

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)

Professional Experience

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| Assistant Professor of Art History | Boston University, 2005 to the present |
| 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 |

Publications

Books

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

Refereed Publications

- “Berber Art and its Historiography: Tribalism, Matriarchy, and an Idealized Neolithic Past” in Susan Miller and Katherine Hoffman, eds., *Berbers and Others: Shifting Parameters of Ethnicity in the Contemporary Maghrib* (under review).
- “The Bride of the Rain in North Africa” in Henry Drewal, ed., *Sacred Waters: The Many Faces of Mami Wata and Other Water Spirits in Africa* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, in press).
- “Masks and Masquerades: Northern Africa” in John Middleton and Joseph C. Miller, eds., *New Encyclopedia of Africa* (Farmington Hills, MI: Thompson Gale, in press).
- “Awakening the Senses: the Aesthetics of Moroccan Berber Dress,” in Helen Foster and Donald Johnson, eds., *Dress Sense: Emotional and Sensory Experiences of Clothes* (Oxford: Berg Press, 72-83).
- “Fadma: Healer of Women and Weaver of Textiles,” in Frances Trix and John Walbridge, eds., *Muslim Voices and Lives in the Contemporary World* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, in press).
- “Interactions Across the Sahara: Enslaved Sub-Saharan African Communities in the Maghreb,” in Labelle Prussin, ed., *African Crossroads*, (New York: The Museum for African Art, forthcoming in conjunction with exhibition *African Crossroads*).
- “Moroccan and Algerian Painters: Contemporary Custodians of Amazigh Consciousness” in Nabil Boudraa and Joseph Krause, eds., *North African Mosaic: a Cultural Reappraisal of Ethnic and Religious Minorities* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2007), 271-293.
- “Amazigh Textiles and Dress in Morocco: Metaphors of Motherhood,” *African Arts* 39.3 (2006): 42-55.
- “Review of The Beaded Prayers Exhibition at the National Center of Afro-American Artists, Boston,” *African Arts* 39.2 (2006): 76-78, 88.
- “Gender, Identity, and Moroccan Weddings: The Adornment of the Ait Khabbash Berber Bride and Groom,” in Helen Foster and Donald Johnson, eds., *Wedding Dress Across Cultures* (Oxford: Berg Press, 2003), 105-122.
- “‘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* 7.4 (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.

Non-Refereed Articles and Other Media

- 2006 African Arts and Cultures Teachers Institute Course Reader. University of New Mexico and Albuquerque Museum of Art and History
- “Berber Folklore,” in William Clements, ed., *Greenwood Encyclopedia of World Folklore* (New York: Greenwood Press, 2006), 101-112.
- 2004 *An Amazigh Wedding in Morocco* DVD, based on original field footage, produced for the Newark Museum of Art's exhibition "A Rural Bride in Morocco"
- “The Gnawa Festival of Khamlia,” *Tingis: A Moroccan-American Magazine of Ideas and Culture* 1(4): 20-24.
- 2001 “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), 6-7.

Consulting and Curatorial Experience

- Curator of exhibition, *Nigerian Poetics: Works by Obiora Udechukwu*. Sherman Gallery, Boston University, September-October 2007
- Member of organizing committee for conference on the Nigerian poet Christopher Okigbo, 2006-07
- Member of organizing committee for conference on Africa's Photographic Heritage to be held in Morocco in May 2008
- Thesis panel member at the Boston Architectural College, 2006-7
- Curator of Moroccan Arts Exhibit, French Library and Cultural Center, Boston, March 2007.
- Contributor to Berber art exhibition *Imazighen: Beauty and Artisanry in Berber Life*, Peabody Museum, Harvard University, 2005
- Research consultant for *National Geographic Magazine*, article on Berbers in Morocco, 2005
- Research consultant and guest curator for the exhibition, *A Rural Bride in Morocco*, Newark Museum of Art, 2004
- Contributor to exhibition at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, *A Woman's Way: Feminine Attire in 20th Century Morocco*, 2003
- 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
- Invited consultant for Smithsonian Institute National Museum of African Art for the exhibition *All That Glitters: The Splendor of African Jewelry*, 2002
- Invited consultant and contributor to the exhibition *African Crossroads* organized by Labelle Prussin for the Museum for African Art, New York, 2000

Grants and Awards

- Humanities Foundation support for African art exhibition, fall 2007
- African Studies Program, Boston University, course development grant, spring 2007

Humanities Foundation Junior Fellowship, Boston University, spring semester 2007
Humanities Foundation Library Acquisition Grant, fall 2006.
American Institute of Maghreb Studies, summer research grant, summer 2006
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
Dissertator Support Award from the Art History Department, UW-Madison, 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

Invited Lectures and Conferences

2007 Lecture on Amazigh Wedding Arts at the Third Annual Amazigh Festival, Santa Cruz, CA, May

Guest lectures in BU African-American art history graduate seminar and African Today undergraduate course, March and April

Presenter at roundtable discussion "Beyond the Visual: Connecting African art history and social justice pedagogies." Fourteenth Triennial Conference organized by the Arts Council of the African Studies Association. University of Florida, March

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." Fourteenth Triennial Conference organized by the Arts Council of the African Studies Association. University of Florida, March

"Amazigh Arts in Morocco: Metaphors of Motherhood," Invited lecture at Wheaton College, Norton, MA, March

