MAKING AFRICAN AMERICA
A Virtual Symposium on Immigration and the Changing Dynamics of Blackness

March 2021

Presented by
The University of Maryland,
College Park
National Museum of African American
History and Culture
nmaahc.si.edu/MAA

©Nelson Stevens. Artwork courtesy of Arlene Turner Crawford
Photograph courtesy of Rose Blouin.
On behalf of the Smithsonian’s National Museum of African American History and Culture, I am honored to welcome you to this symposium on the impact of immigration on black American identity co-sponsored with the Center for Global Migration Studies at the University of Maryland, College Park. The symposium, titled Making African America: Immigration and the Changing Dynamics of Blackness, will explore how demographic changes have transformed the social, cultural, and political significance of blackness in the United States. This is the first gathering of its kind.

The participants will examine definitions of African Americanness, notions of home and belonging, and the tensions and alliances between black Americans of different ethnicities, among other topics. Each of the eleven panel discussions will generate meaningful conversations that will resonate far beyond this multi-day online symposium.

At the National Museum of African American History and Culture, we present black American identity as multicultural and immigration as an important part of the black American story.

Thank you for joining this timely discussion.

Kevin Young
Andrew W. Mellon Director
National Museum of African American History and Culture

Welcome to the University of Maryland, College Park, a globally recognized leader in transnational research on migration. The Center for Global Migration Studies at the University of Maryland and the National Museum of African American History and Culture proudly present the symposium Making African America: Immigration and the Changing Dynamics of Blackness.

Nationally, nearly one in 10 black Americans is an immigrant or the child of an immigrant. This figure is significantly higher in our home community, the Maryland-DC-Virginia metropolitan area. The discussions we generate are vital for better understandings of black American identity at a global, national, and local level. As a center of interdisciplinary scholarship and teaching, we are thrilled to bring together a multidisciplinary community of professionals to discuss how immigration has shaped and is continuing to reshape what it means to be black in the United States.

Migration has influenced all aspects of our nation’s experiences. Over the next three weeks, we will specifically explore how the experiences and contributions of immigrants from the African diaspora have shaped U.S. culture.

Thank you for being here.

Bonnie Thornton Dill, Ph.D.
Dean
University of Maryland College of Arts and Humanities

Print of M. G. Sishuba, 1913–1918
Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, Gift of Catherine M. Bailey

Poster for African Liberation Day, 1977
Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture
THE MAKING OF AFRICAN AMERICA SYMPOSIUM

The Making African America symposium brings together scholars, journalists, activists, curators, filmmakers, and writers to discuss how immigration has shaped and is continuing to reshape what it means to be black in the United States. This project is motivated by our understanding that black immigrants—from the Caribbean migrations of the late 19th and early 20th century to the Caribbean, Latin American, and African immigrations since 1965—have exercised a profound influence on the making of African America, yet have received insufficient attention. Connecting African American history to the history of immigration, this symposium will explore the rich ways a changing demography has transformed the social, cultural, and political significance of blackness in the United States.

Join us as we explore topics such as the expanding geographies of civil rights, defining African American and transnational identities, and notions of home and belonging, as well as the forces underlying the tensions, shared histories, and alliances between different black ethnicities in the United States.

ABOUT THE SYMPOSIUM

OBJECTIVES

► To explore the interconnections between black immigration and African American history
► To highlight how race informs national dialogues about immigration
► To bring greater visibility to the diversity of black American identities
► To present and explore immigration and black identity through a multidisciplinary lens
► To reach and engage a broad cross-section of communities

African-American history might best be viewed as a series of great migrations, during which immigrants—at first forced and then free—transformed an alien place into a home, becoming deeply rooted in a land that once was foreign, even despised. After each migration, the newcomers created new understandings of the African-American experience and new definitions of blackness.

