

The Black Midwest Initiative Presents  
**THE 2ND BIENNIAL BLACK MIDWEST SYMPOSIUM**



Detroit, Michigan  
October 20 - 22, 2022



black  
midwest  
initiative



Wayne  
County  
Community  
College  
District

[theblackmidwest.com](http://theblackmidwest.com)

# **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

This convening could not have happened if not for the generous financial support, hard work, and commitment of the people and organizations named below. We thank them for believing in the mission of the Black Midwest Initiative and for all they have done to make our work possible.

*A very special thanks to the **University of Illinois Chicago** for serving as the primary sponsor of the Black Midwest Initiative and the Black Midwest Symposium.*

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# DIRECTOR'S WELCOME

Dear Friends,

I am thrilled to welcome you to the Second Biennial Black Midwest Symposium on behalf of the Black Midwest Initiative. This gathering was initially scheduled to take place in 2021, two years after our inaugural symposium was held in Minneapolis on the University of Minnesota campus. But we never could have anticipated all that would take place in the months following that initial convening. Within six months of our gathering in the fall of 2019, the Covid pandemic had fundamentally disrupted, and in some cases completely dismantled, life as we knew it. As with so many social disasters, poor and working-class Black people and communities were especially hard hit, including many of the people who we know best and love most. Then, in the summer of 2020, the police killing of George Floyd further underscored the precarity of Black life and sparked one of the largest protest movements in history. At the time, BMI was still based in Minneapolis and those of us living in the Twin Cities had a special angle of view on the devastation that was occasioned by the brutality of George Floyd's death.

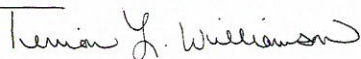
This year's theme, "Presence and Protest," emerged out of our collective attempts, as an organization of Black Midwesterners, to reckon with what it means to be Black folks living, working, dreaming, organizing, studying, and creating at the very forefront of some of the most intense sociopolitical struggles being waged in our time—even when, as often happens, the centrality of our lives to those struggles goes unacknowledged or underappreciated. Given this impetus, there is perhaps no better place for us to be gathered in this moment than Detroit. As a majority-Black city that has withstood any number of racial, economic, and political upheavals, Detroit, like Black Midwesterners writ-large, has something to say about refusal—refusal to be defined by external narratives; refusal to be conflated with the worst thing that has happened to us; refusal to settle for the stinginess of low expectations or a compromised view of Black social life.

Now based in Chicago at the University of Illinois Chicago, the Black Midwest Initiative has grown by leaps and bounds, and there is so much more to come. For starters, we are among those taking the lead in developing Black Midwestern Studies as a rigorous and significant field of study. At the same time, we are committed to developing pedagogical models and community-based initiatives that decenter the formal university and academic protocols and that privilege the visual, literary, musical, and performance arts as modalities that are essential to reckoning with the full capacity of Black life.

On Saturday morning, the BMI Council will be hosting a breakfast meeting for people who are interested in learning more about, and potentially joining, our work. Details of the meeting can be found in the schedule. If you are unable to make the meeting but still want to join with us or want to know more about the organization, please make sure to complete the membership interest form that is available in the registration area.

Members of the BMI Symposium Committee have put their love and labor into creating an event that we believe will challenge and stimulate you, and one that we hope you will want to return to again and again. Given the realities of Covid and the incalculable difficulties of the past three years, we do not take lightly the opportunity to congregate, fellowship, and share our work with each other *in person* once more. Thank you for making the space and time in your lives to be here and, again, welcome to the symposium.

In love and struggle,



Terrion L. Williamson  
Director, Black Midwest Initiative  
Associate Professor, Black Studies and Gender & Women's Studies  
University of Illinois Chicago

# SCHEDULE

All events will take place in the WCCCD Atrium except where otherwise noted.

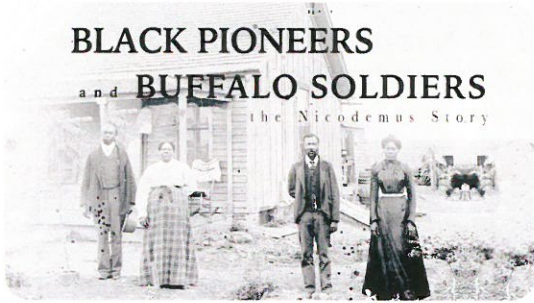
## THURSDAY, OCTOBER 20

1:00P	<b>REGISTRATION OPENS</b>
1:00P - 3:00P	<b>MUSEUM TOUR</b> feat. <b>JAMON JORDAN</b>
6:00P - 7:30P	<p><b>KICK-OFF EVENT   THIS BLACK MIDWEST: HANIF ABDURRAQIB IN CONVERSATION WITH AARON FOLEY AND TAMARA WINFREY-HARRIS</b></p> <p>To kick-off this year's symposium, Columbus, Ohio-bred poet, essayist, and cultural critic Hanif Abdurraqib will share his work before joining in conversation with writers Aaron Foley, originally of Detroit, Michigan, and Tamara Winfrey-Harris, originally of Gary, Indiana. Together, these three dynamic authors who are helping to develop the landscape for regional Black writing will discuss how Blackness is variously conceived within midwestern contexts and how their work has been shaped by their experiences as Black Midwesterners.</p>
7:30P - 8:30P	<p><b>WELCOME RECEPTION</b></p> <p>Frank Hayden Community Room</p>

## FRIDAY, OCTOBER 21

9:00A	<b>REGISTRATION OPENS</b>
9:30A - 11:00A	<p><b>PANEL #1   BLACK CREATIVES, MIDWESTERN FUTURES</b></p> <p>The funkiness of Dayton and the Minneapolis Sound. The poetic beauty of Gwendolyn Brooks and the literary genius of Toni Morrison. The choreographic brilliance of Katherine Dunham and the visual acumen of Gordon Parks. The innovative artistry of Black Midwesterners is, and always has been, indispensable to shaping the U.S. cultural landscape. This panel considers how contemporary cultural producers are building upon what came before to imagine and enact liberatory futures for Black Midwesterners.</p> <p><i>Panelists: Gabrielle Civil, Jen Everett, Njaimeh Njie, Stacey Robinson, avery r. young</i>  <i>Moderator: Tia-Simone Gardner</i></p>
11A - 11:15A	<b>BREAK</b>

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 21 CONT.**

<p>11:15A - 12:45P</p>	<p><b>PANEL #2   HEALING AND RESISTANCE: REST AS REBELLION, CARE AS LIBERATION</b></p> <p>Is resting a form of rebellion? The past several years have brought high levels of loss to the Black Midwest. From the increase in hate group and hate crime activity to voter suppression, police murders, COVID, and more, Black folks have barely had time to rest. How can we in the Black Midwest find space and time for rest, rejuvenation, and joy as we continue working for justice? How might frameworks such as intergenerational trauma and reparations help us find new pathways away from burnout and towards respite and reclamation of our health? How can we find and embrace communal, culturally specific ways of healing that will attend not only to our physical needs but also to our spiritual and emotional needs? If we consider rest as part of resistance, what does it spark as we imagine our futures in the Black Midwest?</p> <p><i>Panelists: Janett Lewis, Kandia Milton, Kama Tai Mitchell, Kerrie Trahan, AK Wright</i>  <i>Moderator: Catherine R. Squires</i></p>
<p>12:45P - 2:00P</p>	<p><b>LUNCH AND COLLABORATIVE WRITING SESSION feat. CATHERINE R. SQUIRES</b></p>
<p>2:00P - 3:30P</p>	<div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p><b>DOCUMENTARY FILM SCREENING &amp; PANEL DISCUSSION</b>  <b>THE AFRICAN AMERICAN MIDWEST: A 400 YEAR FIGHT FOR FREEDOM (2022)</b>          Frank Hayden Community Room</p> <p>Join us for an early screening of the upcoming documentary film being developed by Dan Manatt that surveys the rich history of Black freedom struggles throughout the Midwest. The screening will be followed by a discussion with several leading scholars in Black midwestern studies who are serving as part of the film's consulting production team.</p> <p>More information about the film is available on page 23.</p> <p><i>Panelists: Ashley Howard, Christy Clark-Pujara, Crystal M. Moten</i>  <i>Moderators: Tama Hamilton-Wray &amp; Jeffrey C. Wray</i></p>
<p>3:30P - 3:45P</p>	<p><b>BREAK</b></p>

