Theory* 48, no. 4 (2009): 112–29.

#### **Module 4b: Vision & Justice**

#### Assigned readings:

- Teju Cole, "The Superhero Photographs of the Black Lives Matter Movement," *The New York Times Magazine*, July 26, 2016, <a href="https://www.nytimes.com/2016/07/31/magazine/the-superhero-photographs-of-the-black-lives-matter-movement.html">https://www.nytimes.com/2016/07/31/magazine/the-superhero-photographs-of-the-black-lives-matter-movement.html</a>
- bell hooks, "Oppositional Gaze," *Black Looks: Race and Representation*, (Boston, Mass: South End Press, 2007).
- Kyle Chayka, "The Mimetic Power of D.C.'s Black Lives Matter Mural," *The New Yorker*, June 9, 2020, <a href="https://www.newyorker.com/culture/dept-of-design/the-mimetic-power-of-dcs-black-lives-matter-mural">https://www.newyorker.com/culture/dept-of-design/the-mimetic-power-of-dcs-black-lives-matter-mural</a>

#### WEEK 5: Black Futures

#### Module 5a: Afrofuturism & Africanfuturism

#### Assigned readings:

- Mark Dery, "Black to the Future," in *Flame Wars: The Discourse of Cyberculture* (Duke University Press, 1994).
- W.E.B. Du Bois, "The Comet," in *Dark Matter: The Anthology of Science Fiction, Fantasy and Speculative Fiction by Black Writers* (New York: Aspect Warner Books, 2000).
- Nnedimma Nkemdili Okorafor, "Africanfuturism Defined," *Nnedi's Wahala Zone Blog*, October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2019.

Assigned film: Pumzi, dir. Wanuri Kahiu (2009), https://vimeo.com/46891859

#### **Module 5b: Impossible Futures?**

#### Assigned readings:

- Saidiya Hartman, "The End of White Supremacy, An American Romance," *Bomb Magazine*, <a href="https://bombmagazine.org/articles/the-end-of-white-supremacy-an-american-romance/">https://bombmagazine.org/articles/the-end-of-white-supremacy-an-american-romance/</a>
- Edouard Glissant, "The Open Boat," in *Poetics of Relation* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press), 5-9.