- “Sons of Bambara: The Sufi-Inspired Arts of the Moroccan Gnawa,” Keynote speaker at University of Kansas African Studies Conference on Sufi Arts, Rituals, and Performance in Africa, February
- 2006 “Amazigh Arts in Morocco: Women Shaping Berber Identity,” Invited public book lecture, Oakton Community College (Women’s Studies and Honor’s Programs), Chicago, November
- “Berber Arts in North Africa,” Invited lecture, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, November
- “Berber Arts in North Africa,” Invited lecture, Salem State College, October
- Lecture on African art to Freshmen Trustee Scholars at Boston University, October
- “Amazigh Arts in Morocco: Women Shaping Berber Identity,” Invited book lecture, Department of Art History, University of Wisconsin-Madison, September
- “Artistic Roots/Routes of the Gnawa: Cross-Cultural Interactions from the Sudan to Morocco,” African Studies Sandwich Seminar in conjunction with the Madison World Music Festival’s Conversations on World Music, University of Wisconsin-Madison, September
- Guest lecture in Introduction to African Art course for Henry Drewal, University of Wisconsin-Madison, September
- “Berber Art and its Historiography,” International Conference: Berbers and Others: Shifting Parameters of Ethnicity in the Contemporary Maghrib, Harvard University, April
- 2005 “Artistic Roots/Routes of the Gnawa: Evidence of Cross-Cultural Interactions Across the Sahara,” African Studies Association, Washington, DC, November
- Chair of Panel “Healing through the Visual and Textual in African Arts,” African Studies Association, Washington, DC, November
- “Tootie Montana and the Mardi Gras Indians: Race and Resistance in New Orleans,” Fall 2005 Lecture Series, African American Studies, Boston University, November
- "The Multi-Sensory Aesthetics of Amazigh Dress in North Africa," Joanne Eicher Symposium: Senses and Sentiments of Dress, University of Minnesota, September
- “Contemporary Amazigh Artists: Giving Material Form to Amazigh Consciousness,” International Conference: The Berbers and Other Minorities in North Africa: A Cultural Reappraisal, Portland State University, May

- “*Là-bas, ici*: Denis Martinez, an Algerian painter in exile,” College Art Association, Atlanta, February
- 2004 “The Beaded Prayers Project,” Service-Learning in the Arts Workshop, Minneapolis College of Art and Design, October
- “Art Historical Connections Across the Sahara: Morocco and Mali,” Saharan Studies Initiative Workshop, University of California-Los Angeles, October
- Lecture on Amazigh wedding dress to graduate seminar “Dress and Culture” for Joanne Eicher, Department of Design, Housing, and Apparel, University of Minnesota, October
- 2003 “Public Performance of Gender in Morocco: Berber Women and Weddings,” American Anthropological Association, Chicago, November
- “Berber Textiles: Weaving Metaphors of Motherhood,” African Studies Association Conference, Boston, November
- “The Creative Power of Muslim Women: Feminine Attire in Morocco,” adult class co-taught with textile curator Lotus Stack, Minneapolis Institute of Arts, November
- “Berber Art from the Collection of the Minneapolis Institute of Arts,” three lectures given for docent training at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, September and May
- 2002 “Altering the Female Body: Berber Tattoos in Morocco,” African Studies Association Conference, Washington, DC, December
- “The Role of Berber Women in Artistic Production in Morocco,” American Association of University Women, Minneapolis, MN, April
- “Gnawa and the Arts of Resistance and Accommodation: The Influence of the Trans-Saharan Trade on Visual Culture in North Africa,” College Art Association, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, February
- 2001 “Weaving, Embroidering and Wearing Identity: Berber Textiles in Morocco,” Textile Council of the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, October
- “Catholic Saints, Islamic Spirits, and African Aesthetics: A Comparison of Moroccan Gnawa and Cuban Santería Ceremonies,” Slavery and Religion in the Modern World Conference, sponsored by the UNESCO Slave Route Project and York University, Essaouira, Morocco, June
- “Arts, Gender and Identity: The Role of Women in the Creation of Images of Amazigh (Berber) Identity in Morocco,” Twelfth Triennial Symposium on African Art. Organized by the Arts Council of the African Studies Association. St. Thomas Virgin Islands, April

- “Powerful Muslim Women: Berber Arts in Morocco,” Saturday adult class, Minneapolis Institute of Arts, March
- “Identité et création artistique des marocaines,”* American Association of Teachers of French, Minnesota Humanities Commission. St. Paul, MN, January
- 2000 “Cross-roads Africa: Descendents of Enslaved sub-Saharan Africans in Morocco,” Conference on Slavery in the Arab World, Al Akhawayn University in Ifrane, Morocco, June
- 1999 “Art as Identity: Body Adornment in the Tafilalet of Southeastern Morocco,” Middle Eastern Studies Association Conference, Chicago, IL, December
- “The Afro-Islamic Arts of Possession-Trance and Healing: The Ismxan of Morocco,” Conference on Slavery and the African Diaspora in the Lands of Islam, Northwestern University, April
- “The Afro-Islamic Arts of Possession-Trance and Healing: The Ismxan of Morocco,” PASALA Graduate Student Symposium, University of Iowa, March
- 1998 “Art as Passage: Body Adornment among the Gnawa of Southeastern Morocco,” African Studies Association Conference, Chicago, IL, October
- “Visualizing Identity: Berber Textiles from the Tafilalet of Southeastern Morocco,” Ars Textrina Conference on Textiles and Costume. Madison, WI, June
- “Art as Passage: Body Adornment in the Tafilalet of Southeastern Morocco,” The Eleventh Triennial Symposium on African Art. New Orleans, LA. Organized by the Arts Council of the African Studies Association, April

International Research and Languages

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

Courses Taught

Introduction to African Art
Arts of the African Diaspora in the Americas
Islamic Art in Africa
Women's Art in Cross-Cultural Perspective
Morocco: Arts, History, and Culture (3 week study abroad course taught in Morocco)
Arts of Ceremony and Memory: Masquerade and Performance in Africa and the African
Diaspora
Ancient to Medieval World Art Survey