Course Description:
Using African American religious traditions as the framework, seminarians will explore a variety of artworks, artifacts and material culture in western Christianity. This rich legacy of visual texts is not only used to expand the perimeters of aesthetics in the work of justice but also tells a “peculiar” history of theological anthropology.

Course Objectives: 1) to investigate the role of religious beliefs which have apparently inspired the creation of many African American artifacts; 2) to identify justice-making themes in African American visual art; 3) to reflect critically upon the interdependent processes of ethical perception and artistic expression; and 4) to become knowledgeable of literature in the field.

Requirements:
(1) Everyone is expected to facilitate an Architectonic Talking Paper. Facilitators have the following responsibilities: to open with a devotional moment and share copies of their talking paper;
(2) complete the assigned reading as scheduled;
(3) all seminar participants must prepare an architectonic talking paper based on the required reading each class session, according to the designated guidelines. The first architectonic text talking paper is due May 10, 2011 and every seminar session thereafter;
(4) visit a museum and write a living lab report;
(5) submit three (3) Scholarly Book Reviews; and
(6) a biographical book critique, due May 25, 2011

Everyone should make two copies of each talking paper, one for the professor’s files and a second copy for a seminar colleague. The reader of the talking paper should write in the margins her/his response to the step-by-step commentary. Your responses might consist of questions, ideas you liked, disagreements, analogies to other readings, bibliographical suggestions, etc. Include your signature at the end of your comments.

On the following class session, the reader should return the talking paper to the original author. The author should read the comments and record in one’s journal any comments that serve as a catalyst for further development of ideas and refinement of thought. Ideally, each student should have responses from each member of the seminar by the end of the month.

Procedure: After the devotional moment, we will view a segment of the documentary, The Face: Jesus in Art, do a free-write, and discuss talking papers. Following the break, Steps 4, 5, & 6 will be the basis for the dialogical lecture and Q & A plenary session.
**Guidelines: Architectonic Talking Paper**

**Step One:**
Each seminar participant should read the designated page assignments. Write quickly (3 - 5 minutes) your first reaction to the first required reading, whatever that may be without critical constraint; do not edit. In other words, write in free-style your “felt sense” of what is important to you in this text. When you finish your free-style writing, edit your reflections.

**Step Two:**
If you think of this reading assignment as a personal conversation with the author, what has been an important idea that you learned from what the author shared with you?

**Step Three**
Next, read the assigned pages in *Creating Black Americans: African-American History and Its Meanings 1618 to the Present* by Nell Irvin Painter. Identify a sentence of conscientization in the required reading that matters to you, a sentence that surprised you, puzzled you, or challenged you. Discuss the significance of this statement as to how it deepens your understanding of *Ethic and Ethnicity*.

**Step Four**
Decide on an architectonic image by an African American artist that reflects the zeitgeist of your commentary expressed in the steps above. Become knowledgeable of background information: the African American artist’s biosketch: name, date and place of birth, race, gender, class, educational background, familial influences. In your judgment, how do these factors affect the artist, the artwork, and the art-making process? Share the title of the artwork, year it was completed, how the object came into being, resources used, and its dimensions. Include full bibliographical and/or web citation.

**Step Five**
In bringing the visual and the textual into alignment, define a word from the readings that increases your ethical lexicon and explain why the aesthetic sensibility in your selected African American Architectonic text
  a) helps you gain insights into the continuous call of the African American soul-force to create;
  b) is a visual aid to a deeper understanding of the forces that influence artistic representation and theoretical conceptualization in the work of justice;
  c) has synesthesiatic meaning for you in the service of the gospel.

**Step Six: Interrogation/Integration of Ethics, Ethnicity, and Architectonic Text**
Conclude the talking paper by discussing the theological anthropology that this artist exposes, complicates, destabilizes, contests, or adheres to that invites new inquiry and possibilities in our ongoing scholarly study of *Ethics, Ethnicity and Architectonic Texts*.

