

Cynthia J. Becker

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Education

- Ph.D. 2000 University of Wisconsin-Madison (Art History)
Dissertation: "Arts, Gender and Changing Constructions of Amazigh (Berber) Identity: The Ait Khabbash of southeastern Morocco, 1930-1999"
Advisor: Henry Drewal
1997 Certificate in African Studies, University of Wisconsin-Madison
M.A. 1991 University of Wisconsin-Madison (Anthropology)
B.A. 1987 University of New Orleans (Anthropology)

Employment

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| Associate Professor of Art History | Boston University, 2009 to the present |
| Assistant Professor of Art History | Boston University, 2005-09 |
| Director of Graduate Studies | Art History Dept., Boston University, 2008-09 |
| Assistant Professor of Art History | University of St. Thomas (St. Paul, MN), 2000-2005 |
| Faculty director | University of St. Thomas Liberal Arts Semester in Paris, spring 2004 |
| Faculty director | University of St. Thomas study abroad course in Morocco, January 2002, 2003, and 2005 |
| Lecturer | University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1999-2000 |
| Teaching Assistant | University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1997-1999 |
| Research Assistant | University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1993 |
| Field Supervisor | Archaeological excavation in Carthage, Tunisia, University of Michigan-Ann Arbor, summer 1992 and 1991 |
| Field Assistant | Archaeological excavation, southern France, CNRS, summer 1990 |

Grants and Awards

- Fulbright-Hays Faculty Research Abroad Fellowship for 7 months of research in Morocco
Radcliffe Institute Fellowship, Harvard University, 2009-10

Fulbright Senior Scholar Grant for Morocco, 2009-10, grant declined
Boston University Humanities Foundation support for African postcard exhibition and symposium, November 2008-January 2009
Council of American Overseas Research Centers Multi-Country Fellowship, comparative research in Morocco and Niger, summers 2008 & 2009
Choice Award, 2007 Outstanding Academic Title for *Amazigh Arts in Morocco: Women Shaping Berber Identity* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2006)
Boston University Grant for Undergraduate Teaching and Scholarship to work with student on African postcard exhibition, spring 2007
Boston University Humanities Foundation support for African art exhibitions (“Another Modernity: Works on Paper by Uche Okeke” and “African Poetics: Works by Obiora Udechukwu”) at the BU Sherman Gallery, fall 2007
African Studies Program, Boston University, course development grant, spring 2007
Boston University Humanities Foundation Junior Fellowship, spring semester 2007
Boston University Humanities Foundation Library Acquisition Grant, fall 2006
Boston University Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program grant to supervise BU student with research on Tuareg jewelry, spring 2006
American Institute of Maghreb Studies, summer research grant for Morocco, summer 2005, deferred until 2006
Luann Dummer Center for Women, University of St. Thomas, curriculum development grant, spring 2005
Fine Arts and Humanities Endowment Grant, University of St. Thomas, support for comparative research in Mali and Morocco, summer 2004
Sudden Opportunity Grant, University of St. Thomas, support for research in Senegal, summer 2002
International Education Grant, University of St. Thomas, support to attend CIEE seminar in Senegal, summer 2002
Luann Dummer Center for Women, University of St. Thomas, purchase of teaching materials for graduate seminar, 2002
Faculty Development Grant from the University of St. Thomas to attend Midwest Faculty Seminar on Diasporic Cultures at the University of Chicago, November 1-3, 2001
Faculty Development Grant for summer research in Morocco, U. St. Thomas, 2001
Vilas Travel Award from University of Wisconsin-Madison to attend conference in Morocco, summer 2000
University Fellowship, UW-Madison, 1999-2000
Summer research grant from the American Institute of Maghreb Studies, 1999
University of Wisconsin-Madison, Dissertator Support Award, Art History Department, 1998
Fulbright grant for research in Morocco, 1996-97
Twelve-month research grant from the American Institute of Maghreb Studies for research in Morocco, 1995-96
Foreign Language Area Scholarship from the University Wisconsin-Madison to attend Arabic program at the American School in Tangier, summer 1995
Fellowship award from SUNY-Binghamton and USAID to attend the American School in Tangier, summer 1995

Publications

Books

Berber Art and Architecture at the Saharan Crossroads, in progress.

Afro-Islamic Art and Performance in Morocco: The Trans-Saharan History of the Gnawa, in progress.

Amazigh Arts in Morocco: Women Shaping Berber Identity. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2006.

Peer Reviewed Journal Articles

"Hunters, Sufis, Soldiers, and Minstrels: Trans-Saharan Derivations of the Moroccan Gnawa." *Res: Anthropology and Aesthetics*, forthcoming. 45 pages.

