

# MATTHEW OMELSKY

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## ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

Associate Professor, Department of English, Department of Black Studies, and the Graduate Program in Visual & Cultural Studies, University of Rochester, 2024-

Director of Undergraduate Studies, Department of Black Studies, 2024-2026  
Faculty Affiliate in Film & Media Studies, 2019-

Assistant Professor, Department of English, University of Rochester, 2019 – 2024

Mellon Foundation Postdoctoral Fellow, Department of African American Studies, Pennsylvania State University, 2018-2019

## EDUCATION

Ph.D., English, Duke University, 2018  
M.P.S., Africana Studies, Cornell University, 2011  
B.A., Africana Studies, Politics, New York University, 2007

## PUBLICATIONS

### BOOK

*Fugitive Time: Global Aesthetics and the Black Beyond*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2023.

### JOURNAL ARTICLES & BOOK CHAPTERS

“Queer Césaire.” *Small Axe: A Caribbean Journal of Criticism* 28, no. 1 (2024): 1-19.

“Speculative African Slavery.” In *The Cambridge Companion to Global Literature and Slavery*, edited by Laura T. Murphy, 49-61. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2023.

“Being and Becoming: The Grammar of Black Theory.” *InVisible Culture* 31 (2020).

“African Fugitivities.” *The Black Scholar* 50, no. 1 (2020): 56-69.

“The Creaturely Modernism of Amos Tutuola.” *Cultural Critique* 99 (2018): 66-96.

With Ian Baucom, “Knowledge in the Age of Climate Change.” *South Atlantic Quarterly* 116, no. 1 (2017): 1-18.

“After the End Times?: Postcrisis African Science Fiction.” *Cambridge Journal of Postcolonial Literary Inquiry* 1, no. 1 (2014): 33-49.

“Jean-Pierre Bekolo’s African Cyborgian Thought.” *Nka: Journal of Contemporary African Art* 31 (2012): 6-21.

“Chris Abani and the Politics of Ambivalence.” *Research in African Literatures* 42, no. 4 (2011): 84-96.

### EDITED COLLECTION

With Ian Baucom, “Climate Change and the Production of Knowledge.” *South Atlantic Quarterly* 116, no. 1 (2017).

#### REVIEWS & INTERVIEWS

Review of Cajetan Iheka’s *African Ecomedia: Network Forms, Planetary Politics* (Duke UP, 2021), *Journal of the African Literature Association* 16, no. 3 (2022): 525-526.

“Chronicling the Metropolis: Q&A with *Jungle Jim* – South African Pulp Fiction Zine,” *Brittlepaper.com*, October 2013.

“African Science Fiction Makes a Comeback: A Review of *AfroSF*,” *Brittlepaper.com*, June 2013.

#### FELLOWSHIPS & AWARDS

2023	G. Graydon and Jane W. Curtis Award for Nontenured Faculty Teaching Excellence, University of Rochester
2023	Faculty Fellowship, Humanities Center, University of Rochester
2018-19	Mellon Sawyer Seminar Postdoctoral Fellowship, Penn State University
2017-18	Mellon/ACLS Dissertation Completion Fellowship William P. Few Award, Duke University
2016	John Hope Franklin Summer Fellowship, Duke University
2015	Graduate School International Dissertation Travel Grant, Duke University
2012-14	Graduate School Fellowship, Duke University
2011	Graduate Student Paper Prize, African Literature Association Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowship, UC Berkeley Center for African Studies (Wolof language study)
2009-10	Sage Graduate Fellowship, Africana Studies, Cornell University
2003-04	CalArts Guitar Scholarship, Jazz Studies, California Institute of the Arts School of Music

#### TEACHING

##### UNIVERSITY OF ROCHESTER

Introduction to African American Literature  
Theory, Criticism, Methods (English honors seminar)  
Empire and its Afterlives  
Black Adaptations  
Black Fugitive Aesthetics  
Contemporary African Film and Fiction  
African Digital Cultures  
Black Film Collectives  
Reimagining the Human: Global Black Speculative Fiction  
Bright Lights, African Cities  
Internet Aesthetics: Viral Forms from the Global South  
African Literatures of Migration  
Caribbean Gothic

