

FALL 2021- 2022

ISSUE NO. 3



THE AFRICA INSTITUTE NEWSLETTER

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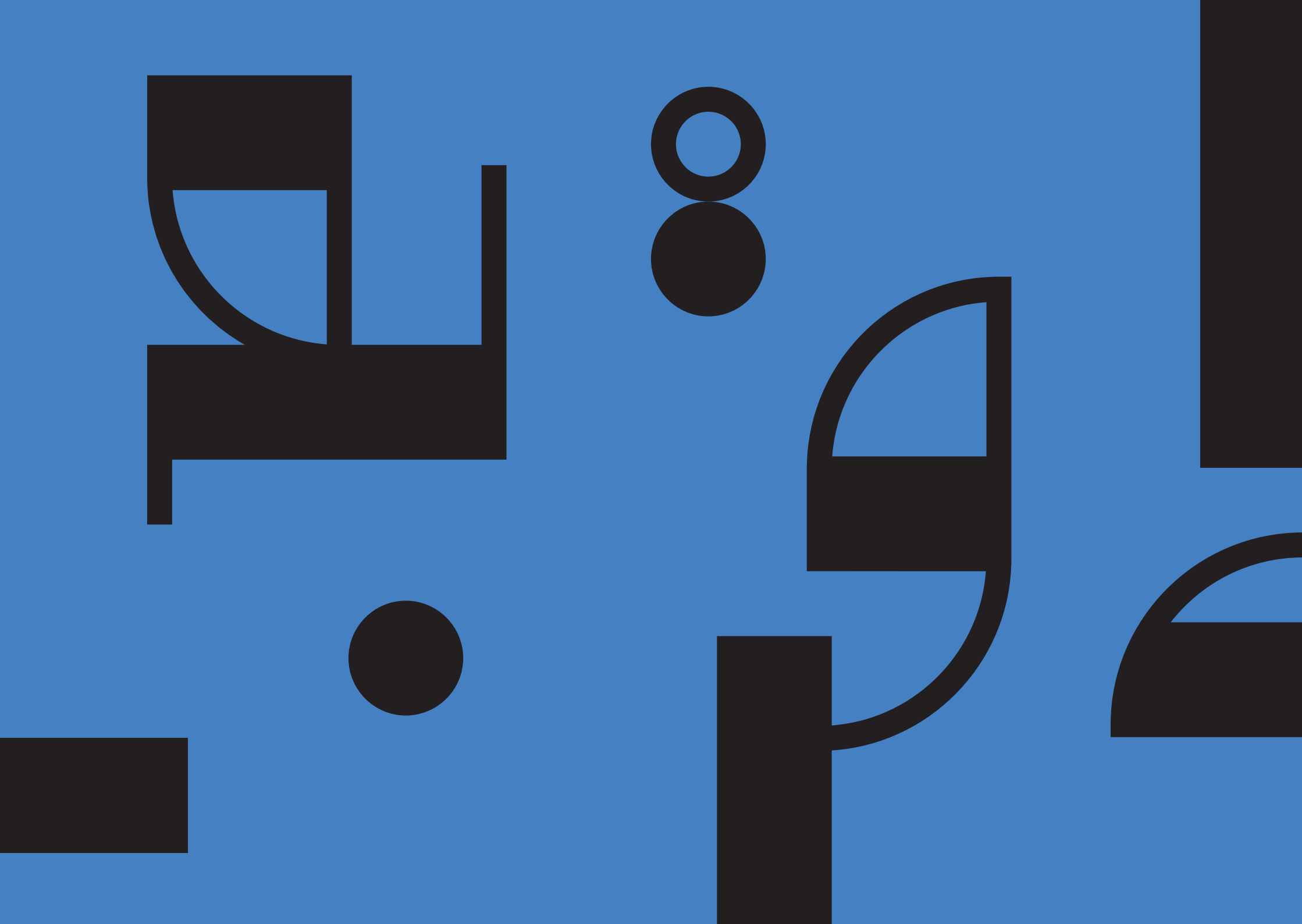
THE AFRICA INSTITUTE NEWSLETTER
FALL 2021- 2022
SHARJAH, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

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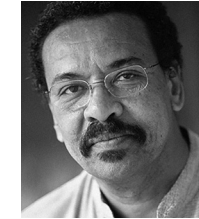
PRESIDENT & DIRECTOR



Hoor Al Qasimi

Hoor Al Qasimi is the President of The Africa Institute and serves as President and Director of Sharjah Art Foundation and Sharjah Architecture Triennial. As a practicing artist and curator, Al Qasimi founded Sharjah Art Foundation in 2009 to promote the role of art in Sharjah and beyond. Over ten years, she has expanded the foundation's scope to include international exhibitions, artist and curator residencies, production grants for emerging artists, and educational programming for all ages.

In addition to her work with the foundation, Al Qasimi co-curated Sharjah Biennial 6 in 2003 and most recently Sharjah Biennial 15, themed "Thinking Historically in the Present" (2023). Under her leadership, the biennial has grown as an internationally recognized platform for contemporary artists, curators, and cultural producers. Al Qasimi's contributions to the field have earned her various recognitions, including her election as President of the International Biennial Association (IBA), Chair of the Advisory Board for the College of Art and Design at the University of Sharjah, and member of the Advisory Board for Khoj International Artists' Association in New Delhi. She also serves on the Prince Claus Award Committee and was a jury member for the Bonnefanten Award for Contemporary Art in 2018.



Salah M. Hassan is the Director of The Africa Institute, Sharjah, UAE. Hassan is the Goldwin Smith Professor and Director of the Institute for Comparative Modernities, and Professor of Art History and Visual Culture in the Africana Studies and Research Center, and the Department of History of Art and Visual Studies, Cornell University, Ithaca, USA. Hassan is an art critic, curator, and founding editor of *Nka: Journal of Contemporary African Art*. He authored, edited and co-edited several books including *Ibrahim El Salahi: A Visionary Modernist* (Museum for African Art and Tate Modern, 2012, 2013), *Darfur and the Crisis of Governance: A Critical Reader* (Cornell University Press, 2009), *Diaspora, Memory, Place* (Prestel Publishing, 2008), *Unpacking Europe* (NAi Publishers, 2001) and *Authentic/ Ex-Centric* (Forum for African Arts, 2001). Hassan has curated several exhibitions including major ones at the Venice and Dakar Biennales, and most recently *The Khartoum School: The Making of the Modern Art Movement in Sudan (1945-Present)*, and *The Egyptian Surrealists: When Art Becomes Liberty (1938-1965)* sponsored by the Sharjah Art Foundation and which opened in Sharjah and Cairo (2016). Hassan was the Madeleine Haas Russell Visiting Professor in African and Afro-American Studies, Brandeis University, Boston, US (2016-2017). He is the recipient of several grants and awards including the J. Paul Getty Postdoctoral Fellowship in Art History and the Humanities, and the Rockefeller Foundation, the Ford Foundation, the Andy Warhol Foundation, and Sharjah Art Foundation.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

FACULTY

The Africa Institute has successfully recruited a group of distinguished faculty members for the 2021-2022 academic year. These scholars have made significant contributions to their fields and are poised to impart their knowledge and expertise to the next generation of critical thinkers in African and African diaspora studies. We look forward to the valuable contributions they will make to our academic community.



Jean Allman

Professor of History

Jean Allman is the J.H. Hexter Professor in the Humanities and professor of African and African American Studies at Washington University in St. Louis, where she directed the Center for the Humanities from 2014-2022. Allman joins The Africa Institute as a Professor of History.

Since completing her Ph.D. in African History at Northwestern University (USA), Allman has been actively engaged in interdisciplinary research, publication, and teaching in the humanities and social sciences, with a focus on Africa, the African Diaspora, and Gender and Women's Studies. She has also been a professor of history at the University of Illinois and director of its Center for African Studies and taught at the University of Missouri and the University of Minnesota. She has twice been a senior research affiliate at the University of Ghana. Allman has served as co-editor of two book series: Heinemann's Social History of Africa series and the New African Histories book series at Ohio University Press. For six years she co-edited the Journal of Women's History. Allman was the President of the Ghana Studies Council (now Association) from 1992-98 and has sat on the Boards of Directors of the African Studies Association (USA), the Association for the Study of the Worldwide African Diaspora, and the Consortium of Humanities Centers and Institutes. Allman served as the Vice President, President, and Past President of the African Studies Association (USA) from 2017-2020.

Allman's research and published work engage twentieth-century African history, with a geographic focus on Ghana and thematic interests in gender, colonialism, decolonization, and the racial politics of knowledge production. Her recent research interrogates the whiteness of African studies in the U.S. and Europe and seeks to reconstruct the mechanisms through which "colonial knowledge" is sustained and reproduced in "postcolonial" contexts. Her work has been supported by the National Endowment for the Humanities, the American Council of Learned Societies, Fulbright-Hays, the Social Science Research Council, and The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.



Rachel Ama Asaa Engmann

Associate Professor of Archaeology and Anthropology

Rachel Ama Asaa Engmann is a critical heritage scholar, practitioner, and direct descendant of slave traders.. She has a BA, two MA's, and a Ph.D. from Columbia and Stanford Universities respectively. She completed a postdoctoral fellowship at Brown University. She also has a certificate from Stanford University Business School's Innovation and Social Enterprise Program, using archaeology and heritage for African education and development.

Engmann is currently working on two projects: The first project, Hidden Palimpsests: Unraveling Nineteenth Century Islamic Talismans in Asante chronicles the relationship between objects, texts, religion, and empire. The second project, Slavers in the Family: The Archaeology of the Slaver in Eighteenth-Century Gold Coast, is a study of Christiansborg Castle, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, former seventeenth-century European trading post, Danish and British colonial seat of government administration, and Office of the President of the Republic of Ghana (in English, Ga and Twi) & (in English, Ga and Danish).

Engmann has received multiple interdisciplinary fellowships, grants, and prizes from the United States, European and African countries, including governmental, international foundations, and research institutes. She currently serves on the African scholars' advisory board for UNESCO's African World Heritage Sites, Brepol's Studies in the Archaeology of the Islamic World, and 100 Histories of 100 Worlds. She has also worked on many heritage and development projects in Ghana and other African countries, including for UNESCO (Paris & Accra).



Emery Kalema

Assistant Professor of History

Emery Kalema holds a Ph.D. in History from the University of the Witwatersrand. He was a Postdoctoral Fellow at both the Institut de Sociologie at the Université Libre de Bruxelles (2021-2022) and the South African Research Chair in Historical Trauma and Transformation at Stellenbosch University (2017-2020). In addition, he was a Summer Program in Social Science Fellow at the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton (2018-2019) and the winner of the competition for the inaugural Center for the Study of Africa and the African Diaspora (CSAAD) Research Fellowship at New York University (Fall 2019).

Kalema is the recipient of the 2021 Central African Studies Association (CASA) Essay Prize for the Best Published Article by a Junior Scholar.

Kalema's research interests include power and politics, body and embodiment, violence, memory, trauma, and suffering. He is currently working on a book project tentatively titled, Violence and Memory: The Mulele 'Rebellion' in Postcolonial Congo. The book is an exploration of suffering caused by the Mulele rebellion (1963-1968), the reproduction of suffering across time, and its inscription in the imaginary of the survivors. Kalema looks at suffering in various ways: as something people experienced in the concrete conditions of existence during the rebellion; suffering experienced by the body during the rebellion; suffering that the 'body' remembers because it carries visible marks, recognizable by the self and others; and suffering that leaves marks in the minds of the suffering subjects.


Premesh Lalu

Professor of History

Premesh Lalu is a founding director of the Centre for Humanities Research (CHR) at the University of the Western Cape. Under his leadership, the CHR was awarded the Department of Science and Innovation-National Research Foundation Flagship on Critical Thought in African Humanities. During his term as director, he worked with colleagues to establish the CHR's Greatmore Arts and Humanities Hub that will host a Laboratory of Kinetic Objects (with Handspring Puppet Company and Ukwanda Puppetry and Design Collective), a program in music and new media, a documentary film training program, and an international consortium on communicating the humanities. Lalu is a board member of the International Consortium of Humanities Centers and Institutes, the Advisory Board Member of Kate Hamburger Kollegs in Munich, a juror at the Akademie Schloss Solitude in Stuttgart, and past chairperson of the Handspring Trust for Puppetry in Education.

Lalu has published widely in academic journals on historical discourse and the study of the humanities and is a regular contributor of public opinion pieces on the arts and humanities, with particular focus on apartheid, social justice and postcolonialism. His research articles have appeared in *History and Theory*, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, *Journal of Asian, African and Middle Eastern Studies*, *Critical Times*, *Kronos: Southern African Histories*, *Economic and Political Weekly*, and the *South African Historical Journal*.


Aliyu Mustapha Lawal

Lecturer of Hausa

Aliyu Mustapha Lawal is a Lecturer in the African Languages and Translation program. He has an MA degree in Arabic literature and criticism from Al Azhar University, which he received in 2021. He worked as a Hausa lecturer at the faculty of African postgraduate studies in Cairo University from 2014-2021. Additionally, he is an author of several publications in Arabic poetry, Hausa language, and translation.

He has also worked as a translator, news editor, and broadcaster at National Media Authority, Maspero, Egypt between 2020-2021. As a poet, he has participated in several competitions and festivals of Arabic poetry, including "The Competition of Prince of Poet" in Abu Dhabi 2021, "Sharjah Poetic Festival" in Sharjah 2019, and "Luxor Poetic Festival" in Egypt 2016.



Christopher J. Lee

Professor of African History, World History, and African Literature

Christopher J. Lee is a Professor of African History, World History, and African Literature at The Africa Institute. Since completing his Ph.D. at Stanford University, he has held a range of faculty appointments in Africa and North America, including at Stanford, Harvard, Dalhousie University in Nova Scotia, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Lafayette College in Easton, Pennsylvania, and the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. Lee has published seven books, with his most recent book *Culture and Liberation: Exile Writings, 1966-1985* (London and Calcutta: Seagull Books, 2022) being a volume of essays, reportage, and fiction by the South African writer and anti-apartheid activist Alex La Guma (1925-85).

His articles and reviews have appeared in a number of journals including the *Journal of African History*, the *American Historical Review*, *Social History*, *Law and History Review*, *Gender and History*, *Research in African Literatures*, *Modern Fiction Studies*, *College Literature*, *Journal of African Cultural Studies*, *Postcolonial Studies*, *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*, *Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies*, *Transition*, *Politique Africaine*, the *South African Historical Journal*, *Radical History Review*, and elsewhere. He has edited or coedited special issues of *Safundi* (2007), *Kronos: Southern African Histories* (2011), and *Radical History Review* (2018). His work has also appeared in a range of edited volumes, most recently in *The Oxford Handbook of the Ends of Empire* (2018), *The League Against Imperialism: Lives and Afterlives* (2020), *Contemporary Archipelagic Thinking: Toward New Comparative Methodologies and Disciplinary Formations* (2020), and *India after World History: Literature, Comparison, and Approaches to Globalization* (2022). He is a Contributing Editor at *Africa is a Country*.



John Thabiti Willis

Associate Professor of African History

John Thabiti Willis holds a Ph.D. in History from Emory University, USA. He was a Postdoctoral Fellow at the Carter G. Woodson Institute for African-American and African Studies (2008-2010). He has been working as an associate professor of African history and director of Africana Studies at Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota, U.S.A.

He is a scholar of the social and cultural history of Africa in the Atlantic and Indian Ocean Worlds. His Ph.D. thesis and first book focused on the history and politics of masquerade performances and the institutions that organized them among the Yoruba people of southwestern Nigeria from precolonial to modern times.

His 2018 book, *Masquerading Politics: Kinship, Gender, and Ethnicity in a Yoruba Town, Ota, 1774-1928*, demonstrates how institutions that used ritual masquerade both reflected and shaped changing political and economic relations during the rise and fall of West African empires, Atlantic slavery, the spread of Islam, and the establishment of Christian missions and British colonialism. It has earned recognition as a finalist for the 2019 Best Book Prize (formerly known as the Herskovits award) by the African Studies Association and recently won the 2020 Yoruba Studies Book Prize, which honors the best books on Yoruba people and their culture over a three-year period.

For the last decade, he has been exploring the contributions of Africa to the history and heritage of pearling in the Gulf. His work draws heavily on museum exhibits, manumission records, and heritage performances. Thabiti's new project uses oral histories collected through ethnography and geographic information system methodologies to analyze the biographies of people who once worked in pearling.

FACULTY ACHIEVEMENTS

Highlights of our faculty and fellow's milestones during the academic year 2021-2022.



Left to right: Andrew Martin, Chancellor of Washington University presents the Arthur Holly Compton Faculty Achievement Award to Professor Jean Allman on Washington University's Founders Day.

Photo Credit: Washington University, St. Louis

PROFESSOR JEAN ALLMAN AWARDED ARTHUR HOLLY COMPTON FACULTY ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Regarded as one of the nation's leading African historians, Professor **Jean Allman** was presented the Arthur Holly Compton Faculty Achievement Award at Washington University's Founders Day on November 8, 2022.

Washington University began celebrating Founders Day in 1953 to commemorate the university's 100th anniversary and serves as an opportunity to reflect upon the university's many milestones and accomplishments – including its distinguished alumni, outstanding faculty, and most treasured friends.

Allman is the J.H. Hexter Professor in the Humanities and Professor of African and African American Studies at Washington University in St. Louis, where she directed the Center for the Humanities from 2014-2022. She concurrently holds the position of Professor of History at The Africa Institute.

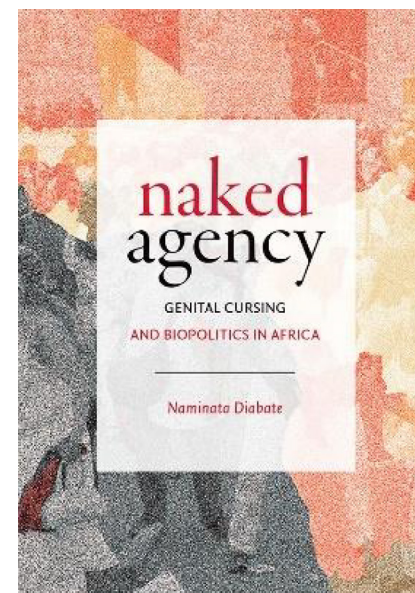
Andrew Martin, Chancellor of Washington University presented Allman the award recognizing her passion for the African continent through her teaching, mentoring of undergraduate and graduate students, and prolific writing and scholarship. Her research and published work, which focus on West Africa, explore the concepts of national identity, gender and colonialism, fashion and the politics of clothing, and the modernity of indigenous belief systems.

The Africa Institute takes this opportunity to congratulate Professor Allman on this milestone and wishes her the best in future endeavours.

CONGRATULATING SENIOR FELLOW NAMINATA DIABATE ON WINNING THE 2022 ALA FIRST BOOK AWARD

The Africa Institute congratulates its **Ali A. Mazrui** senior fellow **Naminata Diabate** on winning the African Literature Association (ALA) 2022 First Book Award for her book *Naked Agency: Genital Cursing and Biopolitics in Africa* (Duke University Press, 2020). ALA annually awards authors for an outstanding book in African literary studies. The ALA recognized Diabate's deep investment in African literature, culture, and media and how her book forwards ambitious feminist arguments originating out of workshops and conversations with leading African and Euro-American scholars in the field. In its wide geographical reach, ALA appreciated how the author displayed a capacity to move across different modalities without losing textual detail. As well as how she synthetically brought together various contexts to present a nuanced and ambitious argument about women's naked protests across Africa and the diaspora that are equally relevant to Euro-American biopolitical discussions.

Earlier in 2021, she also won the ASA Best Book Prize for the same book. The African Studies Association (ASA) Best Book Prize recognizes the most important scholarly work in African studies published in English and distributed in the United States during the preceding year. The ASA began awarding the prize in 1965. Previous honourees of the award include Frederick Cooper, Pearl Robinson, Emmanuel Gyimah-Boadi, Iris Berger, Adom Getachew, and J.H. Kwabena Nketia.



Synopsis

Naked Agency: Genital Cursing and Biopolitics in Africa

Across Africa, mature women have for decades mobilized the power of their nakedness in political protest to shame and punish male adversaries. This insurrectionary nakedness, often called genital cursing, owes its cultural potency to the religious belief that spirits residing in women's bodies can be unleashed to cause misfortune in their targets, including impotence, disease, and death. In *Naked Agency*, Naminata Diabate analyzes these collective female naked protests in Africa and beyond to broaden understandings of agency and vulnerability. Drawing on myriad cultural texts from social media and film to journalism and fiction, Diabate uncovers how women create spaces of resistance during

socio-political duress, including such events as the 2011 protests by Ivoirian women in Côte d'Ivoire and Paris as well as women's disrobing in Soweto to prevent the destruction of their homes. Through the concept of naked agency, Diabate explores fluctuating narratives of power and victimhood to challenge simplistic accounts of African women's helplessness and to show how they exercise political power in the biopolitical era.

About Naminata Diabate

Naminata Diabate is an Associate Professor of Comparative Literature at Cornell University. She is a member of the core faculty in Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies (FGSS), and affiliated faculty in Romance Studies; Africana Studies and Research Center (ASRC); Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Studies; Performing and Media Arts; and Visual Studies. Diabate holds a Ph.D. in Comparative Literature with dual concentrations in African Diaspora Studies and Women's and Gender Studies from the University at Texas at Austin (2011). She is the Ali A. Mazrui Senior Fellow for 2021-2023 at The Africa Institute.

FACULTY PERFORMS POETIC TRIBUTE AT THE 41ST SHARJAH INTERNATIONAL BOOK FAIR

Aliyu Mustapha Lawal, Lecturer of Hausa at The Africa Institute was invited for a cultural discussion and shared poetic renditions at the Culture Cafe, Sharjah International Book Fair on November 3, 2022. He was joined by Emirati poet and academic, Dr. Aisha Al Shamsi and the session was moderated by Amal Al Mashayek.

Themed, 'Spread the Word', the Sharjah International Book Fair (SIBF) is the region's biggest celebration of books, reading, culture, and creativity celebrating its 41st annual edition with over 125 authors, intellectuals, and experts from 57 countries.

Lawal recited six poems, each well-received by his audience. His poems titled, 'Discovering the Lost Image', 'Rainfall in the Heart of the Orchard', 'Mirage Chasers', 'Make the Water Flow', 'The Lifetime Error' and 'Praying in the Chamber' revolved around themes of nature, self-reflection, dreams, and aspirations.

His closing poem titled, 'In the Land of The Africa Institute' was in tribute to the establishment of The Africa Institute in the emirate of Sharjah, commending the emirate's leadership, vision, and strong support promoting Africa and African diaspora in the region.

"I am grateful to SIBF for this wonderful invitation, it has been a great opportunity to broaden my horizon and foster knowledge sharing through the power of the written word. I would also like to extend my heartfelt thanks to The Africa institute for supporting me at every step of my journey," added Professor Lawal.



Aliyu Mustapha Lawal, Lecturer of African Languages and Translation, The Africa Institute performs his poetry at the 41st Sharjah International Book Fair.

CURRENT/UPCOMING PROGRAM

COUNTRY FOCUSED SEASON



Building Terrain II (2012) Digital C-type print by artist, Naiza Khan.

Visual theme for the country-focused season, *Thinking the Archipelago: Africa's Indian Ocean Islands*.

THINKING THE ARCHIPELAGO: AFRICA'S INDIAN OCEAN ISLANDS

The Africa Institute announces the Indian Ocean region to be the third edition of its 'country-focused season'—an annual initiative exploring one African country or African diaspora community through a range of scholarly and public programs.