"Matriarchal Nomad or Freedom Fighter? Expressions of Transnational Amazigh Consciousness in Art by Moroccan, Algerian, and Nigerien Activists." *Critical Interventions: Journal of African Art History and Visual Culture* 4, forthcoming, summer 2009. 38 pages.

"Art, self-censorship and public discourse: contemporary Moroccan artists at the crossroads." *Contemporary Islam: Dynamics of Muslim Life* 3 (2009): 143-166.

"Exile, Memory, and Healing in Algeria: Denis Martinez and *La Fenêtre du Vent*." *African Arts* 42, no. 2 (2009): 24-31.

"Amazigh Textiles and Dress in Morocco: Metaphors of Motherhood." *African Arts* 39, no. 3 (2006): 42-55.

"We are real slaves, real Ismkhan': Memories of the trans-Saharan slave trade in the Tafilalet of South-Eastern Morocco." *The Journal of North African Studies* 7, no. 4 (2002): 97-121.

"Visualizing Gender and Identity: Berber textiles from the Tafilalet of southeastern Morocco." *Ars Textrina: A Journal of Textiles and Costume* 31 (1999): 183-199.

Book Chapters

"Exilé, Mémoire, and Guérison: Denis Martinez et *La Fenêtre du Vent*." In *Racontre-Arts*, edited by Hacene El Metref. Algérie: Édition Bibliothèque Municipale de Valentigney, forthcoming, 12 pages.

"Deconstructing the History of Berber Arts: Tribalism, Matriarchy, and a Primitive Neolithic Past." In *Berbers and Others: Shifting Parameters of Ethnicity in the Contemporary Maghrib*, edited by Susan Miller and Katherine Hoffman. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, in press. 43 pages.

“The Bride of the Rain in North Africa.” In *Sacred Waters: The Many Faces of Mami Wata and Other Water Spirits in Africa*, edited by Henry Drewal. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2008, 446-449.

“Photographic Encounters on the North African Stage.” In *Desert Jewels: North African Jewelry and Photography from the Xavier Guerrand-Hermes Collection*. New York: The Museum for African Art, 2008, 68-92.

“Fadma: Healer of Women and Weaver of Textiles.” In *Muslim Voices and Lives in the Contemporary World*, edited by Frances Trix and John Walbridge. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008, 31-42.

“Awakening the Senses: The Aesthetics of Moroccan Berber Dress.” *Dress Sense: Emotional and Sensory Experiences of Clothes*, edited by Helen Foster and Donald Johnson. Oxford: Berg Press, 2007, 72-83.

“Moroccan and Algerian Painters: Contemporary Custodians of Amazigh Consciousness.” In *North African Mosaic: a Cultural Reappraisal of Ethnic and Religious Minorities*, edited by Nabil Boudraa and Joseph Krause. Cambridge, England: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2007, 271-293.

“Gender, Identity, and Moroccan Weddings: The Adornment of the Ait Khabbash Berber Bride and Groom.” *Wedding Dress Across Cultures*, edited by Helen Foster and Donald Johnson. Oxford: Berg Press, 2003, 105-122.

Encyclopedia Entries

“Morocco.” In *Encyclopedia of World Dress and Fashion*, edited by Joanne B. Eicher. Oxford: Berg Press, forthcoming, 2010. 25 pages.

“Masks and Masquerades: Northern Africa.” In *New Encyclopedia of Africa*, edited by John Middleton and Joseph C. Miller. Farmington Hills, MI: Thompson Gale, 2007, 490-491.

“Berber Folklore.” In *Greenwood Encyclopedia of World Folklore: Volume 1, Topics and Themes, Africa, Australia, and Oceania*, edited by William Clements. New York: Greenwood Press, 2006, 101-112.

Review

“Exhibition Review of Black Womanhood: Images, Icons, and Ideologies of the African Body. Hood Museum, Dartmouth College.” *African Arts* 42, no. 3 (2009): 82-84.

“Review of The Beaded Prayers Exhibition at the National Center of Afro-American Artists, Boston.” *African Arts* 39, no. 2 (2006): 76-78, 88.

Non-Refereed Articles and Other Media

African Arts and Cultures Teachers Institute Course Reader. University of New Mexico and Albuquerque Museum of Art and History, 2006.

An Amazigh Wedding in Morocco DVD, based on original field footage, shown in the Newark Museum of Art exhibition "A Rural Bride in Morocco" (2004) and the Peabody-Essex Museum's exhibition "Wedded Bliss: The Marriage of Art and Ceremony" (2008).