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 21 CONT.**

<p>3:45P - 5:15P</p>	<p><b>PANEL #3   EXODUS: BLACK MIDWESTERN DIASPORAS</b>                  While narratives of the Great Migration of Black southerners to the industrial cities of the North and tales of francophone Black Canadians migrating to the Great Lakes are vitally important to Black midwestern history, there are other Black midwestern migratory patterns that also deserve greater attention. For example, Columbus, Ohio and the Twin Cities of Minnesota are home to the largest Somali diaspora populations within the United States, and substantial Caribbean communities are thriving within cities like Chicago, Detroit, and Pittsburgh. This panel explores the Midwest as a site of global connection for African diasporic people with attention to issues of immigration, political struggle, and cultural, religious, and language diversity.</p> <p><i>Panelists: LuFuki Ismaeel, Courtney Joseph, Su'ad Abdul Khabeer, Erik S. McDuffie, Sara Osman</i>  <i>Moderator: Tamira Amin</i></p>
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**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 22**

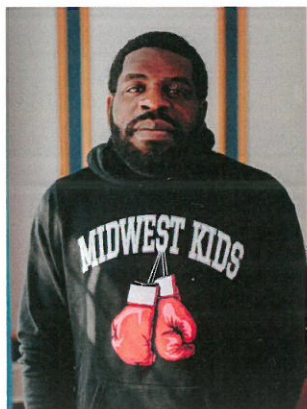
<p>8:30A - 9:45A</p>	<p><b>BMI COUNCIL MEETING &amp; BREAKFAST</b>                  Conference Room</p> <p>This meeting is open to anyone who is interested in helping to move forward the work of the Black Midwest Initiative. We will discuss what it means to be a BMI member as well as the future progress of BMI, including organizational structure, fundraising, and the location of the next Black Midwest Symposium. Breakfast will be served for attendees.</p>
<p>9:30A</p>	<p><b>REGISTRATION OPENS</b></p>
<p>10:00A - 11:30A</p>	<p><b>PANEL #4   COMMITMENT TO PLACE: CULTIVATING AND (RE)CLAIMING BLACK LAND IN MICHIGAN</b>                  Representations of Black midwestern communities are replete with images of shuttered factories, dilapidated buildings, and contaminated waterways. We are continuously besieged with the rhetoric of decline, insolvency, and reversal. Yet Black Midwesterners throughout the region continue to model new and innovative ways of solving old and evolving problems. This panel focuses on the important work Black Michiganders are doing in ethical urban planning and community revitalization, in developing urban agriculture and fighting for food sovereignty, and, ultimately, toward building more just and sustainable environments.</p> <p><i>Panelists: Remi Harrington, Brent Harris, Dale Mitchell, Heather Mitchell, shakara tyler</i>  <i>Moderator: Michelle S. Johnson</i></p>
<p>11:30A - 11:45A</p>	<p><b>BREAK</b></p>

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 22 CONT.**

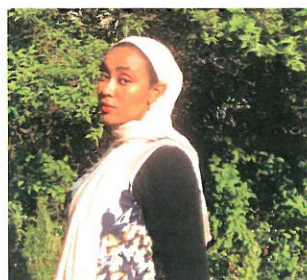
<p>11:45A - 1:15P</p>	<p><b>FILM SHORTS SCREENING &amp; PANEL DISCUSSION   BLACK MOVEMENT</b>                  Frank Hayden Community Room</p> <p>Join us for a screening of a series of short films by up-and-coming filmmakers and cultural producers whose work circulates around the theme of bodily, social, and geographic movement. The screening will be followed by a discussion with the filmmakers that will be moderated by the prolific Mansfield, Ohio-born filmmaker Kevin Jerome Everson.</p> <p>More information about the films is available on page 24.</p> <p><i>Panelists / Films:</i>                  Aisha Ford, <i>Cherry Lemonade</i> (2020, 11:00 min)                  bree gant, <i>Riding with Aunt D. Dot</i> (2018, 07:12 min)                  DeMar Walker, <i>The Beckoning</i> (2020, 03:18 min)</p> <p><i>Moderator: Kevin Jerome Everson</i></p>
<p>1:15P - 2:15P</p>	<p><b>LUNCH</b></p>
<p>2:15P - 3:45P</p>	<p><b>PANEL #5   BLACK STUDY &amp; PUBLIC PEDAGOGY</b>                  Since our founding, BMI has been committed to the idea that struggling toward Black liberation mandates that we work across disciplinary and institutional boundaries and alongside the communities that have helped to sustain us. While we see the university as a critical site of intervention in this endeavor, also central to our belief is the idea that education occurs as much outside of academic institutions as it does within them, and that art and community-based organizational work are just as critical to transforming the larger social world. To this end, this panel attends to the idea of “Black study,” what we conceptualize as an ongoing process of deep coalitional thinking and struggle rather than a formalized academic field, that is meant to privilege ways of knowing that are informed by people whose artistic practices and training beyond the university expand our capacity for freedom dreaming.</p> <p><i>Panelists: Tyanna Buie, A.D. Carson, Keona K. Ervin, Johari Jabir, David Stovall</i>  <i>Moderator: Ezekiel Joubert III</i></p>
<p>3:45P - 4:00P</p>	<p><b>CLOSING REMARKS</b></p>
<p>7:00P - 9:00P</p>	<p><b>CLOSING RECEPTION   THE GET DOWN feat. THE CORZO EFFECT</b>                  Curtis L. Ivery Health &amp; Wellness Education Center, 971 W. Fort Street</p> <p>Come celebrate the end of the symposium with BMI to the sounds of the amazing Michigan-based cover band, The Corzo Effect.</p>



## SPEAKERS



**Hanif Abdurraqib** is a poet, essayist, and cultural critic from Columbus, Ohio. His poetry has been published in *Muzzle*, *Vinyl*, *PEN American*, and various other journals. His essays and music criticism have been published in *The FADER*, *Pitchfork*, *The New Yorker*, and *The New York Times*. His first full length poetry collection, *The Crown Ain't Worth Much*, was released in June 2016 from Button Poetry. It was named a finalist for the Eric Hoffer Book Prize, and was nominated for a Hurston-Wright Legacy Award. His first collection of essays, *They Can't Kill Us Until They Kill Us*, was released in winter 2017 by Two Dollar Radio and was named a book of the year by *Buzzfeed*, *Esquire*, *NPR*, *Oprah Magazine*, *Paste*, *CBC*, *The Los Angeles Review*, *Pitchfork*, and *The Chicago Tribune*, among others. He released *Go Ahead in The Rain: Notes to A Tribe Called Quest* with University of Texas press in February 2019. The book became a New York Times Bestseller, was a finalist for the Kirkus Prize, and was longlisted for the National Book Award. His second collection of poems, *A Fortune for Your Disaster*, was released in 2019 by Tin House, and won the 2020 Lenore Marshall Prize. His newest release, *A Little Devil in America*, was published with Random House in 2021. In 2021, Abdurraqib was named a MacArthur Fellow. He is a graduate of Beechcroft High School.



**Tamira Amin** is a Twin Cities-based writer and poet. Her work is preoccupied with the shames we inherit, the ever-evolving distortions of Black women in popular culture, and the task of imagining freedom. She can often be found trying to read the perfect romance novel without much luck.



A Chicago and Milwaukee native, **Tyanna Buie** received her BA from Western Illinois University, and her MFA from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Buie is the recipient of multiple awards including the Mary L. Nohl Fund Fellowship, Joan Mitchell Painters & Sculptors Grant, Kresge Artist Fellowship/Visual Arts, Grant Wood Fellowship in Printmaking at the University of Iowa in Iowa City, and the 2020 Fellowship.art award, a top accelerator award/program funded through gener8tor, and was recently selected by artist Shepard Fairey to collaborate on the Milwaukee mural titled "Voting Rights is Human Rights." Her work has been acquired by major institutions, such as the Milwaukee Art Museum and the Northwestern Mutual Tower and Commons in Milwaukee, WI, as well as private collections nationally, and has been reviewed on *Hyperallergic.com*, *Newcity Chicago Magazine*, *South Bend Tribune*, and featured on *Essay'd.com* and *New American Paintings No. 155*. Currently, Buie is an Assistant Professor/Section Chair of Printmaking at the College for Creative Studies in Detroit, MI.



