

Chrystel OLOUKOI
Department of Geography
Washington University
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Areas of interest

night studies, time, temporality; surveillance, policing, sovereignty; political economy, labor, leisure; gender, sexuality, transactional sex.

Black studies, African studies, urban studies, critical geography, queer theory, legal anthropology, sonic ethnography, history.

Black cinema; African cinema; guerilla filmmaking; Queer Cinema; Third Cinema; experimental cinema.

Education

- 2024 PhD in African and African American Studies, Harvard University
Primary field: Social Anthropology; *Secondary fields:* Critical Media Practice; Women, Gender & Sexuality Studies
- 2017 MA, Geography of the Global South, Paris 1 - Panthéon Sorbonne, France
- 2014 BA, Geography and Planning, Paris 1 - Panthéon Sorbonne, France
- 2013 Admitted at the Ecole Normale Supérieure of Paris (ENS), France

Short programs

- 2022 **Color Reversal**, an analog-based arts incubator for BIPOC creators by the Saskatchewan Filmpool Cooperative
- 2021 **Flaherty Seminar**, programmed by Janaína Oliveira
- Film Futura**, an alternative film school by [No Evil Eye](#)
- Archives in Non-Fiction Cinema**, by Onyeka Igwe, University College London and Open City Documentary Festival

Professional experience

Teaching and mentorship

- 2022- **Social Studies Senior Thesis Advisor**, Chloe Koulefanou (class of 2023), “*You’re not a Country, Togo*,” Harvard University

- 2022 **Women, Gender and Sexuality Junior Tutorial**, Teaching Fellow, taught by Durba Mitra, Harvard University
Awarded a Certificate of Distinction in Teaching for the Spring 2022 semester by the Office of Undergraduate Education
- Social Anthropology Junior Tutorial**, Teaching Fellow, Harvard University
Awarded a Certificate of Distinction in Teaching for the Spring 2022 semester by the Office of Undergraduate Education
- Women, Gender and Sexuality Senior Thesis Reader**, Harvard University
- 2019 **Work/Study Circle animator**, Center for Black, Brown and Queer Studies
- Global Feminisms**, Teaching Fellow, General Education course taught by Durba Mitra, Harvard University
Awarded a Certificate of Distinction in Teaching for the Fall 2022 semester by the Office of Undergraduate Education
- 2016-2017 Teacher at the PEI Program at the Ecole Normale Supérieure, Paris, France
- 2015-2016 **French lecturer**, Tulane University
- Other*
- 2022 **Pre-selector, Open City Documentary Festival**, 2022 programming team
- Diversity, Inclusion, Belonging Fellow, Harvard University**, appointed to the Women, Gender and Sexuality department
- 2021- **Curatorial Intern at Canyon Cinema, San Francisco**, curated program *“Playing in the Dark: Watery Experiments”*
- 2020- **Co-curator of [Monangambee](#)**, Lagos-based nomadic microcinema
- 2020 **Intern at the British Film Institute**, covering the 2020 edition of the London Film Festival (LFF2020) for *Sight and Sound*
- 2019 **Fact-Checking Research Assistant at the Shorenstein Center on Media, Politics and Public Policy (Harvard Kennedy School)** on social media, instant-messaging apps and disinformation
- Board of Directors and Work/Study Circle animator**, Center for Black, Brown and Queer Studies
- 2018 **Research Assistant** for Emmanuel Akyeampong’s forthcoming book, *The First Generation of Independent African Leaders and the Making of the Nation-State*
- Research Assistant** for Julie Kleinman’s 2019 book, *Borders in the Capital: Public Space, Migration and the Making of the African Hub in Paris* (University of California Press)

Awards and honors (selection)

- 2022 Carter Woodson Institute Predoctoral Fellowship
Mellon ACLS Dissertation Completion Fellowship – *declined*
British Council New Connections (in partnership with Culture Art Society / CAS)
Harvard Film Study Center (FSC) Fellowship
- 2021 Wenner-Gren Fellowship
Canyon Cinema Curatorial Fellowship
Critical Media Practice Mellon Fellowship, Harvard University
FSC Flaherty Fellowship
- 2020 Sheldon Traveling Fellowship
Philippe Wamba Grant, Harvard University
Weatherhead Center Research Mid-dissertation Grant, Harvard University
- 2019 Merit Fellowship, Harvard University
Center for African Studies Research Grant, Harvard University
Weatherhead Center Language Training Grant, Harvard University
- 2018 Vogelheim Hansen Research and Travel Fund for Africa, Harvard University
- 2017 Presidential Scholarship, Harvard University
Arthur Sachs Fellowship, Harvard University
Fulbright Travel Grant – *declined*