— Ira Berlin

Pinback Button for Shirley Chisholm for President, 1972
Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture

Free Huey!, 1970
Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture

nmaahc.si.edu/MAA
#DiasporaLens
FRIDAY, MARCH 5, 2021

Sign-Up Link
3:30 p.m. EST

Remembering Ira Berlin and Welcome Remarks

- Kevin Young, National Museum of African American History and Culture
- Bonnie Thornton Dill, University of Maryland, College Park
- Lonnie G. Bunch III, Smithsonian Institution
- INTRODUCTIONS: Julie Greene, University of Maryland, College Park

KEYNOTE
Dis-Locations, Dis-Possessions—On Borders, Walls, Nations
- Carole Boyce Davies, Cornell University

Sign-Up Link
5:00 p.m. EST

SESSION 1: African American/American African Encounters

Introducing the methods and theories employed by scholars to understand the African diaspora, this session will explore both historical and contemporary migrations. Panelists will also consider the relationships and encounters between African Americans and African diasporic immigrants.

- Msia Kibona Clark, Howard University
- Joshua Guild, Princeton University
- Nancy Mirabal, University of Maryland, College Park
- CHAIR: Julie Greene, University of Maryland, College Park

SATURDAY, MARCH 6, 2021

Sign-Up Link
4:30 p.m. EST

SESSION 2: Transnational Ties and Conceptions of Home

The meanings and experiences of “home” are often complex and complicated. This panel will investigate homes and homelands through discussions of return migrations, dual residences, historical memory, familial ties, cultural production, and changing technologies of communication.

- Nemata Blyden, George Washington University
- Violet Showers Johnson, Texas A&M University
- Paul Joseph López Oro, Smith College
- CHAIR: Merle Collins, University of Maryland, College Park

Sign-Up Link
6:00 p.m. EST

SESSION 3: Struggles for Civil and Labor Rights

Struggles for justice have shaped the relationship of black migrants and African Americans for generations. This panel considers the contributions of black diasporic organizers and activists in the long history for civil rights and labor rights.

- Glenn Chambers, Michigan State University
- Fumilayo Showers, University of Connecticut
- Kaysha Corinealdi, Emerson College
- CHAIR: Quincy Mills, University of Maryland, College Park
SESSION 4: Artistic Encounters: Literature, Music and Art History

Examining the diaspora through the lens of cultural production and retention offers dynamic examples of the meanings and legacies of migration. This session will explore how cultural productions in literature, music, and art both reflect and contribute to the complexity of encounters between African Americans and black immigrants during the 20th century.

Mukoma Wa Ngugi, Cornell University
Dagmawi Woubshet, University of Pennsylvania
Silvio Torres-Saillant, Syracuse University
Jason McGraw, Indiana University

CHAIR: Zita Nunes, University of Maryland, College Park

SESSION 5: Global Geographies and Constructions of Blackness

This session will address how black immigrants and their interactions with African Americans have forged new and more global experiences of blackness over the course of the 20th century.

Lara Putnam, University of Pittsburgh
J. Marlena Edwards, Pennsylvania State University
Minkah Makalani, The University of Texas at Austin
Erik McDuffie, University of Illinois

CHAIR: Samir Meghelli, Anacostia Community Museum

SESSION 6: Curating Blackness in Museums and Cultural Spaces

Although measures of diversity name “black” as a single category, some museums and cultural institutions focus on the research, collection, preservation, and display of black diversity. This panel will explore what it means historically, and in a contemporary context, to present diverse black stories, whether for “traditional” museum audiences, predominantly black visitors, or in digital spaces.

Deborah L. Mack, National Museum of African American History and Culture
María Elena Ortiz, Perez Art Museum Miami
Aleia Brown, University of Maryland, College Park
Diala Touré, Appraisals of Value

MODERATOR: Ariana A. Curtis
National Museum of African American History and Culture
SESSION 7: Mediating Blackness: A Journalist’s Roundtable

Although black migrations within and into the United States are nothing new, articulations of black diversity are receiving a surge in media attention. Black Americans are increasingly naming their transnational, multiethnic, and multilingual realities, among other identities. The journalists on this panel will explore the use of collective terminologies such as African American and black, and discuss how the multiplicity of news media, both written and social, is responding to diverse black perspectives.

