

CHRYSTEL OLOUKOÏ

Website

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

Diploma from the Ecole Normale Supérieure of Paris (ENS), France

Academic appointment

2024 Assistant Professor, Geography Department, University of Washington, Seattle.

Research interests

night, nightlife; carceral and abolition geographies; cities, urban studies, public spaces; slavery, colonialism, empire; political economy of time, labor and leisure; queer politics, transactional sex; nocturnal ecologies, black ecologies; black geographies, black studies

Publications

- *Books*

Oloukoï, C. (manuscript under preparation). *black nocturnal, insurgent nightscapes and ecologies in Lagos*.

Oloukoï, C. (2026). *Penser, changer, combattre avec bell hooks*, Editions Payot

- *Peer-reviewed articles*

Oloukoï, C. (forthcoming). "On Lagos night/life and queer inhabitation(s)" special issue "Blackness and Inhabitation," edited by Aicha Diallo, Alana Osbourne and Asha Best, *Public Culture*

Bergamelli, A. A., Oloukoï, C., & Emmanuel, E. (2025). On Screening *Sambizanga* in Lagos: The Monangambee Film Collective in Conversation. *Black Camera*, 17(1), 143-154.

Oloukoï, C. (2022). "Archive fetishes: did the fire read the stories it burnt?" *World Records*, 7 (5).

Oloukoï, C. (2016). « La marche urbaine : un outil pour appréhender les émotions à Johannesburg ? », *Les Carnets de géographes*, n°9

Oloukoï, C. (2016). « Nuits, objets de peurs et de désirs à Maboneng », *Sociétés politiques comparées*, n°38, 2016.

Oloukoï, C., Guinard, P. (2016). « La nuit à Maboneng (Johannesburg, Afrique du Sud): un front urbain entre sécurisation, marchandisation et contestation. » *L'Espace Politique*, (30).

- *Book chapters*

Oloukoï, C. (forthcoming). "Blinded By The Light: Beyond Enlightenment Thinking" in *Cinema and the City in the Era of Planetary Urbanisation*, by Nitin Bathla, Silvia Cipelletti, Markus Lähteenmäki and Klearjos E. Papanicolaou (co-eds), De Gruyter Brill.

Oloukoï, C. (forthcoming). "Filming on an African Rhythm: Safi Faye, Cinematic Griot," in *Black Feminist Theories*, Carole Boyce Davies, Bibi Bakare-Yusuf, Janell C, Hobson, Christen Smith (co-eds), Bloomsbury Academic. [authorized reprint of a previous commissioned essay for *Air Afrique* n°1, 2023]

Oloukoï, 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.

- *Public-facing writing*

- 2026 [forthcoming] “A Page of Madness.” *Notebook*, MUBI, 2026
- [liner notes] “Yam Daabo: On Idrissa Ouedraogo’s Humanist Cinema,” Criterion, World Cinema box set #5
- 2025 “Labouring Acts: On Karimah Ashadu.” Film London, 2025 Jarman Awards
- “Riotous Frequencies,” for *Nigeria Imaginary*, Venice Biennale Exposition Catalog, MOWAA Publishing
- “The Night Otherwise: Nocturnal Space in Japanese Edo Prints and Rājput Court Paintings,” *The Curationist*, August 2025.
- “États-Unis : pour la désobéissance sur les campus,” *La Déferlante*, n°18, May 2025
- 2024 “What I am Reading Now...” A space in-between, #4, Cooper Gallery, October 2024.
- “The African Gaze” *Metrograph*, September 2024
- “On View: An Artist Who Uses Plants as Camouflage,” *T Magazine / New York Times*, February 2024
- 2023 “Filming on an African Rhythm: Safi Faye, Cinematic Griot,” *Air Afrique*
- “A World of Nightwalkers,” Three Essays on Jean-Pierre Bekolo’s *The Bloodettes*, Brixton Community Cinema
- 2022 [Exhibition maps, catalog maps] “Fela’s Lagos”, Philharmonie de Paris’ exhibition *Fela Anikulapo-Kuti: Rebellion Afrobeat* at the Cité de la Musique.
- “Playing in the Dark, Watery Experiments: Curatorial Essay,” Canyon Cinema, October 2022
- “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

Art and Craft: Neptune Frost, *Film Comment*, June 2022

“A Chorus for the Revolution: On Sarah Maldoror’s *Sambizanga*” *Metrograph*, June 2022

“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)