The multi-series conference program titled, "*Thinking the Archipelago: Africa's Indian Ocean Islands*" is organized by The Africa Institute in collaboration with leading scholars Jeremy Prestholdt, Professor of History at the University of California, San Diego; Rogaia Mustafa Abusharaf, Professor of Anthropology, Georgetown University in Qatar; and Uday Chandra, Assistant Professor of Government, Georgetown University in Qatar.

Indian Ocean Africa has been a critical nexus of global linkages for millennia, and Africa's islands have occupied a central place in this matrix of connectivity. The Indian Ocean region referred to as the 'cradle of globalization' and 'center stage' in the contemporary multipolar world, is a cultural continuum facilitated by mobility, belief, aesthetics, exchange, and other practices. Its historical, sociocultural, economic, and geopolitical significance can hardly be overstated. Half the world's population lives within fifty miles of its shores, half of the world's container ship traffic crosses its waters, the majority of the world's petroleum traverses the basin, and global powers have long competed for regional influence. In a multipolar world, the geostrategic importance of Indian Ocean Africa is perhaps greater than ever before. As a result, interest in the Indian Ocean region, including Africa's role within it, has increased in recent years.

The Indian Ocean region, bounded by the continents of Africa, Asia, and Australia, has borne witness to remarkable circularities since humans began to master seafaring and star navigation. The monsoon, which brings both seasonal rains and winds for interregional sojourns,

has facilitated the integration of the Indian Ocean rim over thousands of years. Much like other maritime zones, mercantile, religious, and related cosmopolitan linkages have long existed in tension with slavery, indenture, imperialism, and colonialism, all of which have shaped regional societies. Yet, unlike its Atlantic and Mediterranean counterparts, the Indian Ocean's unique nexus of translocal relationships has never received the attention it merits. Moreover, in discussions of the Indian Ocean, Africa has often been relegated to the margins. This season actions a call to scholars, activists, and others to center Africa within studies of global relations, emphasizing the importance and cultural vibrance of Indian Ocean African societies, specifically its diverse island communities.

Starting in Fall 2022, this season will highlight the multitudinous forces shaping Africa's Indian Ocean rim, including overlapping forms of circulation, mobility, cultural production, ecological change, and cosmopolitanism through the lens of Africa's islands. Indian Ocean relations have transformed over time, in each instance revealing complex, changing processes of engagement and translation. Diverse travel and migratory waves have enriched poetry, art, literature, religion, and economic exchange along the Indian Ocean's shores. Just as important, shifting concepts of gender, race, ethnicity, environmental change, and empire have all shaped Indian Ocean African societies. These themes deserve consideration not only in comparison with other world regions, but also because forms of interaction, exchange, and alienation have engendered littoral societies with dynamic local identities simultaneously linked to proximate and distant communities.

Islands have always been integral spaces of Indian Ocean exchanges. From Madagascar's immense scale and ecological diversity to Mozambique Island's compact, urban environment and Mombasa's centrality to the East African economy, islands have profoundly shaped African history. As crucial points of contact with societies within and beyond Africa, they have been the primary conduits through which

people, goods, and ideas move. Islands foster particular local identities, and this combination of local dynamism and identity has ensured that islands such as Zanzibar and Lamu are effervescent spaces of cultural production. Indeed, the particular social environments of islands such as Seychelles, Mauritius, and the Comoros have contributed to unique forms of literary production, music, dance, film, and aesthetics, art forms in dialog with continental and more distant societies. Islands have also faced a range of environmental challenges, from cyclones and tsunamis to rising sea levels and the devastation of marine ecologies as a result of climate change. But much as with cultural production, modes of adaptation to environmental change over centuries demonstrate the unique vision, initiative, and forms of the resilience of island societies.

In sum, the season, *Thinking the Archipelago: Africa's Indian Ocean Islands* aims to raise the profile of Indian Ocean societies, bringing the complex history and rich cultural heritage of Indian Ocean Africa's islands to a wide, international audience. With an eye toward expanding our appreciation of connections forged across diverse environments and cultures in the context of the monsoon and maritime worlds, this season will highlight Africa's Indian Ocean islands as uniquely powerful and compelling frames through which to interpret Africa's history, understand its present, and imagine its future.

The Africa Institute created this annual series to highlight the complex history of the African world while also providing a forum for creatively engaging its present and imagining new futures. Inaugurated with *Ethiopia: Modern Nation/Ancient Roots* in 2019-2020 followed by *Global Ghana* in 2021-2022, the country-focused seasons are an integral part of The Africa Institute's year-round work to develop and support original scholarship and programming that expands understanding of African and African diaspora studies among the academic community and the broader public.

CO-CONVENOR BIOGRAPHIES



Rogaiya Mustafa Abusharaf

is a Sudanese ethnographer and Professor of Anthropology at Georgetown University in Qatar. She was a recipient of Postdoctoral and Senior fellowships at Durham University in the U.K., Brown, and Harvard. Her work was supported by Guggenheim Foundation, the Royal Anthropological Institute, the Sir William Luce Memorial Fellowship, The Andrew Mellon Foundation and MIT Center for International Studies, and Rockefeller Bellagio Study Center. She writes on culture and politics, anthropology of gender, human rights, migration, and diaspora issues in Sudan, the Gulf, Oman and Zanzibar, and the Indian Ocean. She is the author of *Darfur Allegory*, *Transforming Displaced Women in Sudan: Politics and the Body in a Squatter Settlement* and *Wanderings*, both published by the University of Chicago Press; *Oceanic Circularities* coedited with Uday Chandra, Irene Promodh and Maurice Jackson and published by Georgetown University Press. She is the editor of the 2010 special issue of *South Atlantic Quarterly* (Duke University Press) and *Female Circumcision: Multicultural Perspectives* (Ed.) (University of Pennsylvania Press 2006). She is the co-editor with Dale Eickelman of *Africa and the Gulf: Blurred Boundaries Shifting Ties and Higher Education in the Gulf* both from Gerlach Press in 2014 and 2015

respectively. In addition to numerous book chapters and essays, some of her articles appeared in the *Sciences*, *South Atlantic Quarterly*, *Differences*, *Anthropology and Humanism*, *History and Anthropology*, *Oriental Anthropology*, *International Migration*, *Radical Philosophy Review*, *Anthropology News*, *Transition: International Review*, *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences* and *Black Renaissance*. Abusharaf is also the co-editor of *Monsoon: Journal of the Indian Ocean Rim*, published by Duke University Press in collaboration with The Africa Institute, 2023.



Jeremy Prestholdt is a Professor of History at the University of California, San Diego. He specializes in African, Indian Ocean, and global history with an emphasis on consumer culture and politics in East Africa. His work has been supported by the National Endowment for the Humanities, Rockefeller Foundation, Woodrow Wilson Foundation, Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation, Social Science Research Council, and the Fulbright Foundation, among other agencies. He has been a visiting fellow at Ritsumeikan University, the University of Warwick, the University of Basel, and the University of Bergen. His articles have appeared in journals such as the *American Historical Review*, the *Journal of African History*, *Public Culture*, the *Journal of Global History*, the

Journal of World History, and the *Journal of Eastern African Studies* as well as many edited volumes. He is the author of *Domesticating the World: African Consumerism and the Genealogies of Globalization* (2008) and *Icons of Dissent: The Global Resonance of Che, Marley, Tupac, and Bin Laden* (2019). Prestholdt is the co-editor of *Monsoon: Journal of the Indian Ocean Rim*, published by Duke University Press in collaboration with The Africa Institute, 2023. He is also a co-editor of the Brill monograph series *African Social Studies*.



Uday Chandra is an Assistant Professor of Government, Georgetown University, Qatar. He received his B.A. in economics from Grinnell College and his Ph.D. in political science from Yale University. He received the 2013 Sardar Patel Award for writing the best dissertation in a US university on any aspect of modern South Asia. Before coming to Doha, he held a prestigious research fellowship at the Max Planck Institute for the Study of Religious and Ethnic Diversity in Goettingen, Germany. Uday's research lies at the intersection between critical agrarian studies, political anthropology, postcolonial theory, and South Asian studies. He is interested in state-society relations, power and resistance, political violence, agrarian change, rural-urban migration, popular religion, and the philosophy

of the social sciences. Uday's work has been published or will appear shortly in the *Law & Society Review*, *Social Movement Studies*, *New Political Science*, *Critical Sociology*, *The Journal of Contemporary Asia*, *Contemporary South Asia*, the *Indian Economic & Social History Review*, and *Modern Asian Studies*. He has co-edited volumes and journal issues on self-making in modern South Asia, subaltern politics and the state in modern India, caste relations in eastern India, and social movements across rural India today. His book, *Oceanic Circularities* coedited with Rogaiya Mustafa Abusharaf, Irene Promodh, and Maurice Jackson is published by Georgetown University Press. With regard to his upcoming projects, he is working on volumes on the comparative politics of "populism" and transnational circularities in the Indian Ocean. His first monograph *Negotiating Leviathan: Making Tribes and States in Modern India* will be published by Stanford University Press. Chandra is also working on a second book project on Hindu nationalism and democracy in postcolonial India.

INAUGURAL PROGRAM: REIMAGINING MOBILITIES/ IMMOBILITIES IN THE INDIAN OCEAN



Panelists, attendees and guests at the opening of the third country-focused season highlighting Africa's Indian Ocean islands on December 15, 2022 in Sharjah.

The Africa Institute successfully opens the Indian Ocean region to be the third edition of its 'country-focused season' with a three-day program, December 15-17, 2022 in Sharjah. The inaugural program is themed, *'Reimagining Mobilities/Immobilities in the Indian Ocean'* highlighted the multitudinous forces shaping Africa's Indian Ocean rim, including overlapping forms of circulation, mobility, cultural production, ecological change, and cosmopolitanism through the lens of Africa's islands.

Over the centuries, exchanges and interactions across the Indian Ocean created vibrant littoral societies with cosmopolitan identities. Due to the prevailing circularities of people, objects, and ideas, the Indian Ocean has emerged as a bona fide host to a diversity of cultural exchanges, economic interactions, and human relations. Linguists, for instance, have illuminated the incredible fusions of languages and terminologies showing how Kiswahili had resulted from the marriage of Arabic and the eastern Bantu languages.

Examples of fusions and microeconomies of cultural interactions abound throughout the ocean's vast rim. Much like other maritime zones, mercantile, religious, and related translocal linkages have spawned various forms of mobilities and Immobilities in the Indian Ocean littoral societies. Yet, these human interactions have received relatively little attention in the Indian Ocean compared to its Atlantic and Pacific counterparts. Moreover, and in spite of the growing interest in Indian Ocean Studies, scholarship, with few exceptions, has deployed interpretive frameworks predicated on the Atlantic model. This tendency has generated marked limitations in examining patterns and processes that are uniquely moulded within the Indian Ocean's social, political, and historical specificities.

This symposium, *Reimagining Mobilities/Immobilities in the Indian Ocean*, brings together scholars from diverse disciplines to address this prevailing lacuna. The symposium devoted to covering a vast array of historical and cultural phenomena within an overarching Indian Ocean particularism. From their divergent scholarly interests, the symposium's participants explored the ties that bind the overlapping forms of cosmopolitanism, circulation, inequality, and exploitation to elucidate the complex, changing processes of transaction and engagement.

The multidisciplinary program covered a vast array of forms of mobility and immobility in terms of these concepts' metaphorical and theoretical significances. It will delve into topics such as slavery and abolition, gender and sexuality, race and ethnicity, diaspora, faith traditions, and resistance among other interactions paving the way for expanding the field beyond reductive frameworks all the while recognizing its connectivity and far-reaching impact in global history.

The first two days of the symposium (December 15-16, 2022) was a public program that witnessed four panels, 16 presentations, and discussions, a performance from scholars specializing in Indian Ocean studies from Mauritius, the United Kingdom, United States of America, Italy, Norway, Germany, India, Pakistan, Qatar, Canada, and United Arab Emirates. The presentations highlighted how the Indian Ocean is being reimagined as a critical space of social exchange and analysis, a process that has intensified in the twenty-first century as rivalries among global powers intensify and communication technologies proliferate.

The program also included a performance titled, *Hamachi Gaani* (The Songs have Spoken) by the Afro-Indian tribe, Siddi showcased ancestral stories as part of their cultural heritage through Dhamami songs and dance. The final day (December 17, 2023) was a guided archaeological excursion visiting key sites in Khorfakkan, a town on the Gulf of Oman, in the United Arab Emirates, centered on Al-Khor Beach and a deep-sea port.

The Africa Institute collaborated with Pakistani artist Naiza Khan to use her images to visually depict the monsoonal circularities of the Indian Ocean and what it represents as a heterogeneous assemblage of power, colonial history, and collective memory.

To learn more about the program, visit our website or scan the QR code:

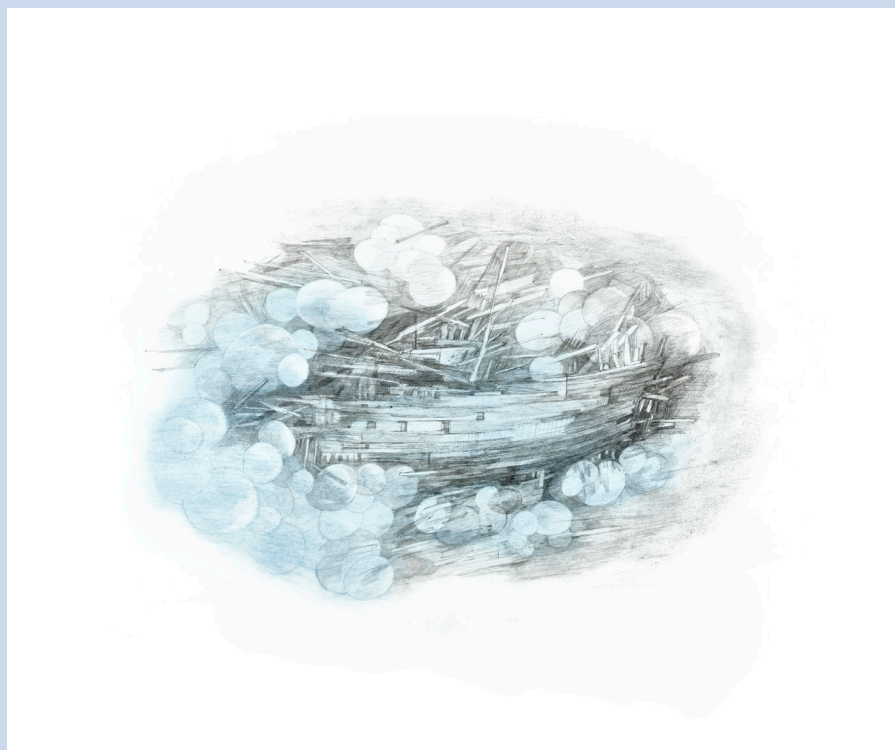




"Hamachi Gaani (The Songs have Spoken)": a celebration of traditional music and storytelling by Geeta Siddi, Girija Siddi, and Madhura Channige Subbanna, bring to light the story of the lost Africans in India. The performance took place on the second day (December 16, 2022) of the inaugural country-focused season dedicated to Africa's Indian Ocean islands in the Africa Hall, Sharjah.

LEGACIES OF RACE AND SLAVERY IN THE ATLANTIC AND INDIAN OCEANS

The Africa Institute presents its second of four symposiums titled, "*Legacies of Race and Slavery in the Atlantic and Indian Oceans*" as part of the third edition of its country-focused season highlighting the Indian Ocean region.



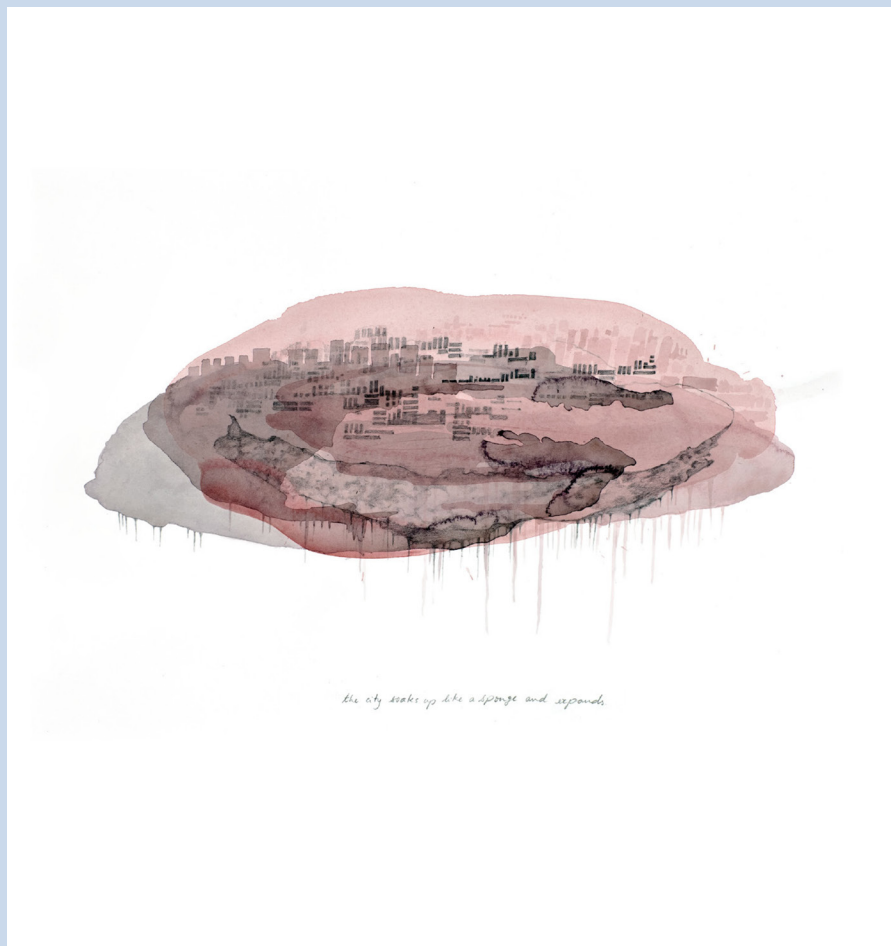
Shipwreck (2017). Charcoal, conte and graphite on paper. Artist: Naiza Khan.
Photographer: Charlie Bettinson.

Recent calls for racial justice in the United States have resonated with other parts of the world. There is a growing recognition that colorism and racism are not unique to the Atlantic world. Both scholars and non-scholars are recognizing that colorism and racism are not unique to the Atlantic world. Yet, there are also striking divergences in the historical experience of slavery and servitude in the "Old World": the centrality of the household economy and kinship relations, not profit-generating mercantilism, appears to lie at the heart of forced labour regimes in societies across the Indian Ocean rim. Moreover, in these societies, most notably in the Arab world, slaves from the Caucasus and the Balkans existed alongside those from Western India and the Swahili coast. There are, in other words, vital differences in the role of slaves and their social status as well as the racialized hierarchies in which they found themselves placed.

This project seeks to make sense of the similarities and differences between the historical legacies of race and slavery in the Atlantic and Indian Oceans. We wish to assess what the idea of racial justice might look like through a comparative lens. Moving beyond the disciplinary silos in which knowledge production typically takes place, we hope to stimulate a new scholarly dialogue between specialists working on key sites in the Atlantic and Indian Ocean worlds. In this project, we solicit answers to a series of critical questions: How does the memory of slavery and/or servitude differ in the Indian Ocean in comparison with the Atlantic world? To what extent does colour or colourism matter to legacies of slavery today beyond world regions dominated by state-sponsored discourses of "whiteness"? What might the Indian Ocean contribute to our existing understanding of race in the modern world? How might scholars play an engaged role in educating the wider public about the pernicious role of race and slavery outside the Atlantic world?

The conference is scheduled to take place from June 12-14, 2023 in Zanzibar. For more information, please visit our website.

COLORFUL THREADS: THE INTERWOVEN WORLDS OF ART AND CULTURE IN THE WESTERN INDIAN OCEAN



The City Soaks Up Like a Sponge and Expands (2011) Ink and watercolour on Arches by Naiza Khan.
Photo: Mehmood Ali

Colorful Threads: The Interwoven Worlds of Art and Culture in the Western Indian Ocean is co-organized by Prita Meier, Associate Professor of Art History, New York University and Laura Fair, Professor of African History, Department of Middle Eastern, South Asian and African Studies, Columbia University, and is the third rendition as part of the multi-series conference themed, Thinking the Archipelago: Africa's Indian Ocean Islands scheduled to be held in Sharjah between December 14-16, 2023.

Colorful Threads: The Interwoven Worlds of Art and Culture in the Western Indian Ocean aims to revolve around the Islands of the Western Indian Ocean region, stretching from the Eastern African coasts of Kenya, Mozambique, Somalia, South Africa, and Tanzania to Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius, Seychelles, Mayotte, and Reunion, brim with historical, socio-cultural, and economic significances. The circuitous toing and froing across the sea that brought people from the Indian Ocean's vast expanse had spawned momentous cultural interactions and microeconomies of exchange. Of the various forms of anthropological knowledge about independent invention, innovation, diffusion, and cultural brokerage, we come to understand that these Islands were/are not only creole entities but also important sites of creativity and imagination as evidenced in both symbolic and material cultures such as those expressed in the diversity of languages, ethnicities, rites, performances among other artistic forms of human expressions.

Nowhere have the influences of the Indian Ocean circularities been more powerfully pronounced than in the aesthetic realms of art and cultural production. The predictable monsoon winds that molded the very character of social life in the African Islands of the Indian Ocean were both ethnographically and historically significant for the communities in question. A plethora of patterns and processes through

which artistic and cultural knowledge traveling from the various shores of the ocean's rim had come to be shared, practiced, and revered, reveals a fecund cosmological imagination and inventiveness. Taking notice of the impressive artistic genius and cultural vibrancy of the people of the Western Indian Ocean, galleries and curators throughout North America, Australia, and Europe brought some of the most notable traditions to the broader public as had some museums of archeology and anthropology. The exhibitions of Madagascar's stunning akotifahana colorful textiles, which were once worn by the local elites and offered to dignitaries as gifts were put on full display in the Royal Ontario Museum. Similar exhibitions that differed in scope and scale have analogously imparted considerable knowledge on the numerous cultural objects' provenances and histories abound. The series arranged by the Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA) exhibit Arts of the Monsoon is one example that drew attention to the Island's opulent artistic resources.

From the vast array of the rich artistic traditions of music, photography, theatre, dance, ritual life, and spirit possession performances to mention a few, this season's angle on art and cultural production will pivot around key subjects of critical importance to scholars in the humanities and the social sciences. By deciphering the fine print of this intricately interwoven oceanic tapestry, we examine the ways in which this artistry has shaped the Islanders' subjectivities both cosmologically and culturally. Our focus on aesthetic sensibilities and cultural logic is an effort to broaden the scope of the archipelagic identities and the patterns of self-fashioning, which were brought about by the systematic human convergences on the Islands. Our interpretive frames of such patterns will be contextualized within larger epistemological questions of the conditions under which such fusions occurred. This by necessity will engage questions of power, representation, production, consumption, and the systems of signification emerging from a panoply of cultural forms and consciousnesses. This theme, *Colorful Threads: The Interwoven Worlds of Art and Culture in the Western Indian Ocean* thus

strives to examine such currents by taking a closer look at the multitude of styles, meanings, experiences, and performances in an ocean that Julia and Markus Verne have aptly called an "aesthetic space."

This forum will bring scholars from various academic disciplines and geographical locations to ponder what Pierre Bourdieu made clear in his distinctions as both symbolic and cultural capital. Our focus on rethinking the archipelago will improve our understanding of the fine-grained nuances of human relations. The vantage points of anthropology, history, art, architecture, museum studies, ethnographies of rituals, music, and dance as conceived within disciplinary and interdisciplinary knowledge and practice will be engaged fully in presentations, symposia, and publications.

The conference is scheduled to take place from December 14-16, 2023 in Sharjah. For more information, please visit our website.