**A.D. Carson** is an award-winning rapper, performance artist, and educator from Decatur, Illinois. He received a Ph.D. from Clemson University in Rhetoric, Communication, and Information Design. His most recent album is *iv: talking to ghosts*, and his academically peer-reviewed album, *i used to love to dream*, was published by University of Michigan Press in 2020. Dr. Carson is currently assistant professor of Hip-Hop & the Global South in the Department of Music at the University of Virginia.



**Gabrielle Civil** is a Black feminist performance artist, poet, and writer, originally from Detroit, MI. She has premiered fifty performance works around the world including *Jupiter* (2021) at the Salt Lake City Performance Art Festival and *Vigil* (2021) in Northern Spark. Her performance memoirs include *Swallow the Fish* (2017), *Experiments in Joy* (2019), (*ghostgestures*) (2021), *the déjà vu* (2022), and *In & Out of Place* (2022). Her writing has also appeared in *Black in the Middle*, *Teaching Black*, *New Daughters of Africa*, *Kitchen Table Translation*, and *Experiments in Joy: a Workbook*. She earned her Ph. D. in Comparative Literature from New York University, traveled as a Fulbright Fellow to Mexico, and was named a 2019 Rema Hort Mann Los Angeles Emerging Artist. She teaches creative writing, Black feminism, and performance at the California Institute of the Arts. The aim of her work is to open up space.



**Christy Clark-Pujara** is an Associate Professor of History in the Department of Afro-American Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Her research focuses on the experiences of Black people in small towns and cities in northern and Midwestern colonies and states in British and French North America from the late 17th century through the American Civil War. She is the author of *Dark Work: The Business of Slavery in Rhode Island* (NYU Press); her current book project *Black on the Midwestern Frontier: Contested Freedoms, 1725-1868* examines how the practice of race-based slavery, Black settlement, and debates over abolition, and Black rights shaped white-Black race relations in the Midwest. She is the recent recipient of the Vilas Faculty Early Career Investigator Award and the University of Wisconsin System Outstanding Woman of Color in Education Award. Clark-Pujara is also a co-principal investigator on an Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Just Futures Grant, "Humanities Education for Anti-racism Literacy (HEALSTEM) in Sciences and Medicine," for the University of Wisconsin Madison, 2021-2024.



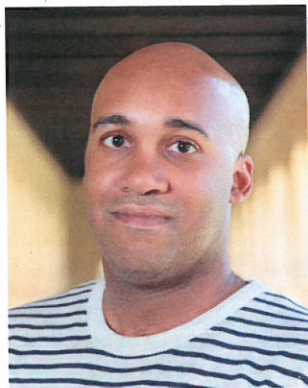
A native of St. Louis, **Keona K. Ervin** is Associate Professor of History at the University of Missouri-Columbia. Ervin is the author of the award-winning *Gateway to Equality: Black Women and the Struggle for Economic Justice in St. Louis*. She has published articles and reviews in *International Labor and Working-Class History*, *Journal of Civil and Human Rights*, *Souls: A Critical Journal of Black Politics, Culture and Society*, *New Labor Forum*, and *Los Angeles Review of Books*. Ervin is currently working on two projects: a history of Black women's labor struggles that will be published by Verso Books and a history of mass defense, political repression, and coalitional solidarities in the Midwest since the 1970s.



**Jen Everett** is an artist from Southfield, Michigan, currently based in Saint Louis, Missouri. Broadly, she is interested in the myriad ways Black people continue to produce and transmit knowledge in excess of formal structures. Her practice moves between lens and time based media, installation and writing. Jen received an MFA from Washington University in St. Louis where she was a Chancellor's Graduate Fellow in the Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Arts. She earned a Bachelor of Architecture from Tuskegee University. Her work has been shown nationally and internationally at art spaces including Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, Krannert Art Museum, Kunsthall Stavanger, Seattle University's Hedreen Gallery and SPRING/BREAK Art Show New York. Jen has been an artist in residence at the Vermont Studio Center, Atlantic Center for the Arts and ACRE. She is a 2021-22 Duke University DocX Archive Lab fellow. Her work is in the collection of the Museum of Contemporary Photography (MoCP) at Columbia College -Chicago.



Artist/Filmmaker **Kevin Jerome Everson** has made over two-hundred films. Including *Tonsler Park*, *The Island of Saint Matthews*, *Erie, Ears, Nose and Throat*, *Sugarcoated Arsenic*, with Claudrena Harold, and *Park Lanes*. He has three DVD box sets of his films; *How You Live Your Story: Selected Works by Kevin Jerome Everson*, *Broad Daylight and Other Times* and *I Really Hear Something: Quality Control and Other Films*. Everson films are also streaming on Criterion Channel. Everson's films and artwork have been widely shown at venues including Sundance, BlackStar, Berlin, Rotterdam, Oberhausen, Venice, Toronto and New York Film Festival. The Museum of Modern Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art, Smithsonian Museum of African American History, the Tate Modern in London and Centre Pompidou in Paris. The work has also been recognized through awards and fellowships such as Guggenheim Fellowship, an Alpert Award, a Heinz Award, a Creative Capital Fellowship, an American Academy in Rome Prize and an American Academy in Berlin Prize. Everson is represented by Picture Palace Pictures New York and Andrew Kreps Gallery New York.



**Aaron Foley's** reporting and writing on Detroit, blackness and queerness has appeared in *This American Life*, *Jalopnik*, *The Atlantic*, *CNN*, several anthologies and the *PBS News Hour*, where he is currently a senior digital editor. A Detroit native, the city's first appointed chief storyteller and a former magazine editor, he is the author of "How to Live in Detroit Without Being a Jackass" and editor of "The Detroit Neighborhood Guidebook." He currently lives in Brooklyn's Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood.



**Aisha Ford** is an award-winning filmmaker studying as a 4th-year graduate film student at NYU Tisch School of the Arts. Over the past few years, she has written and directed short films that have been broadcasted on platforms such as the American Black Film Festival Independent TV series and screened at multiple film festivals across the country. Her current film "Cherry Lemonade" is an official selection of the 2021 Tribeca Film Festival. Her recent accomplishments include: the recipient of the Tisch School of the Arts Dean's Fellowship, the Spike Lee Film Post-Production Grant, and the prestigious NYU Wasserman Award for her 2nd-year short film "Royal." She is also the recipient of the British Academy of Film and Television Arts HBO Scholarship. In 2022, her thesis short film "Brownies" was selected personally by Spike Lee to receive his production grant.



**bree gant** is an artist and thinker from the westside of Detroit. Using photography, video, collage, dance, and installation, bree remarks on the social forces that shape and distort our understanding of reality. Their work is rooted in research and ritual and a legacy of Black queer performance. bree has held residencies and fellowships with Art Matters Foundation, Kresge Arts in Detroit, Red Bull Arts, People in Education, Surf Point Foundation, and Detroit Narrative Agency, and exhibits her artwork nationally. Some of their most transformative experiences were collaborative, improvisational performances with folk like The Gathering, Visions of the Evolution, and The Fringe Society. bree is currently researching how depending on the bus in Detroit affects body and care, binge watching early 2000s science fiction, and probably at a city park somewhere dancing in the snow.