F Carl-Philippe Juste, Miami Herald Media Company
F Isma’il Kushkush, Freelance journalist
F Felice León, The Root
F Jeneé Osterheldt, The Boston Globe
MODERATOR: Natalie Hopkinson, Howard University
Films

▶ Standing at the Scratch Line, by Julie Dash, 2016 (11 minutes)

The year 2016 marks a century since the beginning of the first Great Migration of African American families to the Philadelphia area at the start of World War I. Dash captures the stories of a people seeking refuge and freedom in the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Working with Mother Bethel AME in Philadelphia, and Mother Emmanuel AME in Charleston, South Carolina, Dash creates a cinematic poem about returning to sacred spaces of departure and arrival.

▶ No Traveler Returns, by Ellie Fournibl, 2018 (12 minutes)

Migrating to the United States as a young black male can be a difficult process. For a young African immigrant, the adjustment can at times be overwhelming. This beautifully shot black-and-white film tells the story of one young man’s struggle to adapt to life in America, which eventually pushes him toward an existential crisis.

▶ The Bengali: A Work in Progress, by Kavery Kaul, 2020 (8-minute trailer)

An untold story of ties between South Asians and African Americans in the United States. In the early 1900s, an Indian Muslim man marries an African American Christian woman. A granddaughter of this vibrant cultural tangle travels to Bengali, India, in search of family—a world apart—a remarkable quest of hope and fear, as she tackles deep divides of culture.

▶ Into My Life, by Cassandra Bromfield with Grace Remington, Sarah Keeling, and Ivana Hucikova, 2018 (15 minutes)

Since 1965, an African American mother-daughter filmmaking duo has chronicled their lives on 8-mm film. Into My Life pays tribute to their drive for self-preservation and self-representation, highlighting the memories, identities, and relationships housed within their archive. From Puerto Rico to Lindsay Park in South Williamsburg, Brooklyn, the women experience vast changes to the places they have made their home.

Community Day: Telling Tales of the Diaspora

This community day engages visitors in exploring what diaspora is and what it means to them. Dr. Jessica Harris will discuss her recent book, Vintage Postcards from the African World: In the Dignity of their Work and the Joy of their Play. During this presentation, selected postcards will come to life through theatrical scenes written and directed by playwright Gabrielle Fulton Ponder.

Session 9: Advancing Blackness in Activism and Justice

Preceded and influenced by the work and legacies of Claudia Jones, Shirley Chisholm, Maida Springer Kemp, Kwame Ture, and more, contemporary black immigrant organizers and advocates build on decades worth of political strategy and analysis to advance racial justice. This panel discussion will explore contemporary sites of and insights on mobilizing and advocacy, from the perspective of black immigrant organizers and advocates.

Malachi Hernandez, Massachusetts State House
Gregory “Ronnie” James, UndocuBlack Network
DeJoiry McKenzie-Simmons, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
Nakia Woods, HOPE Collaborative

Moderator: Nana Afua Brantuo, Justice for Muslims Collective
Elizabeth Acevedo is a National Poetry Slam champion who received the 2018 National Book Award for her New York Times bestselling novel for young adults, The Poet X. She is also a winner of the Boston Globe-Hornbook Award for Best Children’s Fiction, and author of the chapbook Beat Girl & Other Origin Myths. She holds a B.A. in Performing Arts from The George Washington University and an M.F.A. in Creative Writing from the University of Maryland. Her most recent book, With the Fire on High, is a young adult novel. She lives in Washington, D.C.

@AcevedoWrites

Nemata Blyden is professor of History and International Affairs at The George Washington University. Her most recent monograph is African Americans and Africa: A New History. Blyden’s research interests lie in African and African diaspora history, and she has published on women in 19th-century Liberia, West Indian migration to Sierra Leone, and relationships between African Americans and African and Caribbean immigrants. @BlydenNemata

Carole Boyce Davies is professor of Africana Studies and English at Cornell University. She has held distinguished professorships at a number of institutions, including the Herskovits Professor of African Studies and Professor of Comparative Literary Studies and African American Studies at Northwestern University. She is the author of Black Women, Writing and Identity: Migrations of the Subject (Routledge, 1994) and Left of Karl Marx: The Political Life of Black Communist Claudia Jones (Duke University Press, 2008).