INTERTWINED ECOLOGIES AND INTERCONNECTED HISTORIES: THE INDIAN OCEAN RIM

The final symposium as part of the four-part country-focused season is titled, *"Intertwined Ecologies and Interconnected Histories: The Indian Ocean Rim"*.

The Indian Ocean is the fastest-warming ocean in the world. Its rim, encompassing the eastern seaboard of Africa, the Persian Gulf, Peninsular India, the Southeast Asian mainland, and western Australia, is home to diverse, interconnected societies in rapidly urbanizing and fragile ecologies threatened by climate change. Islands and their inhabitants in the Indian Ocean face their own ecological crises as unsustainable models of economic growth, often driven by tourism, deplete natural resources steadily. Between the coasts and islands are the emerald waters of the ocean, in which endangered animals such as dugongs and giant tortoises coexist with thousands of smaller marine species from oysters to seagrass. The warming and rising waters of the Indian Ocean today threaten livelihoods and habitats as much as the future of entire species and complex ecologies from mangrove forests to salt marshes. Today's profound ecological crises also remind us of the history of regional environmental challenges and the initiative and resilience of coastal communities in the face of catastrophe.

Moreover, as we broaden our conception of the "social" to embrace nonhuman actors, we must also deconstruct and decenter received ideas of environmental and/or climate justice from the North Atlantic world in ways that ensure equity, fairness, and agency for the communities that live by and from the sea. Bringing together environmental historians, anthropologists, climate scientists, and marine biologists, this symposium seeks to create a new dialogue between sub-spaces and historical regions along the Indian Ocean rim, notably across Indian Ocean Africa. Such a dialogue braids the "local" and "global" as interconnected scales on which just, shared environmental futures can emerge.

*Learn more about our country-focused season, visit our website:
africainstitute.org*

2021-2022 IN REVIEW

THE AFRICA INSTITUTE SHARJAH LAUNCHES GHANAIAN PLAYWRIGHT MOHAMMED IBN-ABDALLAH'S PLAY, 'SONG OF THE PHARAOH' IN ACCRA



A scene enacted from the book, *Song of the Pharaoh* - The Africa Institute's first bilingual publication available in English and Arabic.

The Africa Institute, Sharjah launches renowned Ghanaian avant-garde artist Mohammed Ibn-Abdallah's play, *Song of the Pharaoh* at Base Lounge in Accra, Ghana on July 16, 2022.

Coming from a long line of pan-African activists and Islamic thinkers, Abdallah is the major Ghanaian playwright of his generation, and *Song of the Pharaoh* is his most ambitious play. It explores the life of the eighteenth dynasty Pharaoh Akhnaten and is a timeless story of love, politics, and religious intrigue set in ancient Egypt. The play brings together decades of formal theatrical experiments with a lustrous and spectacular Pan-African aesthetic combining Ghanaian traditional music and dance forms with an eclectic, creative blend of styles from Egypt and across Africa.

The book was ceremonially unveiled by the author Mohammed Ibn-Abdallah in line with The Africa Institute's second edition of the country-focused season with the focus on 'Global Ghana,' an annual initiative exploring one African country or African diaspora community through a range of scholarly and public programs.

To further engage and stimulate audiences, the event hosted a panel discussion, a music performance and showcased an ensemble that included some original and new cast members who performed excerpts from *Song of the Pharaoh*, serving as a tribute and celebrating the launch of the publication of the play in English and Arabic.

"This book, *Song of the Pharaoh* is the first bilingual publication as part of The Africa Institute series, Writing Africa, making it accessible to Arabic readers across the globe. This represents our commitment of The Africa Institute to translation in order to familiarize readers with the diversity and complexities of African creative expressions and as an important form of bringing different cultures into a fruitful dialogue of ideas, interpretation, and presentation of African cultural forms and norms," said Salah Hassan, Director, The Africa Institute.

Introducing the book, ethnographer and artist Jesse Weaver Shipley, spoke of Abdullah's seamless technique of incorporating music, dance, and reflexive reflections on the performance itself into the dramatic narrative, forcefully and playfully pulling audiences into the story itself.

"It is important to say that Abdallah's work in theatre and the arts have opened critical dialogues among artists and audiences in our evolving cosmopolitan world. As a writer, director, and politician working on culture, his work tries to rebalance the power dynamics that lie just below the surface and to tell stories that reshape how people remember and forget," said Shipley.

This publication was made possible by the generous support and leadership of Hoor Al Qasimi, President, The Africa Institute; Awo Asiedu, Acting Dean of the School of Performing Arts, University of Ghana, Legon for her guidance and to the entire faculty, staff, and students at the School of Performing Arts and lastly all the highly skilled translators.

Song of the Pharaoh first premiered at Ghana's National Theatre in September 2013 with a cast that included the National Theatre Company, the National Dance Ensemble, and the National Symphony Orchestra. Musicians blended the akpaloo and kora genres into a modern original musical score. The dance choreography blended various movement styles from around the continent, incorporating staccato aggressive war dances, celebratory sweeping wedding movements, and somber funerary marches rendered in slow-motion.

GLOBAL GHANA: IN SEARCH OF AFRICA'S BLACK STAR

The Africa Institute presented *Global Ghana: In Search of Africa's Black Star in Accra*, Ghana on October 27-29, 2022. Organized by The Africa Institute in collaboration with leading scholars Akosua Adomako Ampofo, Jean Allman, Carina Ray, and Joseph Oduro-Frimpong, this interdisciplinary conference explored the multiplicity of meanings that have been and continue to be invested in Ghana as a beacon of African emancipation, African unity, and continental innovation. The program aimed to eschew racially essentialist interpretations of the Black Star in favor of diverse perspectives informed by Ghana's complex history—from Ghana's role in the trans-Atlantic slave trade in the 17th and 18th centuries to its place as one of the most significant sites for Afro-Arab solidarity in the 20th century. Deep historical perspectives informed the program's consideration of how younger generations in Ghana today are reimagining what and who constitutes the Black Star nation and its possible futures through a range of different media, including visual and performing arts. Following the successful rendition in Sharjah themed, *Global Ghana: Sites of Departure/Sites of Return* held between March 08-10, 2022, this segment of the conference through a dynamic mix of scholarly and creative programming offered audiences an opportunity to engage with scholars, writers, artists, and activists.



The author Mohammed Ibn-Abdallah (right) unveils his book, *Song of the Pharaoh*, during The Africa Institute's second edition of their country-focused season, 'Global Ghana.'

CO-CONVENER BIOGRAPHIES



Akosua Adomako Ampofo is Professor of African and Gender Studies at the Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana (UG). Adomako Ampofo is President of the African Studies Association of Africa; an honorary Professor at the Centre for African Studies at the University of Birmingham; and a Fellow of the Ghana Academy of Arts and Sciences. An activist scholar, Adomako Ampofo's areas of interest include African knowledge systems, higher education, race and identity politics, gender relations, masculinities, and popular culture. In her current work on Black masculinities, she explores the shifting nature of identities among young men in Africa and the diaspora.

Adomako Ampofo is the Editor-in-Chief of Contemporary Journal of African Studies and Co-Editor of Critical Investigations into Humanitarianism in Africa blog. She serves on the board of several organizations including the U.S. African Studies Association; The Centre for the Advancement of Scholarship, University of Pretoria; Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence, University of Bayreuth, of which she is Chairperson; Perivoli Africa Research Centre, University of Bristol; and the Institute for Humanities in Africa, HUMA, University of Cape Town. Adomako Ampofo's work has been variously recognized by, among others, the Fulbright Scholar Program and the Sociologists for Women and Society (SWS), which awarded her the Feminist Activism Award.



Carina Ray is the A.M. and H.P. Bentley Associate Professor of African History at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. A scholar of race and sexuality, comparative colonialisms and nationalisms, migration, and maritime history, print cultures, bodily aesthetics, and the relationship between race, ethnicity, and political power, Ray's research focuses on Ghana and its diasporas, while also branching out to include a long-term oral history project documenting the experiences of Cubans who served in Angola, Mozambique, and Ethiopia. She is the author of *Crossing the Color Line: Race, Sex, and the Contested Politics of Colonialism in Ghana*, winner of the American Historical Association's 2016 Wesley Logan Book Prize; the African Studies Association's 2017 Aidoo-Snyder Book Prize; and a finalist for the United Kingdom African Studies Association's Fage and Oliver Book Prize. Her work has also appeared in such journals: *Gender and History*; *PMLA*; *American Historical Review*; and *Journal of West African History*, among other publications. She is a series co-editor of *New African Histories* (Ohio University Press) and *African Identities* (Cambridge University Press) and recently completed three-year terms as editor of *Ghana Studies* and as a member of the board of editors of *The American Historical Review*.



Jean Allman is the Professor of History at The Africa Institute, Sharjah. She is also the J.H. Hexter Professor in the Humanities and Professor of African and African American Studies at Washington University in St. Louis, where she directs the Center for the Humanities. Allman's research and published work engages 19th- and 20th-century African history, with a geographic focus on Ghana and thematic interests in gender, colonialism, decolonization, and the racial politics of knowledge production. Her work has been supported by the National Endowment for the Humanities, the American Council of Learned Societies, Fulbright-Hays, the Social Science Research Council, and the Mellon Foundation. She was the President of the Ghana Studies Council (now Association) from 1992-1998; has served on the Board of Directors of both the African Studies Association (USA) and the Association for the Study of the Worldwide African Diaspora; and was the President of the African Studies Association in 2018.

She is the author of *The Quills of the Porcupine: Asante Nationalism in an emergent Ghana*, "I Will Not Eat Stone": *A Women's History of Colonial Asante* (with Victoria Tashjian), and *Tongnaab: The History of a West African God* (with John Parker) and has edited several collections, including *Fashioning Africa: Power and the Politics of Dress*. Allman co-edits the *New African Histories* book series at Ohio

University Press, and her work has also appeared in a range of journals, including the *Journal of African History*, *Africa*, *Gender and History*, *Journal of Women's History*, *History Workshop Journal*, *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, *African Studies Review*, *American Historical Review*, and *Souls*

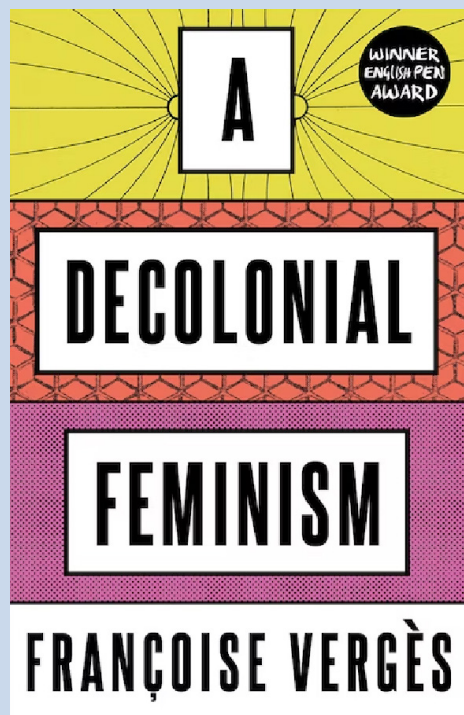


Joseph Oduro-Frimpong is a media anthropologist and Director of the Center for African Popular Culture at Ashesi University. He received his Ph.D. from the Department of Anthropology at Southern Illinois University, Carbondale (2012) and also holds degrees in Information Studies (University of Ghana, Legon) and Human Communication (Central Michigan University). He is an American Council of Learned Societies/African Humanities Program Fellow. He has held postdoctoral fellowships at Rhodes University and at the University of Cape Town.

Widely published, his research has appeared in respected journals, including *Journal of African Cultural Studies*, *International Journal of Communication*, and *African Studies Review*, and in a number of edited volumes, including *Popular Culture in Africa: The Episteme of the Everyday* and *Taking African Cartoons Seriously: Politics, Satire, and Culture*.

BOOK CONVERSATIONS

Our program, Book Conversations, aims to highlight new books by African and Africanist authors in the fields of humanities, arts and social sciences.



A DECOLONIAL FEMINISM

Wednesday, June 8, 2022

The Africa Institute hosted a panel of faculty and fellows who reflected, critiqued, and discussed Françoise Vergès's award winning book, '*A Decolonial Feminism*'. Author of over 20 books, Françoise Vergès is a Professor of Cultural and Postcolonial Studies at the Africa Institute.

Synopsis

For too long feminism has been co-opted by the forces they seek to dismantle. In this powerful manifesto, Françoise Vergès argues that feminists should no longer be accomplices of capitalism, racism, colonialism, and imperialism: it is time to fight the system that created the boss, built the prisons, and polices women's bodies.

A Decolonial Feminism grapples with the central issues in feminist debates today: from Eurocentrism and whiteness to power, inclusion, and exclusion. Delving into feminist and anti-racist histories, Vergès also assesses contemporary activism, movements, and struggles, including #MeToo and the Women's Strike.

Centering anticolonialism and anti-racism within intersectional Marxist feminism, the book puts forward an urgent demand to free ourselves from the capitalist, imperialist forces that oppress us.

Speakers

Françoise Vergès Professor of Cultural Studies at The Africa Institute, Sharjah. Her academic and professional life has been linked with activism and artistic projects. Her work is trans-disciplinary looking at the fabrication of consent and dissent using decolonial psychoanalysis, visual, sonic and literary elements, and feminist, postcolonial, anticolonial and radical theories.

In 1996, she worked with artist and filmmaker Isaac Julien on Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Mask*; for the Paris Triennial curated by Okwui Enwezor (2012), she curated *The Slave in Le Louvre. An Invisible Humanity* and was project advisor for the Platform 3 'Créolité and Creolization'; she has written films on Aimé Césaire (2013) and Maryse Condé (2011). At the Collège d'études mondiales (FMSH, Paris), she created the Chair Global South(s) (2014–2018). In 2015, she co-founded the association 'Decolonize the Arts,' and its free monthly university (2016–2019), the space opened by artist Kader Attia in Paris. She regularly curates workshops with artists, activists and scholars of colour that end with a public performance.

She was president of the French National Committee for the Memories and History of Slavery (2008–2012) and was a consultant for the Memorial of the Abolition of Slavery, conceived by Krzysztof Wodiczko and Julian Bonder (opened in 2012).

Her recent publications include *A Feminist Theory of Violence* (Pluto Press, 2022); *De la violence coloniale dans l'espace public* (Shed Publishing, 2021); *A Decolonial Feminism* (Pluto Press, 2021); *The Wombs of Women. Race, Capitalism, Feminism* (Duke University Press, 2020); and *Resolutely Black. Conversations with Aimé Césaire* (Polity, 2020).

She received her PhD in Political Theory from Berkeley University (1995).

Surafel Wondimu Abebe is an Assistant Professor, Performance Studies and Theory at The Africa Institute. Abebe studied Literature (BA) and Cultural Studies (MA) at Addis Ababa University (AAU) (2010). He served at AAU as a lecturer, researcher, and Deputy Dean of Humanities. He continued working with AAU as an assistant professor at the Institute of Ethiopian Studies, Center for African Studies, and College of Performing and Visual Arts after he completed his PhD in

Performance Historiography at the University of Minnesota (2018). He is also board member of a multi-genre online journal, AGITATE, at the University of Minnesota.

Amy Niang is an Associate Professor, Political Science at The Africa Institute. Her work has been published in journals such as *International Relations*; *Alternatives*; *Politics*; *African Studies*; *African Economic History*, *Journal of Ritual Studies* and in many edited collections. Her research interests are broadly centred around the history of state formation and sovereignty, Africa's international relations, and the history of geopolitics.

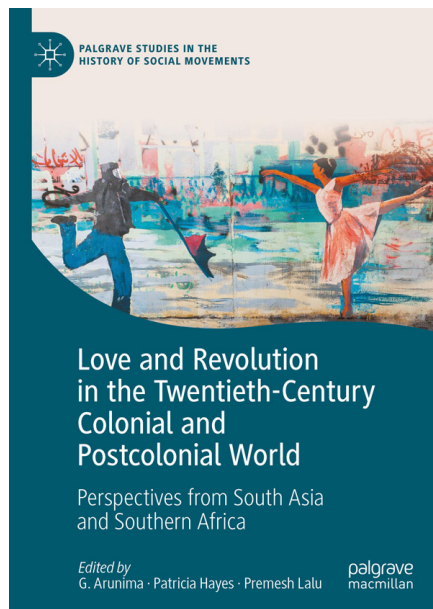
Prior to her current position, she taught at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, the Mohammed VI Polytechnic University in Rabat, and has also held visiting positions and fellowships at the University of Sao Paulo, Princeton University, the University of Halle-Wittenberg, the University of Michigan, the Institute of Peace and Security Studies (IPSS) amongst many other institutions. Niang holds a BA in International Relations (2005) and a MA in Political Economy from the University of Tsukuba (2007) and a PhD in Politics and International Relations from the University of Edinburgh (2011).

Naminata Diabate is Ali A. Mazrui Senior Fellow at The Africa Institute. She is also an Associate Professor of Comparative Literature at Cornell University. She is a member of the core faculty in Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies (FGSS), and affiliated faculty in Romance Studies; African Studies and Research Center (ASRC); Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Studies; Performing and Media Arts; and Visual Studies. Diabate holds a PhD in Comparative Literature with dual concentrations in African Diaspora Studies and Women's and Gender Studies from the University at Texas at Austin (2011).

LOVE AND REVOLUTION IN THE TWENTIETH-CENTURY COLONIAL AND POSTCOLONIAL WORLD

Wednesday, May 18, 2022

Professors Patricia Hayes, G. Arunima, and Premesh Lalu, who are co-editors of the book *'Love and Revolution in the Twentieth-Century Colonial and Postcolonial World,'* were joined by Professors Javed Majeed, English and Comparative Literature at King's College London, and Behrooz Ghamari, Chair of the Department of Near Eastern Studies at Princeton University, in a discussion moderated by Professor Elizabeth Giorgis.



Book Synopsis

The book addresses emancipatory narratives from two main sites in the colonial world, the Indian and Southern African subcontinents. Exploring how love and revolution interrelate, this volume is unique in drawing on theories of affect to interrogate histories of the political, thus linking love and revolution together. The chapters engage with the affinities of those who live with their colonial pasts: crisis of expectations, colonial national convulsions, memories of anti-colonial solidarity, even shared radical libraries. It calls attention to the specific and singular way in which notions of love of the world were born in a precise moment of anti-colonial struggle: a love of the world for which one would offer one's life, and for which there had been little precedent in the history of earlier revolutions. It thus offers new ways of understanding the shifts in global traditions of emancipation over two centuries.

Editors

G. Arunima is a Professor in the Centre for Women's Studies at Jawaharlal Nehru University, India, and currently the Director of Kerala Council for Historical Research (KCHR), Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala. She has researched and published on both historical and modern contexts in India, focusing particularly on cultural, visual and material texts, and rethinking the politics of the contemporary.

Patricia Hayes is The National Research Foundation and South African Research Chair of Visual History and Theory at the Centre for Humanities Research, University of the Western Cape, South Africa. She has published extensively on history and colonial and documentary photography in southern Africa.

Premesh Lalu was a Founding Director of the Centre for Humanities Research (CHR) at the University of the Western Cape in South Africa. He is co-editor of *Remains of the Social: Desiring the Post-apartheid* (Wits University Press, 2017), and *Love and Revolution in the Twentieth-Century Colonial and Postcolonial World* (Palgrave, 2021). His forthcoming book, *Undoing Apartheid*, will be published by Polity Press in the UK in November 2022.

Discussants

Javed Majeed is a Professor of English and Comparative Literature at King's College London. He is the author of a number of books and articles on modern South Asia, including *Ungoverned Imaginings: James Mill's the History of British India and Orientalism* (1992); *Autobiography, Travel and Postnational Identity: Gandhi, Nehru and Iqbal* (2007); and *Muhammad Iqbal: Islam, Aesthetics and Postcolonialism* (2009). He is also the editor, with Christopher Shackle, of *Hali's Musaddas: The Flow and Ebb of Islam* (1997), and with Isabel Hofmeyr, of *India and South Africa* (2016). His two-volume study of G.A. Grierson's Linguistic Survey of India was published as *Nation and Region in Grierson's Linguistic Survey of India and Colonialism and Knowledge in Grierson's Linguistic Survey of India* (2018). He is currently working on the cultural and linguistic politics of lexicography and conceptions of the English language in 19th century colonial India. He was elected a Fellow of the British Academy in 2021.

Behrooz Ghamari-Tabrizi is a Professor and Chair of the Department of Near Eastern Studies at Princeton University. He holds a Ph.D. in sociology from the University of California, Santa Cruz. He is also the Director of Princeton University's Sharmin and Bijan Mossavar-Rahmani Center for Iran and Persian Gulf Studies. He joined the Department of Near Eastern Studies in February 2019 after fourteen years at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, where he was a professor of history and sociology, as well as the Director of the Center for South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies.

He is the author of three books on different aspects and the historical context of the Iranian revolution of 1979 and its aftermath: "Islam and Dissent in Post-Revolutionary Iran: Abdolkarim Soroush and the Religious Foundations of Political Reform," "Foucault in Iran: Islamic Revolution after the Enlightenment," and "Remembering Akbar: Inside the Iranian Revolution." He has written extensively on the topics of social theory and Islamist political thought in various journals and book chapters. Currently, he is working on a project on "Mystical Modernity," a comparative study of the philosophy of history and political theory of Walter Benjamin and Ali Shariati.

Moderator

Elizabeth W. Giorgis is an Associate Professor in Art History, Theory, and Criticism at The Africa Institute. She obtained her Ph.D. in the History of Art and Visual Studies from Cornell University in 2010 and her Master's in Museum Studies from New York University in 2004. Giorgis has held various academic positions, including serving as the director of the Institute of Ethiopian Studies and as the Dean of the College of Performing and Visual Art at Addis Ababa University. She has authored several publications and serves on the editorial boards of *Transition Magazine*, *Northeast African Studies Journal (NEAS)*, and the *Ethiopian Journal of Social Science and Humanities (EJOSSAH)*. Giorgis has received fellowships and has curated exhibitions, including her book "Modernist Art in Ethiopia" (2019, Ohio University Press). She convened the African Humanities Initiative "Africa as Concept: Decolonization, Emancipation, and Freedom" in 2019.

THE AFRICA INSTITUTE AND SUDANESE SOCIAL CENTER HONOR HISTORIAN YUSUF FADL HASSAN



The Africa Institute in collaboration with Sudanese Social Center, Sharjah honor and release book dedicated to Sudanese historian Professor Yusuf Fadl Hassan at The Africa Hall on November 5, 2022.

The Africa Institute honored Sudanese historian Professor Yusuf Fadl Hassan with a special ceremony at the Africa Hall in collaboration with the Sudanese Social Center in Sharjah on November 5, 2022.

Professor Yusuf Fadl Hassan has dedicated his life to promoting the research and documentation movement in Africa and Asia. The 90-year-old historian was recently recognized as the 2022 edition's 'Cultural Personality of the Year' at the Sharjah International Book Fair for his substantial efforts and invaluable work.

The Africa Institute took the opportunity to celebrate the distinguished and creative intellectual, Professor Fadl with the unveiling of their publication dedicated in his honor titled, *"Yusuf Fadl Hassan: Sobriety of Earning and Generous Giving"*. The book is written by Ahmed Ibrahim Abu Shouk, Professor of History, Qatar University.

In the presence of Sheikha Hoor Al Qasimi, President of The Africa Institute, the evening was officially opened with Professor Salah M. Hassan, Director of The Africa Institute. Engineer Omar Ahmed Khojaly, President of the Sudanese community in Sharjah, President of the Sudanese Social Center in the Emirate of Sharjah also shared opening remarks followed by an address by the author of the book, Professor Ahmed Ibrahim Abu Shouk who shared a visual presentation on his method and provided a brief overview of provided a brief overview of the chapters of the book dedicated to Professor Fadl, a key pillar of sustainable cultural development in the Arab world.

