The Roark Lecture is an annual recognition and presentation that showcases excellence in scholarship by a faculty member in the College of Arts & Sciences at Eastern Kentucky University. It was established in the 2004-05 academic year and the inaugural lecture was delivered in April 2005. For more information about this lecture series, visit the College of Arts & Sciences web site at: http://cas.eku.edu/ruric-and-mary-roark-distinguished-lecture or contact Dr. Tom Otieno at tom.otieno@eku.edu or 622-1393


Dr. Gay Sweely
Department of Art & Design, EKU
Monday, April 6, 2015
6:30 PM-Reception
7:15 PM-Lecture followed by a Q & A session.
Walnut Hall, Keen Johnson Bldg.

ABSTRACT

Can you name an African-American artist? Why not? What impact has the African Diaspora had on contemporary American Art? Africans have always been actively involved in making art – in Africa and also after being transported to America in the early days of the 17th century. However, under the duress of slavery and negative racial perceptions, the extreme beauty, creativity, resourcefulness, and artistic achievements of the leading African-American artists in our country were overlooked for many years.

This presentation will show that, contrary to the early negative perceptions, the African Diaspora positively affected contemporary American art. At first, it was perceived that there was no art or any culture in Africa. The early slaves became artisans who were originally exposed to European art, and they adapted these art forms to their own African traditions. However, experimentation would eventually lead these artisans and craftsmen to infuse their art forms with a mixture of West African, European, and colonial American cultural ideas to produce the vibrant African-American arts of today. The 2015 Roark Lecture will present notable African-American artists – to be discussed, revered, and remembered.

The Roark Lecture is an annual recognition and presentation that showcases excellence in scholarship by a faculty member in the College of Arts & Sciences at Eastern Kentucky University. It was established in the 2004-05 academic year and the inaugural lecture was delivered in April 2005. For more information about this lecture series, visit the College of Arts & Sciences web site at: http://cas.eku.edu/ruric-and-mary-roark-distinguished-lecture or contact Dr. Tom Otieno at tom.otieno@eku.edu or 622-1393