##### DUKE UNIVERSITY

Creatures, Aliens and Cyborgs  
African Literature and Environmental Crisis

##### OTHER TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Primary School English Instructor, French Ministry of Education, Basse-Terre, Guadeloupe, French West Indies, Fall 2007-Spring 2008

## TALKS & PRESENTATIONS

### PAPERS PRESENTED

“Sofia Samatar’s Otherworldly Beings: Experimental Speculative Fiction and the Production of Knowledge,” African Literature Association Annual Conference, University of Tennessee, May 2023

“Black Audio’s Coming World,” African Literature Association Annual Conference, virtual, May 2021

“Fugitive Opacity,” Modern Language Association Annual Convention, virtual, January 2021

“African Experiments: The Digital and the Speculative,” African Literature Association Annual Conference, Columbus, OH, May 2019

“Imagining in Excess: African Speculative Fiction and Global Black Protest,” American Comparative Literature Association Annual Meeting, Georgetown University, March 2019

“Queer Utopia, Fugitivity and Black British Cinema,” African Literature Association Annual Conference, Washington, D.C., May 2018

“Toward an African Fugitivity: Expanding the Scope of the New Black Studies,” African Literature Association Annual Conference, Yale University, June 2017

“Césairean Phenomenologies: Time, Utopia, and the Flesh,” African Literature Association Annual Conference, Atlanta, GA, April 2016

“Blackness and Utopia: John Akomfrah’s Fugitive Filmic Grammar,” American Comparative Literature Association Annual Meeting, Harvard University, March 2016

“Diaspora, Time and the Cosmos,” African Literature Association Annual Conference, Universität Bayreuth, Germany, June 2015

“The Creaturely Modernism of Amos Tutuola,” American Comparative Literature Association Annual Meeting, New York University, March 2014

“‘After the End Times’: Postcrisis African Science Fiction,” African Literature Association Annual Conference, College of Charleston, March 2013

“Chris Abani and the Politics of Ambivalence,” African Literature Association Annual Conference, Ohio University, April 2011

“Toward and Beyond: Sovereignty, Haitian Migrancy and Émile Olivier’s *Passages*,” American Comparative Literature Association Annual Meeting, New Orleans, LA, April 2010

### INVITED TALKS

“Reorientations and Undercurrents in Duncan Yoon’s *China in 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Century African Literature*,” African Literature Association Annual Conference, University of Louisville, May 2024

“AI, Pedagogy, and African Literary Studies,” African Literature Association Annual Conference, University of Louisville, May 2024

- “Time, Fugitivity and Global Black Aesthetics,” Willson Center for Humanities and Department of Comparative Literature, University of Georgia, April 2024
- “Black Speculative Collage,” Humanities Center, University of Rochester, March 2023
- “Cajetan Iheka’s *African Ecomedia* and the Potential of Aesthetics,” African Literature Association Annual Conference, virtual, May 2022
- “Refusative Fiction: African Literature and the Limits of Black Study,” African American Studies, Penn State University, April 2019
- “Yvonne’s Vera’s Sonic Flight,” Department of English, University of Toronto, January 2017
- “After the End Times’: Postcrisis African Science Fiction,” Futurities Conference, Universiteit Leiden, Netherlands, June 2014
- “The Phenomenology of Objects,” African Humanities Working Group, Duke University, March 2014
- “On African Science Fiction,” Franklin Humanities Institute, Duke University, November 2013