Publications

Peer-reviewed articles

- 2022 “Archive fetishes: did the fire read the stories it burnt?” *World Records* [forthcoming]
- 2016 Oloukoi, C. (2016) « La marche urbaine : un outil pour appréhender les émotions à Johannesburg ? », *Les Carnets de géographes*, n°9
Translation: The urban walk, a tool to apprehend emotions in Johannesburg?
- Oloukoi, C. (2016) « Nuits, objets de peurs et de désirs à Maboneng », *Sociétés politiques comparées*, n°38, 2016.
Translation: Nights, objects of fear and desire in Maboneng

Book chapters

- 2018 Oloukoi, C. (2018) “Precarious Gentrification: Dreading the Night while ‘Taking Back the City’ in Johannesburg,” in *Exploring nightlife: Space, Society and Governance*, Eldridge, A. & Nofre, J. (eds), Rowman & Littlefield.

Commissions (criticism; art; cartography)

- 2023 [\[Essay\]](#) “Filming on an African Rhythm: Safi Faye, Cinematic Griot,” *Air Afrique*
- 2022 [\[Maps\]](#) “Fela’s Lagos”, exhibition and catalog maps for the Philharmonie de Paris’ forthcoming exhibition *Fela Anikulapo-Kuti: Rebellion Afrobeat* at the Cité de la Musique.
- [\[Essay\]](#) Playing in the Dark, Watery Experiments: Curatorial Essay, Canyon Cinema, October 2022
- [\[Review\]](#) Chrystel Oloukoï on Self-Portrait: Fairy Tale in 47KM, Program booklet for *Open City Documentary Festival*, London, September 2022
- [\[Interview\]](#) In the Black Fantastic: A Conversation with Ekow Eshun, BFI, July 2022
- [\[Interview\]](#) Art and Craft: Neptune Frost, *Film Comment*, June 2022
- [\[Essay\]](#) “A Chorus for the Revolution: On Sarah Maldoror’s Sambizanga” *Metrograph*, June 2022
- [\[Essay\]](#) “Rosine Mbakam: The Art of Non-fiction”, April 2022, for the retrospective organized by Open City Documentary Festival and Birkbeck Institute of the Moving Image (BIMI)
- [\[Essay\]](#) “Dakan, 25 years after: the queer landmark that haunts African film”, *BFI*, March 2022
- 2021 [\[Essay\]](#) “Survival is in the Mouth”. Grief & Disaster Storytelling in This Is Not A Burial, It’s A Resurrection, Program Booklet for *Edges of Belief*, curated by Emily Wright, December 2021
- [\[Review\]](#) “Bantú Mama looks at the African diaspora through a contemporary lens” *Sight & Sound*, November 2021
- [\[Feature\]](#) “Six African films not to miss at the LFF”, *BFI*, October 2021
- [\[Essay\]](#) Where to begin with Ousmane Sembène? *BFI*, June 2021
- [\[Video essay\]](#) The Cinema of Kelly Reichardt, Bird’s Eye View / MUBI, June 2021
- [\[Interview\]](#) Life before the Moomins: behind the scenes of a new biopic of creator Tove Jansson, BFI, March 2021
- [\[Feature\]](#) “Five recommendations at BFI Flare 2021”, *BFI*, March 2021
- [\[Video Essay\]](#) Women, Gender and Sexuality in Weimar Cinema, BFI, March 2021
- [\[Essay\]](#) “The Watermelon Woman at 25: the Black lesbian classic that wears its brilliance lightly”, *BFI*, February 2021
- [\[Liner notes\]](#) Leontine Sagan, a life in movement: careful libertinage and kaleidoscopic selves, BFI DVD, February 2021

[[Review](#)] MLK/FBI is one of these stories America loves to tell about itself, *Sight & Sound*, January 2021

2020 [[Public talk](#)] A Conversation with Merawi Gerima, Los Angeles Filmforum December 2020

[[Essay](#)] “Notes from the Nigerian New Wave”, *Sight & Sound*, December 2020.

