

Comparison of Contemporary African Artists

Instructions: Now that you have completed this unit on contemporary African art, compose a 2 -3 page comparative essay based on visual information. The goals of this assignment are:

- 1) To describe unfamiliar art in formal terms;
- 2) To assess potential iconographic or symbolic meanings of imagery;
- 3) To highlight the aesthetics of individual styles through a comparison.

Choose two artists to compare from among those represented on Jean Pigozzi's "[Contemporary African Art Collection](#)."* As you have done in earlier assignments, introduce the artists you will discuss and one or two main ideas that you will emphasize throughout the essay. For example, you may focus on media type, potential meaning, stylistic properties, country or group of origin of the artists, iconography, etc. You will touch on several of these and/or other aspects within the essay, but try to select one or two areas of particular focus.

First, get a feel for each artist's main interests by looking at a number of their works. Assess form, imagery, and content or potential messages; make notes while you looking at images. Your essay should include at least two specific works by each artist using titles and data from the website; use these to convey a few main points so you can be specific. Point out where the artists exhibit a similar approach and where they seem to diverge, then conclude with comments about how a close look at each artist can illuminate aspects of the other, whether through differences or similarities. If you would like a challenge, do web research on your artists and integrate some background information where it may help explain meaning, techniques, or other aspects you may focus on in your visually oriented essay. You will be able find relevant information on nearly every artist on the site.

The assignment should take about one hour.

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