@caroleboycedavies

Nana Brantua, a doctoral candidate at the University of Maryland, College Park, is an educator, writer, and immigrants’ rights advocate. She is the strategic policy and advocacy adviser for the Justice for Muslims Collective. Her research focuses on black mobilities and migrations, immigrant acculturation, and return migration. Her writing has appeared in The Hill, PBS Newshour, the African American Intellectual History Society, and OkayAfrica. @NanaYBrantua @newafrican

Cassandra Bromfield regards herself as a creative since birth. She has been a self-reliant businesswoman since the 1990s, creating wedding gowns and social occasion dresses for women in Brooklyn, New York. Her inspiration comes from her mother, who was always documenting everyday events.

@Cassbromfield

Alicia M. Brown serves as the Assistant Director of the African American History, Culture and Digital Humanities (AADHum) Initiative where she co-directs the Restorative Justice Project and leads research, teaching, and programmatic initiatives. She holds a Ph.D. in Public History from Middle Tennessee State University. Her research and publicly engaged work explores black women’s material and digital culture created to advance black freedom struggles. She is the co-curator of the traveling exhibition Ubuntutu: Life Legacies of Love and Action. She is also the co-founder and organizer of two digital humanities projects. #BlkTwitterstorians #MuseumsRespondtoFerguson.

@BkTwitterstorians @MuseumsRespondtoFerguson.

SESSION 10: I, Too, Sing America: Writing Blackness in Poetry and Fiction

This panel discussion brings together renowned authors whose cultural roots span the African diaspora. They will discuss their use of the written word as a medium to communicate black immigrant experiences, including the complexity of encounters with other black Americans in the United States.

Dinaw Mengestu, author

Edwidge Danticat, author

Elizabeth Acevedo, poet and author

MODERATOR: Joanne Hyppolite, National Museum of African American History and Culture

Book Purchases

Titles by Dinaw Mengestu, Edwidge Danticat, and Elizabeth Acevedo are available for purchase from the NMAAHCC gift shop using this order form.
PARTICIPANTS

Lonnie G. Bunch III is the 14th Secretary of the Smithsonian. He assumed his position June 16, 2019. As Secretary, he oversees 19 museums, 21 libraries, the National Zoo, numerous research centers, and several education units and centers. Bunch was the founding director of the Smithsonian’s National Museum of African American History and Culture and is the first historian to be Secretary of the Institution. @SmithsonianSec

Glenn Chambers Jr. is associate professor of History at Michigan State University and author of Race, Nation, and West Indian Immigration to Honduras, 1890-1940. His current project highlights West Indian migration to highly racialized Jim Crow New Orleans. Central to Chambers’s scholarship is an emphasis on the ways in which people of African descent have maintained a common identity rooted in a shared history and experience.

Msia Kibona Clark is associate professor of African Studies at Howard University. She has written on African migrant experiences and African black identity, including her co-edited volume, Pan African Spaces: Essays on Black Transnationalism, and her article, “Identity among First and Second-Generation African Immigrants in the United States.” Clark has also written two books on Hip-Hop in Africa @Kibona @Kibona

Marie Collins is professor of English at the University of Maryland, College Park, and director of the Latin American Studies Center. She has published short stories, collections of poetry that include Because the Daze Breaks and Lady in a Boat, and the novels Angel and The Colour of Forgetting. Collins has also published several articles on politics and society in Grenada and produced a DVD on Grenadian culture.

Kaysha Corinealdi is assistant professor of History at Emerson College and a fellow at the Afro-Latin American Research Institute at Harvard University. She is completing revisions on her manuscript, Defining Panama: Zones of Exclusion and Afro-Caribbean Diasporic World Making. Corinealdi’s work has been supported by the Woodrow Wilson National Foundation and featured in the Caribbean Review of Gender Studies and the Global South.