Professor Fadl through a moderated discussion with Professor Shouk answered questions with anecdotes shedding light on his journey, his gratitude to his Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan Bin Muhammad Al Qasimi, Member of the Supreme Council and Ruler of Sharjah as well as the key milestones, that came with his illustrious career.

About Professor Yusuf Fadl

Born in Al Mahmiyya, Sudan, in 1932, Professor Fadl received his Bachelor's degree in General Arts from Khartoum University in 1956, and Master's degree with honors in History from London University in 1959, and a Ph.D. in History from the University of London in 1964.

He served as a lecturer at the History department at the University of Khartoum. He served as the director of the Sudan Research Unit (which became the African and Asian Studies Institute) from 1972-1983, entrusted with chronicling the Sudanese heritage and spearheading a team of researchers. Professor Fadl served as the president of Khartoum University between 1985 – 1991 and was the editor of Sudan Notes and Records magazine, which has more than 20 editions. He also launched a Sudanese Studies magazine.

He has authored more than 30 books, including *"The Arabs and Sudan: From the Seventh to the Early Sixteenth Century,"* *"Introduction to the History of Islamic States in Eastern Sudan,"* *"Studies in Sudanese History,"* and co-edited *"Tabaqat Wad Dayf Allah."*



Right to Left: Ahmed Ibrahim Abu Shouk, Professor of History at Qatar University and author of *"Yusuf Fadl Hassan: Sobriety of Earning and Generous Giving,"* with historian Yusuf Fadl.

FILM SCREENING + TALK

FATI'S CHOICE



Film still from *Fati's Choice*, 2021.

The Africa Institute hosted *Fati's Choice* (2021) directed by Fatimah Dadzie, a filmmaker and storyteller who crafts compelling stories about people who live at the margins of society.

The film was streamed and freely available for viewing on The Africa Institute website, between February 14-16, 2022.

On February 16, 2022, the three days of streaming concluded with a webinar that brings Fatimah Dadzie, director of the film, into conversation with Idrissou Mora-Kpai, a filmmaker whose work explores themes of migration and diaspora in colonial and post-colonial African societies, and Carina Ray, a historian of Ghana and its diaspora. The speakers discussed a variety of issues and themes raised by the film and its connection to the conference, *Global Ghana: Sites of Departure/ Sites of Return* held between 8-10 March 2022 at the Africa Institute.

Film Synopsis

Fati, unhappy with her prospects as an irregular migrant in Italy, returns home to Ghana to take care of her five children. As a returned migrant with not much to show from her time in Europe, she is stigmatized by her gossiping neighbours and friends, who paint her as a failure. Fati forges ahead but can she cope amid a failed marriage, losing her children, and dire financial constraints? Alone and rejected, will Fati regret coming back home or will she succeed in her primary objective of getting her children back?

Director:

Fatimah Dadzie | Ghana, South Africa | 45 minutes | 2021

Speakers

Fatimah Dadzie has used her expertise and skills in film production to capture and tell compelling stories about ordinary people, for over a ??? trained at the National Film and Television Institute (NAFTI) of Ghana and the University of Leicester in the United Kingdom, Fatimah initially worked in advertising and television production. This early professional experience sharpened her storytelling abilities, which she brought to bear on a number of documentary film projects, including a film about the reproductive health of adolescent girls. In 'Fati's Choice,' Fatimah's directorial debut, she continues to hone her interest in telling stories about women and children, while also drawing attention to a neglected area of study: the fate of African migrants who chose to return home after finding disappointment in Europe.

Idrissou Mora-Kpai an Assistant Professor of Media Arts, Sciences and Studies at Ithaca College and an award winning filmmaker. His films have screened world-wide at prestigious festivals in Berlin, Rotterdam, Vienna, Milano, Busan, and Sheffield, and have garnered many international accolades. Born in Benin, West Africa, Idrissou has made a name for himself with his social documentaries tackling post-colonial African societies, African migrations and diasporas. He is a recipient of the prestigious Dutch Prince Claus Award for his artistic achievements dedicated to promoting social change in the Global South. Idrissou's most recent film, *America Street* explores the daily struggles of an African-American community in a quickly gentrifying historically black neighborhood in downtown Charleston, South Carolina, just after the 2015 Walter Scott killing. A graduate of the Konrad Wolf Film University of Babelsberg (Germany), Idrissou has been a guest artist and visiting faculty member at Cornell University, Duke University, and the University of Pittsburgh.

Carina Ray is the H. Coplan Chair of Social Sciences and Associate Professor of African and African American Studies at Brandeis University. A scholar of race and sexuality, comparative colonialisms and nationalisms, migration and maritime history, print cultures, bodily aesthetics, and the relationship between race, ethnicity, and political power, Ray's research focusses on Ghana and its diasporas. She is the author of *Crossing the Color Line: Race, Sex, and the Contested Politics of Colonialism in Ghana*, winner of the American Historical Association's 2016 Wesley Logan Book Prize and the African Studies Association's 2017 Aidoo-Snyder Book Prize. Her work has also appeared in *Gender and History*; *PMLA*; *American Historical Review*; and *Journal of West African History*, among others. She is a series co-editor of *New African Histories* (Ohio University Press) and *African Identities: Past and Present* (Cambridge University Press).

FACULTY SEMINARS

The Africa Institute hosts a series of public seminars featuring faculty, scholars, fellows, and more.

Through these lectures, The Africa Institute reaffirms its mission as a center for the study and research of Africa and its diaspora and its commitment to the training of a new generation of critical thinkers in African and African Diaspora studies.

Here are collated highlights of seminars conducted through 2021-2022.



Professor Elizabeth W. Giorgis, Associate Professor at The Africa Institute, moderating a seminar with Faisal Garba Muhammed, Senior Lecturer of Sociology at the University of Cape Town on 'Migration and the Outlines of a Macro Sociology of (Contemporary) Africa' on September 14, 2022.

THE AFRICA INSTITUTE SENIOR FACULTY PRESENT IN 2022'S PIONEERS OF CONTEMPORARY AFRICAN ART PARIS CONFERENCE

Monday & Tuesday, April 11-12, 2022

Faculty:

Professor Salah M. Hassan, The Africa Institute's Director and Elizabeth W. Giorgis, Associate Professor of Art History, Theory & Criticism, The Africa Institute

The Institut National D'histoire de L'art two-day hybrid conference titled, Pioneers of Contemporary African Art in Paris was curated by South African curator and writer Riason Naidoo, focused on pioneer figures of contemporary African art especially dedicated to the artists of the 1960s and 1970s, the collectives, and to the festivals that marked the dynamics during the decades.

The event invited multiple conversations with artists, curators, critics, writers, and art historians. This plurality of views and experiences made it possible to retrace select singular trajectories and collective movements at a time when, with the end of the Cold War and the evolution of world politics, contemporary African art began to be the subject of increased international attention.

Professor Giorgis delivered the keynote address virtually recalling narratives that make up an important chapter of African art. The focus of her talk was on Ethiopian modernists of the 1960s, which was based on excerpts from Elizabeth's book, "Modernist Art in Ethiopia" (2019).

While Professor Hassan shared his talk through a moderated conversation titled, "NKA and other projects" where he spoke about NKA, a journal of contemporary African art founded in 1994 by Okwui Enwezor, Chika Okeke-Agulu, and Salah M. Hassan.

Hassan shared the reason and significance of initiating NKA which contributes to the intellectual dialogue on world art by publishing critical work in the developing field of contemporary African and African diaspora art. The journal features scholarly articles, reviews of exhibitions, books, film reviews, and roundtables.

STUDENTS OF THE WORLD: DECOLONIZATION AND GLOBAL 1968 IN THE CONGO

Monday, June 13, 2022

Faculty:

Pedro Monaville, Assistant Professor of History, New York University in Abu Dhabi (NYUAD)

Professor Monaville's upcoming book, "Students of the World: Decolonization and Global 1968 in the Congo", which is set to be released in June 2022 by Duke University Press, was the main focus of the seminar. The book reveals how students built transnational emancipatory frameworks that offered new possibilities for imagining Congo's future. In his presentation, Professor Monaville contextualized how Congolese student activists refused to accept the closing of the temporal horizon envisioned by Lumumba, which signalled a shift away from a past of colonial oppression and towards a future of sovereignty, dignity, and justice. The Congolese student movement rapidly articulated a project of radical emancipation that went well beyond university campuses. Through the seminar, Professor Monaville shed light on the political imagination of students and their reaction through the 1960s, connecting Congo to the world. Monaville's ongoing research projects include a study of the decolonization of the Catholic Church in the Congo, a biography of the Congolese historian T.K. Biaya, and an edited English translation of André Yoka Lye's *Kinshasa: Signes de Vie*.

A FEW IDEAS ON AFRICA IN WORLD HISTORY

Wednesday, June 22, 2022

Faculty:

Abdourahmane Idrissa, Senior Researcher, African Studies Centre, Leiden University

Idrissa is a senior researcher at Leiden University's Africa Studies Centre. He is a political scientist with a strong inclination toward history. As a specialist in political Islam and democratization in the Sahel, he's written the book, *The Politics of Islam in the Sahel: Between Persuasion and Violence* (2015) and co-edited *Democratic Struggle, Institutional Reform, and State Resilience in the African Sahel*. He is currently working on a book on "the Songhay Empire and the Birth of Modernity". In French, he co-authored *L'Afrique pour les nuls* ("Africa for Dummies") in 2017.

The seminar primarily revolved around two working book projects: the first segment was on his developing proposal on "Sunset Empire: Songhay and the Birth of the Modern World" which will act as a prequel to the second segment of the session that grappled with key ideas for his upcoming book, "Africa Modern: a World History" that questioned Africa's role in the creation of the modern world in which we live now.

As part of the reflection, the seminar was moderated by Salah M. Hassan, Director, The Africa Institute who invited an array of questions from faculty and fellows to stimulate dialogue, bring forward arguments and focus on specific aspects related to the African experience in the Americas.

“Historians of global history have tended to present the saga of the advent of the modern world is presented as that of the ‘rise of the West’ and a corresponding ‘sinking of the Rest’, and philosophies of the modern age world have supported the notion,” said Professor Idriss.

“The central scene, in any event, is always the West. This book project, “Africa Modern: a World History” claims that these powerful perspectives fascinate us the way the moon does: we see only the face of it that glows with cosmic sunlight – never the whole of it. To see the whole of the moon of the modern world, that which is left in the dark must be brought to light, and I contend that the biggest chunk of that is Africa. Africa in those centuries made modernity, and largely made the West, which did not “rise” by sheer volition but through Newtonian laws of history that involved a lot of Africa.” he added.

AS RELAY (ቅብብሎሽ): WOMEN IN ETHIOPIAN STUDENT MOVEMENT 1950-1978

Tuesday, June 28, 2022

Faculty:

Netsanet Gebremichael, Fatema Mernissi Postdoctoral Fellow, in Visual Culture, Performance Studies and Critical Humanities, The Africa Institute; Assistant Professor and Researcher, Addis Ababa University, Institute of Ethiopian Studies

This lecture shared Professor Gebremichael’s three-year research journey that traces Women in the Ethiopian Student Movement from 1950-1978, working through a print culture of the Ethiopian Student Movement publications, Oral History interviews of women who took part in the Ethiopian student Movement that was conducted from 2019-2021, and multimedia exhibition materials entitled Kibibilosh that was shown at the Modern Art Museum, Gebre Kristos Desta Center in Addis Ababa (7 May – 28 July 2021).

Using these materials, Professor Gebremichael highlighted how to work through a blind spot of a movement and its history through a practice of relay as a method of mapping local-global and intergenerational linkages on emergence, development, and substantive transformations of “the women’s questions” and the lives of women in the Ethiopian Student Movement.

“In this lecture, I expose how relay provides an essential metaphor for deep understanding of intellectual history of the Ethiopian Student movement in the formulation of “women’s questions” through tracing its transformation in the print culture of the Ethiopian Student Movement, it also re-inscribed women in Ethiopian Student Movement within the genealogy of histories leftist local-global struggles by highlighting their written engagements, life history interviews, accounts of imprisonment, and loss of their lives for the emergence and development of social questions.” said Professor Gebremichael.

Moderated by Françoise Verges, Professor of Cultural and Post-Colonial Studies at The Africa Institute, the seminar showcase a method of making multidirectional intervention through existing historiographical lacunas by crafting a playful synergy of relay between research, documentation, and education in the form of curatorial-practices.

Netsanet also appreciated the support of The Africa Institute and generous funding by Global Research Network on Parliaments and People project powered by SOAS University during the course of her three year journey of research, documentation, and exhibition which will now be focused into a manuscript.

MIGRATION AND THE OUTLINES OF A MACRO SOCIOLOGY OF (CONTEMPORARY) AFRICA

Wednesday, September 14, 2022

Faculty:

Faisal Garba Muhammed, Senior Lecturer of Sociology, University of Cape Town

A Senior Lecturer of Sociology at the University of Cape Town (UCT), where he leads the South-South Migration, Inequality, and Development Hub, and convenes the Global Studies Programme (GSP). His most recent publication is a special issue of *Zanj: The Journal of Critical Global South Studies* on “Migration and Inequality in the Global South” (2022), co-edited with Francis Nyamnjoh and Heaven Crawley.

The talk questions and explores how contemporary African social formations would be conceptualized, theorized, and taught, if our starting point is Africa’s experience of shifting and multiple relationships between territoriality and belonging, as opposed to proceeding from the Westphalian fusion of identity (and a single) place (and in some cases blood).

“This presentation discusses the process to develop a sociology of Africa by rethinking some of the dominant concepts, categories, frames, and methods that are deployed in the study of Africa,” said Professor Garba who works on migration and mobility, social theory, and knowledge production, inequality, and social movements and working-class forms of organizing in Africa.

He went on to explain reasons to study Africa through a macro-sociology perspective. He entailed the three parts of the process that lay the foundation in his study of migration and the outlines of a macro sociology of contemporary Africa: firstly by tracing how migration mediates the emergence and remaking of political communities out of diverse social

groups; and secondly by moving away from categories and assumptions that racialize, ethnicize, tribalize and essentialize the public sphere in Africa; and finally proposing an approach to researching and teaching contemporary African societies that emphasizes mobility, territoriality, modes of livelihood, and shifting identities and belonging, as opposed to essence and timelessness.

Professor Garba reflected on the practicalities of doing a macro sociology of Africa that takes Africa and its diverse interconnections as a frame and a method, without succumbing to geographical and or methodological borders. He further shared the implications for research and pedagogy revolving around sociology across the South and student mobility.

The seminar was moderated by Professor Elizabeth W. Giorgis, Associate Professor of Art History, Theory & Criticism, The Africa Institute.

THE WOLOF IS AN AFRICAN LANGUAGE IN GHOST LETTERS: TRANSLATION, FORM, HISTORY AND BLACK LIVES MATTER

Monday, September 26, 2022

Faculty:

Baba Badji, Postdoctoral Associate at the Institute for the Study of Global Racial Justice and Comparative Literature, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey, USA

Senegalese American poet, translator, and researcher Baba Badji presented a talk titled, “The Wolof is an African Language in Ghost Letters: Translation, Form, History and Black Lives Matter” that explores the processing of cultures, people, Négritude, and Blackness at (home and abroad) and how it is mediated using different tongues in his recently published poetry collection, *Ghost Letters* (2021) that was longlisted for the National Book Award.

Professor Badji works on the links between the various forms of postcolonial studies, theory, and practice, with a particular focus on debates about postcolonial translation theory and Négritude in Anglophone and Francophone cultures.

The talk rethinks Négritude to plot its relevance for the enduring Black struggles of today. It dwells for a moment about being a refugee from a little town in Senegal, and the self-discovery and journey from Africa to America at the age of eleven to reconnect with his biological father.

“I argue how in one sense, an African language in my poetry is my way of reaching out to my roots; and I claim that without the Wolof in it, the poem becomes what I call ‘a European poem or an American poem’. In another sense, without the Wolof in a poem that also does not have French, that poem strictly becomes what I call “a Westernized poem”. In turn, if what I call a “diasporic poem” or “a universal poem” must have Wolof, must have English, and must have French together, I maintain that the interventions in Ghost Letters offer generative tools that help me reimagine the identities I embody,” said Professor Badji who speaks English, French also fluent in Wolof, Manding, and Diola. Professor Badji discusses the foundation of his first book, Ghost Letters, the ‘first skeletons’ of how it evolved from 2013 to 2021.

Inspired by several iconic authors Toni Morrison, Paulette Nardal, Suzanne Césaire, Aimé Césaire, Abdoulaye Sadj, Léopold Sédar Senghor among several others, he traces the founders of Négritude and explores how they would think of blackness. He further explores the personal dimensions of the Négritude that debate across time and space, sharing his site of operations in three parts: shifting negritude across time and space; rethinking negritude to plot its relevance for the enduring Black struggles and lastly, translating negritude as a site of Blackness and Anti-Blackness.

The session was moderated by Binyam Sisay Mendisu, Associate Professor of African Languages and Linguistics, The Africa Institute.

PANDEMICS, EPISTEMIC COMMUNITIES AND AFRICAN FUTURES IN THE WORLD: DECOLONIZING THE DISCIPLINES

Wednesday, September 28, 2022

Faculty:

Ousseina D. Alidou, Professor Department of African, Middle Eastern and South Asian Languages and Literatures and the Graduate Program in Comparative Literature, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey, USA

In what seemed an endless health catastrophe all over the world, the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020 has imposed a global stillness and rethinking of the ethics of sharing the common world in an era of violence and racial reckoning, neoliberal extractive capitalism, climate vulnerability, mass refugees and migrants’ movements.

Throughout the COVID 19 pandemic to the present, the continent of Africa is still decrying vaccine inequity in the face of global north vaccine nationalism. However, since the outbreak, Africans are actively contributing to scientific and artistic innovations that need global highlighting against the under-reporting by hegemonic global north media broadcasting networks and significant contributions to the process of decolonizing fields of knowledge and their practical applications.

To further discuss this impact and change, The Africa Institute invited special guest Professor Ousseina D. Alidou, theoretical linguist, gender, and cultural critic to present her work as part of the Faculty Seminar Series on Wednesday, September 28, 2022.

The session was moderated by Jean Allman, Professor of History, The Africa Institute who opened the seminar appreciating how artists and creative people have helped us survive and thrive through the pandemic and the humble honor of hosting Professor Alidou at our enterprise to discuss African artists’ solidarity and creative output through it all.

Professor Alidou, Professor in the Department of African, Middle Eastern and South Asian Languages and Literatures and the Graduate Program in Comparative Literature at Rutgers University, New Brunswick specialises in the study of Muslim women in Africa. Her talk titled, “Pandemics, Epistemic Communities and African Futures in the World: Decolonizing the Disciplines,” examined the ways in which global local African artists mobilize non-hegemonic epistemological reasonings to shape a poetics of care and musical performances disseminated through digital mobile phones and other social media platforms during the COVID 19 pandemic period. The art produced speaks to marginalized rural and urban populations living in precarious material conditions because of the imposition of destructive neoliberal economic policies enabled by political elites.

“Their poetic narratives and performances are framed within an ethics of life affirmation that center on life saving messages that put into dialogue the biomedical, cosmological, and affective. By appropriating digital media space and radio and television broadcasting platforms and using dialogic multilingualism –inclusive of African languages and scripts – and code-switching as a lingua franca in their musical performances, the African global local artists once again contribute not only to the fight against a biomedical pandemic, but also to the struggle against other global pandemics of dispossession affecting African societies,” said Professor Alidou who serves as the President of African Studies Association (ASA).

In addition to her multiple roles, she is also a Senior Faculty Advisor to UNESCO BRENDA's Gender and Transformative Leadership Curriculum Design for African Universities and Civil Society and in the context of her talk, Professor Alidou appreciated UNESCO's efforts and partnership with African Hip Hop Artists.

She further shared that through critical literacy and artistic performances building on intercultural translations, the African global local artists are contributing to decolonizing the (public) health

disciplines and media studies in their representation of Africa's epistemic contributions to the epidemiological challenges faced by humanity in the 21st century.

With references to the work of late Nigerian author Tejumola Olaniyan and using data from popular culture including African cartoons that delve into themes of politics, satire and culture and youth artistic performances in Niger, Northern Nigeria, and the African Diasporas, Professor Alidou concluded her talk by examining the discursive alterity to and actions against neoliberal solutions to both the biomedical and social pandemics that African youth artists offer.

BARGHASH DISCOVERS EUROPE & EGYPT: THE REHLA OF SULTAN BARGHASH, 1875

Monday, October 17, 2022

Faculty:

Abdul Mohammed Hussein Sheriff, Ali A. Mazrui Senior Fellow in Global African Studies, The Africa Institute

“We are honored to have Professor Abdul Sheriff among us and as part of our inaugural cohort of Ali A. Mazrui Senior Fellows. We are grateful for his contributions to The Africa Institute through his mentorship and we have indeed learnt a lot during his time here,” said Salah M. Hassan, Director, The Africa Institute who moderated the session.

Abdul Sheriff was born and educated in Zanzibar and is among the founding fathers to contribute to the scholarly work about Zanzibar and the Indian Ocean rim. He taught history at the University of Dar es Salaam from 1969-1991, served as Advisor & Principal Curator of the Zanzibar Museums from 1993-2005, and as Executive Director of the Zanzibar Indian Ocean Research Institute from 2007 until 2012. He also served as Chairman and Member of the Presidential Committees on the State University of Zanzibar from 1995 until 2002, Chairman of the Zanzibar Constitutional Forum from 2012 until 2014, and Delegate to the Tanzanian Constituent Assembly in 2014.

“I came across this book while completing my doctoral research on the history of Zanzibar ‘The Arabic Rehla (travelogue) of Barghash’s visit to Europe in 1875’. It was edited and published in 1879 by a Syrian Rev. John Louis Sabunji, editor of an Arab nationalist magazine in London. However, it was in Arabic. Taking this fellowship felt like an opportunity was presented to me to translate the book into English during the course of my Ali A. Mazrui Fellowship at The Africa Institute, where I could edit and write a critical introduction,” said Professor Sheriff, who completed his Ph.D. from the School of Oriental & African Studies (SOAS), the University of London in 1971 and his bachelors and master’s degrees at the University of California in Los Angeles in 1966.

With his rich experience and exquisite storytelling, Professor Sheriff shared a comprehensive historical narrative of the visit of His Highness Sultan of Zanzibar to Europe.

In his talk, he further shared burning questions and reasons behind his own curiosity that triggered him to explore the visit of Sultan Barghash of Zanzibar, where it appears that he invited himself to England in 1885, soon after he was forced to sign a treaty to stop all slave trade in his territories.

The was also attended by Adil Babikir, translator of the book from Arabic to English among other faculty, fellows and staff.

Abdul Sheriff has published several books, including *Slaves, Spices & Ivory in Zanzibar* (1987), and *The Dhow Cultures of the Indian Ocean – Cosmopolitanism, Culture & Islam* (2010); edited *History & Conservation of Zanzibar Stone Town* (1995); and co-edited *Zanzibar Under Colonial Rule* (1991), *The Indian Ocean: Oceanic Connections & the Creation of New Societies* (2014), and *Transition from Slavery in Zanzibar & Mauritius*, (2017), as well numerous scholarly articles. His current research interests are on Zanzibar, the Swahili culture, and the Indian Ocean.

