

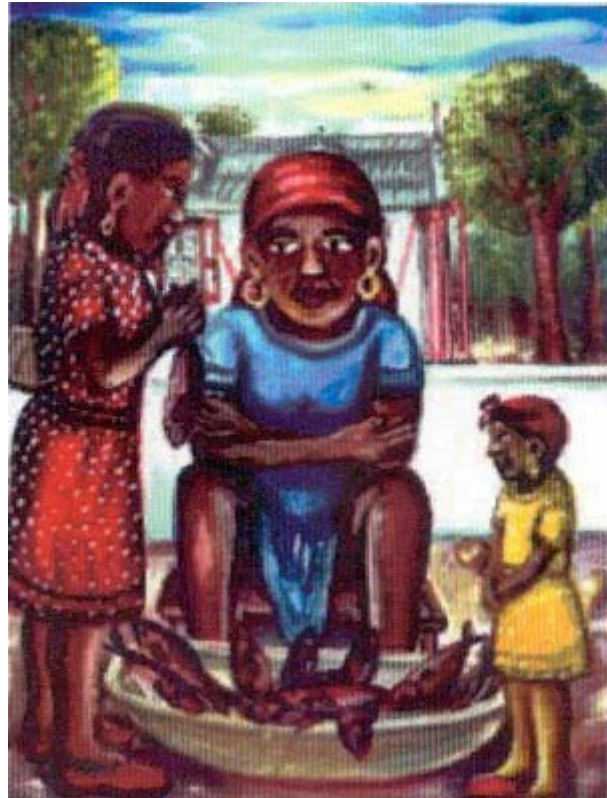
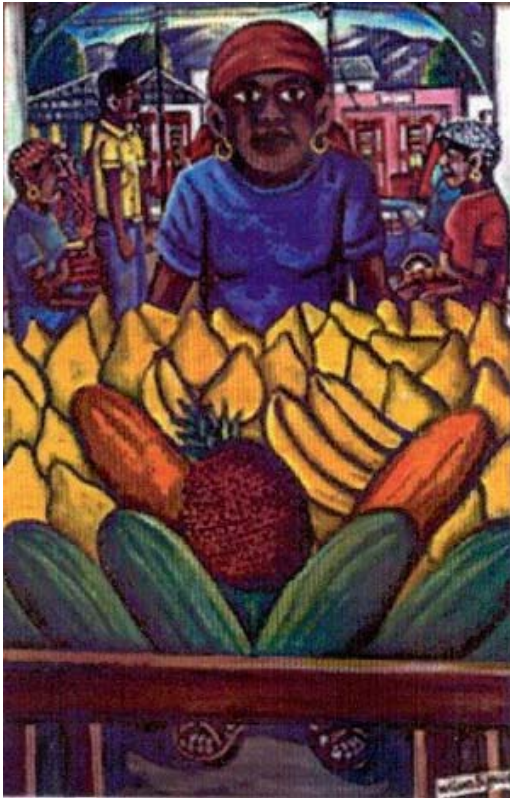
For reasons still unknown, Haiti is the francophone Caribbean island with the most painters. One of the recurring theme of Haitian painting is the Caribbean woman. The choice of paintings in this section will allow you to discover and compare the ways in which both European and Caribbean painters have depicted the West Indian woman.

**I. Women of color in two European painting of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.**



*Benoist, "Portrait of a negress," cir. 1800 (left)*  
*Anonymous, "The Lady with a Red Shawl," cir. 1850 (right)*

**II. Women of color in two Caribbean paintings of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.**



Bigaud, "The fruit merchant" (left)  
Bigaud, "The fish merchant" (right)

**ACTIVITY**

Please answer the following questions for each painting:

- 1- Which painting do you prefer? Why?
- 2- Which painting surprises you the most? Explain why.
- 3- How did the painter choose to represent his female model?
  - What does the model wear?
  - What colors dominate in the painting?
  - What is the atmosphere around the model?
  - How does the model seem to feel?
- 4- What feature(s) of the model does the painting underline? Why?
- 5- What did the painter chose not to reveal about the model? Why?
- 6- What role does each woman seem to have in the painting?
- 7- Which woman seems to be the most independent? Explain why.
- 8- Are those women represented in a traditional or unusual way? Explain.
- 9- In what way can we say that these models are stereotyped? Which ones seem to depart from stereotypes? Explain.
- 10- What conclusion can you make about the representation of "women of color" as seen by a European artist of the 19<sup>th</sup> such as Benoit and by a Caribbean artist of the 20<sup>th</sup> such as Bigaud?