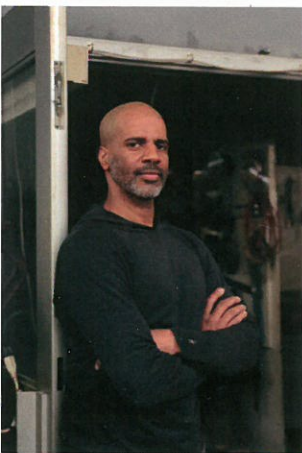
**Tia-Simone Gardner** is an interdisciplinary artist, educator, and Black feminist scholar. Working primarily with drawing, images, archives, and spaces, Gardner has made a practice of tracing Blackness in landscapes, above and below the ground's surface. In 2009 she received her MFA in Interdisciplinary Practices and Time-Based Media from the University of Pennsylvania followed by her participation in the Studio Fellow Whitney Independent Study Program. Gardner has been an invited artist at a number of national and international artist residencies including the Center for Photography at Woodstock, A Studio in the Woods, and IASPIS Sweden. She has also been awarded a number of fellowships for her work including the McKnight Visual Artist Fellowship and the Smithsonian Artist Research Fellowship. Her current work brings the questions of Black geography to questions of geology in order to examine ideas of race and landscape along the Mississippi River and her home in Fairfield/Birmingham, Alabama. Tia-Simone currently lives in Saint Paul, Minnesota.



**Tama Hamilton-Wray** is a scholar-practitioner who holds an associate professor position in the Residential College in the Arts and Humanities at Michigan State University and works as an independent filmmaker. Her research and teaching interests include Global African Cinema and Black feminist cultural production and theory, with specific scholarship focusing on the socially engaged artists such as Haile Gerima and Raoul Peck. Her publications appear in the *Journal of African Cinemas and Directions in the Study of the African Diaspora: Uncharted Theme and Alternative Representations*. Her films include *Songs for My Right Side* and *The Evolution of Bert*.



**Remi Harrington** is the lead organizer and administrator of the Zoo City Farm and Food Network, a local food policy council, industry association and network of urban farmers, cottage food businesses, folk artisans, local retailers and conscientious consumers. The Zoo City Farm and Food Network is focused on food sovereignty and is actively developing a regional food system fueled by neighborhood centered production sites.



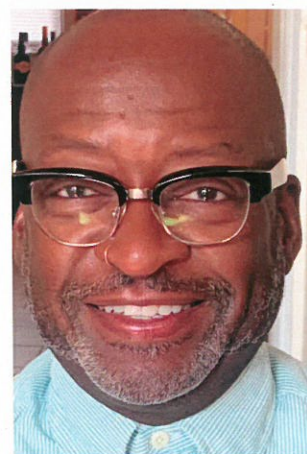
**Brent Harris's** world and his work is created in Kalamazoo Michigan, where he resides with his two children. Brent received his BFA from Western Michigan University in 1994. Immediately afterwards feeling the need to do more for his community he put his art career on the back burner and worked as a paramedic for seven years. In that time he became a field trainer for new medics and continued sculpting from the front seat of an ambulance. In 2003 he bought the bronze casting foundry he once mentored at. The Alchemist Sculpture Foundry. Along with his work the Alchemist made a name for itself creating large scale work of national importance. They found a niche in the sports industry casting players for the Detroit Redwings, Los Angeles Lakers, Chicago White Sox/Cubs and dozens more. Brent has shown in galleries and public spaces throughout the Midwest. His sculptures can be seen in collections in New York, Chicago, and London. Currently he is Head of the sculpture department at the Kalamazoo Institute of Arts teaching and developing new programming. He also enjoys working in the public schools as a teaching artist for Education for the Arts. Beginning this summer Brent will be teaching bronze casting at Ox-Bow and be the visual arts to the Kalamazoo County Juvenile Home.



**Ashley Howard** is an assistant professor of History and African American Studies at the University of Iowa. Her research interests include the Black Midwest; intersectional identities; and the global history of racial violence. She is currently completing her manuscript which analyzes the 1960s urban rebellions in the Midwest, grounded in the way race, class, gender, and region played critical and overlapping roles in defining resistance to racialized oppression. Dr. Howard's work has appeared in *The Black Scholar*, *American Historian*, the *Journal of African American History*, *TIME Magazine*, the *Washington Post*, the *Financial Times*, NPR, Al Jazeera, the *Associated Press*, *BBC World News* and numerous other popular and scholarly Outlets. As an educator, Dr. Howard's primary goal is to teach students to be effective writers, critical thinkers, and engaged global citizens. She is dedicated to sharing her scholarly knowledge beyond the traditional campus community, including underserved schools and correctional facilities.



**LuFuki Ismaeel** is a composer, guitarist, community organizer and curator in Detroit who is focused on connecting hearts through sound in order to promote solidarity, freedom, and social action. He views music as a spiritual practice that brings about healing and unity. He and his partner formed afro-jazz collective, LuFuki and Divine Providence, and have released four albums since: *Inner Horizons*, *Elephants and Mountains*, *First Light*, and *Love&Light*. LuFuki is currently working on several projects including, XRoads, a traveling exhibit on the history of Black Muslims in Jazz, and Autophysiopsychic Millennium, a creative research-music collective to explore and experiment with the philosophy and music methodology of the great Dr. Yusef Lateef. LuFuki also works with DREAM of Detroit and MuslimARC (Anti-Racism Collaborative) in urban housing development. LuFuki holds a Masters degree from Wayne State University in Near Eastern Studies, specializing in the Arabic Language, and with a concentration in the literary genre of Tasliyah, praise poetry of the Prophet Muhammad.



**Johari Jabir** is a contemplative musician and scholar. A native of St. Louis, Missouri, Johari was immersed in the expressive culture of St. Louis' Black working class religious community. He currently serves a director of music at St. George & St. Matthias Episcopal Church and works as an associate professor in the department of Black Studies at the University of Illinois Chicago. In his work as a prison abolitionist with P-NAP (Prison and Neighborhood Arts Project) in Chicago, Johari has created a Black Studies and mindfulness-based curricula for prison education as restoration and renewal. His first book, *Conjuring Freedom: Music and Masculinity in the Gospel Army of the Civil War* (Ohio State University Press, 2017), is a cultural history of the nation's first Black regiment, the 1st South Carolina Volunteers. *Conjuring Freedom* attends to the "spirituals" sung by the regiment in the ring shout as a mode of conjuring the spirit for military aims. He is currently at work on a Black Working Class History of Gospel Music, revealed in the life of the King of Gospel, Rev. James Cleveland.



**Michelle S. Johnson** serves as a public scholar in the fields of Black history, literature and cultural production and applies her background in cultural studies programs and classroom environments. Centering the power of telling story, Johnson consults on Black history projects that document the people, narratives and places of Black autonomy and researches, writes, curates, develops exhibits, performs, and lectures for academic and public settings. Her most recent essay, “*The Relation of Greens*”, was commissioned by and published in *Gravy Quarterly*, Hub City Press (Summer 2022). Co-founder of the Institute of Public Scholarship in the Arts, Sciences and Humanities, Johnson was named a 2021 Rubinger Fellow. As CEO of Playgrown, Johnson is an emerging developer and generates interactive design to provide physical, environmental, and cultural spacemaking. As Dj Disobedience she writes and co-produces the podcast series *Syncope* featuring Black Resorting in Southwest Michigan and Raising Hay. Host of the Slip Back Soul Show at 89.1 WIDR (Kalamazoo, MI) on Saturdays 11-1pm for 15 years before the pandemic, she co-founded and Dj'd for Fire's one time Fire Radio and WMBM/Syncope web stations.



**Jamon Jordan** is an educator, writer & historian. Also known as Baba Jamon, he has been a teacher of African & African American history for 20 years and a researcher of Black history for decades. Born in 1971, and raised in Detroit and Highland Park, he has, since 2013, been running Black Scroll Network History & Tours, where he leads tours and presentations dealing with African & African American history in the Detroit area, and throughout Michigan and the United States. In February 2021, Jamon Jordan was appointed by Governor Gretchen Whitmer to be a commissioner on the Michigan Freedom Trail Commission, the state organization responsible for the research, and teaching of the people, places and events associated with the Underground Railroad and the fight against slavery. Jamon Jordan is a husband, father, and teacher who is committed to African & African American History and teaching it to as many people who will listen.