[[Interview](#)] Damilola Orimogunje, director of For Maria Ebun Pataki, The British Blacklist, November 2020

[[Listen](#) | [Transcript](#)] “Audio review of TIME: How Garrett Bradley’s temporal symphony clocks the cruelty of mass incarceration”, BFI, October 2020

[[Review](#)] “Eyimofe (This Is My Desire) charts broken dreams of migration in an indomitable Lagos”, BFI, October 2020

[[Review](#)] “Lovers Rock finds respite and rapture in a Black London house party”, BFI, October 2020

[[Review](#)] “The Eagle’s Nest is a funny, cynical take on the tired trope of African desires of migration”, TBB, October 2020

[[Interview](#)] Olivier Assoua, director of The Eagle’s Nest, The British Blacklist, October 2020

Conferences, seminars, talks

Conferences (selection)

2022 “Nocturnal Lagos: In the searchlight of a police cruiser”, Conference Encounters with the Urban Night, organized by the Visual Research Network (VRN), Estonian National Museum, (Tartu, Estonia), June 2022

2021 Roundtable participant, “Centering Blackness in the Anthropology of Africa”, American Anthropological Association Annual Conference (Baltimore, MD)

Panelist, “Author Meets Readers: *Engaging Classify, Exclude, Police: Urban Lives in South Africa and Nigeria* by Laurent Fourchard (John Wiley, 2021)”, Lagos Studies Association (Lagos, Nigeria)

2020 “Disciplining the night in colonial Lagos (1920s-1950s)”, International Conference in Night Studies, (Lisbon, Portugal – *moved online due to covid-19*)

2019 “The Politics of Leisure and Exhaustion in Lagos Nightlife: “Release” as endless labor” Lagos Studies Association (Lagos, Nigeria)

2018 “Tired Bodies, Tired Worlds: On the Social Reproduction of Disposable Bodies in Two Colonial Cities” The Productive Body Conference, Birkbeck University, (London, UK)

“I need to tire my body’: A Political Economy of Nightlife in Postcolonial Lagos”
Graduate Student Conference, “Exhaustion, Tired Worlds, Tired Bodies”, English
Department, University of Chicago (Chicago, IL)

“Governing through sex? The politics of sexualized bodies, landscapes and
temporalities in Allen Avenue (Lagos, Nigeria)” AAG 2018, Annual Meeting of the
Association of American Geographers (New Orleans, LA)

2017 “The Uses of the Night: Liminality and Spectrality in Johannesburg and Lagos”
Panel: “Nocturnal Cities”, 7th European Conference on African Studies (Basel,
Switzerland)

Organization of conferences or masterclasses

2023-2024 Co-organizer of the African Studies Colloquium (University of Virginia,
Charlottesville)

2020

[#EndSARS Teach-in](#): rapid response event on the ongoing coloniality of policing
in Nigeria

2019 “Looking for/from Public Spaces in African Cities”, a masterclass and symposium
co-organized with the support of the African Studies Institute in Ibadan, the
University of Lagos and the French Institute for Research in Africa (IFRA).
Keynote speakers: Filip de Boeck (Leuven) Philippe Gervais-Lambony (Paris 10)

Invited talks, panels and workshops

2024 Tozzer Library Pride Talk, Harvard University, June 2024

“Black Queer Placemaking: Methods, Histories, Diasporas” University of
Pennsylvania, March 2024

2022 “Issues in Prison Documentaries”, moderator, *Getting Real 22*, International
Documentary Association (IDA), September 2022,

“Africa’s Urban Futures”, Université de Genève (Geneva, Switzerland), September
2022

“Modernités africaines. Conversations, circulations, décentremments”, Ecole
Normale Supérieure of Paris, (France), June 2022

“Talking Back: bell hooks and Her Impact on Our Work”, roundtable, The New
School, May 2022

Panel on Sarah Maldoror in the context of Yasmina Price’s screening series *In the
Images, Behind the Camera: Women’s Political Cinema, 1959—1992*, panelist, Brooklyn