Ariana A. Curtis is curator of Latin American Studies at the National Museum of African American History and Culture, where she uses material culture and intangible cultural heritage to research, publish, exhibit, and promote Latinx and black-centered narratives (not mutually exclusive). Curtis is a Fulbright scholar with a Ph.D. in Anthropology. @ArianaCurtis43 @arianaart43

Merle Collins is professor of English at the University of Maryland, College Park, and director of the Latin American Studies Center. She has published short stories, collections of poetry that include Because the Daze Breaks and Lady in a Boat, and the novels Angel and The Colour of Forgetting. Collins has also published several articles on politics and society in Grenada and produced a DVD on Grenadian culture.

Julie Dash is a filmmaker who broke through racial and gender boundaries with her Sundance award-winning film Daughters of the Dust, becoming the first African American woman to have a wide theatrical release of a film. In 2004, Daughters of the Dust was placed in the National Film Registry by the Library of Congress. Dash is currently developing the upcoming bio pic on Angela Davis and is scheduled to direct the Mahalia Jackson story. She is currently the distinguished professor of Art & Visual Culture at Spelman College. @dash_julie @JulieDash

J. Marlena Edwards is assistant professor of African American Studies and History at Pennsylvania State University. Her first book will be an examination of West Indian and Cape Verdean immigrants and their lives after settling in early 20th century New England. Edwards’s research interests include multiethnic African American identities, African diaspora history, and women, gender, and immigration in the United States.

Edwidge Danticat is the author of numerous books, including Breath, Eyes, Memory, an Oprah Book Club selection; Krik? Krak!, a National Book Award finalist; and The Farming of Bones, an American Book Award winner. Her memoir, Brother, I’m Dying, was a 2007 finalist for the National Book Award and a 2008 winner of the National Book Critics Circle Award for autobiography. She is a 2009 MacArthur Fellow, a 2008 winner of the Neustadt Prize, and a 2009 winner of the Saint Louis Literature Prize. Her most recent book, Everything Inside, is a collection of stories. She lives in Miami, Florida. @edwidgedanticat

Ellie Foumbi is an actor/writer/director from Cameroon. With an MFA from Columbia University, her films have screened at international film festivals, Student Academy Awards Semifinals and a reelection for an African Movie Academy Award. She was invited to participate in New York Film Festival’s prestigious Artist Academy. Her projects have support from Venice Biennale Cinema College, SF FILM Kenneth Rainin Foundation, IFFP’s No Borders Project Forum, the Film Independent Screenwriting Lab, and the Tribeca Film Institute. Her short film Home’ was funded by Netflix and premiered on their Youtube platform. She’s a member of Screen Actors Guild and the Directors Guild.

Juli Greene is professor of History and director of the Center for Global Migration Studies at the University of Maryland, College Park. She is the author of The Canal Builders: Making America’s Empire at the Panama Canal, which won the OAH’s James Rawley Award for the best book on the history of race relations. Greene’s current projects include a study of labor, race, and migration in the making of the U.S. “New Empire.” @jgreenade

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Ellen Davis is a woman to have a wide theatrical release of a film. In 2004, Daughters of the Dust was placed in the National Film Registry by the Library of Congress. Dash is currently developing the upcoming bio pic on Angela Davis and is scheduled to direct the Mahalia Jackson story. She is currently the distinguished professor of Art & Visual Culture at Spelman College. @dash_julie @JulieDash

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Joshua Guild is associate professor of History and African American Studies at Princeton University. His upcoming book, *In the Shadows of the Metropolis: Cultural Politics and Black Communities in Postwar New York and London*, examines Afro-Caribbean migration and community formation from the 1950s to the 1970s. Guild’s research interests include the making of the modern African diaspora, black internationalism, and the black radical tradition.

Malachi Hernandez is a torch scholar at Northeastern University majoring in Political Science and Communication Studies. His experience growing up in Boston fueled his desire to combat injustice and advocate for communities of color. This led him to work for the Obama Foundation’s My Brother’s Keeper Alliance (MBKA). At MBKA, he works alongside industry leaders to develop safe and supportive communities for boys and young men of color where they feel valued and have clear pathways to community formation from the 1930s to the 1970s. Guild’s research interests include the making of the modern African diaspora, black internationalism, and the black radical tradition.