“Dakan, 25 years after: the queer landmark that haunts African film”, BFI, March 2022

2021

“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

“Bantú Mama looks at the African diaspora through a contemporary lens” *Sight & Sound*, November 2021

“Six African films not to miss at the LFF”, BFI, October 2021

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

“Five recommendations at BFI Flare 2021”, BFI, March 2021

[video essay] *Women, Gender and Sexuality in Weimar Cinema*, BFI, March 2021

“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

“MLK/FBI is one of these stories America loves to tell about itself,” *Sight & Sound*, January 2021

- 2020 [\[audio\]](#) [\[transcript\]](#) “Audio review of TIME: How Garrett Bradley’s temporal symphony clocks the cruelty of mass incarceration”, BFI, October 2020
 “Eyimofe (This Is My Desire) charts broken dreams of migration in an indomitable Lagos”, BFI, October 2020
 “Lovers Rock finds respite and rapture in a Black London house party”, BFI, October 2020
 “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

Awards and honors

- 2026 Simpson Center’s Society of Scholars
- 2025 Incentive Prize (First Place), International Association of Art Critics (AICA)
 Royalty Research Fund Grant, UW
 ACLS Digital Justice Seed Grant
 Simpson Center Research Cluster Grant, UW
 Simpson Center Whiteley Faculty Writing Fellowship, UW
 Global Innovation Fund Research Award, UW
 Global Innovation Fund Teaching Award, UW
- 2024 Curationist Fellowship
- 2023 Inaugural Irene Yamamoto Arts Writers Fellowship, Japanese American National Museum
- 2022 Carter Woodson Institute Predoctoral Fellowship
 Mellon ACLS Dissertation Completion Fellowship – *declined*
 British Council New Connections (with CAS / Culture Art Society)
 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*

Teaching and mentoring

Student supervision

Co-chair:

Winter Smiley, UW Geography, MA

Committees:

Yveline Saint-Louis, UW Anthropology, PhD
Madalena Monnier-Reyna, UW Geography, PhD

Undergraduate advising:

Sumaya Mohamed Mohamud, UW Geography
Edwin Bai, UW Geography

Courses

- 2026 **GEOG | CMS 595** Dark Ecologies: Race and the Environment, UW
GEOG 295 Urban Symphonies, UW
GEOG 425 Qualitative Methods, UW
GEOG 595 | CMS 595 Carceral Geographies, UW
- 2025 **GEOG 277** Geography of Cities, UW
GEOG 425 Qualitative Methods, UW
GEOG | CMS 595 Dark Ecologies: Race and the Environment, UW
Humanities Data Science Summer Institute, UW

2023 Wayward Critique | Film Futura virtual school, [No Evil Eye](#)

Professional service

Grant reviews	Wenner-Gren Foundation (2024-) Creative Capital Award (2024)
Selection committees	Open City Documentary Festival (2022-2024) Lagos Queer Film Festival (2021-)
Boards	Center for Black, Brown and Queer Studies, Boston, MA, United States (2019-2020) Obodo , Nigeria (2025-)
Referee (articles)	<i>Urbanités</i> <i>Bulletin de l'Association de Géographes Français</i> <i>Journal for the Anthropology of North America</i>
Referee (books)	Routledge
Professional memberships	Association of American Geographers Association for the Study of the Arts of the Present Association for the study of the worldwide African diaspora Global Urban History Project Lagos Studies Association National Council of Black Studies
Departmental service	UW Geography, Colloquium (2025-2026) UW Geography, Tenure and Promotion Guidelines Committee (2025-2026)

Other professional experiences

Internships	Canyon Cinema, San Francisco, CA (2021-2022) British Film Institute, London, UK (2020)
Research assistantships	Shorenstein Center on Media, Politics and Public Policy (Harvard Kennedy School) <i>Akyeampong, E. (2023) The First Generation of Independent African Leaders and the Making of the Nation-State. Indiana University Press.</i>

Kleinman, J. (2019) *Borders in the Capital: Public Space, Migration and the Making of the African Hub in Paris*. University of California Press.

Lectureships French lecturer, Tulane University, New Orleans, LA (2015-2016), as part of an academic exchange with ENS Ulm Paris.

Conference participation

2026 Roundtable. "Conducting Research in Nigeria: Reflections on Archival and Fieldwork Experience," Lagos Studies Association Conference, June 2026.

Panelist, "The nocturnal outdoors: atmospherics of freedom in (post)colonial Lagos," for session "Geographies and Ecologies of Counter/Insurgency," Association of American Geographers, San Francisco, CA, March 2026.