### **Painting / Drawing Workshop**

**Step 1:** Paint or draw a woman.

What does she look like?

*(tall, short, blond, brunette, auburn, red hair, plump, thin, skinny, athletic, muscular, frail, pale, black, white, tanned, with slanted eyes, almond-shaped eyes, round eyes etc...)*

What does she wear?

Is she alone or with someone (kids? Adults?)?

What does she do? (Is she posing for you or busy with a particular task?)

What personality do you want your model to suggest?

**Step 2:** Exchange your drawing/painting with a classmate and analyze the image you now have in front of you.

1- Does the image in front of you look like someone you know?

2- Does she look like an actress, a model or any other woman from the media? Is she stereotypical?

3- If so, what stereotype(s) does she embody?

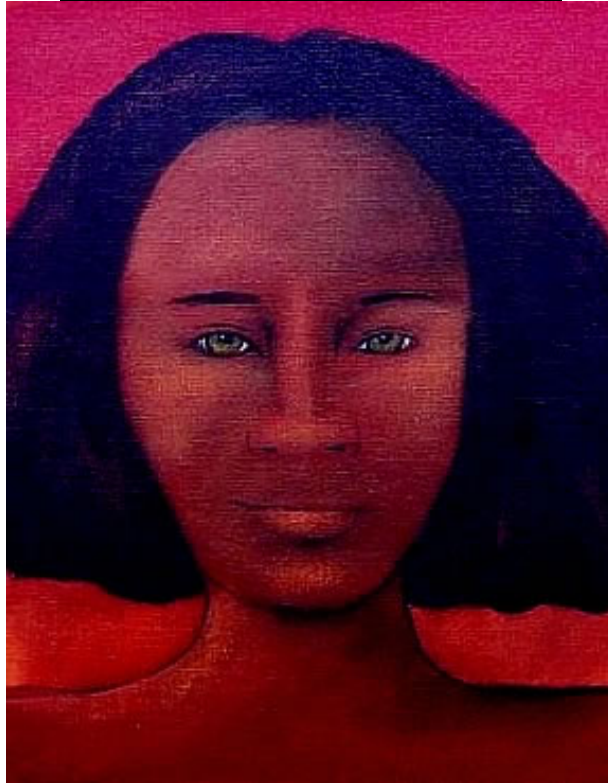
4- If not, what makes this woman unique?

5- Do you believe stereotypes have strongly influenced your classmate?

### **Short research**

Bring to class one magazine of your choice. Open it and select 2 or 3 advertisements with women in them. Analyze them with the help of the questions used for the paintings you've previously studied. What can you conclude about the role the media play regarding the proliferation of stereotypes?

**OTHER PAINTING, other activities**



John Preble, "Abitian Creole Study" Oil on Canvas 8" x 10"

Analyze this painting by using the previous questions about the paintings as a guide. In what sense can we say that John Preble has managed to paint "Creoleness" onto the young woman's face without falling into the stereotypes that are traditionally used to depict "women of color"?



*Now Is The Time To Pray*



Anonymous, Icon of the Virgin (left)  
Anonymous, Post Card of the Virgin Mary (right)



Eliassaint, "Erzulie Dantor" (left)  
Eliassaint, "Apparition Erzulie" (right)

- 1- What representation of the Virgin Mary surprises you and why?
- 2- What do you think the painter has chosen to depict a Black Virgin Mary?
- 3- Topic for short-essay: do you think it necessary that art diversify the traditional iconography of religion? Why or why not?