#### PANELS & EVENTS ORGANIZED

- “Comparative Twentieth Centuries: Migration, Race and Belonging in Brazil and the United States,” organized with Molly Ball, featuring Marcia Chatelain and Barbara Weinstein, Mellon Sawyer Seminar workshop, University of Rochester, February 2022
- “Migration, Passage, Displacement: Black and Native Cultural Production in Relation,” featuring Mishuana Goeman and Cheryl Finley, Mellon Sawyer Seminar workshop, University of Rochester, February 2022
- “Literature, Migration and Global Blackness,” co-led and organized with Delali Kumavie, Mellon Sawyer Seminar workshop, University of Rochester, January 2022
- “Temporalities,” panel organized with Ken Harrow, African Literature Association Annual Conference, virtual, May 2021
- “The State of African Literary Studies,” keynote featuring Tejumola Olaniyan, African Literature Association Annual Conference, Yale University, June 2017
- “Publishing, Teaching, Networking and Service: A Roundtable for Graduate Students, Adjuncts and Pre-Tenure Faculty,” featuring Laura Murphy, Ato Quayson, Eileen Julien, and Nasrin Qadar, African Literature Association Annual Conference, Atlanta, GA, April 2016
- “The African Fantastic,” symposium featuring Ato Quayson and V.Y. Mudimbe, African Humanities Working Group, Duke University, March 2014

#### CURATED PROGRAMMING

- Unbordering the Americas: A Migration Film Festival*, curated with Ouma Amadou and Lakmali Jayasinghe, featuring films directed by Ekwa Msangi, Isabel Sandoval, Julie Dash, Sky Hopinka, Esery Mondesir, Priscilla Gonzalez Sainz, Affonso Uchôa, João Dumans, and Lee Isaac Chung, Dryden Theater, George Eastman Museum, Mellon Sawyer Seminar, University of Rochester, February 2022
- Sandra Brewster: Precious Sense*, curated with Peter Murphy, gestural gel transfer portraits and video installation as part of Sandra Brewster’s ongoing *Blur* series, Hartnett Gallery, Mellon Sawyer Seminar, University of Rochester, January and February 2022

## UNIVERSITY & PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

2023-2028	Executive Committee Member, Africa Since 1990 Forum, Modern Language Association
2024-2027	English Department Representative, Faculty Council, University of Rochester
2024	Jury Member, Book of the Year award (Creative Writing), African Literature Association
2024	Committee Member, Graduate Admissions, English Department, University of Rochester
2023	Jury Member, Abioseh Porter Best Essay award, African Literature Association
2022	Committee Member, Sproull and Provost Fellowship nominations, University of Rochester
2021-22	Co-convener, Mellon Sawyer Seminar, "Unbordering Migration in the Americas: Causes, Experiences, Identities," Humanities Center, University of Rochester
2021	Committee Member, Fulbright Fellowship nominations, University of Rochester
2019-22	Co-convener, Graduate Student Job Placement Workshop, English Department, University of Rochester
2020	Co-convener, African Literature Association Annual Conference, Washington, DC (cancelled due to COVID-19)
2018-19	Co-creator, Black Intersections digital humanities project, Mellon Sawyer Seminar, African American Studies, Penn State University
2015-17	Chair, Graduate Student Caucus, African Literature Association
2013-14	Co-founder/Co-convener, African Humanities Working Group, Franklin Humanities Institute, Duke University

*Manuscript reader:* Research in African Literatures; Novel: A Forum on Fiction; Ohio University Press (Modern African Writing Series); Mosaic: An Interdisciplinary Critical Journal; African Identities; Journal of African Cultural Studies; African Literature Today; Routledge Handbooks; Rutgers University Press (Critical Caribbean Studies Series); Diacritics: A Review of Contemporary Criticism; Oxford University Press; Journal of African Cinemas; Nordic Journal of African Studies; Texas Studies in Literature and Language.

## ADDITIONAL TRAINING

2013	Johannesburg Workshop in Theory and Criticism, Johannesburg, South Africa
2011	Baobab Language Center, Intermediate/Advanced Wolof, Dakar, Senegal Summer Cooperative African Language Institute, Beginning Wolof, University of Florida

## LANGUAGES

French	Excellent reading, speaking, writing
Wolof	Good reading, speaking, writing
German	Excellent reading

## PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

African Literature Association  
 American Comparative Literature Association  
 Modern Language Association  
 Caribbean Philosophical Association  
 American Studies Association