Roundtable, "Dark Black Study: On the Offensive," National Council of Black Studies, Baltimore, MD, March 2026.

Roundtable, "The Decolonization of the Black Race': Nathan Hare, Black Studies, and Radical Ecologies," AAG, San Francisco, CA, March 2026.

2025 Panelist, "Un/settlements: On Lagos Night/life and Queer Inhabitation(s)" for session, "After Dark: Empire, Race, and the Political Economy of Nightlife," American Studies Association, San Juan, Puerto Rico, November 2025.

Panelist, "Concrete ecologies and the atmospherics of freedom in colonial Lagos," for session, "Navigating Urban Ecologies in West Africa," Association for the Study of the Worldwide African Diaspora (ASWAD), Saint-Louis, MO, October 2025.

Panelist, "Nighttime Lights," for session, "Global Lagos," Global Urban History Project, Berlin, July 2025.

Panelist, "Nightwalkers," for session, "Still in Flight: Geographies of Marronage in Africa and the Diaspora." Anthropology and the Black Experience Conference, University of Cheikh Anta Diop, Dakar, Senegal, May 2025.

- 2024 Roundtable, “Echoes From A Sunless Place,” Association of the Arts of the Present (ASAP), New-York, United States.
- 2019 Panelist. “The Politics of Leisure and Exhaustion in Lagos Nightlife” Lagos Studies Association, Lagos, Nigeria, June 2019.
- 2018 Panelist. “Tired Bodies, Tired Worlds: Perspectives from Nocturnal Lagos” Body Productive Conference, Birkbeck, University of London, December 2018
- Panelist. “I need to tire my body” - Exhaustion and the Political Economy of Nightlife in Lagos.” Conference, Exhaustion: Tired Bodies, Tired Worlds, Franke Institute for the Humanities, University of Chicago, IL, November 2018.
- 2017 “The Uses of the Night: Liminality and Spectrality in Johannesburg and Lagos” Panel: “Nocturnal Cities”, 7th European Conference on African Studies (Basel, Switzerland), June 2017.
- 2016 Panelist, “Governing Through Sex? the Politics of Sexualized Bodies, Landscapes and Temporalities in Allen Avenue (Lagos, Nigeria)” for session "Geographies of Sex, Sexuality and Sex Work: Myths, Imaginaries and Realities" AAG, San Francisco, CA, March 2016.

Public-facing talks

- 2020 [A Conversation with Merawi Gerima](#), Los Angeles Filmforum, December
- [#EndSARS Teach-in](#): rapid response event on the ongoing coloniality of policing in Nigeria

Organized conferences, talks, events, workshops

- 2026 Geography Colloquium, University of Washington (Winter and Spring)
- Black Digital Studies in the Age of Technofascism (in collaboration with LaShawnDa Pittman, Golden Owens, Jelani Ince), University of Washington

- 2025 Geography Colloquium, University of Washington (Fall)
- Film & Storytelling, Treehouse, Lagos, Nigeria (in collaboration with Monangambee), January 11, 2025
- 2024 African Studies Colloquium (University of Virginia, Charlottesville)
- 2023 African Studies Colloquium (University of Virginia, Charlottesville)
- 2021 [Film and the Social Sciences](#), Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan
- 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)
Role: co-organizer
- 2018 “Can the Migrant Speak?” Mahindra Center for the Humanities, Harvard University, April 2018.

Invited keynote lectures, talks and seminars

- 2026 Keynote. Youth in the City: Towards an African Feminist Urban Ethnography Workshop, Lagos, Nigeria, June 20-23, 2026
- Invited Speaker. Urban Popular Economies School, Nairobi, Kenya, April 27-30 2026.
- 2025 Invited Speaker. “Nocturnal Lagos: In the searchlight of a police cruiser.” IFRA-IAS (Institute of African Studies) Joint Seminar, University of Ibadan, Nigeria, December 4, 2025.
- Invited Speaker. “Economías populares en el sur global: debates y experiencias desde África: economía política de la noche.” Latin American Council of Social Sciences | El Consejo Latinoamericano de Ciencias Sociales (CLACSO), Economías Populares y Feministas, Buenos Aires, Argentina, June 24, 2025.
- Invited Speaker. Complete Disorder: Resistance and Refusal to Colonial Legacy in the Arts and Humanities, May 8, 2025. Brown University, Providence, RI.
- Invited Speaker. “The House We Must Build,” Festival organized by Thandi Loewenson and Huda Tayob, Center for Planetary

Pedagogies (C4PP), LAPA Brixton and Johannesburg Art Gallery, February 2025.