**Courtney Pierre Joseph** (she/her) is an Assistant Professor of History and African American Studies and the inaugural chair of the African American Studies Department at Lake Forest College. Her specializations are in African American history and culture, Haiti and its diaspora, women and gender studies, and hip-hop culture. Joseph earned her PhD in History from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 2017. She has spoken at numerous local and national institutions, including the DuSable Museum of African American History, the Field Museum, Brooklyn College, and Carroll University. She is collaborating with the Haitian Museum of Chicago to create the first oral history archive dedicated to the Haitian diaspora in Chicago. Dr. Joseph is currently working on her first book, titled *DuSable's Diaspora: Haiti, Blackness, and Belonging in Chicago*, which will be published by University of Texas Press.



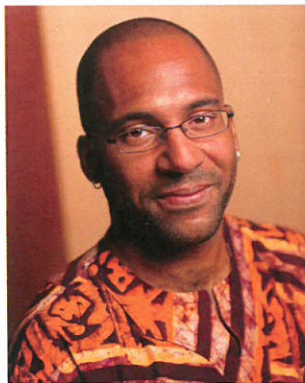
**Ezekiel Joubert III** is an educator, community-engaged scholar, and creative writer. He is an Assistant Professor of Educational Foundations in the Division of Advanced and Applied Studies at California State University-Los Angeles. His research and writing focus on the intersections of racial capitalism and Black education, the political economy of Black mobilities, the history of educational inequality in Black rural communities near Metro Detroit and in the Midwest, and Black organic educational intellectual thought and activism. Additionally, his work centers narratives of Black life, the speculative and spiritual, and the poetics of teachings and learning with marginalized communities.



**Su'ad Abdul Khabeer** is a scholar-artist-activist originally from Brooklyn, NY. She is curator of Umi's Archive, a multimedia project documenting Black women's histories and co-founder of Sapelo Square, a digital media and education collective on Black Muslim in the US. Trained as an anthropologist, Su'ad's first book, *Muslim Cool: Race, Religion and Hip Hop in the United States*, is a critically acclaimed ethnography on Islam and hip hop in Chicago that examines how intersecting ideas of Muslimness and Blackness challenge and reproduce the meanings of race in the US. Su'ad's written scholarly work on Islam and hip hop is accompanied by her performance-based work including her one woman solo show, *Sampled: Beats of Muslim Life*. She has written broadly for outlets including: *The Root*, the *Washington Post*, the *Atlantic*, *Vice* and *Ebony Magazine*, and has appeared on *Al Jazeera English*. Su'ad is an associate professor at the University of Michigan.



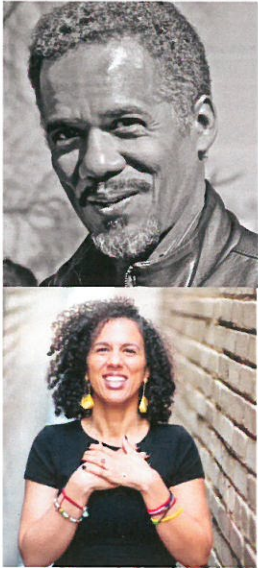
In 2020 **Janett Lewis** founded and acquired non-profit status for a 6.64 acre sustainable urban farm called Rustic Roots Sanctuary, of which she is the Founder and Executive Director. Though the sanctuary was just finding its footing when COVID came around, Janett used the time to develop programs to touch on all of her passions –from sustainability to community development to youth engagement. Rustic Roots Sanctuary grows food for the community, teaches sustainability, works with youth in agriculture, runs a senior program that helps feed people that are home-bound and hosts Restorative Nature Immersion Women retreats. In each of her key roles Janett Lewis is drawing from her lifetime of experience in, essentially, making people feel better. Rustic Roots Sanctuary's mission is to create a healing space in Spanish Lake that brings the community together, revolves around holistic healing and gives access to healthy, fresh organically grown food.



**Erik S. McDuffie** is an Associate Professor in the Department of African American Studies and History at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He is the author of the award-winning monograph *Sojourning for Freedom: Black Women, American Communism, and the Making of Black Left Feminism* (Duke University Press, 2011). Currently, he is completing a new book, tentatively titled *Garveyism in the Diasporic Midwest: The American Heartland and Global Black Freedom, 1920-80*. Drawing from original research conducted in Canada, Ghana, Grenada, Jamaica, Liberia, South Africa, Trinidad and Tobago, the United Kingdom, and the United States, the book establishes the importance of the U.S. Midwest to twentieth-century global Black history and demonstrates the vibrant political exchanges between the heartland and African world through Garveyism. The book received an American Council for Learned Societies fellowship and National Endowment for the Humanities fellowship. A sixth generation midwesterner, his family hails from the United States, Canada, and St. Kitts.



**Kandia Milton** is a results-driven policy professional who believes that central to all good public policy is the positive impact that good policy has on the quality of people's lives. As the Policy Director for Dream.org's Justice program he is charged with working with state and federal officials to advance policy changes that will make our criminal legal system fair and just while keeping us safe. Kandia is a person who has been directly impacted by this system and he has more than 20 years of experience in policy and government affairs. Over his career he has served as a senior congressional staffer, and in his role as Chief of Staff for the City of Detroit, he managed multiple City agencies and intergovernmental relations. Kandia is also the Chairman of the political action committee, Black Slate, Inc in Detroit, MI.



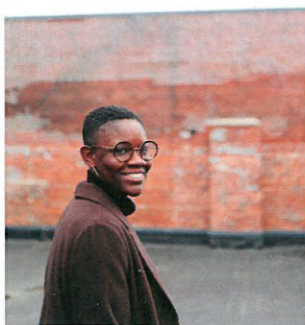
**Dale and Heather Mitchell** are both descendants of a five generation Black owned organic blueberry farm in Grand Junction, Michigan. This father daughter duo have played an active role alongside many family members in sustaining this 54 year old farm over the course of their lives. Since the farm's inception in 1968 Phil and Jeanne Mitchell (Dale's parents and Heather's grandparents) beat the odds of discrimination and redlining to start the farm with the help of neighbors, their ten children, and all their hopes and dreams in five acres of what was once less than desirable land. Mitchells Blueberry farm continues to produce roughly 10,000 pounds of organic blueberries both fresh and frozen every summer and sells them to farmers markets, grocery stores and u-pickers. Mitchell's Blueberry's also donates portions of their blueberries to local organizations who are committed to providing food to community members who might not otherwise have access to fresh organic food. The blueberry farm is also a source of employment for many youth who learn the value of hard work and perseverance season after season. Dale and Heather Mitchell are proud and humbled to share the legacy of their farm with their community.



**Kama Tai Mitchell** is a yogi, certified birth and death doula, African diasporic dancer, and cultural healing arts innovator. She has a core belief that living an embodied life is the root of all healing. Kama is the founder and CEO of Rootead Enrichment Center in Kalamazoo, MI. A center focused on reducing epigenetic stress/trauma, destigmatizing mental health, and disrupting intergenerational poverty through generative offerings and collaborations, while intentionally centering the lived experience of BIPOC/LGBTQIA+ folx. An initiate of Himalayan Tantric Hatha Yoga, a racial healing circle/wisdom keeper, and a newer student of traditional West African Ifa, griot musicology, and ancestral lineage healing; she now incorporates these learnings into her yogic lifestyle. She identifies as queer, radical, abolitionist, and a grand lover of life in all its cultures and forms.



**Dr. Crystal M. Moten** is curator of African American History at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History where she specializes in business and labor history. She also serves as Public Historian in Residence at American University (DC). Her current research examines the intersection of race, class, and gender, and specifically Black women's economic activism, in the civil rights era Urban Midwest. Her work has appeared in the *Journal of Civil and Human Rights*; *Souls*; and *The Strange Careers of Jim Crow North* (NYU Press, 2019). At the National Museum of American History, she is a founding member of the African American History Curatorial Collective; co-host of the *Collected* podcast; and co-curator of an exhibit: *The Only One in the Room: Women Achievers in Business and the Cost of Success*. Her forthcoming book, *Continually Working: Black Women, Community Intellectualism, and Economic Justice in Postwar Milwaukee*, is forthcoming from Vanderbilt University Press.