Joanne Hynes is supervisory museum curator of the African diaspora at the National Museum of African American History and Culture. She is the curator of the Cultural Expressions Inaugural Exhibition at NMAH. She holds a Ph.D. in literature, as well as an M.A. and B.A. in African American Studies. Her publications include the essays “Disyspora,” “Little Citizen” and “Creating Dangerously: African American Literature,” co-authored with Michelle Williamson.

Gregory “Ronnie” James is a black immigrant organizer from St. Lucia, the “Helen of the West Indies.” He is a graduate of The City College of New York, where he received a B.A. in International Studies with a focus on public policy and how it can be used by communities to bring about change on an institutional level. @rein_on

Violet Showers Johnson is professor of History and Associate Dean at Texas A&M University. Her most recent book, *American: West Africans in Post-Civil Rights America*, highlights the experiences of first- and second-generation West African immigrants in the United States, and explores cultural identity formation and translocal connections among them.

Carl-Philippe Juste and his politically active family were forced to flee Haiti in 1965. Since 1991, he has been a photojournalist at the Miami Herald, and shared a Pulitzer Prize as a member of the staff. In 2016, Juste won a prestigious Knight Arts Challenge grant to complete *Havana, Haiti: Two Cultures, One Community*, a book and exhibit of photographs and essays about Cubans’ and Haitians’ lives and shared humanity. @jhypp

Kavery Kaul is an award-winning filmmaker whose films reframe who “we” are and who tells that story. With a refreshingly nuanced approach, her documentaries illuminate the complex human themes at the heart of belonging in the world of today. Her films have been screened in theaters, on television, and in all media worldwide. Born in India and brought up in the United States, her cultural background is unbounded. @Riverfilms, unlimedetcinema

Ismail Kushkush is a journalist who has contributed to *The New York Times*, *The New Yorker*, *The Atlantic*, *Southesian*, *The Nation*, *Guernica*, and others. He received a Bachelor of Arts degree in history and international relations from the University of California, Davis, and a Master of Arts degree in journalism from Columbia Journalism School in New York. He was a fellow at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture and an Ida B. Wells Fellowship recipient with Type Investigations.

Felice Leon is a host, producer, and multimedia journalist at *The Root*. She has hosted and produced many of the site’s viral explainers and on-air interviews, including “We Built This,” “Why Kaepernick Takes a Knee,” and “The Black History of Memorial Day.” She currently hosts and co-produces *Unpack That*, an original video series by *The Root* that examines various topics related to America’s precarious relationship with race. @FeliceLeon

Paul Joseph López Oro is Assistant Professor of Africana Studies at Smith College. His research interests include black politics in Latin America, the Caribbean and U.S. Afrolatinitudes, black Latinx LGBTQ movements and performances, and black transnationalism. He is working on his first book manuscript, *Hemispheric Black Indigeneity: The Queer Politics of Self-Making*.

Deborah L. Mack is associate director for strategic partnerships at the National Museum of African American History and Culture. She is responsible for planning, management, and coordination of professional partnership programs and international activities. Mack holds a Ph.D. and M.A., both in Anthropology, from Northwestern University.

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Minkah Makalani is associate professor of African and African Diaspora Studies and director of the John L. Warfield Center for African and African American Studies at The University of Texas at Austin. He is the author of In the Cause of Freedom: Radical Black Internationalism from Harlem to London, 1937–1939. Makalani’s next book will examine C. L. R. James’s return to Trinidad in the mid-20th century and the politics he brought with him.

Michelle Matterre is director of the Media Management Program and associate professor of Media Studies and Film at The New School. In 1994, she co-founded KJM Entertainment Group, one of the first African American-owned film distribution companies, which managed the marketing, positioning, and distribution of over 23 films, including Daughters of the Dust and L’Homme Sur Les Quais (The Man By the Shore). Her critically acclaimed film series Creatively Speaking, featuring works by women and people of color, is now in its 25th year.