A NEW PERSPECTIVE ON THE COLLAPSE OF THE MEROITIC STATE 300 B.C - 350 A.D

Tuesday, October 18, 2022

Faculty:

Mohamed Faroug A. Ali, Okwui Enewzor Postdoctoral Fellow in Visual Culture, Performance Studies, and Critical Humanities, The Africa Institute and Assistant Professor of Archaeology, International University of Africa, Sudan

Given Professor Faroug’s rich experience and research interests that focus on the formation, political economy, collapse, and regeneration of ancient states in sub-Saharan Africa, his talk discusses concepts and assumptions that have emerged among scholars to address the collapse of the Meroitic state by the middle of the 4th century in light of new archaeological discoveries and first-hand investigation in the region.

“Meroitic state was established in Sudan in the middle Nile region and controlled the area between the second cataract and the modern city Khartoum. The rise of the state was followed by a series of cultural innovations that provided a platform for a significant new type of burial tradition, local cult, new official written language, and centralized production. It also involved investments to establish an infrastructure for political economy and the developing sociopolitical structure in the middle Nile region where they adapted local beliefs to elevate their social power,” said Professor Faroug.

Through the seminar’s discussion, Professor Faroug highlighted how collapse is a political process that often involves decline in different sectors of life, varying from economy through art and literature.

“The current understanding of the collapse of the Meroitic state in the fourth century A.D. is based on historical texts and the available archaeological data from Meroitic settlements and cemeteries, with

no consideration to the peripheries and how regional resources influenced Meroitic regional interconnections, and significantly shaped the Meroitic administrative system and political economy,” he adds.

Professor Faroug shared details about the evolutionary complexities of our societies, the process and reasons for collapse with relevant arguments, theories and findings.

Professor Faroug A. Ali completed his undergraduate school in Sudan at Dongola University and obtained his MA and Ph.D. degrees from the University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB). He is the co-founder and the CEO of the American Sudanese Archaeological Research Center (AmSARC) and he also serves as the Executive Director of the Sudanese Archaeologists Union.

The session was moderated by Rachel Ama Asaa Engmann, Associate Professor of Archaeology and Anthropology, The Africa Institute, Sharjha.

ADVANCING DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

Tuesday, October 18, 2022

Faculty:

Sataan Al Hassan, Associate Director of Administration & Operations and Sherif Nour, Head of IT & Academic Computing, The Africa Institute

The Africa Institute representatives namely Sataan Al Hassan, Associate Director of Administration & Operations and Sherif Nour, Head of IT & Academic Computing were invited to speak at a conference panel on “Advancing Digital Transformation” at the Anthology Together Middle East 22 (ATME22) on October 18, 2022, at Dubai Conrad Hotel, Sheikh Zayed, Road.

The conference was organized by Anthology, one of the world leaders & a joint merger between Anthology & Blackboard, providing a wide campus management and educational technology solutions such as Student Information Systems, Academic ERP, and Learning Management Systems.

This year’s edition of Anthology Together Middle East invited education professionals and organized a dynamic program featuring keynotes by industry thought leaders, peer-driven discussions, best practices sharing, and a variety of networking opportunities.

Sherif Nour shared perspectives on The Africa Institute’s experience with the solutions such as Student Information System & Blackboard Learning Management System along with its goals and best practices as an upcoming educational institution in the region.

Whereas Sataan Al Hassan shared insights on how technology is synced with the key pillars of The Africa Institute namely: Teaching, Learning, and Administration, and details of the Institute’s history, mission, vision, and recent developments.

The panel also discussed key issues and trends in EdTech that drives innovation now and in the future. was moderated by Rob Sparks, Senior Vice President, Corporate Development and Partnerships, Anthology, and also included co-panelist Mohammad Khanfar, Chief Technology Officer, Luminus Education Group.

ISLAMIC SLAVE TRADE OR SLAVERY IN ISLAMIC SOCIETIES?

Tuesday, November 1, 2022

Faculty:

Abdul Mohammed Hussein Sheriff, Ali A. Mazrui Senior Fellow in Global African Studies, The Africa Institute

Professor Sheriff's presentation discusses how slavery has been a widespread phenomenon in human history, but they were not predominantly dependent on slave labor to be described as a slave model. "There has been a tendency to equate the so-called 'Islamic slavery' over 14 centuries, which was associated with a great variety of societies at different levels of development, that can hardly be described as a single mode, with the Atlantic Slavery that lasted over two centuries at the 'rosy dawn of the capitalist mode of production,'" said Professor Sheriff who completed his Ph.D. from the School of Oriental & African Studies (SOAS), the University of London in 1971.

Apart from answering the question 'Islamic Slavery or Slavery in Muslim Societies' presented today, Professor Sheriff felt that it was necessary to analyze exactly what can be described as 'Islamic slavery' during the time of the Prophet.

"I felt it was necessary to describe the kind of society that had developed in Mecca & Medina. I concluded that it was largely a tribal society that was undergoing a transformation because of long-distance trade passing through Mecca between Syria and Yemen in one direction, and Ethiopia and Iran in the other. It was a society that was undergoing social transformation, a society of merchants and oasis farmers in which there were some slaves derived from the traditional tribal skirmishes, but it was not a slave society whose entire economy depended on slave labor. This led me to a detailed analysis of references in the Quran and the Hadith (Traditions) to define what kind of slavery existed in Mecca and Medina at that time. My discoveries surprised even myself," he said.

Professor Sheriff shared that his research agenda is divided into three key parts, firstly, to define the character of slavery during the time of the Prophet by studying the political economy of Arabia, largely based on the authentic sources of the Quran and the Hadiths; secondly, to study the genesis of economic history and; lastly, analyze what residual effect and extent the Islamic ethic has set up in the Quran and Hadith had any influence on the treatment of slaves, and the assimilation that Ali Mazrui is talking about.

NENO HUZALIWA: SWAHILI LITERATURE'S DISRUPTIVE FORMS

Wednesday, November 2, 2022

Faculty:

Meg Arenberg, Postdoctoral Research Fellow in the African, Middle Eastern, and South Asian Languages and Literatures Department (AMESALL), Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey, USA

Professor Arenberg is a scholar of 20th and 21st-century African literature and a literary translator from Kiswahili to English.

In this conversation, Professor Arenberg delves into details discussing the literature writings of Swahili playwright Ebrahim Hussein and anglophone novelist M.G. Vassanji, and how the reading strategy pays closer attention to how authors set their use of African language in relation to received conventions – be it to deploy, manipulate or disrupt dominant structures of social and political relation.

Quoting acclaimed author Chinua Achebe who famously wrote, "I feel that the English language will be able to carry the weight of my African experience. But it will have to be a new English," Professor Arenberg shares how this sentiment, written in response to heated debates over language in the writing of African literature, proves to be a precursor to a recurrent theme in criticism of African literature and of postcolonial literature.

“The capacity for postcolonial authors to disrupt and creatively transform the languages and genres of their former colonizers has been variously called abrogation, appropriation, and even indigenization,” shares Professor Arenberg who goes on to emphasize how framing, often presented through the lens of translation theory, has been integral to understanding the use of African languages and expressive forms to destabilize and reimagine European genres.

“This has trained critics of African literature to look for textual contact between African and Western traditions as sites of social and political intervention. However, these framings also have the capacity to obscure subtler manipulations of those ostensibly stable African expressive forms themselves, within both Europhone and Afrophone texts,” she adds.

Professor Arenberg’s work has been published in *Research in African Literatures*, *East African Literary and Cultural Studies*, *Postcolonial Text*, and *Words Without Borders* and has won recognition from the American Comparative Literature Association and the American Literary Translators Association.

The session was moderated by Binyam Sisay Mendisu, Associate Professor of the African Languages and Linguistics, The Africa Institute.

THE FIGURE OF THE VANGUARD IN THE ETHIOPIAN REVOLUTION: A HISTORIOGRAPHICAL CRITIQUE

Tuesday, November 8, 2022

Faculty:

Semeneh Ayalew Asfaw, Fatema Mernissi Postdoctoral Fellowship in Social and Cultural Studies, The Africa Institute; Lecturer and Researcher, Institute of Ethiopian Studies, Addis Ababa University

The session was moderated by Professor Elizabeth Giorgis, Associate Professor of Art History, Theory & Criticism, The Africa Institute, who further probed the discussion to explore the impact of depicting the university educated as forgers and “purveyors” of social change and radical politics also has the effect of downplaying the place that the radicalization and formation of other social groups and classes who participated in the popular protest movement of 1974.

“By assigning university students as the chief agents of revolution and influencers of social action the historiography explains militancy as a preserve of the educated, while it consigns other social groups either as followers or their actions as subordinate to the truly revolutionary actions of vanguard groups. In my research, I argue, a critique of the history of Ethiopian Student Movement is much needed for a more nuanced understanding of the Ethiopian revolution that goes beyond this dominant vanguardist narrative,” said Professor Asfaw whose research and publications cover themes ranging from social and cultural history, political consciousness, revolutionary terminology, youth subject formation, city making, and urbanism in 20th-century Ethiopia.

He concludes by suggesting an alternative, “A systematic study of the actions demands and concerns of the majority participants of the social protests of 1974, along with the processes that led to the radicalization of the variously situated youth in the years before 1974, would provide a more comprehensive and nuanced history of the Ethiopian revolution.”

As a fellow at The Africa Institute, Professor Asfaw plans to further his research on the relationship between cultural processes and subject formation. By examining social and cultural formations of everyday youth in Addis Ababa between the 1950s and 1974, as well as by mobilizing “archives”, such as musical and literary documents, hitherto unexplored in the study of the history of political militancy, his work seeks to reframe accounts of the Ethiopian Revolution by going beyond the study of student activism.

ANALYZING VISUALITY OUTSIDE HEGEMONIC EUROCENTRIC THEMES: THE EXAMPLE OF MOHAMMED RACIM

Thursday, November 9, 2022

Faculty:

William Gallois, Professor of the History of the Mediterranean Islamicate World at the Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies, University of Exeter

Professor Gallois discussed some of the themes presented in Professor Giorgis’s award-winning book titled, ‘Modernist Art in Ethiopia’. In her groundbreaking study of ‘Modernist Art in Ethiopia’, Elizabeth Giorgis addresses the difficulty entailed in “analyzing visuality outside Eurocentric themes.” This analytic, she notes, is further complicated by how “haughty” and “lofty” aesthetic expectations of western audiences and critics may not tally with the ways in which Southern visual texts “participate” in the lives of their audiences.

Using this frame of thought, as well as the work of Rowland Abiodun and recent anthropological studies of artmaking, Professor Gallois presents the work of the Algerian artist Mohammed Racim (1896-1975 C.E.) as an exemplary guide towards a terrain in which visuality can be analyzed “outside hegemonic Eurocentric themes.”

Starting from the premise that Racim should be viewed as a teacher as much as an object or subject of study, Professor Gallois’s research introduces both Racim’s small oeuvre of painterly works and a hitherto unknown body of unsigned chromolithographs, prints and commercial illustrations which circulated widely amongst Algerian and north African audiences in the colonial period. He concludes his research by exploring the ways this body of art ought not to be incorporated into enriching narratives of global modernisms and multiple modernities but instead can be seen as entry points paving a new critical path.

The seminar was moderated by Professor Elizabeth Giorgis, Associate Professor of Art History, Theory & Criticism, The Africa Institute.

ELITE DEMOCRACY IN AFRICA: MEANING AND PROBLEMS

Tuesday, December 6, 2022

Faculty:

Abdourahmane Idrissa, the Ali A. Mazrui Senior Fellow in Global African Studies, The Africa Institute; Senior Researcher, Leiden University’s African Studies Centre

Professor Idrissa is a political scientist with a strong interest in history and political economy. He obtained his doctorate at the University of Florida following research work on democratization and political Islam in the Sahel before developing expertise in the political economy of development during a two-year post-doctorate at the University of Oxford and Princeton University. He is currently a senior researcher at Leiden University’s African Studies Centre.

This lecture aimed to explore African democratization by building on research conducted in the context of the Sahel countries, especially Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger. It raised the question of the meaning of representative democracy in Africa.

“I wanted to describe how representation fails to work in Africa’s (or the Sahel’s) plural societies and complex political economies – moreover shorn of capitalist development. It also ponders some of the implications and dire consequences of this state of affairs,” said Professor Idrissa.

As a fellow at The Africa Institute, Idrissa is working on a book about the Songhay Empire and the significant changes that have occurred on the global stage during its century of existence, the pivotal sixteenth century. The book is under contract with publishers Allen Lane and Penguin Books.

The session was moderated by Professor Salah M. Hassan, Director of The Africa Institute who took questions from the attending faculty as well as senior and post-doctoral fellows.

UNREASONABLE COLLECTIVITY

Wednesday, December 14, 2022

Faculty:

Elizabeth W. Giorgis, Associate Professor of Theory and Criticism,
The Africa Institute

The Africa Institute’s Associate Professor of Theory and Criticism, Elizabeth W. Giorgis shared her insights at a panel on “Unreasonable Collectivity” organized by Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, Depot – Kunst on December 14, 2022.

“Unreasonable Collectivity” discussed how in many oppressive states like Ethiopia, any form of coming together is considered a threat to the system, which has developed endless ways to weaken and dismantle collectivities. Under such conditions, facilitating ways of coming together is crucial to work individually–collectively; it is a response and a form of refusal.

Professor Elizabeth, author of award-winning book, *Modernist Art in Ethiopia* will contribute to this vital conversation that focuses on the background and entangled activities of Gaze Collective, an artist-run collective initiated by four Ethiopian artists in February 2020. The collective is formed with an emphasis on informality and temporality, exploring possibilities of coming together as professional and political beings.

The panel facilitated a discussion with doctoral candidates, Berhanu Ashagrie Deribew, Ph.D. candidate, Academy of Fine Arts Vienna and Robel Temesgen Bizuayehu, Ph.D. candidate, Oslo National Academy of the Arts.

The session was coordinated by the faculty of the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna: Renate Lorenz, Professor of Art and Research, and Anette Baldauf, Professor of Epistemology and Methodology.

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENTS

AFRICAN LANGUAGES AND TRANSLATION PROGRAM HOSTS HYBRID WORKSHOP TO REVIEW GROUNDWORK AND EXCHANGE BEST PRACTICES

The Africa Institute, Sharjah, UAE, is an interdisciplinary academic research institute dedicated to the study, research, and documentation of Africa and the African diaspora. The Institute is currently in the process of establishing its programs including a robust and dynamic African Languages and Translation (ALT) Program.

As part of its preparation to launch the teaching of selected African languages, the Institute organized a two-day hybrid workshop titled, “Teaching of African Languages and their Contribution to the Study of Africa” on May 25-26, 2022, in Sharjah, UAE inviting colleagues from partner institutions to review the groundwork the Institute has achieved so far to launch the teaching of selected African languages and the documents prepared to support it.

Salah M. Hassan, Director of The Africa Institute, opened the session welcoming the faculty and partners for the workshop. “This workshop not only reviews the progress but also aims to learn from the best experiences and challenges of partner institutions regarding the teaching of African languages and to strengthen partnership among the participants and their institutions for future collaborations in language teaching resource development and joint projects.”

The session was led by Binyam Sisay Mendisu, Associate Professor of African Languages and Linguistics, The Africa Institute who presented “The African Languages and Translation Program at The Africa Institute and its Preparations”.

“It’s so important to gain a deeper understanding of societies in Africa and beyond through facilitating the knowledge of languages. In this endeavour, The Africa Institute commits to teach selected African languages as part of its graduate curriculum by way of preparing the next generation of critical thinkers in the areas of humanities and social sciences,” said Professor Mendisu.

Kazeem Sanuth, Associate Director of The National African Language Resource Centre (NALRC), Indiana University Bloomington shared best practices in his presentation, “The Pedagogy of African Languages in US Universities: the case of Yoruba” followed by Munther A. Younes, Reis Senior Lecturer of Arabic Language and Linguistics, Cornell University who presented his insights on, “Arabic Language Variation and its Consequences”.

The second day, May 26, 2022, opened with Aliyu Mustapha Lawal, Lecturer of Hausa and Arabic Languages at The Africa Institute who shared, “The Teaching of Hausa as a Foreign Language”. Aldin Mutembei, Mwl. Julius Nyerere Professor in Kiswahili Studies, Institute of Kiswahili Studies at University of Dar es Salaam shared the teaching practices of Swahili, also known by its native name Kiswahili in a presentation titled, “Kiswahili Language teaching and its Status as the African Lingua Franca”.

This was followed with a presentation on “*Reflections on Teaching of Amharic as a Foreign Language at Universities*” by Ronny Meyer, Associate Professor, INALCO-International Institute for Oriental Language and Civilization & Dr. Binyam Sisay Mendisu, Associate Professor of African Languages and Linguistics, The Africa Institute.

Binyam Sisay Mendisu concluded the session with a closing note, vote of thanks and way forward.

Special thanks to moderators for the workshop: Sataan Al-Hassan, Associate Director of The Africa Institute; Naminata Diabate, Associate Professor of Comparative Literature, Cornell University and Senior Fellow, The Africa Institute; Surafel Wondimu Abebe, Assistant Professor of Performance Studies and Theory, The Africa Institute.



Left to Right: Participants of the two-day hybrid workshop, Teaching of African Languages and their Contribution to the Study of Africa: Naminata Diabate, Surafel Wondimu Abebe, Binyam Sisay Mendisu, Aliyu Mustapha Lawan and Munther A. Younes.

SUCCESSFUL PILOT LAUNCH OF FOUR BEGINNER LANGUAGES COURSES AT THE AFRICA INSTITUTE

The Africa Institute's African Languages and Translation program successfully executes its pilot five-week-long language courses for beginners.

Being an interdisciplinary academic research institute, The Africa Institute is dedicated to the study, research, and documentation of Africa and the African diaspora. The Institute is working to establish its programs that will include a robust and dynamic African Languages and Translation (ALT) Program.

"We share a lot in our history, and language is one medium that binds us together. The Africa Institute Languages program builds its curriculum to teach selected African languages, encouraging learners to fall in love with the process of learning a new language as well as facilitates a platform to better understand each other and our culture," said Binyam Sisay Mendisu, Associate Professor of African Languages and Linguistics, The Africa Institute.

Starting earlier this November 2022, the ongoing program features selected languages, namely **Arabic, Amharic, Kiswahili, and Hausa**, that were made available to a preliminary group of over 25 participants. Each language program was dedicated to 15 hours of coursework.

The program comprises two levels of **Arabic**; Arabic I and Arabic II, designed for beginner and intermediate levels respectively. Arabic is a Semitic language of the Afro-Asiatic language family that is spoken by more than 300 million people. Moreover, it is the official language of several countries in the Arab world and Africa. Arabic was taught by Dr. Munther A. Younes & Dr. Bilal Al-Omar from Akadimiyyat Arabiyyat al-Naas.

The second language taught was **Kiswahili** (Swahili), a Bantu language of the Niger-Congo family and it is estimated to have close to 50 million speakers in East and Central Africa, including Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, DRC Congo, and a few others. Kiswahili is one of the official languages of the African Union (AU). The language also has official status in several countries in the Eastern and Central Africa region including Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda and Rwanda. The development of Kiswahili as a lingua franca in the region is closely related to its history of starting as a trade language in the coastal areas of the Eastern Africa region and gradually expanding its vocabulary through borrowing from Arabic and elevating its status as a language of wider communication. The comprehensive 15-hour course was taught by Professor Aldin Mutembei, Institute for Kiswahili Studies at the University of Dar es Salaam.

The third language offered was **Amharic**, a Semitic language of the Afro-Asiatic language family spoken in Ethiopia by over 40 million people. Amharic is one of the working languages of the federal government and a major lingua franca in Ethiopia spoken in different regions of the country either as a first or second language. Amharic uses the Ethiopic writing system that is mainly syllabic in nature, and it includes 256 letters. The course was taught by Binyam Sisay Mendisu, Associate Professor of African Languages and Linguistics, The Africa Institute.

The fourth language was West Africa's most widely spoken language, **Hausa**. It has more than fifty million native speakers and about fifteen million non-native speakers. Hausa is mainly spoken in northern Nigeria, the Republic of Niger, northern Cameroon, and Ghana. It is also used as a trade language in West African capital cities, in some parts of Chad and Sudan, and in the north and equatorial Africa. There are also significant Hausa-speaking diasporic communities in Sudan and Saudi Arabia, and new ones are already in the making in the United States and Europe. The Hausa writing tradition goes back to the Middle Ages when the Ajami (Hausa in Arabic script) literacy was developed through the Arab-Islamic school. Hausa is also written in the Roman alphabet, which is mainly used today to teach the language. The program was taught by Aliyu Mustapha Lawal, Lecturer, African Languages and Translation, The Africa Institute.

“This was a good opportunity for the program to run different courses in different modalities (online, face-to-face and hybrid) and it took stock of the learnings from the pilot stage to improve its programing and delivery,” added Professor Mendisu.

FELLOWSHIPS

THE AFRICA INSTITUTE SHARJAH LAUNCHES NEW LITERATURE AND CULTURAL STUDIES FELLOWSHIP IN HONOR OF LATE LITERARY ICON TONI MORRISON



The Toni Morrison Senior Fellowship in African Diaspora Literature and Cultural Studies is proudly established by The Africa Institute in honor of the late Toni Morrison, an acclaimed literary icon known as the first African American woman to win the Nobel Prize in literature.

This is the second Senior Fellowship awarded through The Africa Institute's Research Fellowships Program aimed at welcoming applications from senior scholars of African and African diaspora literature and culture.

The one-year residency program based in Sharjah is a milestone addition to the Institute's Research Fellowships Program dedicated to studying Africa and its diaspora in the humanities and social sciences. It aims to facilitate an impactful opportunity for junior and senior scholars to contribute, enrich and participate in this scholarly and intellectual pursuit.

Launched in 2021, The Africa Institute inaugurated its first senior fellowship named in honor of the esteemed professor of African studies Ali A. Mazrui as well as two postdoctoral fellowships named after scholar and art critic Okwui Enwezor and for world-renowned Moroccan scholar Fatema Mernissi.

About Toni Morrison

Toni Morrison (1931-2019) was a prolific woman of letters whose contributions to world literature, the humanities, and the understanding of the African American experience, expands beyond her novels and into incisive texts in cultural studies and critical theory. By all measures, Toni Morrison is one of the most important thinkers of our time.

Being the first African American woman to win the 1993 Nobel Prize in Literature, Morrison made her debut as a novelist in 1970 and soon after gained the attention of both critics and readers for her rich, powerful depictions of Black life, the supernatural, folklore, identity, friendship and themes of womanhood. Read by millions, her unique voice encouraged individuals and entire nations to contextually imagine the black experience through powerful lyrical prose that continues to inspire old and new artists alike.

With an instructive mastery of the written word, she authored eleven novels, including *Song of Solomon*, which received the National Book Critics Circle Award in 1977, and *Beloved*, which won the Pulitzer Prize in 1988. Among her other works are *The Bluest Eye*, *Sula*, *Tar Baby*, *Jazz and Paradise*, as well as children's books, plays, and the essay collections *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination* (2007) and *The Source of Self-Regard: Selected Essays, Speeches, and Meditations* (2019).

Morrison attended Howard University graduating with a BA in English in 1953, and Cornell University where she earned an MA in 1955. After graduation, she began a career that ranged from serving as a senior editor at Random House for nearly two decades to an academic career that included Texas Southern, Howard, Yale, and Princeton University, where she held the Robert F. Goheen Chair in the Humanities from 1989 until 2006 when she became professor emeritus. She held numerous lectureships and academic chairs at universities across the U.S. and Europe and was honored with many honorary doctorates. Among the many prestigious accolades, Morrison was awarded Officer of the French Legion of Honour (2010), The U.S. Presidential Medal of Freedom (2012), the American Academy of Arts and Letters' highest honor for excellence in the arts, the Gold Medal for Fiction (2019) among many others. Moreover, in the fall of 2019, the U.S. Senate passed a resolution honoring Morrison's life and work and legacy and the state of Ohio officially designated her birthday, February 18th, as "Toni Morrison Day" to be celebrated annually.