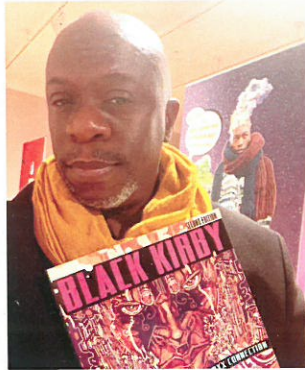
**Njaimh Njie** is a multimedia storyteller. Her photography, filmmaking, oral history, writing, and public artwork explore contemporary Black experiences, with a particular focus on how the past shapes the present. Njie's work has been featured in outlets including *CityLab* and *Belt Magazine*, exhibited in spaces including the Carnegie Museum of Art and The Mattress Factory Museum, and she has presented at venues including TEDxPittsburghWomen, and Harvard University. Among several awards and grants, Njie was named the inaugural Edward Mitchell Bannister Artist-in-Residence at Brown University for 2021-22, and the 2019 Visual Artist of the Year by the Pittsburgh City Paper. Njie earned her B.A. in Film and Media Studies in 2010 from Washington University in St. Louis.



## SPEAKERS



**Sara Osman** is a recent graduate of Berkeley Law School. Sara is from Minneapolis, Minnesota, and is a product of the thriving Somali community in the city. She attended the University of Minnesota as an undergrad student where she studied African American/African Studies and Global Studies with a concentration on human rights in sub-Saharan Africa. Through her time as a local community organizer, she worked on issues relating to immigration, governmental surveillance, and Islamophobia. In law school, she was selected as a 2021 fellow by the Human Rights Center at Berkeley Law and served as the editor-in-chief of the Berkeley Journal of Middle Eastern and Islamic Law. Sara hopes to use her legal education to serve her community and is interested in topics relating to international human rights and migration.



**Stacey A. Robinson**, Associate Professor of Graphic Design at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign was a 2019-2020 Nasir Jones Hip-Hop Fellow at Harvard University's Hutchins Center for African & African American Research and completed his MFA at the University at Buffalo in 2015. His work discusses decolonized Black futures. Illustrated books include: *'I Am Alfonso Jones'* written by Tony Medina (2017) Lee & Low Books, and *'Across the Tracks: Remembering Greenwood, Black Wall Street, and the Tulsa Race Massacre'*, written Alverne Ball (2021) Abrams Books. Exhibitions include: *Ascension of Black Stillness* (CEPA Gallery) and *The Black Angel of History* (Carnegie Hall) 2022.



**Catherine R. Squires** is Professor Emerita at the University of Minnesota. She is the author of multiple books, articles and essays on media, race, gender and politics, including *Dispatches from the Color Line* (SUNY Press, 2007) and *The Post-Racial Mystique* (NYU. Press, 2014). Since 2017, Dr. Squires' work has focused on intergenerational trauma, culturally relevant healing practices, and embodied story sharing. These explorations led to her becoming a certified yoga instructor and engaging memoir writing as a practice of healing and re-connection. Her first biographical essay on trauma was published in the collection *What God Is Honored Here? Writings on Miscarriage and Infant Loss by & for Native Women & Women of Color* (University of Minnesota Press, 2019). Dr. Squires lives with her family in St. Paul, Minnesota, and is always on the lookout for interesting birds in the Midwest.



**David Stovall**, Ph.D. is a professor in the department of Black Studies and in the department of Criminology, Law & Justice at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC). His scholarship investigates three areas 1) Critical Race Theory, 2) the relationship between housing and education, and 3) the intersection of race, place and school. In the attempt to bring theory to action, he works with community organizations and schools to address issues of equity, justice and abolishing the school/prison nexus. His work led him to become a member of the design team for the Greater Lawndale/Little Village School for Social Justice (SOJO), which opened in the Fall of 2005. Furthering his work with communities, students, and teachers, his work manifests itself in his involvement with the Peoples Education Movement, a collection of classroom teachers, community members, students and university professors in Chicago, Los Angeles and the San Francisco Bay Area who engage in collaborative community projects centered in creating relevant curriculum. In addition to his duties and responsibilities as a professor at UIC, he also served as a volunteer social studies teacher at the Greater Lawndale/Little Village School for Social Justice from 2005-2018.



**Kerrie Trahan** 1st tried yoga in 2005. When she moved to Yeosu, South Korea in 2006, she began to take yoga seriously. With regular practice she began healing from her father's tragic death. Instead of going to law school as planned Trahan enrolled in yoga teacher training and became certified to teach. She also gained additional training in Colombia and India. 2012, she founded Yoganic Flow. 2018, Trahan earned a M.Ed. in Community Health where she studied the effects of mindfulness on urban health. In 2019, Mindbody recognized Yoganic Flow, and in 2020 GoDaddy acknowledged Trahan in "Icons of Detroit."



**shakara tyler** is a returning-generation farmer, educator and organizer who engages in Black agrarianism, agroecology, food sovereignty and climate justice as commitments of abolition and decolonization. She obtained her PhD at Michigan State University in Community Sustainability (CSUS) and works with Black farming communities in Michigan and the Mid-Atlantic. She has worked with the MSU Center for Regional Food Systems as the Underserved Farmer Development Specialist where she provided technical assistance to underserved farming groups such as BIPOC farmers, women farmers and beginning farmers. She explores participatory and decolonial research methodologies and community-centered pedagogies in the food justice, food sovereignty and environmental justice movements. She also serves as Board President at the Detroit Black Community Food Security Network (DBCFSN), board member of the Detroit People's Food Co-op (DPFC) and co-founder of the Detroit Black Farmer Land Fund (DBFLF) and a member of the Black Dirt Farm Collective (BDFC).



**DeMar Walker** is the Artistic Director of Ko-Thi Dance Company. He has performed & choreographed in various productions including "JUBA-LEE" which premiered in August 2019 celebrating the company's 50th Anniversary. From 2014-2021, DeMar served as an Associate Lecturer of African Diasporic dance at the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee. He has traveled to the countries of Guinea & Senegal to train, research, & perform in workshops with numerous internationally acclaimed teachers. DeMar is a contributor to the publication entitled *Black in the Middle: An Anthology of the Black Midwest*. In Fall 2021, he directed & released his first dance short film "The Beckoning" which has been screened in Scotland & the United Kingdom. It has received several accolades including the Milwaukee International Short Film Festival. Currently, DeMar is also a first-year graduate student pursuing a Master's in English Degree at Marquette University with an emphasis on Black arts history in the Midwestern United States.

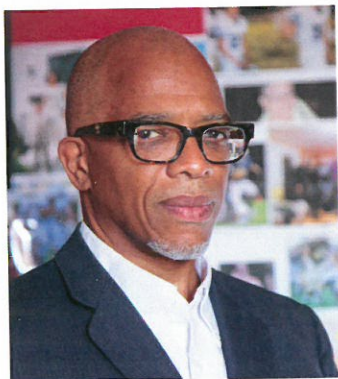


**Terrion L. Williamson** is the director of the Black Midwest Initiative and an associate professor of Black Studies and Gender & Women's Studies at the University of Illinois Chicago. Born and raised in Peoria, Illinois, she is the author of *Scandalize My Name: Black Feminist Practice and the Making of Black Social Life* (Fordham 2017) and the editor of *Black in the Middle: An Anthology of the Black Midwest* (Belt 2020). She is currently working on a book with the working title *We Cannot Live Without Our Lives: Black Women and Serial Murder in the American Midwest* that focuses on the case of nine black women who were killed in her hometown between 2003 and 2004.