**Criteria for Evaluation:**
--- accuracy and precision of scholarship
--- clarity of oral and written presentation
--- completion of assignments on the due dates
--- contribution to the group process of inquiry, facilitation and discussion
--- creativity, critical judgment, and imagination

**Required Textbooks: (3)**
Townes, Emilie M. *Womanist Ethics and the Cultural Production of Evil* (Palgrave/Macmillan, 2006)

**Required Biography of a Visual Artist: Select (1)**
Aaron Douglas: Art, Race and the Harlem Renaissance by Amy Helene Kirschke, 1995
Archibald J. Motley, Jr. by Amy M. Mooney, 2004
Barthe’: His Life in Art by Samella Lewis, 2009
Basquiat: A Quick Killing in Art by Phoebe Hoban, 1998
Betye Saar by Jane H. Carpenter, 2003
Charles Alston by Alvia J. Wardlaw, 2007
Charles White by Andrea Barnwell, 2002
Child of the Fire: Mary Edmonia Lewis and the Problem of Art History’s Black and Indian Subject by Kirsten Pai Buick, 2010
David C. Driskell: Artist and Scholar by Julie McGee, 2006
Elizabeth Catlett: An American Artist in Mexico by Melanie Anne Herzog, 2005
Evolution: Five Decades of Printmaking by David C. Driskell by Adrienne L. Childs, 2007
Henry Ossawa Tanner: A Spiritual Biography by Marcus Bruce, 2002
Hughie Lee Smith by Leslie King-Hammond, 2010
Jean-Michael Bisquiat by Dieter Buchant, et al., 2010
Jean-Michael Bisquiat: A Biography by Eric Fretz, 2010
Keith Morrison by Renee Ater and David Driskell, 2005
Margo Humphrey by Adrienne L. Childs, 2009
Painting Harlem Modern: The Art of Jacob Lawrence by Patricia Hill, 2010
Seeing the Unspeakable: The Art of Kara Walker by Gwendolyn DuBois Shaw, 2004
The Art of Romare Bearden by Ruth E. Fine, 2003
We Flew Over the Bridge: The Memoirs of Faith Ringgold by Faith Ringgold, 2005

**Recommended Texts:**
Johnson, Jason M. *Soul Sanctuary: Images of the African American Worship Experience* (Bullfinch Pr., 2006)

Metcalf, Jr., Eugene W. *The Artist Outsider: Creativity and the Boundaries of Culture* (Smithsonian Institution Pr., 1994)


Peffer, John. *Art and the End of Apartheid* (Univ. of MN Press, 2009)


Thaggert, Miriam. *Images of Black Modernism: Verbal and Visual Strategies of Harlem Renaissance* (Univ. of MA Pr., 2010)


Weinert, Susan M. *Politics, Aesthetics and Gender Relations in African American Art* (Konigshausen & Neumann, 2009)

World Council of Churches (Faith and Order) *Christian Perspectives on Theological Anthropology* (2006)

DVD's of Black Christ Portrayals, such as the one with Blair Underwood and Christ-type figures such as Patrice Lumumba in the famous, "Lumumba"


http://www.amazon.com/Imaging-Divine-Christ-Figures-Communication-Theology/dp/1556128630/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1298319107&sr=1-1-spell


http://www.amazon.com/Jesus-Twentieth-Century-Art-Film/dp/0567026671/ref=sr_1_9?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1298318899&sr=1-9

http://www.amazon.com/Reading-Gospels-Dark-Portrayals-Jesus/dp/156338387X/ref=sr_1_2?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1298319107&sr=1-2-spell

Schedule of Readings and Assignments

Monday, May 9
Introduction to the Course & 11 a.m. Orientation - Multimedia Classroom

Tuesday, May 10

Background Reading:
- African American Masters: Highlights from the Smithsonian American Art Museum by Gwen Everett, 2003
- Art and Religion in Africa by Rosalind Hackett, 1996
- Begrimed and Black: Christian Traditions on Blacks and Blackness by Robert E. Hood, 1994
- Created in God’s Image: An Introduction to Feminist Theological Anthropology by Michelle A. Gonzalez, 2007
- Creating Their Own Image: The History of African-American Women Artists by Lisa E. Farrington, 2005
- Reading Bibles, Writing Bodies: Identity and the Book edited by Timothy Beal and David Gunn, 1997
- The Beauty of Being Black: Folktales, Poems and Art from Africa by Olivia Pearl Stokes, 1973
- The Indigenous and the Foreign in Christian Ethiopian Art by Isabel Boavida and Manual Joao Ramos, 2004