Erik McDuffie is associate professor of African American Studies at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and author of Squaring for Freedom: Black Women, American Communism, and the Making of Black Left Feminism. McDuffie’s current book project, tentatively titled Garveyism in the Diasporic Tentatively titled Garveyism in the Diasporic, examines the experiences of black migrants from the Caribbean and the African diaspora in the 20th century.

DeJoy McKinzie-Simmons serves on the NAACP National Board of Directors. He is a graduate of Howard University, where he studied Political Science and Strategic, Legal, and Management Communications. At Howard, he focused on advancing millennial civic engagement, working on studies focused on student loan debt, and expanding college affordability for all students. A native of St. Peter, Barbados, he spent his formative years in Saginaw, Michigan. @dejoy SIMMONS @dejoySIMMONS


Zita Nunes is associate professor of contemporary African literature. Her work on a book about the international politics of social movements in the second half of the 20th century. @zitamines

Mukoma W. Ngugi is associate professor of English at Cornell University and a scholar of contemporary African literature. He is the author of three novels and two books of poetry. His recent monograph, The Rise of the African Novel: Politics of Language, Identity, and Ownership, examines earlier misreadings of African literature, arguing that early South African literature influenced multiple transnational literatures, including that of the “African independence era.” @mukomawangugi @mukomawangugi

Maria Elena Ortiz is associate curator at the Pérez Art Museum Miami and has collaborated with institutions such as New Langton Arts, Teorética, the Museum of Craft and Folk Art, and the Tate Modern. She has a master’s in Curatorial Practice from the California College of the Arts and is a 2014 recipient of the Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros and Independent Curators International Travel Award for Central America and the Caribbean. @contemporarychica

PARTICIPANTS

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Jason McGraw is associate professor of History at Indiana University Bloomington. He is the author of The Work of Recognition: Caribbean Colombia and the Paradoxic Panamá Canal Struggle for Citizenship and is currently at work on a book about the international history of Jamaican music. McGraw’s teaching and research interests include race and gender in the Americas, the African diaspora, and the Atlantic World. @jasonMcGraw @foudest_island

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@SamirMeghelli @SamirMeghelli

Dinaw Mengestu is the award-winning author of The Beautiful Things That Heaven Bears, and How to Read the Air. He is a graduate of Georgetown University and Columbia University’s M.F.A. program in Fiction and is the recipient of a 2010 Guggenheim Fellowship from the National Book Foundation, and a 20 Under 35 award from The New Yorker. His work has appeared in Harper’s Magazine, Granta, Rolling Stone, The New Yorker, and The Wall Street Journal. The 2012 MacArthur Fellow lives in New York City. @dinawmengestu

Quincy Mills is associate professor of History at the University of Maryland, College Park and author of Cutting Along the Color Line: Black Barbers and Barber Shops in America. He specializes in 20th-century African American business and social movement history. Mills is working on a book about the financial politics of social movements in the second half of the 20th century. @quincymills

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Quincy Mills is associate professor of History at the University of Maryland, College Park and author of Cutting Along the Color Line: Black Barbers and Barber Shops in America. He specializes in 20th-century African American business and social movement history. Mills is working on a book about the financial politics of social movements in the second half of the 20th century. @quincymills

Nancy Miranda is associate professor of American Studies and director of the U.S. Latinidades Program at the University of Maryland, College Park. Her most recent monograph is Suspect Freedoms: The Racial and Sexual Politics of Cabinedge in New York, 1823–1957. Miranda’s research interests include Afrodescendant Studies, immigration, and archive and knowledge production. @nirmiranda

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Maria Elena Ortiz is associate curator at the Pérez Art Museum Miami and has collaborated with institutions such as New Langton Arts, Teorética, the Museum of Craft and Folk Art, and the Tate Modern. She has a master’s in Curatorial Practice from the California College of the Arts and is a 2014 recipient of the Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros and Independent Curators International Travel Award for Central America and the Caribbean. @contemporarychica