"The Gnawa Festival of Khamlia," *Tingis: A Moroccan-American Magazine of Ideas and Culture* 1.4 (2004), 20-24.

Exhibition catalog entries

"Interactions Across the Sahara: Enslaved Sub-Saharan African Communities in the Maghreb." In *African Crossroads*, edited by Labelle Prussin. New York: The Museum for African Art, forthcoming in conjunction with exhibition *African Crossroads*

"Why Women's Arts." In *The Myth that is True: An Exhibition of Art by Native American Women*. St. Paul, MN: University of St. Thomas, 2001, 6-7.

Consulting and Curatorial Experience

Organizer of conference through the American Institute of Maghreb Studies and the West African Research Association, "African Crossroads: Cultural and Artistic Expressions In and Across the Sahara, Views from the South." Part II (June 2010) in Niger, Mali, or Senegal.

Organizer of conference for the American Institute of Maghreb Studies and the West African Research Association, "Saharan Crossroads: Cultural and Artistic Expressions In and Across the Sahara, Views from the North." Part 1 (May 2009) in Tangier, Morocco.

National Museum for African Art, wall panel and essay on North African photography from the Hermes collection for exhibition catalogue *Desert Jewels*

Peabody-Essex Museum, DVD *An Amazigh Wedding in Morocco* featured in their exhibition "Wedded Bliss: The Marriage of Art and Ceremony" (2008).

Curator of Exhibition, Boston University Art Gallery, Curated with Christraud Geary, Teel Curator of African and Oceanic Art, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston), "Exposures: Other Histories in Early Postcards from Africa," November 2008 – January, 2009.

Organizer of Symposium, African Studies Center, Boston University, "Cosmopolitan Identities and Alternative Histories: Africans in Front of and Behind the Camera," November 22, 2008

Boston University, Sherman Gallery, Curator of exhibition, "Nigerian Poetics: Works by Obiora Udechukwu," September-October, 2007

National Geographic TV, consulted about Tuareg for television and film series, June, 2007

French Library and Cultural Center, Boston, Curator of Moroccan Arts Exhibit, March, 2007

BBC, consulted about Berber communities in Morocco for television series, February, 2007

Harvard University, U-Mass, Boston, and Boston U, Member of organizing committee for conference on the Nigerian poet Christopher Okigbo, October, 2006

The Art Institute of Chicago, provided image for exhibition catalogue on African ceramics, October, 2005

Newark Museum of Art, Research consultant and guest curator for the exhibition, A Rural Bride in Morocco, 2005

Harvard University, Peabody Museum, Contributor to Berber art exhibition Imazighen: Beauty and Artisanry in Berber Life, 2004-2005

National Geographic Magazine, Research consultant for article on Berbers in Morocco, 2004

Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Contributor to exhibition, A Woman's Way: Feminine Attire in 20th Century Morocco, 2003

University of St. Thomas, Curator of several exhibitions at the University of St. Thomas, including Art and Life in Northwest Africa and Sacred Art of Daily Life in Africa, 2000-2003

Smithsonian Institute National Museum of African Art, Invited consultant for Smithsonian Institute National Museum of African Art for the exhibition All That Glitters: The Splendor of African Jewelry, 2002

Museum for African Art, New York, Invited consultant and contributor to the exhibition African Crossroads organized by Labelle Prussin, 2000

Invited Lectures and Conferences

2010 College Art Association, panel on International Perspectives on the Legacy of American Feminist Art and Art Histories, "Challenging Orientalism: Contemporary Feminist Art from Northern Africa"

2009 African Studies Association, Chair of panel, Performing Africa in New Orleans, Dialogue, Ambivalence, and Activism

African Studies Association, From the Backstreets to Mainstreet: the Transition of Mardi Gras Indians from Street Performers to Afrocentric Artists