- 2024 “Casas sustitutivas y la economía nocturna en Lagos (Nigeria),” Urban Popular Economies in the Global South, El Alto | La Paz, Bolivia, November 3-9, 2024.
- Invited Speaker. “Black Queer Placemaking: Methods, Histories, Diasporas.” Department of Africana Studies 11th Annual Colloquium, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA, March 21, 2024.
- 2023 Invited Speaker. “Black Urban Extensions.” Urban Extensions, Beyond Inhabitation, University of London Institute in Paris
- 2020 Invited Speaker. “Comparative Conceptualizations of Time in Nairobi and Lagos,” Comparative Urbanisms Series, Princeton University, NJ, March 2020.
- 2018 Invited Speaker. “Nocturnal Fieldwork and Assisted Field Research,” French Institute in Ibadan, Nigeria (IFRA), University of 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)

Curation: programs, exhibitions, screenings

- 2025 [AfterImages](#)
- curated art installation at G. A. S. Foundation, Lagos, Nigeria, June 19-21, 2025
 - physical screening at G. A. S. Foundation, Lagos, Nigeria, June 21, 2025
 - streaming online worldwide, August 18-24, 2025
- [Lagos Queer Film Festival](#) June 13-15, 2025, at PADÀ, Lagos, Nigeria
- [Unsettled Grounds](#), simultaneous physical screening at G. A. S. Foundation, Lagos, Nigeria, and ICA London, January 10, 2026
- [Watery Yearning](#), simultaneous physical screening at Treehouse, Lagos, Nigeria, and ICA London, January 11, 2026

[Tricksters](#), streaming online worldwide, January 20-26, 2025

- 2024 [Sudanese Experimental Cinema](#)
- streaming online worldwide, June 3-9, 2025
 - physical screening at Treehouse, Lagos, Nigeria, May 4, 2025

2023 Queer Motions, REDCAT Roy and Edna Disney CalArts Theater, CALARTS California Institute of the Arts [\[poster\]](#) [\[booklet\]](#)

[Lagos Queer Film Festival](#) June 25, 2023, at Treehouse, Lagos, Nigeria

- 2022 [Archival Mappings, Three by Onyeka Igwe](#)
- physical screening, December 3, 2022, at Treehouse, Lagos
 - streaming online worldwide, December 18-25, 2022

[Playing in the Dark: Watery Experiments](#)

- physical screening at The Roxie Theater, San Francisco, CA
- physical screening at Speed Cinema, Louisville, KY
- streaming online worldwide, October 23-29, 2022

[Spectral Grounds, Black Experimental Film](#) (in collaboration with [Culture Arts Society](#)), streaming online worldwide, September 19-25, 2022

[Lagos Queer Film Festival](#) June 25, 2022, at hFACTOR, Lagos, Nigeria

[Anti-Ethnography: Two films by Christopher Harris and Sebastian Wiedemann](#), streaming online worldwide, February 21-28, 2022

2021 [Carceral Frames, Fugitive Dreams](#), physical screening, November 13, 2021, at hFACTOR, Lagos, Nigeria

[Queer celluloid](#), physical screening, September 4, 2021, at hFACTOR, Lagos, Nigeria

Screening of personal works

- 2025 “On the Ocean Black Night,” at the occasion of “The House We Must Build,” Festival organized by Thandi Loewenson and Huda Tayob, Center for Planetary Pedagogies (C4PP), LAPA Brixton and Johannesburg Art Gallery.
- 2024 “On the Ocean Black Night,” physical screening commissioned by Rian Crane, Fresh’Arts Houston, TX.
- 2023 black nocturnal, CALARTS California Institute of the Arts
- 2022 **“Night Litany”, part of the Black Nocturnal series.**
- University of Iowa, Department of Cinematic Arts
 - [Disembodied Territories](#), LSE
 - Estonian National Museum, (Tartu, Estonia), June 2022

Languages and skills

Proficient	French (native), English, Yoruba, Spanish
Advanced	Portuguese, IsiZulu
Intermediary	Turkish, Swahili, Modern Arabic
Mapping	Illustrator, ArcGIS, QGIS
Editing	Creative Cloud (Premiere, Lightroom, Photoshop, Audition, After Effects)
Other	Atlas.ti, NVivo, Airtable