As a tribute to her life and career her son, Ford Morrison, produced the film *The Foreigner's Home* (2018), which explores Morrison's artistic and intellectual vision through "The Foreigner's Home," her 2006 curated exhibition at the Louvre. Using exclusive footage of Morrison in dialogue with artists, along with extensive archival footage, music, and animation, the film presents a series of incisive exchanges about race, identity, foreignness, and art's redemptive power. The film is based on writings by Toni Morrison and conversations with Edwidge Danticat.

POST-DOCTORAL AND SENIOR RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS PROGRAM

The Africa Institute makes an annual call for applications for applications to its program of four fellowships: two senior fellowships named in honor of the late **Toni Morrison**, the acclaimed literary icon, novelist, theorist, and late professor of African studies, **Ali A. Mazrui**, and two postdoctoral fellowships named in honor of late scholar and art critic **Okwui Enwezor**, and world-renowned Moroccan scholar **Fatema Mernissi**.

The Africa Institute Research Fellowships Program provides the opportunity for both senior and junior scholars of African and African diaspora studies to focus on a research project and participate in ongoing scholarly and intellectual activities during their residency at the Institute.

Browse through our website for application, eligibility criteria and deadlines.

The Africa Institute's faculty will review all applications. Recipients will be chosen based on the proposal's quality, and the applicant's demonstrated capacity to complete the project.

Application and Eligibility Criteria:

- The applicant for the Post-doctoral Fellowships must hold a Ph.D. awarded within the last five years.
- The Senior Fellowships are open to scholars who are at the associate professor or full professor levels, or their equivalents within or outside the academy.
- Applications should include a CV and cover letter indicating the proposed research project, in addition to two published or unpublished writing samples.

The proposal must be submitted in English and emailed to:

applications@theafricainstitute.org with the subject line indicating "Name of the respective Fellowship" you are applying to:

- Toni Morrison Senior Fellowship in African Diaspora Literature and Cultural Studies
- Ali A. Mazrui Senior Fellowship in Global African Studies
- Okwui Enwezor Postdoctoral Fellowship in Visual Culture, Performance Studies, and Critical Humanities
- Fatema Mernissi Postdoctoral Fellowship in Social and Cultural Studies

The awardees for the 2021 Senior and Post-doctoral fellows are:

Ali A. Marzui Senior Fellows in Global African Studies



Naminata Diabate

Naminata Diabate is an Associate Professor of Comparative Literature at Cornell University. She is a member of the core faculty in Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies (FGSS), and affiliated faculty in the Department of Literatures in English; Romance Studies; Africana Studies and Research Center (ASRC); Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Studies (LGBT); Performing and Media Arts (PMA); and Visual Studies. Diabate holds a PhD in Comparative Literature with dual concentrations in African Diaspora Studies and Women's and Gender Studies from the University at Texas at Austin (2011).

A scholar of African and African diaspora studies and sexuality and gender studies with linguistic expertise in Malinké, French, English, Nouchi, Spanish, and Latin, her work seeks to redefine how we understand specific forms of embodied agency in the neoliberal present in global Africa. Diabate engages multiple sites, including novels of 20th and 21st centuries, online and social media, pictorial arts, film, journalism, and oral traditions from Africa, black America, Afro-Hispanic America, and the French Antilles. Her most recent provocations of defiant disrobing, erotic pleasure, and the impact of Internet media on queerness have appeared in her book, *Naked Agency: Genital Cursing and Biopolitics in Africa* (Duke University Press, 2020), peer-reviewed journals, and collections of essays, such as *African Studies Review* (ASR), *Journal of the African Literature Association* (JALA), *Nka: Journal of Contemporary African Art*, *Research in African Literatures* (RAL), *African Literature Today* (ALT), *Interventions*, *Routledge Handbook of African Literature*, and *Fieldwork in the Humanities*. Her book, *Naked Agency*, was awarded the African Studies Association (ASA) 2021 Best Book Prize and the African Literature Association (ALA) 2022 First Book Award.

In addition to her interventions in the conventional academic channels, Diabate contributes regularly to several media outlets, including newspapers, women's magazines, and



Ahmad Sikainga

podcasts. Recently, she appeared in NBC News, BBC's the Comb, PBS's Academic Minute, The New Books in Women's History podcast, and the South African Podcast series, Sound Africa, and wrote for the women's magazine *Voix/Voie de Femme* in Côte d'Ivoire. Diabate's forthcoming work will appear in *The Journal of the African Literature Association* (JALA) and two edited volumes, *New Visions in African and African Diaspora Studies* and *The Archive in African Literature 1800-2000*. Currently, she is working on two monographs, "The Problem of Pleasure in Global Africa" and "Digital Insurgencies and Bodily Domains".

Ahmad Sikainga is a Professor of African History at the Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio, USA. His academic interests embrace the study of Africa, the African Diaspora, and the Middle East with a focus on slavery, labor, urban history, and popular culture. The geographical focus of Sikainga's research is the Sudan, the Nile Valley, North Africa, and the Persian Gulf.

His publications include: *Sudan Defense Force: Origin and Role, 1925-1955* (1983), *Western Bahr al-Ghazal under British Rule, 1898-1956* (1991), *Slaves into Workers: Emancipation and Labor in Colonial Sudan* (1996), *City of Steel and Fire: A Social History of Atbara, Sudan's Railway Town, 1906-1984* (2002). He co-edited *Africa and World War II* (Cambridge, 2015), *Post-conflict Reconstruction in Africa* (2006), and *Civil War in the Sudan, 1983-1989* (1993). In addition, Sikainga has published dozens of articles and book chapters. His research was supported by fellowships and grants from such institutions as the Andrew Mellon Fellowship at Harvard University, National Endowment for the Humanities, the American Council of Learned Societies, the American Philosophical Society, the J. William Fulbright program, and the Social Science Research Council, just to name a few. Sikainga is currently working on two book projects: *Free and Unfree Labor in a Changing Economy: Slavery, Oil, and Wage Labor in Qatar* examines the link between slavery, the oil industry, and wage labor in Qatar from the late nineteenth to mid-twentieth centuries, and *Slavery, Ethnicity. The second projected, titled Identity, and the Development of Popular Culture in Contemporary Sudan* explores the role of former slaves, their descendants, immigrants, and other subaltern groups in the development of distinct styles of music, dance, and fashion that have shaped Sudanese urban popular culture.



Abdul Sheriff

Abdul Sheriff was born and educated in Zanzibar, and completed his bachelors and master's degrees at the University of California in Los Angeles in 1966. He went on to receive his PhD from the School of Oriental & African Studies (SOAS), University of London in 1971.

He taught history at the University of Dar es Salaam from 1969-1991, served as Advisor & Principal Curator of the Zanzibar Museums from 1993-2005, and as Executive Director of the Zanzibar Indian Ocean Research Institute from 2007 until 2012. He also served as Chairman and Member of the Presidential Committees on the State University of Zanzibar from 1995 until 2002, and Chairman of the Zanzibar Constitutional Forum from 2012 until 2014 and Delegate to the Tanzanian Constituent Assembly in 2014.

Sheriff has published several books, including *Slaves, Spices & Ivory in Zanzibar* (1987), and *The Dhow Cultures of the Indian Ocean - Cosmopolitanism, Culture & Islam* (2010); edited *History & Conservation of Zanzibar Stone Town* (1995); and co-edited *Zanzibar Under Colonial Rule* (1991), *The Indian Ocean: Oceanic Connections & the Creation of New Societies* (2014), and *Transition from Slavery in Zanzibar & Mauritius*, (2017), as well numerous scholarly articles. His current research interests are on Zanzibar, the Swahili culture, and the Indian Ocean.

Fatema Mernissi Postdoctoral Fellow in Social and Cultural Studies



Netsanet Gebremichael

Netsanet Gebremichael earned her Ph.D. in Interdisciplinary Social Studies from Makerere Institute of Social Research, Makerere University Uganda in 2019. She currently works as an Assistant Professor and researcher at Addis Ababa University's Institute of Ethiopian Studies. Since October 2021, she has also been a Fatima Mernissi Post-Doctoral Fellow at The Africa Institute in Sharjah, United Arab Emirates. From April 2010 to November 2012, Gebremichael served as the Director of Addis Ababa University's Gender Office, where she initiated several projects, including a Gender Resource Center IT lab and a library for disadvantaged students.

Gebremichael's academic research focuses on memory, archival studies, historical and cultural documentation practices, particularly through oral history projects. Recently, she completed the first phase of documentation on oral recollections of the 1977 Famine in Ethiopia as experienced by women. She also compiled a monograph based on an oral history study of inter-generational perspectives on Emperor Haileselassie's era. Her works also include documentation on Women in the Ethiopian Student Movement (1950-78), which she conducted as the recipient of the Global Research Network Grant managed by SOAS University of London (2019-2021). Gebremichael's research outcome led to an archival exhibition titled *Kibibilosh*, which she curated at the Modern Art Museum, Gebre Kristos Desta Center in Addis Ababa (7 May - 28 July 2021).

She has published several academic articles, including *"Mapping the notion of the transnational: A close reading of the 'Women's Question' from the Ethiopian Student Movement's publications in the 1960s and 1970s"* (2023); A book chapter, *"PPPs meet the developmental state: The case of Ethiopia,"* in book, *Corporate Capture of Development* (Bloomsbury Publishing, 2023) which has been adapted into a podcast and an animation film; *"Oral Memories of the 1977 Famine in Ethiopia"* in *Transition*, Issue 133 (2022); *"Ambivalent Memories of Imperial legacies: Asmara as 'Beautiful' and 'Segregationist' from Ethiopia,"* published in the *Journal of Cultural Studies* (2020); and *"Travel Writing as an Empirical Mode of Knowing: A Methodological Critique of James Bruce's Travels and Adventures in Abyssinia,"* published in *MISR Review* (2019).

She joined as a Postdoctoral Fellow in 2021, working on a book manuscript titled *Tizita's Path to Reckoning: Reminiscing*

GLOBAL AFRICA TRANSLATION FELLOWSHIP

The African Languages and Translation Program welcomes applications from across the Global South for a grant of up to \$5,000 to complete translations of works from the African continent and its diaspora, into English or Arabic. This is a non-residential fellowship that allows the recipient scholar to complete the work outside of The Africa Institute (Sharjah, UAE). The aim of the fellowship is to make important texts in African and African Diaspora studies accessible to a wider readership across the world.

The fellowship provides funding in the range of \$1,000 to \$5,000, depending on the quality and breadth of the project. Selected projects may be retranslations of old, classic texts, previously untranslated works, poetry, prose, or critical theory collections. The project may be a work-in-progress, or a new project feasible for completion within the timeframe of the grant.

All applications will be reviewed by The Africa Institute's faculty and research fellows. Recipients will be chosen based on the quality of the proposal, and the demonstrated capacity of the applicant to complete the project.

Applications must include:

- A two-page CV/résumé including institutional affiliation, educational qualifications, including highest degree received, and key publications/works produced.
- A two-page narrative explaining the translation to be undertaken during the fellowship period, an explanation of the importance of the work, a justification for a re-translation, if applicable, and proposed dates of completion. The project may be a work-in-progress or a new project that fits within the timeframe of the grant.
- A 4–5-page (double-spaced) sample of the original text(s) and translation.
- An explanation of the work's copyright status: If the work is not in the public domain, please include a copy of the copyright notice from the original text, and a letter from the copyright holder stating that English language rights to the work are available.

An explanation of the work's copyright status: If the work is not in the public domain, please include a copy of the copyright notice from the original text, and a letter from the copyright holder stating that English language rights to the work are available.

Submitted applications must include a statement, sample, copyright status (if applicable), and CV, in that order into a single PDF file. Name the file with the applicant's name in this format: LASTNAME-FIRSTNAME.pdf. Use the same name in the email subject heading LASTNAME-FIRSTNAME application and send PDF as an email attachment to translation@theafricainstitute.org.

The awardees for the 2021 The Global Africa Translation Fellowship are:



Hussein El Hajj

Hussein El Hajj, for the translation of author Salma Khalil's unpublished book *Where Will We Go in Winter?* – an anthology of young Arabs' personal reflections on their experiences of diaspora and exile since the 'Arab Spring' uprisings of 2011 – from English into Arabic.

Hussein El Hajj, is an Egyptian translator and editor who has produced numerous publications, including an Arabic poetry collection, *Tuyuf / Spectres* (Yadawia for handmade books, 2015), and the translations (from English into Arabic) of *A User's Guide to Demanding the Impossible* by Gavin Grindon and John Jordan, (Yadawia for handmade books, 2018) and two online anthologies (2018) on alternative higher education in association with CILAS: *On the Emergence of Pigeon Towers* and a collection of collaborative student translations, *Education as Translation*.



Margaux Fitoussi

Margaux Fitoussi, to translate *Waiting for Omar Gatlato*, written in French by Wassyla Tamzali and published in 1979, into English. *Waiting for Omar Gatlato* is an early sourcebook on Algerian and Tunisian experimental cinema from the end of the 1960s through the late 1970s. The monograph is split into two parts – "A Look at Algerian Cinema" and "A Fragmentary Introduction to Tunisian Cinema" – and includes film analysis, stills, shooting notes, production documentation, and interviews with individual filmmakers.

Margaux Fitoussi, is currently working on her Ph.D. at Columbia University, where she is studying "the shift in politics and political consciousness as reflected in visual culture in post-revolutionary Tunisia". In addition to her Harvard Divinity School coursework, Fitoussi has studied Arabic, anthropology, and history with a North African focus – cross-registrations that allowed her to "play in the best way possible academically".



Nathalie Handal

Nathalie Handal, for translation and editing of *Récitatif au pays des ombres, Recitatif in the Country of Shadows* from French (with some Creole) into English.

Nathalie Handal, is a poet, playwright, nonfiction, and literary travel writer. Handal is the editor of the groundbreaking classic *The Poetry of Arab Women: A Contemporary Anthology*, winner of the PEN Oakland Josephine Miles Book Award, and named one of the top 10 Feminist Books by The Guardian; and co-editor of the W.W. Norton landmark anthology *Language for a New Century: Contemporary Poetry from the Middle East, Asia & Beyond*, both Academy of American Poets bestsellers. She is the author of seven prize-winning collections, most recently *Life in A Country Album*, winner of the 2020 Palestine Book Award; and *The Republics*, winner of the Arab American Book Award. Handal's work has been translated into over 15 languages. She is a professor at New York University-AD, and writes the literary travel column, *The City and the Writer* for *Words without Borders*.



Salma Khalil

Salma Khalil, for the translation of Coptic-Egyptian author Shady Lewis's third novel *A Brief History of Genesis and East Cairo*, published by Dar al-Ein in 2021, from Arabic into English. To learn more about the Global Africa Translation Fellowship Program and the application process, visit [here](#).

Salma Khalil, completed her Master of Science degree in cultural and social anthropology at the University of Amsterdam, and her career has been guided by her passion for knowledge production and sharing. She seeks to contribute to the production and sharing of knowledge on social equality and welfare, with a specific focus on knowledge gathered from the most impacted on the ground, as well as the use of knowledge in specific relation to policy, academic research, social and civil society work.

TEJUMOLA OLANIYAN CREATIVE WRITERS-IN- RESIDENCE FELLOWSHIP



Tejumola Olaniyan Creative Writers-in-Residence Fellowship is created in honor of the late Nigerian Professor Tejumola Olaniyan and his remarkable intellectual legacy in the field of African literature and critical theory. The residency program welcomes applications from creative writers including novelists, short story writers, playwrights, poets and scriptwriters related to Africa and the African diaspora for a grant of 45,000 AED in total. The proposed project can be in Arabic or English (other languages will be considered). The residency invites recipients to Sharjah, UAE for a period of three months to complete their work. Typically, the cohort begins in the fall of every year.

Recipients will have the opportunity to publish their texts through The Africa Institute's publications program. Projects relating to theatre and film scripts can also be published as texts or receive support in facilitating productions. The project could be new or a work-in-progress and should be feasible for completion within the timeframe of the residency.

All applications will be reviewed by The Africa Institute through a committee of peers of well-known writers. Three recipients will be chosen based on the quality of their proposal, and the demonstrated feasibility of completion within the timeframe of the residency.

Applications must include:

- CV/résumé of the applicant.
- A two-page narrative of the project to be undertaken during the residency period, its significance, and a proposed date of completion.
- A sample of published or unpublished writings.

An explanation of the work's copyright status: If the work is not in the public domain, please include a copy of the copyright notice from the original text, and a letter from the copyright holder stating that English language rights to the work are available.

To submit applications, compile all application materials; CV/résumé, two-page narrative and writing sample (in case of a book, please attach separately) into one single PDF in the mentioned order. Please name the file with the residency title abbreviation and the applicant's name in this format: TOCW RP_LASTNAME_FIRSTNAME. Use the same name in the email subject heading and send the PDF as an email attachment to applications@theafricainstitute.org.

About Tejumola Olaniyan

Tejumola Olaniyan was a Nigerian academic and the Louise Durham Mead Professor of English and African Cultural Studies, and the Wole Soyinka Professor of the Humanities at the University of Wisconsin. Olaniyan earned his bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Ife in Nigeria, and completed a second master's degree and his PhD at Cornell University.

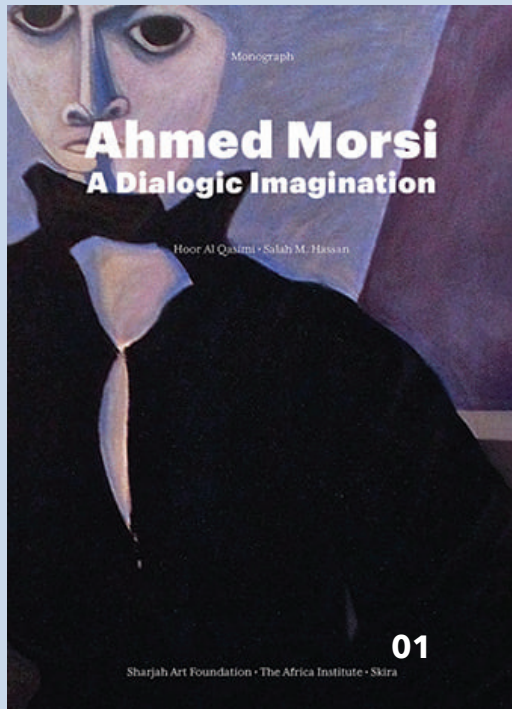
His primary research interests focused on Africa and its diaspora, African Americans, the Caribbean, and African literatures, criticism, post-cultural studies, history, theory and the sociology of drama and pop culture (art, music, and architecture). His publications included *Arrest the Music!: Fela and His Rebel Art and Politics* (2004, 2009; nominated for Best Research in World Music by the Association for Recorded Sound Collections in 2005) and *Scars of Conquest/Masks of Resistance: The Invention of Cultural Identities in African, African American and Caribbean Drama* (1995). He was co-editor of *African Literature: An Anthology of Criticism and Theory* (2007, with Ato Quayson), *African Drama and Performance* (2004, with John Conteh-Morgan), and *African Diaspora and the Disciplines* (2010, with James H. Sweet). Olaniyan practiced different approaches, which allow others to experience new perspectives.

PUBLICATIONS

THE AFRICA INSTITUTE AND SKIRA

A series of co-publications between The Africa Institute and Skira, one of the oldest and leading publishers in the field of art and visual culture.

All publications are available for purchase at The Africa Institute bookshop.



01

AHMED MORSI: A DIALOGIC IMAGINATION

Editors: Hoor Al Qasimi and Salah M. Hassan

Publisher: The Africa Institute (Sharjah, UAE) and Skira Editore (Milan, Italy)

Language: English

Year: 2021

Co-published by The Africa Institute, Sharjah Art Foundation and Skira, *Ahmed Morsi: A Dialogic Imagination* has been edited by Hoor Al Qasimi and Salah M. Hassan and provides deep insight on the career of Ahmed Morsi, which spans seven decades.

Ahmed Morsi: A Dialogic Imagination reviews the myriad locations, ideas, experiences, and materials that embody the practice of the New York-based Egyptian artist Ahmed Morsi, whose work spans printmaking, poetry, paintings, and critique. After coming of age in the 1940s as part of the Alexandria School—a movement led by intellectuals and artists that marked the city’s emergence as a post-war cultural epicenter—Morsi spent time in Baghdad, where he gained experience as an art critic and translator amidst the city’s literary renaissance of the 1960s. Morsi then briefly moved to Cairo, and eventually immigrated to New York in the mid-1970s. In Cairo, Morsi experimented with theatrical set design and artist’s books, and co-founded the avant-garde magazine Galerie 68.

The publication showcases the vibrant exchange between Morsi's poetry and paintings and highlights how his multidisciplinary practice sparks a dialogue with the wider world. *Ahmed Morsi: A Dialogic Imagination* features newly commissioned scholarly essays, commentaries from Morsi's contemporaries and selections from the artist's writings, along with an interview with the artist and a selection of photographs and reproductions of works that capture the vibrancy and breadth of Morsi's career. The book also includes a comprehensive exhibition history, career archive, and bibliography.

About the Editors

Hoor Al Qasimi is President and Director of Sharjah Art Foundation. She is president of the International Biennial Association; Chair of the Board of the Sharjah Architecture Triennial; Chair of the Advisory Board of the College of Fine Arts and Design at the University of Sharjah; and President of The Africa Institute. Hoor serves on the Board of Directors for MoMA PS1 in New York, Kunst-Werke in Berlin, and Ashkal Alwan in Beirut. She also serves on the advisory boards for Khoj, New Delhi, and Darat al Funun in Amman. She was also a member of the Prince Claus Award Committee (2016–2020).

Salah M. Hassan is the Director of The Africa Institute and the Distinguished Professor of Arts and Sciences in Africana Studies and Professor of History of Art and Visual Studies at Cornell University. He is the founding editor of *Nka: Journal of Contemporary African Art*. He is the author and editor of several books and he has curated several international exhibitions. He is the recipient of several grants and fellowships, such as the J. Paul Getty Postdoctoral Fellowship, as well as major grants from the Sharjah Art, Ford, Rockefeller, Andy Warhol, and Prince Claus Fund foundations.

02

IBRAHIM EL-SALAH: AT HOME IN THE WORLD A MEMOIR

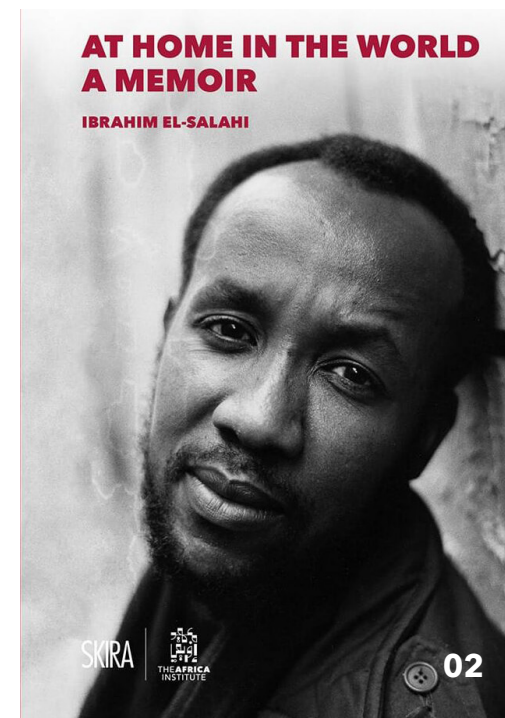
Author: Ibrahim El-Salahi

Editor: Salah M. Hassan

Publisher: The Africa Institute (Sharjah, UAE) and Skira Editore (Milan, Italy)

Language: English

Year: 2022



Co-published by The Africa Institute and Skira, Ibrahim El-Salahi: *At Home in the World – A Memoir* is a thought-provoking documentation of his contributions as a Sudanese artist within a global history of modern art.