* Due: Talking Paper #1 for Architectonic Text

Supplementary Reading:
- Evocative Objects: Things We Think With edited by Sherry Turkle, 2007
- Posing Beauty: African American Images from the 1890s to the Present by Deborah Willis, 2009
- Art and Answerability: Early Philosophical Essays edited by M.M. Bakhtin, Michael Holquist, Vadim Liapunon, 1990
- Images of Dignity: The Drawing of Charles White by Charles White, 1967
- Coming Home! Self-Taught Artists, the Bible and the American South edited by Carol Crown, 2004
- The Black Dancing Body: A Geography from Coon to Cool by Brenda Dixon Gottchild, 2005
- A New History of Photography by Michel Frizot, 1998

Wednesday, May 11
Facilitator

Background Reading:
- A Proud Continuum: Eight Decades of Art at Howard University by Carolyn Shuttlesworth, Tribotia Benjamin, et al, 2005
- African American Art: The Long Struggle by Crystal Britton, 2006
Black Looks: Race and Representation by bell hooks, 1999
God and Power: Counter-Apocalyptic Journeys by Catherine Keller, 2005
Image as Insight: Visual Understanding in Western Christianity and Secular Culture by Margaret R. Miles, 2006
Religion and Art in Ashanti by Robert S. Rattray, 1988

* Due: Talking Paper #2 for Architectonic Text

Supplementary Reading: Dark Designs and Visual Culture by Michele Wallace, 2004
Burnin’ Down the House: Home in African American Literature by Valerie S. Prince, 2005
Still on the Case: A Pioneer’s Continuing Commitment edited by Roland Freeman, 2006
How the Other Half Worships by Camilo Jose Vergara, 2005
The Black Female Body: A Photographic History by Deborah Willis and Carla Williams, 2002

Thursday, May 12 Facilitator

Background Reading: Art and Religion by Von Ogden Vogt (1921) rpt. 2010
Creativity and Spirituality: Bonds Between Art and Religion by Earle J. Coleman, 1998
Disfiguring Art, Architecture, and Religion by Mark C. Taylor, 1994
Imagery of Lynching: Black Men, White Women and the Mob by Dora Apel, 2004
Reimagining the Human: Theological Anthropology in Response to Systemic Evil by Eleazar S. Fernandez, 2004
Religion, Art, and Visual Culture: A Cross-Cultural Reader edited by S. Brent Plate, 2002
Signs of Change: Transformations of Christian Traditions and Their Representation in the Arts, 1000-2000 by Nicolas Belletah, Nils Holger, and Claus Cluver, 2004

*Due: Talking Paper #3 for Architectonic Text

Supplementary Reading: The Birth of An Artist: A Journey of Discovery by Ed Hamilton, 2006
Conjuring Bearden by Richard J. Powell, Margaret Ellen DiGiulo, Alicia Garcia, Victoria Trout, and Christine Wang, 2006
Women and Art in South Africa by Marion Arnold, 1996
From Site to Sight: Anthropology, Photography, and the Power of Imagery edited by Melissa Banta and Curtis M. Hinsley, 1986
Monday, May 16 Research Day for Living Lab Report: Museum Visit

1. Virginia Museum of Fine Arts
3. Corcoran Gallery of Art
4. Smithsonian National Museum of African Art
5. The Metropolitan Museum of Art
6. Smithsonian African Am Art Museum
7. Lewis Art Museum at Morgan State U
8. African American Civil War Museum
9. Black History Museum and Cultural Center in Richmond
10. Hampton Univ. Museum
11. Alexandria Black History Museum
12. Howard Univ. Gallery of Art
14. Anacostia Community Museum
15. Great Blacks in Wax Museum
16. Longwood Center for the Visual Arts

Guidelines for the Living Laboratory Report

A Living Laboratory Experience is by definition an occasion in which the seminarian acts as a responsible agent, by integrating professional knowledge of ethics with cultural awareness of issues, questions, and possibilities, in order to grow in theological understandings and communicative competencies. It is not a happening observed, but an event in which students participate. The report will reveal 1) the nature of the student's involvement; 2) the ability to gain quickly an understanding of particular challenges related to the interdependent processes of ethical perception and artistic expression; and 3) an assessment of the various ways that people of faith expand the perimeters of aesthetics in the work of justice.