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Jeneé Osterheldt is a Boston Globe culture columnist covering identity and social justice through the lens of culture and the arts. A 2001 graduate of Norfolk State University, she previously worked at The Kansas City Star. She was a 2017 Nieman Fellow at Harvard, where she studied the intersection of art, justice, and black representation. @SincerelyJenee

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Silvio Torres-Saillant is professor of English and Dean’s Professor of Humanities in the College of Arts and Sciences at Syracuse University. He writes on the intellectual history of the Caribbean and the literature of the Caribbean diaspora. Torres-Saillant’s research is committed to understanding the enduring impact of the knowledges created by European colonizers of the region in the early modern period and overcoming the sense of difference that lingers from these intellectual frameworks.

Fumilayo Showers is assistant professor of Sociology and Africana Studies at the University of Connecticut. Her current book project, Immigrants Who Care: West Africans in the US Long-Term Care Industry, chronicles the experiences of African immigrants as direct care workers in the U.S. health care industry. Showers’s research interests include U.S. immigration, labor migration and entrepreneurship, and race, class, and gender inequality in health care.

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Nakia Woods is the Executive Director at HOPE Collaborative and was previously Bay Area organizer with the Black Alliance for Just Immigration, where she focused on meeting the immediate needs of black Americans and black immigrants through organizing and advocacy. In their spare time, the members nurture their plant daughter, Lily Potter, get ridiculous tattoos, and interact with all things Harry Potter. @itsnakiawoods

Dagmawi Woubshet is Abuja Family Presidential Associate Professor of English at the University of Pennsylvania and author of The Calendar of Loss: Race, Sexuality, and Mourning in the Early Era of AIDS. His next book will examine the later writings of James Baldwin. Woubshet is interested in the intersections of African American, LGBTQ, and African Studies, as well as Transatlantic Studies, postcolonial literature, and Comparative Race and Empire Studies.

Kevin Young is the Andrew W. Mellon Director, National Museum of African American History and Culture. Before joining the Smithsonian, Young was the director of the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture in New York City and formerly the Charles Howard Candler Professor of Creative Writing and English at Emory University. The recipient of numerous literary awards, Young is the author of 13 books of poetry and prose and the editor of 10 other collections, including the 2020 anthology African American Poetry: 250 Years of Struggle and Song.
GLOSSARY OF TERMS

- **Culture** describes the way people collectively live their everyday lives. Culture changes over time. It is shared and passed down through communal behaviors, beliefs, values, and customs.

- **Diaspora** refers to the movement of a collective identity, voluntarily or involuntarily, from one place to many. The African diaspora primarily refers to communities throughout the world that resulted from the capture and dispersal of African people during the Transatlantic Slave Trade.

- **Ethnicity** is a shared identity-based ancestry and culture. It distinguishes one group from another. Ethnicity can be based on place, history, and shared traditions.

- **Immigration** is the international relocation of an individual or people from one country into another.

- **Latinx** is a gender-neutral label for a person of Latin American origin or descent. It is a non-binary alternative to the terms Latino and Latina.

- **Migration** is both the journey and the movement of a large group from one place to another.

- **Race** is a social process of classifying people with similar physical traits and customs into specific groups. Race was created by and used to justify historical oppression, slavery, and conquest.

ORGANIZING PARTNERS

**Center for Global Migration Studies, University of Maryland**

The Center for Global Migration Studies at the University of Maryland, College Park works to advance teaching and interdisciplinary research around issues of migration and immigration. Working in collaboration with numerous academic departments, community organizations, and institutions in Washington, D.C., the Center is pioneering new ways of producing and sharing knowledge about the processes of migration.

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**National Museum of African American History and Culture**

Since opening September 24, 2016, the National Museum of African American History and Culture has welcomed over 7 million visitors. Occupying a prominent location next to the Washington Monument on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., the nearly 400,000-square-foot museum is the nation’s largest and most comprehensive cultural destination devoted exclusively to exploring, documenting, and showcasing the African American story and its impact on American and world history.

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Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture

Ethiopia, Paint on plaster, 1921
Meta Vaux Warrick Fuller (1877–1968)
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