## SPEAKERS



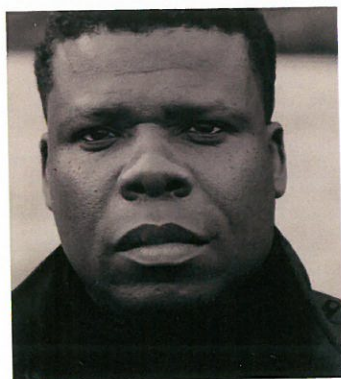
**Tamara Winfrey-Harris** is a writer who specializes in the ever-evolving space where current events, politics, and pop culture intersect with race and gender. She is the author of *Dear Black Girl* and *The Sister Are Alright*. Winfrey-Harris' writing can be found in *The New York Times*, *The Atlantic*, *Cosmopolitan*, *New York Magazine*, and *The Los Angeles Times*. Her essays have also been anthologized in *The Lemonade Reader: Beyonce, Black Feminism and Spirituality* (Routledge, 2019); *The Burden: African Americans and the Enduring Impact of Slavery* (Wayne State University Press, 2018); *Black in the Middle: An Anthology of the Black Midwest* (Belt Publishing, 2020); and others. Winfrey-Harris graduated with a BA degree from the Greenlee School of Journalism at Iowa State University, and is a native of Gary, IN.



**Jeffrey C. Wray** is a Professor of Film Studies and Timnick Chair in the Humanities at Michigan State University and an independent filmmaker. Recent films include *Songs for My Right Side*, a 2020 half-hour drama, *BLAT! Pack Live*, a 2016 music documentary, and *The Evolution of Bert*, a 2014 feature-narrative that premiered at the Chicago International Film Festival and was nominated for the Roger Ebert Award. Wray's screenplays include *The Soul Singer*, a drama and 2018 Nicholl Academy Award Screenwriting Fellowship Quarterfinalist, *Eclipse*, a political drama set in the turbulent summer of 1964, and *Welcome to Idlewild*, a woman faces the ghosts of her childhood. His 2018 essay "How Ella Mae Wray Seized the Opportunities of 1968" was published in *The Atlantic*.



**AK Wright** is a first-generation activist-scholar and storyteller pursuing their doctorate degree in Feminist Studies with a minor in Africa & the African Diaspora at the University of Minnesota. Their dissertation, *The Body is Where Freedom Begins: Black Feminist Embodiments of Carceral Abolition* investigates how Black individuals intimately live, resist and care amid carceral forces. Situated in Black feminist thought, queer and trans studies and carceral studies, their research explores communal healing justice approaches to carceral abolition, centering the care, spiritual, and life flourishing practices of Black folks by tracing Black feminist genealogies of healing through literature, podcasting, and interviews with healing justice practitioners in Minneapolis. They were awarded the Leadership in Equity, Inclusion, and Diversity Fellowship in 2020 and the 2021 Ford Foundation Dissertation Fellowship. AK is originally from Jamaica and was raised in Brooklyn, New York and loves their plants, baking and cooking and creating embroidery art.

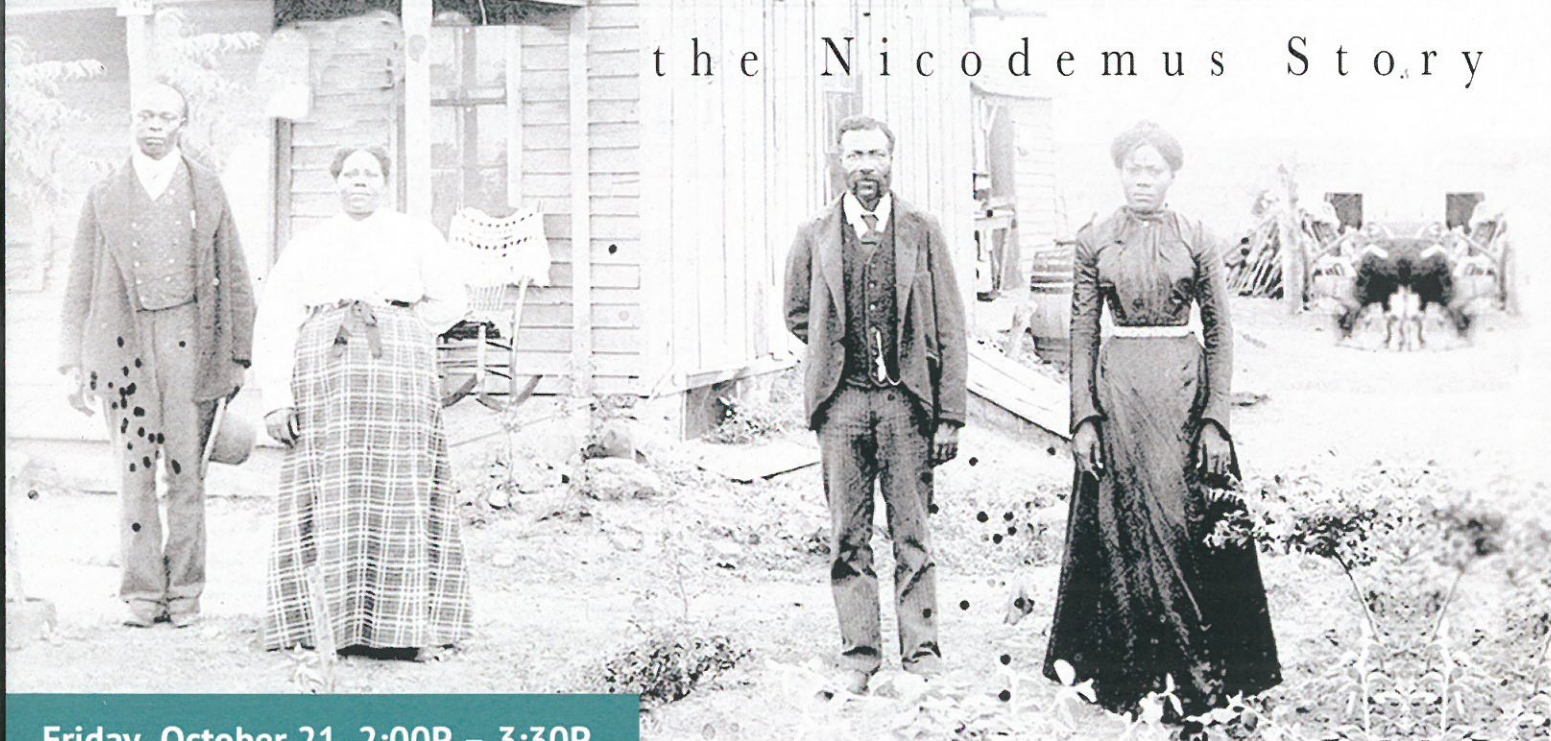


Interdisciplinary artist and educator **avery r. young** is a 3Arts Awardee, Cave Canem fellow and a co-director of The Floating Museum. His poetry and prose have been featured in *BreakBeatPoets*, *Teaching Black*, *Poetry Magazine* and alongside images in photographer Cecil McDonald Jr's, *In The Company of Black*. He was co-writer and co-producer of the soundtrack / score for Lise Haller Baggesson's *Hatorgrade Retrograde: The Musical* and librettist for *Twilight: Gods*. Young's full length recording *tubman*. is the soundtrack to his collection of visual and traditional poetry, *neckbone:visual verses*.

# BLACK PIONEERS

# and BUFFALO SOLDIERS

the Nicodemus Story



Friday, October 21, 2:00P – 3:30P  
Frank Hayden Community Room

## THE AFRICAN AMERICAN MIDWEST: A 400 YEAR FIGHT FOR FREEDOM (2022)

This screening will include two documentary segments: BLACK PIONEERS AND BUFFALO SOLDIERS, a short documentary on Nicodemus, Kansas, the most famous and last remaining African American homesteading community west of the Mississippi River settled as part of the 1880s Exodus Movement; and DILLA'S CHICAGO HISTORY TOUR, where TikTok historian Sherman "Dilla" Thomas takes us on a video street tour of Chicago's African American historical landmarks, from Black Panther Chairman Fred Hampton's apartment to the Ida B Wells "Light of Truth" Monument.