The Living Laboratory Report must have five parts. The five parts are to be clearly distinguished but they need not be equal in length. If your Living Lab is from the past, it should be recent enough that you are able to recall the details in order to complete the assignment.

a. **Background:** Set the Living Laboratory Experience in context. What did you have in mind when you decided to visit the museum today? What were your hopes or fears? When and how did you become involved in this experience? What person(s) precipitated and shaped this event?

b. **Description:** Report the Living Laboratory Experience. Write what you have seen and heard. Include as much detail as possible in two or three paragraphs. How was the physical space arranged? How did it look? What kind of atmosphere prevailed? Who were the principal actors? To what extent did you participate in programmatic activities? What occurred that informs your understanding of *Ethics, Ethnicity and Architectonic Texts*?

c. **Analysis:** What is the story behind this Living Laboratory? Assess three ways in which this Living Lab experience relates to topics of theological significance discussed in the lectures and in the required readings. What aspects of this experience tie in with information, concepts and interpretative frameworks you have gained from reading *Creating Black Americans* by Nell I. Painter and *Christian Art* by Beth Williamson?
d. **Evaluation**: Estimate your effectiveness in this experience. What did you learn? Did you do what you set out to do? If so, how? What factors or dynamics emerged which you did not anticipate? What observations can you make about your skills as an observer/participant? Include at least one theoethical research question generated by your visit to this Living Lab.

e. **Integration**: Reflect on your overall learning at this Living Laboratory. Share one new self-discovery concerning your own conscientization of *Ethics, Ethnicity and Architectonic Texts* as a result of this living lab experience. Will you visit this field site again, why or why not?

**Tuesday, May 17**

*Due: Living Laboratory Report and Scholarly Reviews (3): one from Recommended List, one from Background List, and one from Supplementary List*

**Wednesday, May 18**
Facilitator __________________________

**Background Reading:**
- Critique of Western Theological Anthropology: Understanding Human Beings in a Third World Context by Bo-Myung Seo, 2005
- In the Embrace of God: Feminist Approaches to Theological Anthropology edited by Ann O’Hara Graff, 1999
- Reflections in Black: A History of Black Photographers, 1840 to the Present by Deborah Willis, 2000
- Seeing Beyond the Word: Visual Arts and the Calvinist Tradition edited by Paul C. Finney, 1999
- The Black Interior by Elizabeth Alexander, 2004

**Required Reading:**
  * Due: Talking Paper #4 for Architectonic Text

**Supplementary Reading:**
- Black Venus 2010: They called Her “Hottentot” edited by Deborah Willis, 2010
- The Fact of Blackness: Franz Fanon and Visual Representation edited by Alan Read, 1996
- To the Break of Dawn: A Freestyle on the Hip Hop Aesthetic by William Jelani Cobb
- New Thoughts on the Black Arts Movement edited by Lisa Gail Collins and Margo Natalie Crawford, 2006
- We Won’t Budge: An African Exile in the World by Manthia Diawara, 2003

**Thursday, May 19**
Facilitator

**Background Reading:** Art, Creativity and the Sacred: An Anthology in Religion and Art by Diane Apostolos-Cappadona, 1995
Being Human: Race, Culture and Religion by Dwight Hopkins, 2005
Culture and Imperialism by Edward Said, 1993
Shades of Black: Assembling Black Arts in 1980s Britain edited by David A. Bailey, Ian Baucom & Sonia Boyce, 2005
Interpreting Visual Culture: Explorations in the Hermeneutics of the Visual edited by Barry Sandywell and Ian Heywood, 1999
Sexuality in Western Art by Edward Lucie-Smith, rev. ed. 1991