For more than a half-century, Ibrahim El-Salahi has been at the forefront of African modernism in the visual arts. A renowned artist, writer, critic, and teacher, El-Salahi continues to refine his unique modernist vision, which combines and challenges Islamic, African, and western paradigms of modernism in the visual arts. In this engaging memoir, El-Salahi recalls some of the most formative experiences of his career. From Khartoum to London to São Paulo to New York to Doha, and many places in between, El-Salahi shares his wide-ranging intellectual curiosity as he seeks out significant artwork and interesting conversations on several continents. He introduces his reader to encounters he had with figures such as the African-American modernists Hale Woodruff, Jacob Lawrence, and members of the Spiral Group; the legendary leader of the Nation of Islam, Elijah Muhammad; and the Mexican painter Rufino Tamayo. His memories of passing acquaintances are equally thoughtful and thought-provoking. El-Salahi also documents his contributions to Sudanese public culture, his unjust imprisonment under a military government, and subsequent exile from Sudan. In this important work, El-Salahi offers new perspectives on his development as an artist and on his foundational contributions to African and Arab modernism.

With a foreword by the President of The Africa Institute, Hoor Al Qasimi who writes about her first encounters with Ibrahim El-Salahi's work as part of the Sharjah Biennial as well as his exceptional oeuvre over the years – has stood out to be a transformative figure in the global art world.

The book is edited by Salah M. Hassan, Director of The Africa Institute, who in his introduction contextualizes El-Salahi's artwork within a global history of modern art and expands its narrative.

About the Author

Ibrahim El-Salahi (Arabic: إبراهيم الصلحي, born 5 September 1930, Omdurman, Sudan) is a Sudanese painter, former public servant, and diplomat. He is one of the foremost visual artists of the “Khartoum School”, considered as part of African Modernism and the Hurufiyya art movement, that combined traditional forms of Islamic calligraphy with contemporary artworks.

About the Editor

Salah M Hassan is the Director of The Africa Institute and the Distinguished Professor of Arts and Sciences in Africana Studies and professor of History of Art and Visual Studies at Cornell University.

He curated a retrospective exhibition in tribute to the work of Ibrahim El-Salahi titled, “Ibrahim El-Salahi: A Visionary Modernist” initiated by the Museum of African Art, premiered in Sharjah Art Foundation, and later saw itself at Tate Modern in London (2013). The exhibit is also accompanied by a comprehensive book titled the same.

Salah is the founding editor of *Nka: Journal of Contemporary African Art*. He is the author and editor of several books, and he has curated several international exhibitions. He is the recipient of several grants and fellowships, such as the J. Paul Getty Postdoctoral Fellowship, as well as major grants from the Sharjah Art, Ford, Rockefeller, Andy Warhol, and Prince Claus Fund foundations.

WRITING AFRICA BOOK SERIES

Writing Africa is a series of booklets in the fields of humanities and social sciences related to African and African Diaspora studies. As a periodical publication, the series aims at introducing African culture in its diverse genres ranging from literature, visual cultures, theater, music, song and literary criticism among other forms of creative expressions. It also aims at familiarizing the public with the diversity and complexities of African societies, their histories, in relation to their past, present and future in critical and formative ways.

This marks the third publication under this series and is available for purchase at The Africa Institute bookshop.

SONG OF THE PHARAOH

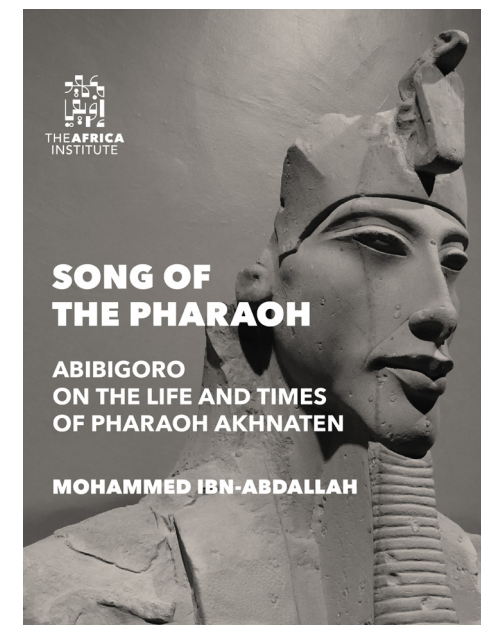
Author: Mohammed Ibn-Abdallah

Publisher: The Africa Institute (Sharjah, UAE)

Language: English & Arabic

Year: 2022

Song of the Pharaoh is the first bilingual publication to appear in The Africa Institute's periodical series, 'Writing Africa', making it accessible to Arabic and English readers across the globe. This represents the commitment of The Africa Institute to translation, enabling global audiences to engage in dialogue with the diversity and complexities of African creative expressions. The book is published as part of the Global Ghana: Country-Focused Season's program of activities.



Song of the Pharaoh tells the tale of the rise and fall of Akhnaten a young pharaoh who fights to change the direction of his kingdom. It is a timeless story of love and political and religious intrigue set in ancient Egypt. Akhnaten marries his childhood friend, the famed beauty Nefertite and they vie with her uncles for religious and political supremacy of the nation. They oversee a time of growth and artistic flourishing. They encourage education and build a new capital called the “City of Light.” Akhnaten is also the proponent of a monotheistic religion that conflicts with older forms of worship. Intrigue threatens to bring down the young rulers and their vision of the future. In the final scene, the struggle continues as Akhnaten leads a procession of followers into exile as his newly built “City of Light” sinks into the desert. The play imagines a spectacular Pan-African aesthetic that creatively blends eclectic music and dance styles from Ghana and Africa. The characters are shadowed by three storytellers and a time-traveling spiritual, historian who narrate the tale and mediate among the audience, actors, and the characters. As they move between the past and the present, the story of ancient times blends with critical portrayals of modern postcolonial struggle.

The book consists of a foreword by Salah M. Hassan, Director, The Africa Institute and an introduction by Jesse Weaver Shipley, Professor, African and African American Studies, Dartmouth College, USA.

About the Author

Mohammed Ibn-Abdallah, born in 1944 in Kumasi, is Ghana’s leading playwright. He comes from a long line of Pan-African scholars and Islamic thinkers. He holds an MFA from University of Georgia and a Ph.D. from University of Texas, Austin in theatre. His major plays include *The Slaves*, *Trial of Malam Ilya*, *Alien King*, *Verdict of the Cobra*, *Land of a Million Magicians*, and *Witch of Mopti*. Written over the course of fifty years, these works have been concerned with developing an avant-garde theatrical style Abdallah has termed *Abibigoro* which translates from Akan as “Black/African play” but he uses to connote a “Total African Theatre.” His plays build upon West African multi-media storytelling traditions and trickster tales that interweave music, dance, and narrative into stories that provoke desire, creativity, and irreverence. His works focus on the moral conundrums faced by African subjects who seek collective and personal freedom while caught up in violent struggles for geo-political power. While a minister in government he developed many of the major cultural and artistic infrastructure that define contemporary Ghana including the National Theatre, the DuBois Center, and the Kwame Nkrumah Mausoleum. He has taught and directed plays at universities across Ghana and around the world.

THE AFRICA INSTITUTE'S PUBLICATIONS

The Africa Institute's publications highlight the rich history and culture of Africa and its diaspora. With a particular emphasis on works written by African and Africanist writers, the institute aims to promote diverse perspectives and shape the discourse around African studies bringing greater awareness to the region's unique and significant contributions to the world. Our publications cover a diverse range of topics not limited to history, politics, economics, and the arts, providing readers with a comprehensive understanding of Africa's past, present, and future.

All publications are available for purchase at The Africa Institute bookshop.



01

FROM RUFA'A TO FLORENCE

Author: Fathi Othman

Publisher: The Africa Institute (Sharjah, UAE)

Language: Arabic

Year: 2022

About the Book

Abdel-Raziq's works are distinguished by the diversity of their subjects, media, and implementation methods, which ranged from realism, expressionism to abstraction. It is noted that his choices in the three methods were determined by a clear vision of what he wanted to express. In his works of portraiture, he tended to adopt realism as a method to express what he sought to reflect in sculpture, in terms of expressions and features, such as "The Face of Jibril Tiyyah" and "The Face of Bakheita", both works were completed after his return from his study course at the Camberwell Institute. These works were realized in an academic spirit, without being stringent, and we notice the aptness of his choice of his models. In the other two models, "A Woman Caressing her Child" and "A Reader," we clearly perceive his transition to expressing general human themes and other issues, such as the relationship between man and the book, i.e., the relationship between reason and knowledge. Here, he moved away from the strict rules of the academic approach and gave himself more freedom to express his chosen themes, in addition to choosing the media that suited the subject and the method of treatment, so he succeeded in realizing what he wanted to express easily and deftly. In his work "Two Pigeons," Abdel Raziq was more inclined towards abstraction, reducing the details into two three dimensional forms which neatly and fluently expressed what was in his

mind in an unobtrusive simplification, which was a difficult endeavour in the field of three dimensional forms treatment. In his later works, Abdel Raziq ventured deep into the realms of abstraction, though with careful and calculated approach to abstraction, based on coherent logic backed by deep experience and logical transitions from realism, in all its details, to reasoned and thoughtful simplification with an insightful eye and an adept hand that realizes the potential of his media and what it can be turned into in its final becoming.

About the Author

Othman is a visual artist and writer. He graduated at the College of Fine and Applied Arts in Khartoum, then he pursued postgraduate studies at the Hungarian Academy of Arts and obtained his Ph.D. from Otvs Laurent University in Budapest. He worked in the field of graphic design and in the Arab press in London during the nineties of the last century. Among his publications is the seminal book: "The House of al-Jack: A Dialogue with Ibrahim El-Salahi" and two illustrated books, published by the French publishing house Grandier.

02

THE COMPLETE POEMS OF THE SUDANESE POET AL-NOUR OTHMAN ABBKAR

Editors: Kamal Al-Jazouli, Alim Abbas Muhammad Nour

Publisher: The Africa Institute (Sharjah, UAE)

Language: Arabic

Year: 2022

Nour Othman Abbkar was a poet, writer, and translator in three languages: Arabic, English and German. He received his elementary and intermediate education in Port Sudan, and his secondary education in Hantoub School, Madani. He joined the University of Khartoum, Faculty of Arts, to graduate in 1962. Immediately after graduating,

al-Nour immigrated to Germany and lived there until 1965, then he traveled to England to study at the University of Leeds and obtained a diploma in teaching English as a second language in 1970. he returned to Sudan to work as an English language teacher in several secondary schools. He served as the Chairman of the Poetry Committee affiliated to the National Council for Literature and Arts 1970-1979. In 1979, he immigrated to Qatar to work as a senior editor for Doha Magazine, and then as a journalist and translator with the Emiri Diwan until his death. He published many poetry collections, including "Awakening of Forgotten Words" 1970, "Singing for the Grass and the Flower" 1975, "I Imbibe Your Face" and "The River is Not Like Clouds." His other writing



activities traversed many fields, including translating many books from English and German, such as the play *"Romanov and Juliet"*; *"Prim's Travels in Sudan"* and *"Gustav Nachtigal"* and *"Darfur and Waddi"*.

About the Editors

Kamal Al-Jazouli

Al-Jozouli is a prominent lawyer, poet, art critic, and human rights activist. He studied Law and International Relations at the Faculty of International Law and International Relations, Kyiv University, Ukraine. He has published several collections of poetry, the most famous of which is "Omdurman Comes on the Eighth Hour Train." He has published several books and articles on topics ranging from culture and politics, literature and literary criticism, to issues of peace, democracy, civil war, and human rights. He is one of the founding members of the Sudanese Writers Union and held the position of its Secretary General until 2007.

Alim Abbas Muhammad Nour

Nour was born in 1948 in El Fasher, Darfur and obtained his bachelor's degree at Omdurman Islamic University in 1972. He has multiple contributions to the cultural and literary Sudanese scene, including articles for newspapers and magazines. He is the author of a number of poetry collections, including: "Rhythms of Unbridled Time" 1974; "Trees of Great Questions" and "Yours is the Meaning Ours is the Song", both published in 1984 and "Classified Papers on the Events after Al-Bassous War", 2012. He won the First Poetry Award for Youth in 1973, and the State Medal for Literature and Arts 1979.

03

THE HISTORIAN YUSUF FADL HASAN: THE SAGACIOUS ACCOMPLISHMENT AND ALL-EMBRACING CONTRIBUTION

Author: Ahmed Ibrahim Abu Shouk

Publisher: The Africa Institute (Sharjah, UAE)

Language: Arabic

Year: 2022



About the Book

The Sagacious Accomplishment and All-Embracing Contributions is a captivating biography dedicated to Yusuf Fadl Hasan, a prominent Sudanese historian. The author, Abu Shouk, employs a unique and creative approach to chronicle Hasan's life and his contributions to Sudanese history. The book provides rich insights into the social incubators and communities, schools and universities, and colleagues and mentors that shaped Hasan's character. Through the biography, the author reveals Hasan's natural disposition as a historian, endowed with a captivating historical imagination and distinguished scholarly traditions that strive to bridge communication with the world. With rigorous and prudent research, the author establishes the inextricable link between Hasan's life and the development of higher education and historical studies in Sudan. Overall, this rich and scholarly biography offers a deep understanding of Hasan's life and his significant contributions to Sudanese history.

About the Author

Ahmed Ibrahim Abu Shouk

Abu Shouk is a professor of modern and contemporary History, and Associate Dean of Humanities and Social Sciences, Qatar University. He received his doctorate in history at the University of Bergen, Norway (1998). Before joining Qatar University in 2012, he worked as a researcher at the Center for Middle East and Islamic World Studies at the University of Bergen (1995-1999), then as a professor in the Department of History and Civilization (1999-2012) at the International Islamic University in Malaysia. He also worked as a researcher and visiting professor at the Center for Modern Middle East Studies in Berlin (2010-2012-2016); the American University of Pittsburgh (2015) and the American University of Wisconsin (2017). He authored more than twenty books and seventy scholarly papers, published in both Arabic and English, and in peer-reviewed scientific journals; published in regional and international publishing houses.

The Africa Institute is dedicated to advancing African and African diaspora studies through its research and publications. In service of that, the institute plans on publishing academic journals in various fields. Our first journal is titled *Monsoon: Journal of the Indian Ocean Rim* and is published in collaboration with Duke University Press.

MONSOON

Publisher: Duke University Press, The Africa Institute (Sharjah, UAE)

Language: English

Year: 2023

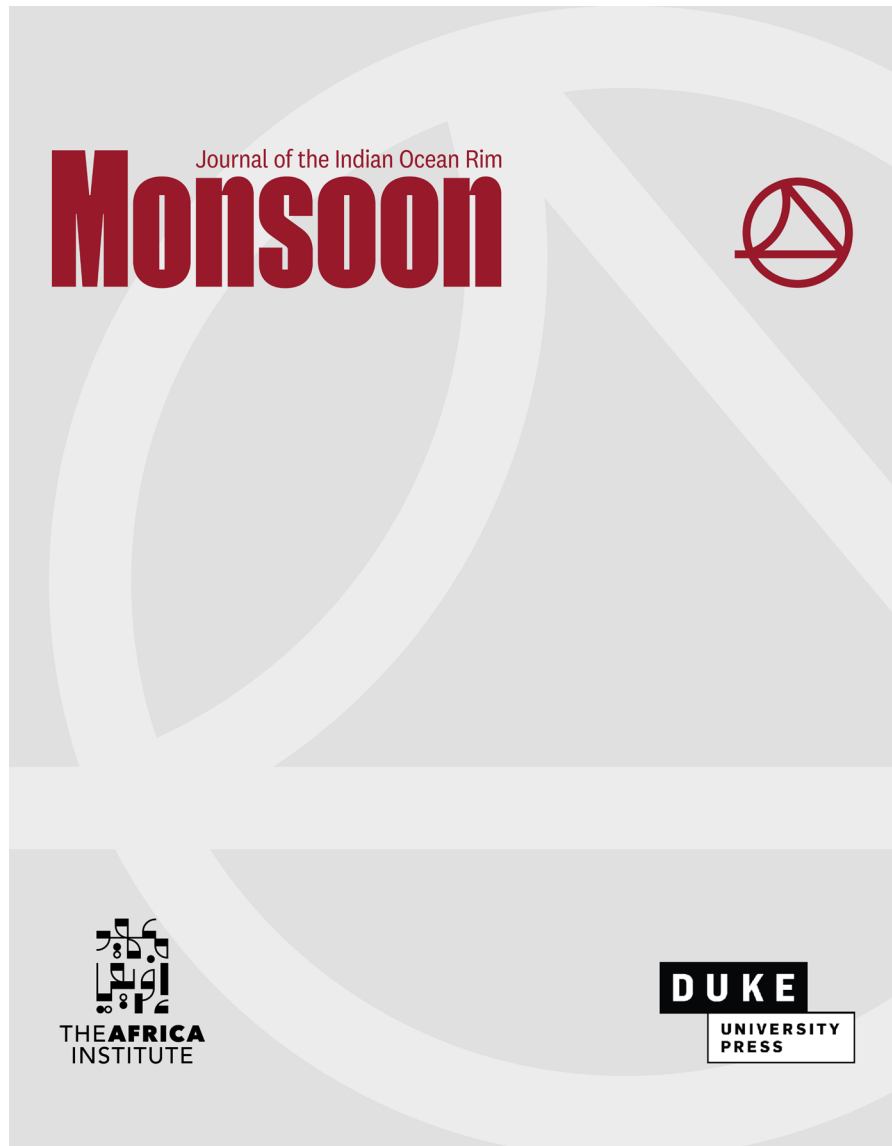
Monsoon: Journal of the Indian Ocean Rim, a new interdisciplinary journal, publishes original and innovative research that analyzes the cultural, historical, and political circumstances that have shaped—and currently affect—the coastal societies of the Indian Ocean.

Monsoon aims to raise the profile of Indian Ocean studies, bringing research on the societies, arts, and cultures of the basin to a wide audience. It also fills a glaring gap in the extant literature on the Indian Ocean region, which has sidelined African and Gulf societies. With an eye cast toward expanding knowledge on the connections forged across diverse environments and cultures, the journal is a critical resource among, and in conversation with, other journals on oceanic and global studies.

The Africa Institute, in collaboration with Duke University Press aims to publish original, cutting-edge research essays as well as special thematic issues that provide analysis of cultural, historical, and political circumstances that have shaped and currently affect, the littoral societies of the Indian Ocean.

Monsoon is co-edited by Rogaia Mustafa Abusharaf, Professor of Anthropology, at Georgetown University in Qatar, and Jeremy Prestholdt, Professor of History, California, San Diego.

For more details, visit our website.



THE AFRICA INSTITUTE AND DUKE UNIVERSITY PRESS TO PUBLISH NEW JOURNAL TITLED MONSOON FOCUSING ON THE INDIAN OCEAN RIM

The Africa Institute, in collaboration with Duke University Press, is pleased to announce the launch of a new interdisciplinary, peer-reviewed, biannual journal titled *Monsoon*, co-edited by Jeremy Prestholdt, Professor of History, University of California, San Diego, and Rogaia Mustafa Abusharaf, Professor of Anthropology, Georgetown University in Qatar, which seeks to spark new ways of thinking about the Indian Ocean region and to promote innovative scholarly research and analysis.

The Indian Ocean has been a critical nexus of global linkages for millennia. The region is a cultural continuum facilitated by mobility, belief, taste, exchange, and other practices. Its geopolitical, strategic, economic, sociocultural, and historical significance can hardly be overstated.

“Half of the world’s population lives within fifty miles of the Indian Ocean’s shores and half of the world’s container ship traffic crosses its waters, most of the world’s petroleum traverses the basin, and global powers compete for regional influence. As a result, scholarly and popular interest in the Indian Ocean region has increased dramatically in recent years. At the same time, the region has yet to receive the scholarly attention it merits,” said co-editor Professor Jeremy Prestholdt. *Monsoon* encompasses a series of special issues bringing together the perspectives of scholars, critics, and artists across the disciplines of humanities and social sciences that offers a new forum to present research, debate critical themes, and highlight emerging trends in Indian Ocean studies — with an emphasis on Africa and the Western Indian Ocean.

Co-editor Rogaiya Mustafa Abusharaf further contextualized the idea behind the title of the periodical. “The name of the journal, ‘Monsoon’, is inspired by seasonal weather patterns, notably the winds that facilitated interregional sojourns and thus the integration of the Indian Ocean rim over thousands of years. The journal proposes to interrogate the multitudinous forces that have defined and continue to shape regional societies, examining overlapping forms of cosmopolitanism, circulation, inequality, and exploitation.”

Through the pages of *Monsoon*, the Indian Ocean will be more legible to readers across disciplines and fields of specialization, and thus the journal will help to propel Indian Ocean studies further. The journal will publish original, cutting-edge research essays as well as special thematic issues that provide analysis of cultural, historical, and political circumstances that have shaped, and currently affect, the littoral societies of the Indian Ocean. In this way, *Monsoon* aims to be a leading contributor to the field of Indian Ocean studies.

“Being an interdisciplinary academic research institute, The Africa Institute is proud of this collaboration with Duke University Press, as it facilitates our dedication to the study, research, and documentation of Africa globally, and exploration of new frontiers of lesser explored African diasporas across the Indian Ocean rim,” said Salah M. Hassan, Director of The Africa Institute, Sharjah, and Cornell University Professor.

This is further affirmed by Hoor Al-Qasimi, the President of The Africa Institute who said, “the Institute has already begun to consolidate its place in global African studies through its rich programs of research, fellowships, publications, and public outreach.”

Rob Dilworth, Journals Director, Duke University Press said, “We are excited to collaborate with The Africa Institute to publish *Monsoon*. The journal will raise the profile of Indian Ocean studies, ensure that Africa and the Western Indian Ocean are represented and highlighted in the field, and help Duke University Press fulfill its ongoing goal to publish periodicals in new areas. The journal will be an excellent addition to our list of books and journals and add to its deep interdisciplinarity. The Press will provide strong publishing services and partnership management as well as a history of growing and sustaining new journals. Our partnership with The Africa Institute will benefit both the Institute and the Press—two mission-driven organizations.”

Duke University Press is a nonprofit scholarly publisher with a focus on the humanities, the social sciences, and mathematics. The Press publishes approximately 140 books annually and around 60 journals, as well as offering several electronic collections and open-access publishing initiatives.

The Africa Institute and Duke University Press are keen to expand knowledge on the connections forged across diverse environments and cultures because of the monsoon. *Monsoon* will follow a double-blind review process to determine originality, creativity, theoretical sophistication, clarity of writing, and contribution to the field. Special emphasis will be placed on the quality of writing as this will enhance our efforts to reach the widest possible audience.

COMMUNITY AND COLLABORATION

UNIVERSITY VISITS: PROMOTING CRITICAL THINKING AMONG YOUTH & EXPLORING SYNERGIES

CARLETON COLLEGE

Nineteen students from Carleton College, a private liberal arts college located in Northfield, Minnesota, USA, visit The Africa Institute between March 28 - 30, 2022.

The Africa Institute faculty and staff greeted and supported students with an itinerary including museum tours in Sharjah, a welcome dinner, and lectures engaging them in topics representing The Africa Institute's areas of focus and study.

Professor Nidhi Mahajan, Fatema Mernissi Post-doctoral Fellow in Social and Cultural Studies, The Africa Institute shared conceptual thoughts on contemporary connections between East Africa and the Middle East via the dhow trade. Mahajan received her Ph.D. in Anthropology from Cornell University; her studies focus on the Indian Ocean's transregional maritime connections, including shipping and commerce networks, ports, and their interplay with state sovereignty.

Professor Ahmad Sikainga, Ali A. Marzui Senior Fellow discussed slavery, oil, and wage labor in Qatar from the late nineteenth to mid-twentieth century with students.