PRODUCERS

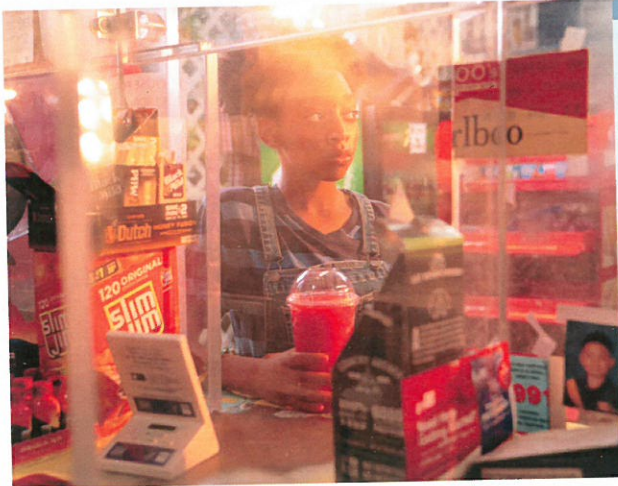
Christy Clark-Pujara, Ashley Howard, Erik McDuffie, Crystal Moten, Terrion L. Williamson, Christopher Wilson

SERIES PRODUCER

Dan Manatt

## FILM SCREENINGS

Saturday, October 22, 11:45A – 1:15P  
Frank Hayden Community Room



### CHERRY LEMONADE (2020, 11 MIN.)

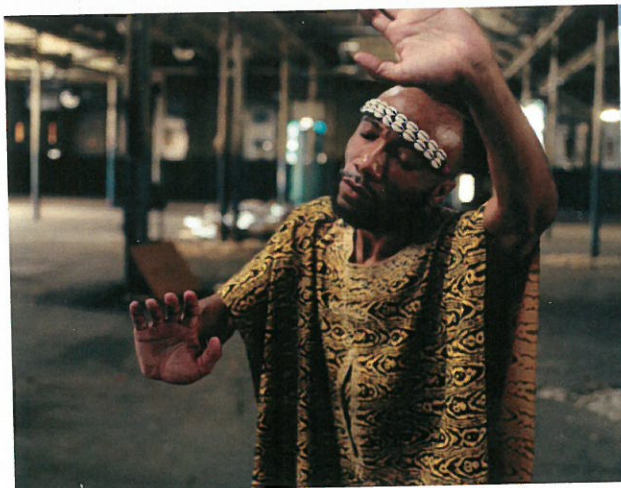
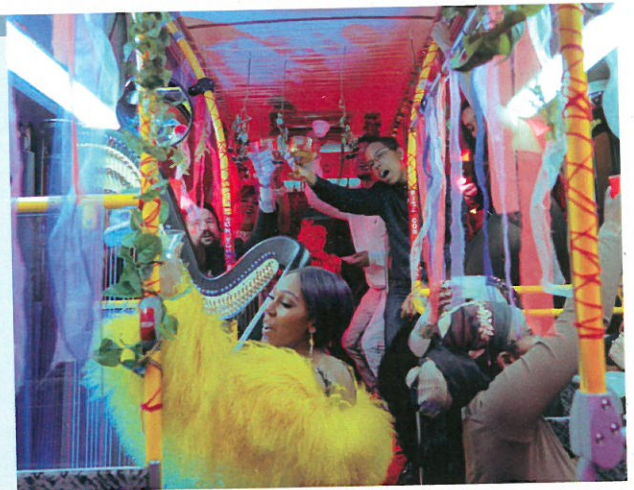
Dir: Aisha Ford

On a hot summer day, in a lower-income neighborhood, a black girl learns how to take the lead on her own terms.

### RIDING WITH AUNT D. DOT (2018, 07:12 MIN.)

Dir: bree gant

Riding with Aunt D. Dot unfolds through personal narrative and radical imagination on the midtown bus loop as it gets stuck in Detroit's historic North End neighborhood. Quinn (played by director bree gant) tries to figure out which of the voices in their head is actually theirs during the journey to an award ceremony downtown.



### THE BECKONING (2020, 03:18 MIN.)

Dir: DeMar Walker

"The Beckoning" is a dance short film that addresses the historical & political antagonisms against the Black body in hopes to signify the inherent beauty of Black life within American society. The film features original poetry by Destinny Fletcher, as well as original music by Kellen "KLASSIK" Abston.

## SEEING YOU, SEEING ME: SPOTLIGHT ON BLACK PORTRAITURE



**Shante Fagans**, born in 1969, is a self-taught painter beginning her work in December of 2021. Through self-discovery, she has learned that her hands are divine and have been a conduit to her artistic abilities that she has acquired over the past twenty years. Her persona is multifaceted serving her local and global community as a natural hair stylist, nail technician, photographer, healer, masseuse, hostess and dancer. Creatively, Shante has found that she has a love for beauty she finds in fashion, color, African hairstyles, jewelry, nature, architecture, interior design and decoration. When she was about twelve, her mother purchased her a Fashion Plates set. She would visualize herself in those plates playing dress up all day long. She imagines that her paintings now stem from that. Beauty, faces, and fashion, summon her irresistibly to the canvas.

*Website: <https://shantefagans.creator-spring.com>*

*Instagram: @shantefagans*



**Olivia "Liv" Furman**, Ph.D. (they/them) is a Black non-binary womanist artist//educator//researcher//doctoral graduate currently working on the ancestral, traditional, and contemporary Lands of the Anishinaabeg – the Three Fires Confederacy of Ojibwe, Odawa, and Potawatomi peoples. Their work currently explores the significance of embodied knowledges, memory, storytelling, and the arts in practices of teaching, learning, self-healing, and self-expression. Each piece they create artfully stories the fluidity and intimate complexities of their identities, difficult emotions, memories, and interactions with other people and/or artifacts. In this process of piecing together they utilize digital and textile materials, including collected/recycled paper, personal photos, ceramics, poetry, symbols, quotes, and other materials to make meaning, to share stories, and to heal. Their primary mediums include multimedia and digital collage, ceramics, quilting, and the written and spoken word. Liv is also an avid gardener, singer, and practicing musician.

*Instagram Website: <https://www.instagram.com/liveannlove/>*



**Jasmine Graham** is a free spirit with a wild heart. As an artist, she is influenced by black people, colors, nature, and natural light from Detroit. A Broadcast Journalist by trade and an artist by heart she blends the two together to express impactful narratives through photography, writing, painting, and mixed media. She has a unique ability to convey emotion through art in a way that is universal. She seeks to share the beautiful complexity of the underrepresented through her work and go down in history as a well-rounded influential artist who told the story the time, evoked change, and conversation while inspiring others to do the same. Her work has featured in a solo and collaborative art shows at the Detroit Artist Test Lab, Western Michigan University and other venues.

*Website: [Stillstostory.com](http://Stillstostory.com) Instagram: @\_jasminegraham*



**Elijah Hamilton-Wray** received his MFA in Studio Art from Northern Vermont University in Johnson, VT. A lover of comic book characters and Japanese animation from an early age, Elijah pays reference to these styles in his current practice. His artwork often incorporates the human form in combination with surreal or unusual elements giving light to different views and interpretations. Each of his series of paintings use detachment in certain ways. One series leaves only particular accessories of the face and head (both permanent and impermanent) to reference self-portraiture. Another series leaves the entirety of the head, but violently (and comically) strips away the body. The viewer is forced to create the narrative with minimal information, filling in the blanks and making assumptions about who is being portrayed, regarding race, personality, beliefs, etc. Elijah has exhibited in Vermont and Michigan and is presently on fellowship at Kalamazoo College.

*Website: <https://elijahhw.portfoliobox.io> Instagram: @kanvaskids*



## **THE GET DOWN FT. THE CORZO EFFECT**

**Saturday, October 22, 2022 // 7:00P - 9:00P**  
**Curtis L. Ivery Health & Wellness Education Center**  
**971 W. Fort Street**

The Corzo Effect was formed in 2015 by bass player Josh Corzo. What started as a trio, blossomed into a dynamic quartet and they began to make a name for themselves in the Greater Lansing Area. Over the years, The Corzo Effect has become a staple in the music scene in mid-Michigan and across the state. They offer songs from a variety of genres such as R&B, Jazz, Hip-Hop, Pop, Soul, Top 40 and, of course, they offer an ample catalogue of Black Midwest music!

They've played the welcome party for newly hired MSU football coach, Mel Tucker and featured at the Lansing Juneteenth Festival. The band consists of: Josh Corzo on bass, Caleb Robinson on drums, Hezekiah Trevino on guitar, Robert Love on vocals and Austin Tipton Jr. on keys.