

3/26/24

David,

I am sharing feedback on the Kostof arch/history piece *Sacred Blood* for tomorrow's meeting. I want to thank Kitty for voicing what others probably feel. I understand the reasoning and am most thankful for the time she devoted to voicing her concerns. I take them seriously and to heart. Nonetheless, Kitty, you know me. I've never followed a conventional path. I not only come out of left field, I live there. So why change now?

As we vie for approval for the exhibition space, I want to keep building the context of my work from the perspective of the student experience and how it affected us as individuals.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WGLRW1QjQ1Y>

The Miseducation of the Negro Book Review
By Afro Angie

Partial transcript:

9:02 his main point is for us to take 9:04 ownership of our plight 9:05 and change it ourselves rather than 9:08 waiting and depending on the morality of 9:10 others so in conclusion 9:11 we need to examine the education from 9:14 our oppressor and its intentions 9:16 examine our self-confidence and 9:18 self-worth as a result of the education 9:20 we need to value each other in our 9:22 communities again by focusing on service 9:25 rather than leadership and finally we 9:27 have to 9:28 own our history all of it and 9:31 tell our story ourselves.

My comments are in yellow below.

Feedback:

Don,

I watched your video again last night. I wasn't going to comment, but I feel like you're owed feedback on it. It's clear that you put a lot of thought, time and effort into this piece. However I don't think it's appropriate for the social factors in architecture space.

My reasons follow:

The connection between your Kostof disagreement on Greek architecture is tenuous at best.

There is an exciting book you may want to read, *Hermes, the Thief* by Norman O. Brown, where he outlines the impact of the lower classes on literature, art, and, by extension, architecture as artisans using the birth of Hermes poem to expose the underlying tension in Athens at the time. It's, in essence, the story of field slaves and

second-class citizens coming into town and establishing a new form of government, and the herm is an essential artifact in that task.

Describing Kostof as your "helpful enemy" puts you both in a bad light. Better to characterize it as an academic dispute which started you on an academic pursuit of your own.

I'm okay with a bad light.

The Cheikh Anta Diop scholarship is anthropology rather than architecture

Part of the problem, besides racism, is the lack of an interdisciplinary approach to myths. You can't separate the study of human society and culture from the study of human agency in designing and building artifacts.

and I believe his thesis challenges the notion that there were no black or negroid genes among the first dynasties of Egyptians.

Correct.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e981qP33ea4>

To take that premise and suggest that those negroid people had an influence on Greek architecture is something I'd love to see, but I don't know that anyone is looking at that. I don't understand the point of recasting of Greek myths under this premise.

Why would they look for a black presence since it has been whitewashed? Diop's thesis for his Ph.D. is the *Cultural Unity of Black Africa*. In its pages, he uses Greek myth to expose African customs at work in their society, specifically Mother Rights—matrilineal inheritance and only the mother possessing the right to kill her children or those that did kill her children. Interesting read.

Another interesting read is *Harper's Dictionary of Classical Literature and Antiquities*, created to safeguard the untold stories. In this book, the different versions of the myths are collected. You also find references to Greek people and artifacts from Africa. For example, there was the African goddess Athena (Neith). She was from the Egyptian city of Sais—the same city the founder of Greek city Athens comes from.

<https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=African+goddess+Athena+%28Neith>

The inclusion of the sadistic rape of men, women and children seems unnecessary.

The section is essential. Whites are quick to point out the oldest profession is prostitution due to sex in ancient temples. But this is BS and has not been portrayed in the proper light, the sexual religious practices of ancient Africans.

Nor is there an explanation for the confinement of women to their homes in Greek society. More importantly, the clash between African and white sexual practices produced children. How were these children treated? What happened to them? These were “children of the temple” whom I illustrate as eventually turning on their native culture and destroying it.

The portrayal throughout the video of scantily clad black women who look like white women with brown makeup is really off putting for me.

The point is that these Greeks were a mixture, number one. The dress is intended to show archaic nudity, which began in Africa, and how it evolved into the classical Greek period when Greek women were clothed from head to toe.

At one point you say that Paris "had a right to her". Pretty misogynistic thing to say in 2024.

I believe I said he had the right to take her. Under African rituals, you marry at the boundary stone; in American slave culture, the change from unmarried to married state was jumping over the broom, a boundary. Leda's attendance at such an event was her consent to marry him. Thus, she was his wife by custom, and Troy could fight for their couple.

Throwing in a passing reference to blacks and the Civil War at the end seems gratuitous.

In the last few months, haven't we seen whites redefining slavery as a condition that wasn't so bad for us, again taking control of the narrative for their own uses? The Civil War piece is tied to explaining who the Sea People were during the collapse of the Bronze Age. The age ends because of civil war, not invasion from an outside group. White scholarship can't explain these mysterious people because their narrative excludes the presence of an African unity within the abused underclass.

I think the quality of the graphic work is amazing. That makes the content even more important. I don't see how the video in its current form adds either to the social factors narrative or properly represents our time at CED.

My understanding of why Area E professors wanted people of color in CED was to provide a different point of view in architectural education and the profession. If not for social factors, I wouldn't have these ideas, nor would I have devoted myself to answering questions that white scholarship has no interest in. Area E professors set me on a path to

correct my miseducation and fulfill my potential, and I think that was what our time in CED was about.

DH