The closing lecture was conducted by Professor Abdul Mohammed Hussein Sheriff, Ali A. Marzui fellow deliberated Africa's reputation for being an isolated continent among outsiders and among Africans themselves.

Overall, the students were stimulated to examine the start of a whole new world of sustenance, resources, opportunities, and perils, all while remaining tied to Africa.

The excursion was part of the an off-campus study program titled “History, Culture, and Commerce: Africa and Arabia” slated between late March to early June 2022 led by Carleton College’s Associate Professor of History, Dr. John Willis who curated a unique educational experience not only traveling to the Emirate of Sharjah but also visiting and collaborating with institutions in the Kingdom of Bahrain, and the Sultanate of Oman.



Students, faculty and representatives from New York University Abu Dhabi visit The Africa Institute for an educational excursion.

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY ABU DHABI

Representatives from New York University Abu Dhabi (NYUAD), a research university with fully integrated liberal arts and science college based in the emirate of Abu Dhabi, visited The Africa Institute for an educational excursion on May 19, 2022.

The visit enabled an interactive exchange with NYUAD visiting professors, research fellows and guests who were keen to learn more about the role and work of the Africa Institute while also paving the way for future research collaboration between the academic institutions.

Salah Hassan, Director, The Africa Institute welcomed the visitors and opened the session with a detailed presentation about the history, recent projects and future of the Institute.

Anneka Lenssen, Associate Professor of Global Modern Art at the University of California, Berkeley and a current Senior Fellow at the NYUAD Humanities Research Fellowship for the Study of the Arab World and board member for al Mawrid Arab Center for the Study of Art, who was the lead facilitator of the visit shared, “This has been an incomparable gathering! It is hard to imagine such an exciting meeting taking place anywhere else. We left with a new understanding of the transformative mission of The Africa Institute as a hub for postgraduate studies in African and African diaspora studies, a resource, and a visionary actor in the art world.”

“Our visit to The Africa Institute as a final session in our workshop, *“Go East, Young Artists: Creative Practice across the Middle East, North Africa, and Eastern Bloc, 1950s-1980s,”* allowed us to meet scholar colleagues who are leading the way to new models of interdisciplinary academic research,” said Anneka.

Given that the group is currently conducting research on the history of exchanges across different ‘eastern’ territories and territorial imaginations in the Cold War decades, our faculty presented their research, which acted as a platform for dialogue. The works shared were Salah Hassan’s continuous research on the *“Khartoum School: The Making of the Modern Art Movement in Sudan (1945 – Present)”*; followed by a presentation by Elizabeth W. Giorgis, Associate Professor of Art History, Theory and Criticism on ‘Ethiopian modernism and the link between the Derg period and the Soviet Union’.

Anneka added that “the presentations by Director Salah Hassan and Professor Elizabeth Giorgis highlighted some mutual questions about modalities of cultural exchange (past, present, future) while expanding our frames of reference for thinking about power, patronage, and survival.”

The research group participants consisted of research fellows and professors: Przemysław Strożek, a curator at the Archiv der Avantgarden, Dresden and Assistant Professor at the Institute of Art of the Polish Academy of Sciences; Sara Lagnaoui, an archivist at the Dresden State Art Collections; Anthony Gardner, a Professor of Contemporary Art History at the University of Oxford, Masha Kirasirova, an Assistant Professor of History at New York University Abu Dhabi; Anahi Alviso-Marino, a specialist in the political sociology of visual arts in the Arabian Peninsula and Ala Younis, an artist with curatorial, film, and publishing projects as well as NYUAD undergraduate students.

Their visit concluded with a lunch at the Africa Hall and a tour of Sharjah Art Foundations’ Spring exhibitions.

The Africa Institute’s outreach efforts are oriented toward shared programming and collaborations with such programs across diverse topics in African history and the African diaspora that contribute to the Africa Institute’s mission and developing research.



Salah Hassan, Director, The Africa Institute welcomes students from New York University Abu Dhabi (NYUAD) and shares his research on *“Khartoum School: The Making of the Modern Art Movement in Sudan (1945 – Present)”*.

CULTIVATING AWARENESS & TALENT THROUGH THE AFRICA INSTITUTE'S INTERNSHIP PROGRAM



The Africa Institute inaugurates a summer internship program with the recruitment of two interns. Being an interdisciplinary academic research institute dedicated to the study, research, and documentation of Africa and the African diaspora, the internship aims for young scholars to learn and contribute to our mission in our pursuit of global excellence.

The objective is to stimulate their young minds, first-hand interaction and serves to act as a launchpad for their careers in the UAE. Furthermore, this initiative aims to increase awareness of The Africa Institute in the education and research sector through practical experience and expand public understanding of Arab-African exchange within the local Sharjah community, the region, and around the globe.

The first pair of interns onboarded are Toga El Taher and Rashid Alzarooni.

Toga El Taher is completing her bachelor's in Media and Mass Communication with a major in International Relations from American University in The Emirates, Dubai. While Rashid Alzarooni is a final year undergraduate student pursuing his Bachelor's in Business Administration with a major in Human Resources at Sharjah University.

Over the course of the months of May – July 2022, Toga and Rashid will be working in rotation with some of our departments to better assimilate, and understand the various roles, operations, and work culture as they apply their skills at The Africa Institute.

THE AFRICA INSTITUTE, SERPENTINE AND SHARJAH ART FOUNDATION PRESENT THE FIRST LONDON SOLO EXHIBITION OF PIONEERING SUDANESE ARTIST KAMALA IBRAHIM ISHAG

The Africa Institute collaborated with Serpentine and Sharjah Art Foundation (SAF) to present a major exhibition of pioneering Sudanese artist Kamala Ibrahim Ishag. The exhibition will take place in Serpentine South in London from October 7, 2022 to January 29, 2023.

Ishag has forged a unique and expansive practice that is not defined by a singular style or movement. Her work embraces and expresses different earthly and spiritual landscapes and histories of Sudanese visual culture across many eras. Both a master modernist and innovative contemporary painter, Ishag continues to influence artists internationally and has been a prominent teacher and mentor to generations of practitioners, especially in her role as a professor of painting for over 30 years in Sudan. She was amongst the first women artists to graduate from the College of Fine and Applied Art in Khartoum in 1963. Later, she became the leading figure of the conceptual Crystalist Group in Sudan during the 1970s and 1980s.

“We are thrilled to partner with Sharjah Art Foundation and The Africa Institute to bring the work of this pioneering artist to London. Kamala’s thinking of not “imprisoning” the artist within one idea is central to the work we are doing at Serpentine. We believe artists are key to many disciplines and areas of society, never restricted within boundaries. Kamala’s seven decades of art making leads the way with this idea,” said Bettina Korek, Serpentine CEO, and Hans Ulrich Obrist, Serpentine Artistic Director.

Serpentine galleries have been championing new ideas in contemporary art since 1970 and have presented pioneering exhibitions for half a century from a wide range of emerging practitioners to the most internationally recognized artists of our time.

The exhibition celebrates the breadth and importance of Ishag’s work and offers London audiences insights into her world, featuring works spanning from the 1960s to today, including her time in London studying at the Royal College of Art (RCA) from 1964-66, in addition to new paintings created in her Khartoum studio that have previously never been presented.

Ishag shared, “It is very special for me to have this exhibition at Serpentine as I studied close to Hyde Park at the Royal College of Art in the 1960s and I have spent time living in London. I have completed new paintings for this exhibition which will be shown alongside works from across my career. These are all connected by images of humans and plants – the vital elements that constitute all life. It is wonderful to be working with Serpentine, Sharjah Art Foundation, and The Africa Institute on this project.”

Undoubtedly, the Kamala Ibrahim Ishag exhibition is another milestone toward The Africa Institute’s endeavor to expand the public understanding of African and African diaspora studies as a global enterprise.

Salah M. Hassan, Director, The Africa Institute shared that he is delighted to work with Serpentine and Sharjah Art Foundation to bring Kamala Ishag’s ground-breaking practice to London. “Kamala challenged tradition and forged a new style, paving the way for many women and men, and younger generations which she has mentored over the years, including the Crystalists group. Through this exhibition, we look forward to expanding the understanding of African and African diaspora modernist and contemporary art practices, by showcasing her influence on Sudanese art and her reputation as one of the most important painters in African and global modern art,” said Professor Hassan.

Kamala Ibrahim Ishag is organized by Sharjah Art Foundation and Serpentine, in collaboration with The Africa Institute, Sharjah. It is co-curated by Hoor Al Qasimi, Director, Sharjah Art Foundation; Salah M. Hassan, Director, The Africa Institute, Sharjah, and Professor at Cornell University; and Melissa Blanchflower, Curator Exhibitions and Public Art, Serpentine, with Sarah Hamed, Assistant Curator, Serpentine.

The artist’s first monograph will be published, on the occasion, of the exhibition by Sharjah Art Foundation, The Africa Institute, Serpentine, and Koenig, and will be available in early 2023.



Kamala Ibrahim Ishag: States of Oneness, Serpentine South Gallery, 7 October 2022 - 29 January 2023.

THE AFRICA INSTITUTE PARTICIPATES AT USA'S 65TH ASA ANNUAL MEETING

The Africa Institute, Sharjah successfully participated in the 65th Annual Meeting hosted by African Studies Association (ASA) in Philadelphia between November 17-19, 2022. The Annual Meeting encouraged the production and dissemination of knowledge between Africa and the Arab world.

During the 65th Annual Meeting themed, 'Africa Urbanities: Mobility, Creativity, and Challenges', The Africa Institute contributed to thought leadership through specially curated roundtables that feature our senior faculty and fellows as well as set up an exclusive visiting booth to promote the Institute's mission, programs, fellowships, publications, and more.

The African Studies Association (ASA) is the flagship membership organization based in the United States that is devoted to enhancing the exchange of information about Africa since its establishment in 1957. With almost 2,000 individual and institutional members worldwide, the ASA aims to cultivate a better understanding of the continent, taking a holistic approach to its areas of focus. This includes all facets of Africa's political, economic, social, cultural, artistic, scientific, and environmental landscapes, to name a few.

The Africa Institute faculty contributed to two roundtables at the Annual Meeting and both were well received.

The first day of the conference, November 17, 2022 featured Professor Christopher J. Lee, Professor of African history, World history, and African literature at The Africa Institute was part of an *Author Meets Critics roundtable* based on the publication, "Spear: Mandela and the Revolutionaries" authored by Paul Landau. Professor Lee was joined by Robert Trent Vinson, University of Virginia; Meredith McKittrick, Georgetown University and Jacob S. Dlamini, Princeton University. The panel was chaired by Elizabeth Thornberry, Johns Hopkins University.

The second day, November 18, 2022 hosted a roundtable that was proposed by The Africa Institute's scholars. The panel was titled, "Outside Africa/Outside the West: Visions and Prospects for Building African Studies in the Gulf". The topic chosen emerges for "African Studies" has been an outgrowth of Western knowledge production, informed by Eurocentric disciplines and based on racist colonial epistemological paradigms. Although the field has grown and its paradigms have experienced major shifts, in which enduring divides, such as the ones between North and Sub-Saharan Africa, or continental Africa and its diasporas, have been challenged and transcended, cultural, political, and racial divides continue to inform the Western academy. That academy remains stubbornly hegemonic on a global scale.

While ongoing calls for decolonization of the field and critical revisions of its history and origins continue to challenge the status quo and the hegemony of whiteness in organizations like the ASA (US), what has been achieved? Black Lives Matter protests and movements for reparations and for the repatriation of African cultural artifacts continue to resonate across the global south and embolden demands for critical reflection on what precisely it means to do "African Studies" today.

The roundtable chaired by Professor Salah M. Hassan, Director, The Africa Institute, Sharjah critically reflected on what it means to do "African studies" outside the west.

The panelist presenters included Jean Allman, Professor of History, The Africa Institute; Elizabeth Giorgis, Associate Professor of Art History, Theory and Criticism, The Africa Institute; Naminata Diabate, Ali Marzui Senior Fellow, The Africa Institute and Associate Professor of Comparative Literature at Cornell University and Ahmad Sikainga, Professor of African History at the Ohio State University.



The Africa Institute faculty and fellows lead panel titled, "Outside Africa/Outside the West: Visions and Prospects for Building African Studies in the Gulf" at the "African Studies" Association, 65th Annual Meeting on November 18, 2022.

THE AFRICA INSTITUTE PARTICIPATES IN SHARJAH'S FOCAL POINT ART FAIR 2022



The Africa Institute participated in the fifth edition of Sharjah Art Foundation's Focal Point art book fair between 25 to 27 November 2022, at Bait Obaid Al Shamsi, a heritage site in Sharjah's historical quarter.

An initiative of Sharjah Art Foundation, Focal Point is an annual art book fair that places a special focus on UAE-based publishers and functions as a critical space for knowledge sharing and community building. Audiences find a compelling selection of printed material by artists' presses, bookmakers, self-publishers, and non-commercial cultural producers on offer.

The Africa Institute booth made their publications among other key works by African and African diaspora available for purchase. The edition consisted of three main sections: International (works from artists and independent publishers in the global art community); Edit (curated publications and special interest books not distributed by local retailers); and Local (publications from within the UAE's art community).

This three-day book fair featured more than 100 local and international publishers with book launches, talks, workshops, and musical performances.

The musical performances include Alexandria-born oud player Hosny jamming live with his bandmates; the Dubai-based Sudanese group Adiga known to blend nostalgia with the current musical soundscape; and a funk-soul trio, Sways N Edges.

THE AFRICA INSTITUTE HOSTS WORKSHOP ON THE WESTERN SUDAN COMMUNITY MUSEUMS PROJECT



Curators, scholars and dignitaries convene at The Africa Institute for the Western Sudan Community Museums Project in December 2022.

Under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan bin Muhammad Al Qasimi, Member of the Supreme Council, Ruler of Sharjah, the Regional Office for the Conservation of Cultural Heritage in the Arab Region (ICCROM - Sharjah) in cooperation with the National Cooperation of Antiquities and Museums in Sudan (NCAM) and The Africa Institute, organized a workshop on the Western Sudan Community Museums (WSCM) project on December 8, 2022 at The Africa Institute, Sharjah.

This workshop shed light on the Western Sudan Community Museums Project launched in 2018 by ICCROM-Sharjah, an intergovernmental organization dedicated to the preservation of cultural heritage, in collaboration with various local and international partners and funded by the British Council Cultural Protection Fund and ALIPH Foundation, with the aim of addressing the role of museums as hubs with heritage collections in contributing to peacebuilding and social cohesion.

The three participating museums in the project are the Darfur Community Museum, Sheikan Community Museum, and Khalifa House Community Museum collectively represent the geography, history, and culture of Western Sudan.

“The WSCM project has aimed to breathe new life into local museums in Western Sudan by transforming them into community hubs – for gathering, learning, sharing, and growing together. There is no greater joy than seeing our efforts make a genuine impact on these communities, which will continue to benefit society for years to come. ICCROM is honoured to have collaborated with our local partner, the National Cooperation of Antiquities and Museums in Sudan, and the British Council in turning this vision into reality,” said Dr. Webber Ndoro, Director of the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM).

Over 30 professionals and personalities concerned with cultural affairs in the Arab region in general and Sudan attended this workshop, which lasted for one day. Sheikha Hoor bint Sultan Al Qasimi, President of the Africa Institute in Sharjah; Dr. Salah M. Hassan, Director of the Africa Institute; Dr. Zaki Aslan, Director of the ICCROM-Sharjah; and Dr. Ghalia Garelnabi, Deputy Director of the National Cooperation for Antiquities and Museums (NCAM) in Sudan, were among the list of attendees and speakers.

Sheikha Hoor Al Qasimi, President of The Africa Institute opened the event by welcoming attendees and participants in the workshop and praised the importance of the Western Sudan Community Museums project. She also thanked the sponsor of this event, His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan bin Muhammad Al Qasimi, Member of the Supreme Council, and Ruler of Sharjah, and said that “His Highness has always paid great attention to projects and initiatives that are part of his comprehensive vision to consolidate our identity, cultural and human heritage.”

Director of The Africa Institute, Dr. Salah M. Hassan said: “The Africa Institute is pleased to host a scholarly conference on Western Sudanese Heritage in collaboration with ICCROM, which will facilitate cultural exchange through art and performance to enrich the understanding and preservation of the rich heritage of Sudan. This event is integral to our mission as a globally oriented institution dedicated to the study, teaching, and documentation of Africa and its diaspora located in the heart of Sharjah, the capital of culture.”

Dr Zaki Aslan, Director of the ICCROM-Sharjah said: “This project is not only targeting valuable heritage properties through carrying out conservation and maintenance work and training national teams, but it is also representing a methodology, project process, and long-term investment in Sudan to create an integrated work environment. In addition to the importance of preserving and restoring these museums and collections, the real value of this project and its results is represented in reviving the museums and promoting them as canterers for social and cultural encounters.”

Deputy Director of NCAM, Dr. Ghalia Garelnabi concluded the opening ceremony stressing the importance of the project for the history and future of Sudan. “On behalf of the National Cooperation of Antiquities and Museums in Sudan, I would like to extend our sincere appreciation and grateful to our partners, ICCROM-Sharjah and the British Council Cultural Protection Fund for the planning and implementation of this important project, which will have a significant impact on the future of community museums in Sudan and will serve as a model for other museums in the country to follow.”

In addition to the workshop, the event included an interactive exhibition that was inaugurated on 8 December 2022 at the Africa Institute in Sharjah, and will continue until 12 December 2022. The workshop was concluded by launching a book and video of “Make a Museum”, and a mesmerizing live orchestral concert performed by Bait Al Oud – Khartoum led by Ahmed Shamma and supervised by Dr. Naseer Shamma. The performance enabled artistic thought, promoted African music and heritage as well as celebrated the culture and music of ‘Oud’, which is considered one of the oldest Arabic musical instruments.

BAIT AL OUD - KHARTOUM ORCHESTRA



The iconic music ensemble, Bait Al Oud - Khartoum Orchestra performed at the Africa Hall in Sharjah on December 7 and 8, 2022.

Bait Al Oud - Khartoum orchestra is a musical heritage that celebrates the rich and diverse living heritage of Sudan and its connections to ancient civilizations.

The Sudanese orchestra featured talented musicians who have gained expert knowledge of a myriad of musical genres, expressed through multiple platforms and mediums. The concert produced a selection of special musical compositions aimed to enrich artistic thought and promote African music.

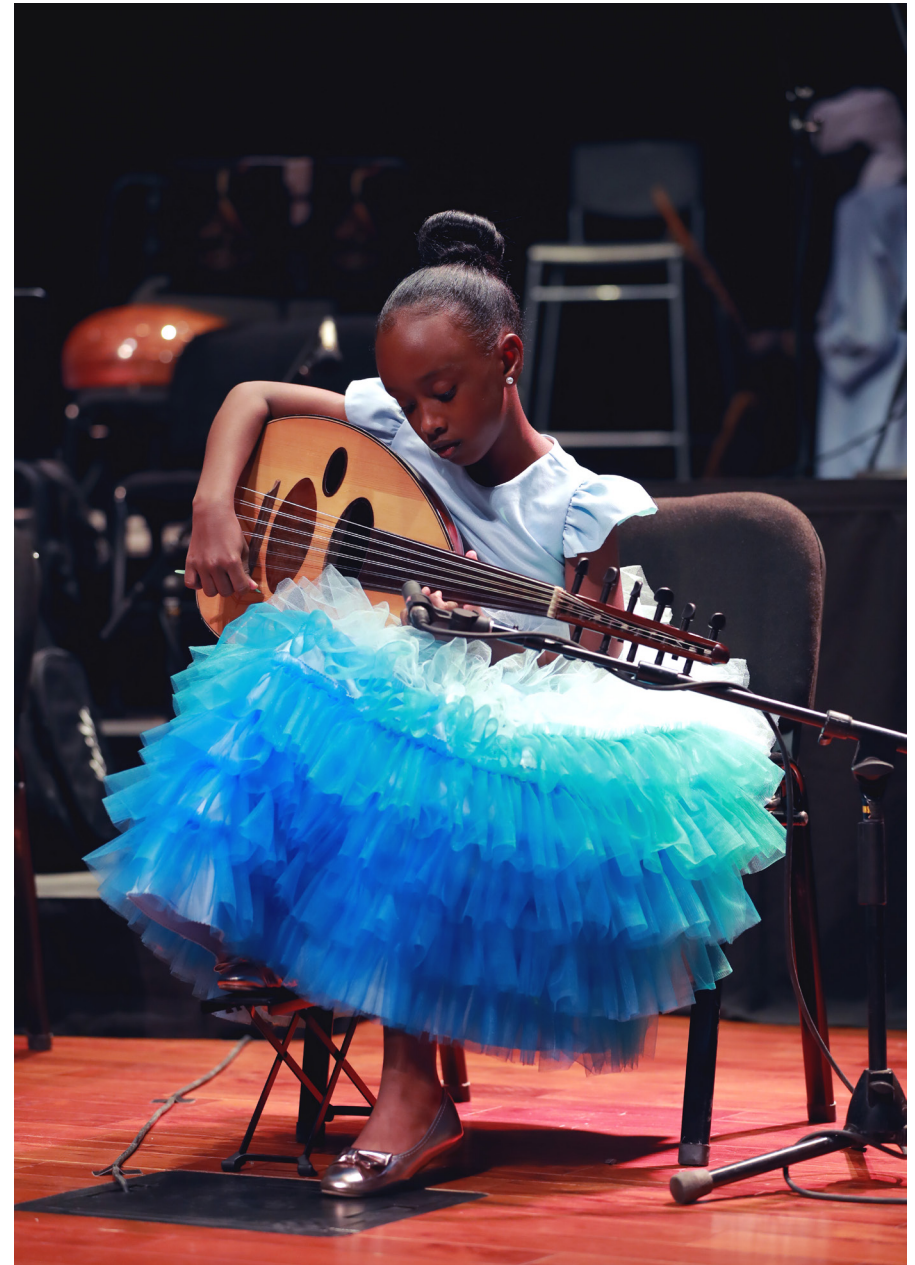
Bait Al Oud was established in 2008 to spread awareness of the culture and music of 'Oud', which is considered one of the oldest Arabic musical instruments. Bait Al Oud also teaches strumming techniques on various 'Oud' methods and facilitates dealings with various well-known schools to unearth a new generation of professional musicians and qualify them to a high level of specialization.

Khartoum, the capital of Sudan, joined the list of Arab cities hosting Bait Al Oud in January 2020, sponsored by Dal Group and supervised by international musician Naseer Shamma, Bait Al Oud's founder.

With the Arabic Bait Al Oud curriculum, a special curriculum for the pentatonic scale that characterizes Sudanese music is being developed to be taught in Bait Al Oud - Khartoum, which aims to be the African center for teaching Arabic musical instruments. The curriculum will be shared and studied with other oud houses in Cairo, Abu Dhabi, Baghdad, and Alexandria.

Besides training Sudanese musicians, Bait al Oud also produces original musical compositions and performs them on international stages. Bait Al Oud Orchestra was founded in August 2021 by Bait Al Oud students and musicians from all over Sudan under the supervision of Dr. Naseer Shamma and led by Mr. Ahmed Shamma. Bait Al Oud Orchestra, Khartoum prides itself as it brings Sudanese musical pieces to life reflecting unique and different rhythmic tones among other Arabian and international pieces.

This event was supported by DAL Group in collaboration with the International Center for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM), Tribe and The Africa Institute, Sharjah.



Bait Al Oud was established in 2008 to spread awareness of the culture and music of 'Oud', which is considered one of the oldest Arabic musical instruments.



Culture meets music: The Africa Institute hosts timeless artistry of the 'Oud' by Bait Al Oud - Khartoum Orchestra at the Africa Hall on December 7-8, 2022.

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