- Presentation at the annual conference for the American Institute of Maghrib Studies and the West African Research Association, "The Sahara as a Mythic Space of Amazighité," May
- Cornell University, Visual Studies Colloquium, invited lecture on contemporary North African art, April
- 2008 Smithsonian National Museum of African Art, invited public lecture on Berber art in North Africa, December
- Fulbright-Hays, lecture on Berber art in Morocco to group of Fulbright scholars visiting Morocco. Rissani, Morocco, July
- Dartmouth College, Hood Museum of Art, "Beyond Orientalism: Contemporary Women's Art from Northern Africa." Lecture coincided with symposium organized for the exhibition "Black Womanhood: Images, Icons, and Ideologies of the African Body," April
- Boston University, African Studies Center, "Hunters, Sufis, Soldiers, and Minstrels: Trans-Saharan Slave Trade and the Arts of the Moroccan Gnawa," Lecture for the Walter Rodney Seminar Series, March
- Harvard University, moderator, Conference on Sacred Power and Performance: Ifá Divination in West Africa and the African Diaspora, March
- Harvard University, discussant, Conference on New Geographies in Contemporary African Art, February
- Guest lecture in BU Africa Today undergraduate course, February
- 2007 Middle Eastern Studies Association, "The Influence of Sufism and Calligraphy on Contemporary Moroccan Art: Lyrical Mysticism or Self-Censorship?" Montreal, November
- African Studies Association, "Matriarchal Nomad or Freedom Fighter? Expressions of Amazigh Consciousness in Art by Moroccan, Algerian, and Nigerien Activists." New York, October.
- Lecture on Amazigh Arts and Weddings at the Third Annual Amazigh Festival, Santa Cruz, CA, May

- Guest lectures in BU African-American art history graduate seminar and Africa Today undergraduate course, March and April
- Fourteenth Triennial Conference organized by the Arts Council of the African Studies Association. Presenter at roundtable discussion “Beyond the Visual: Connecting African art history and social justice pedagogies.” University of Florida, March
- Fourteenth Triennial Conference organized by the Arts Council of the African Studies Association. Chair of panel “Islam and the Arts of Africa: New Perspectives.” Presented paper “The Dichotomies of “Pagan,” Pre-Islamic and African Aesthetic Expression in the Islamic Maghreb.” University of Florida, March
- Invited lecture at Wheaton College, “Amazigh Arts in Morocco: Metaphors of Motherhood, Norton, MA, March
- Keynote speaker at University of Kansas African Studies Conference on Sufi Arts, Rituals, and Performance in Africa, “Sons of Bambara: The Sufi-Inspired Arts of the Moroccan Gnawa,” February
- 2006 Invited public book lecture, Oakton Community College (Women’s Studies and Honor’s Programs), “Amazigh Arts in Morocco: Women Shaping Berber Identity,” Chicago, November
- Invited lecture, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, “Berber Arts in North Africa,” November
- “Berber Arts in North Africa,” Invited lecture, Salem State College, October
- Lecture on African art to Freshmen Trustee Scholars at Boston University, October
- University of Wisconsin-Madison, University Lectures Committee, Invited book lecture “Amazigh Arts in Morocco: Women Shaping Berber Identity, September
- African Studies Sandwich Seminar in conjunction with the Madison World Music Festival’s Conversations on World Music, University of Wisconsin-Madison “Artistic Roots/Routes of the Gnawa: Cross-Cultural Interactions from the Sudan to Morocco,” September
- University of Wisconsin-Madison, Guest lecture in Introduction to African Art course for Henry Drewal, September
- Harvard University, International Conference: Berbers and Others: Shifting Parameters of Ethnicity in the Contemporary Maghrib, “Berber Art and its Historiography,” April
- 2005 African Studies Association, “Artistic Roots/Routes of the Gnawa: Evidence of Cross-Cultural Interactions Across the Sahara,” Washington, DC, November

- African Studies Association, Chair of Panel "Healing through the Visual and Textual in African Arts," Washington, DC, November
- African American Studies Program, Boston University "Tootie Montana and the Mardi Gras Indians: Race and Resistance in New Orleans," Fall 2005 Lecture Series, November
- Joanne Eicher Symposium: Senses and Sentiments of Dress, University of Minnesota "The Multi-Sensory Aesthetics of Amazigh Dress in North Africa," September
- International Conference: The Berbers and Other Minorities in North Africa: A Cultural Reappraisal, Portland State University, "Contemporary Amazigh Artists: Giving Material Form to Amazigh Consciousness," May
- Macalester College, Third Annual ACTC Art History Faculty Symposium, "Art Historical Connections Across the Sahara: Morocco and Mali," St. Paul, MN, April
- College Art Association, "*Là-bas, ici*: Denis Martinez, an Algerian painter in exile," Atlanta, February
- 2004 Minneapolis College of Art and Design, Service-Learning in the Arts Workshop, "The Beaded Prayers Project," October
- Minneapolis Women's Study Club, "Imazighen, Art and Culture and its Current Recognitions by the Moroccan King"
- University of California-Los Angeles, Saharan Studies Initiative Workshop, "Art Historical Connections Across the Sahara: Morocco and Mali," October
- Department of Design, Housing, and Apparel, University of Minnesota, Lecture on Amazigh wedding dress to graduate seminar "Dress and Culture" for Joanne Eicher, October
- 2003 American Anthropological Association, "Public Performance of Gender in Morocco: Berber Women and Weddings," Chicago, November
- African Studies Association Conference, "Berber Textiles: Weaving Metaphors of Motherhood," Boston, November
- Minneapolis Institute of Arts, "The Creative Power of Muslim Women: Feminine Attire in Morocco," adult class co-taught with textile curator Lotus Stack, November
- Minneapolis Institute of Arts, "Berber Art from the Collection of the Minneapolis Institute of Arts," two lectures given for docent training, September and May