Academy of Music (BAM), May 2022

[“Pause and Black Feminist Thought\(s\)”](#) Panel, University of Pennsylvania, Screening Scholarship Media Festival, Center for Experimental Ethnography, March 2022

Screening of “Night Litany” and public lecture, "Black Nocturnal: An Anti-ethnography of Lagos nights", University of Iowa, Department of Cinematic Arts

2021 “Comparative Conceptualizations of Time in Nairobi and Lagos”, *African Urbanisms Series* organized by Halimat Somotan and Devanne Brookins at Princeton University, with Mamadou Diouf (Columbia University) as respondent.

2020 “Decolonizing Ethnographic Film”, French Institute of Research in Africa (IFRA); African Studies Institute, University of Ibadan, (Ibadan, Nigeria)

2019 “Coding and Referencing for Qualitative Research”, French Institute of Research in Africa (IFRA); African Studies Institute, University of Ibadan, (Ibadan, Nigeria)

“Sonic Ethnography”, French Institute of Research in Africa (IFRA); African Studies Institute, University of Ibadan, (Ibadan, Nigeria)

2018 “Research Assistants, Colonial Research Infrastructures and Ethics”, French Institute of Research in Africa (IFRA); African Studies Institute, University of Ibadan, (Ibadan, Nigeria)

2017 “Politics of Fear, Politics of Release: Policing the Night through Emotions in Johannesburg and Lagos”, Seminar “Geographies of Emotions”, Ecole Normale Supérieure of Paris, (France)

2016 “Nocturnal Fieldwork”, Seminar “Fieldwork and methodology of research”, *Paris 1 - Panthéon Sorbonne* (France)

Podcast episodes

2021 [“The Watermelon Woman with Chrystal Oloukoi”](#), The Bechdel Cast

[“First Cow and the work of Kelly Reichardt”](#), Girls on Film

[“Cities After Dark — Into the Night”](#), University of Melbourne

2019 [“Who owns the night?”](#), Veritalk, Harvard University

Media projects and curated programs (selection)

2024 “On the Ocean Black Night” part of the *black nocturnal* series, physical screening as part of Rian Crane’s solo exhibition at Fresh’Arts Houston, May-July 2024

- 2022 *Playing in the Dark: Watery Experiments* (Canyon Cinema)
 Online screening, followed by physical screenings at The Roxie Theater (SF), Speed Cinema (Louisville), and other venues October 16-onwards.
- [*Black Women Experimental Filmmakers*](#) (Culture Arts Society & Monangambee)
 British-Council funded project, September 19-25th, available online, worldwide.
- Lagos Pride Film Festival*, physical screening at hFACTOR, Lagos.
- “*Night Litany*”, part of the *Black Nocturnal series*.
- Online screening, University of Iowa, Department of Cinematic Arts
 - Online screening, [Disembodied Territories](#), LSE
 - Physical screening, Estonian National Museum, (Tartu, Estonia), June 2022
- [Anti-Ethnography: Two films by Christopher Harris and Sebastian Wiedemann](#)
 (Monangambee)
 Online screening
- 2021 [Carceral Frames, Fugitive Dreams](#) (Monangambee)
 Physical screening at hFACTOR, Lagos.
- [Queer Celluloid](#) (Monangambee)
 Physical screening at hFACTOR, Lagos.

Professional affiliations

- 2021 Society for Cinema and Media Studies
- 2019- Association of American Anthropology
- 2017- Lagos Studies Association
- 2017-2018 Association of American Geographers
- 2015- Reading Committee of *Urbanités*: A French online academic journal devoted to a comprehensive analysis of urban spaces across the North/South divide.

Languages

- Proficiency French, English, Yoruba, Pidgin, Spanish
- Advanced IsiZulu
- Intermediary Portuguese, Turkish, German, Modern Arabic, Egyptian Dialect

Digital tools

Audiovisual production Final Cut, Premiere, Photoshop, Lightroom, Audition, ProTools, After Effects

*Cartography,
GIS, and
Statistics* Illustrator, ArcGIS, QGIS, R, R Studio

*Qualitative
analysis* Sonal, Dedoose, ATLAS.ti, NVivo