**Required Reading:** Womanist Ethics and the Cultural Production of Evil, pp. 79-110; Creating Black Americans: African-American History and Its Meanings, 1619 to the Present, pp. 218 – 263.
* Due: Talking Paper #5 for Architectonic Text

**Supplementary Reading:** The Ringing Ear: Black Poets of Lean South edited by Nikky Finney, 2007
Lyle Ashton Harris: Blow Up by Lyle A. Harris, 2008
Pitch Blackness by Hank Willis Thomas, 2008
New Thoughts on the Black Arts Movement edited by Lisa Collins and Margo Crawford, 2006
The Color of Stone: Sculpting the Black Female Subject in Nineteenth Century America by Charmine A. Nelson, 2007

Monday, May 23
Facilitator

**Background Reading:** An Ecological Christian Anthropology: At Home on Earth? by Ernst M. Conradie, 2005
Anthropologies of Art edited by Mariet Westermann, 2005
Challenging Racism in the Arts by Carol Tator, Frances Henry and Winston Mattis, 1998
Christianity, Art and Transformation: Theological Aesthetics in the Struggle for Justice by John de Gruchy, 2001
On the Body: A Contemporary Theology of the Human Person by Carlo Maria Martini, 2001
Re/Righting History: Counternarratives by Contemporary African-American Artists by Barbara Bloemink and Lisa G. Collins, 1999
Theological Aesthetics: A Reader by Gesa E. Thiessen, 2005

**Required Reading:** Womanist Ethics and the Cultural Production of Evil, pp. 111-138; Creating Black Americans: African-American History and Its Meanings, 1619 to the Present, pp. 264-319.
* Due: Talking Paper #6 for Architectonic Text
Supplementary Reading: Race-ing Modernism: Malvin Gray Johnson, Yasuo Kuniyoshi, Max Weber, and “Racial Art” in America by Jacqueline Francis, 2011
African American Art and Visual Culture: From Slavery to the Present by Celeste-Marie Bernie, 2008
Contemporary African Art since 1980 by Okwai Emwezar and Chike Okeke-Agulu, 2009
Decoded by Jay-Z, 2010
Theological Aesthetics: God in Imagination, Beauty, and Art by Richard Viladesau, 1999
New Thoughts on the Black Arts Movement by Lisa Gail Collins, 2006
Rethinking Social Realism: African American Art and Literature 930-1953 by Stacy I. Morgan, 2004

Tuesday, May 24
Facilitator ________________________________________________________________

Background Reading: A History of African American Artists: From 1972 to the Present by Romare Bearden and Harry Henderson, 1993
After Empire: The Art and Ethos of Enduring Peace by Sharon A. Welch, 2004
The Anthology of Rap edited by Adam Bradley and Andrew DuBois, 2010
The Art of History: African American Women Artists Engage the Past by Lisa Gail Collins, 2002

Required Reading: Womanist Ethics and the Cultural Production of Evil, pp. 139-165; Creating Black Americans: African-American History and Its Meanings, 1619 to the Present, pp. 320 – 370.
* Due: Talking Paper #7 for Architectonic Text

Wednesday, May 25 Closure and Evaluation

*Due: Biographical Book Critique

Guidelines for a Scholarly Book Review: Due – May 16, 2011

1. Author of the Book __________________________________________________________

2. Include one fact about the Author that might be relevant to her/his contribution to the subject matter.

3. Title of the Book __________________________________________________________
According to this scholarly review
a. What is the author’s central thesis?
b. For whom was the book written and what is its purpose?
c. What new issues does this text raise?
d. What are the book’s major weaknesses?
e. What are its primary strengths and contributions?

Guidelines for Biographical Book Critique

1. Share background information: the African American artist’s biosketch: name, date and place of birth, race, gender, class, educational background, familial influences.
2. In your judgment, how do these factors affect the artist, the artwork, and the art-making process?
3. Discuss this artist’s call to create; how her/his artistic work offers you a deeper understanding of the forces that influence representation and theoretical conceptualization in the work of justice; and synesthesiatic meanings embedded in this artist’s artwork that can be used in the service of the gospel.