- 2002 African Studies Association Conference “Altering the Female Body: Berber Tattoos in Morocco,” Washington, DC, December
- American Association of University Women, “The Role of Berber Women in Artistic Production in Morocco, Minneapolis, MN, April
- College Art Association, “Gnawa and the Arts of Resistance and Accommodation: The Influence of the Trans-Saharan Trade on Visual Culture in North Africa,” Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, February
- 2001 Textile Council of the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, “Weaving, Embroidering and Wearing Identity: Berber Textiles in Morocco,” October
- UNESCO Slave Route Project and York University, Slavery and Religion in the Modern World Conference, “Catholic Saints, Islamic Spirits, and African Aesthetics: A Comparison of Moroccan Gnawa and Cuban Santería Ceremonies,” Essaouira, Morocco, June
- Twelfth Triennial Symposium of the Arts Council of the African Studies Association, “Arts, Gender and Identity: The Role of Women in the Creation of Images of Amazigh (Berber) Identity in Morocco,” St. Thomas Virgin Islands, April
- Midwest Art History Society Conference, “Arts, Gender and Identity: The Role of Women in the Creation of Images of Amazigh (Berber) Identity in Morocco,” Minneapolis, April
- Minneapolis Institute of Arts, “Powerful Muslim Women: Berber Arts in Morocco,” Saturday adult class, March
- American Association of Teachers of French, Minnesota Humanities Commission, “*Identité et création artistique des marocaines*,” St. Paul, MN, January
- 2000 Al Akhawayn University in Ifrane, Morocco, Conference on Slavery in the Arab World “Cross-roads Africa: Descendants of Enslaved sub-Saharan Africans in Morocco,” June
- 1999 Middle Eastern Studies Association Conference, “Art as Identity: Body Adornment in the Tafilalet of Southeastern Morocco,” Chicago, IL, December
- Northwestern University, Conference on Slavery and the African Diaspora in the Lands of Islam, “The Afro-Islamic Arts of Possession-Trance and Healing: The Ismxan of Morocco,” April
- PASALA Graduate Student Symposium, University of Iowa, “The Afro-Islamic Arts of Possession-Trance and Healing: The Ismxan of Morocco,” March

1998 African Studies Association Conference, “Art as Passage: Body Adornment among the Gnawa of Southeastern Morocco,” Chicago, IL, October

Ars Textrina Conference on Textiles and Costume, “Visualizing Identity: Berber Textiles from the Tafilalet of Southeastern Morocco,” Madison, WI, June

The Eleventh Triennial Symposium on African Art. New Orleans, LA. Organized by the Arts Council of the African Studies Association, “Art as Passage: Body Adornment in the Tafilalet of Southeastern Morocco,” April

International Research and Languages

Research in Morocco, Summer 2008

Research in New Orleans, March and June 2007

Research in Niger, January 2007

Research in Morocco and Algeria, Summer 2006

Research in Mali and Morocco, Summer 2004

Research in Senegal, Summer 2002

Doctoral Research in Morocco, 1995-97

Research in Morocco, Summer 1993, Summer 1994, Summer 1999, Summer 2000

Research in Tunisia, Summer 1991, Summer 1992

Excellent Moroccan colloquial Arabic and French

Basic knowledge of Tamazight

Professional Affiliations

African Studies Association

American Institute of Maghreb Studies

Arts Council of the African Studies Association

West African Research Association

College Art Association

Middle Eastern Studies Association

Saharan Studies Association

Association for the Study of the World-wide African Diaspora

Friends of African Art, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Textile Curatorial Council of the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, program director from 2001-2003

Courses Taught

Introduction to African Art

From Morocco to Timbuktu: Arts of the Saharan Crossroads

Arts of the African Diaspora in the Americas

Islamic Art in Africa

Contemporary African Art

African Architecture and Urbanism
Women's Arts in Cross-Cultural Perspective
Morocco: Arts, History, and Culture (3 week study abroad course taught in Morocco)
Art, Colonialism, and Globalization at the Saharan Crossroads
Arts of Ceremony and Memory: Masquerade and Performance in Africa and the African
Diaspora

References

Available Upon Request