

Matthew Francis Rarey
Curriculum Vitae

Contact

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Research and Teaching Interests

Visual cultures of the black Atlantic world; Visual representations of enslavement; Arts of Afro-Atlantic religions; Assemblage and ephemeral aesthetics; Museums and curatorial studies; Critical intersectional studies of archives, race, sexuality, and colonization.

Education

2014 Ph.D. University of Wisconsin-Madison, Art History and Latin American Studies
2010 University of Wisconsin-Madison, Certificate in African Studies
2008 M.A. University of Wisconsin-Madison, Art History
2005 B.A. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Anthropology and Art History (Highest Distinction)
2004 Universidad Nacional de Trujillo (Peru), Certificate in Archaeological Studies

Employment

Academic Appointments

2015-Present Assistant Professor, Department of Art, Oberlin College
2014-2015 Visiting Assistant Professor, Department of Art History, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
2010-2011 Adjunct Lecturer, Department of Art, Carthage College
2008-2009 Teaching Assistant, Department of Art History, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Visiting Scholar Appointments

2018-2019 Visiting Scholar, Program of African Studies, Northwestern University

Museum and Curatorial Positions

2009-2010 Curatorial Fellow in African Art, Chazen Museum of Art, University of Wisconsin-Madison
2005-2006 Collections Assistant, Department of Anthropology, Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago
2005 Regenstein Intern in South Pacific Anthropology, Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago
2002-2004 Collections Assistant, Spurlock Museum, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Fellowships and Grants

External

2018-2019 National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowship
2012-2013 CLIR Mellon Fellowship for Dissertation Research in Original Sources
2011 James R. Scobie Memorial Award, Conference on Latin American History

Internal (Oberlin College)

- 2018-2019 B. Wade & Jane B. White Fellowship in the Humanities
2017 Mellon Foundation Writing Advanced Curriculum Development Grant, “Reassessing Art History Writing in a Global Curriculum” (\$1,500)
2016 Oberlin College Teaching Grant to develop course “Looking for Africa in Brazil” (\$2,300)

Internal (UW-Milwaukee)

- 2015 Support for Undergraduate Research Fellowship, Office of Undergraduate Research (declined)
2014 Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies Research Travel Award

Internal (UW-Madison)

- 2013-2014 Dana-Allen Dissertation Fellowship, Institute for Research in the Humanities
2013 Mellon-Wisconsin Summer Dissertation Fellowship
2011 Vilas Research Travel Grant, The Graduate School
2011 Chancellor’s Fellowship, Department of Art History
2010 Joaquim Nabuco Award, Brazil Initiative (Best essay on Brazil by any UW-Madison student)
2009-2010 Graduate Curatorial Fellowship, Department of Art History
2009 Foreign Language Area Studies Fellowship (Brazilian Portuguese)
2009 Shirley L. and Dr. Willard Fritz Mueller Art History Graduate Student Travel Award
2008-2009 Teaching Assistantship, Department of Art History
2008 Shirley L. and Dr. Willard Fritz Mueller Art History Graduate Student Travel Award
2007-2008 Visual Resources Project Assistantship, Department of Art History
2007 Tinker-Nave Field Research Grant, Latin American, Caribbean, and Iberian Studies Program
2006-2007 Chipstone Project Assistantship, Material Culture Program
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Honors and Awards

- 2008 University Housing’s Honored Instructor Award, UW-Madison
2008 Art Institute of Chicago Graduate Symposium Award, Department of Art History, UW-Madison
2008 Graduate Student Presentation Award, Midwest Art History Society
2005 Outstanding Senior in Art History, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, UIUC
2005 James Scholar Graduation Honors, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, UIUC
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Publications**Books**

- In progress. *Insignificant Things: Assemblage, Occlusion, and the Art of Survival in the Black Atlantic.*

This book analyzes the form and use of “mandinga” amulets made by enslaved Africans and used across Africa, Brazil, and Portugal between the late 17th and early 19th centuries. It argues that mandingas are a rich, and largely unexamined, archive of Africans’ experiences in the black Atlantic world. By analyzing extant mandingas and their contents, describing of their construction and use, and reconstructing of the biographies of mandinga makers and users, *Insignificant Things* expands on key issues in African diaspora art history, slavery studies, and visual culture studies. In turn, the book asks who writes history, how archives are constructed, and how the enslaved represented their experience in arenas meant to obscure it.

Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles and Book Chapters

- 2018 “Assemblage, Occlusion, and the Art of Survival in the Black Atlantic.” *African Arts* 51:4 (Winter 2018): 20-33.
- 2015 “Counterwitnessing the Visual Culture of Brazilian Slavery.” In *African Heritage and Memories of Slavery in Brazil and the South Atlantic World*, ed. Ana Lucia Araujo. Amherst, NY: Cambria Press, 2015: 71-108.
- 2014 “Camera Lucida Mexicana: Travel, Visual Technologies, and Contested Objectivities.” *Visuality’s Romantic Genealogies* volume of *Romantic Circles Praxis Series*, ed. Theresa M. Kelley and Jill H. Casid (December 2014).
- 2012 “Virtual Materiality: Collectors and Collection in the Brazilian Music Blogosphere,” with Lindsay Fullerton. *Communication, Culture, and Critique* 5:1 (March 2012): 1-19.

Invited Contributions to Edited Volumes

- In preparation. “Dirt, Concrete, and the Substance of Memory in Slavery’s Dungeon.” In *Sensiotics: Theory and Practice in African Art*, ed. Moyo Okediji. Ilé-Ifè, Nigeria: Obafemi Awolowo University Press, 2020.
- 2020 “Leave No Mark.” In *The Black Modernism Seminars (Seminar Papers, Volume 4)*, ed. Steven Nelson and Huey Copeland. Washington: National Gallery of Art and Yale University Press, 2020.
- 2012 “Visualism.” In *Theorizing Visual Studies: Writing Through the Discipline*, ed. James Elkins and Kristi McGuire with Maureen Burns, Alicia Chester, and Joel Kuennen. New York: Routledge, 2012: 278-281.

Dictionary and Museum Catalog Entries

- In press. “Nile Connections: Egypt and Ethiopia;” “Transcultural Exchange: Bijogo, Asante, and Yorùbá;” and “Contemporary Africa: Willie Bester, El Anatsui, and Lamidi Olonade Fakeye;” in *Handbook of the Collection, Chazen Museum of Art*. Madison, WI: Chazen Museum of Art, 2020.
- 2016 “Francisco das Chagas;” “Manuel da Cunha;” “José Theóphilo de Jesus;” and “Joaquim Pinto de Oliveira (Thebas)” in *Dictionary of Caribbean and Afro-Latin American Biography*, ed. Henry Louis Gates, Jr. and Franklin K. Knight. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016.

Book and Film Reviews

- 2017 Review of *Shine: The Visual Economy of Light in African Diasporic Aesthetic Practice*, by Krista Thompson. *African Arts* 50:4 (Winter 2017): 90-92.
- 2016 Review of *Jean-Michael Basquiat: Now’s the Time*, ed. Dieter Buchhart. *CAA Reviews*, February 2016.
- 2015 Review of *Black Art in Brazil: Expressions of Identity*, by Kimberly L. Cleveland. *Luso-Brazilian Review* 52:1 (June 2015): 163-166.

- 2013 Review of *Brazilian Art under Dictatorship: Antonio Manuel, Artur Barrio and Cildo Meireles*, by Claudia Calirman. *Luso-Brazilian Review* 50:2 (December 2013): 163-166.
- “The Black Presence in Argentina: A Review of *Afroargentinos*, a film by Jorge Fortes and Diego H. Ceballos.” H-AfrArts, H-Net Reviews, March 2013.
- 2011 “Uruguay as Race and Nation: A Review of *Blackness in the White Nation: A History of Afro-Uruguay*, by George Reid Andrews.” H-AfrArts, H-Net Reviews, August 2011.
- 2010 “The Direction of Afro-Mexican Studies: A Review of *Black Mexico: Race and Society from Colonial to Modern Times*, ed. Ben Vinson, III and Matthew Restall,” with Alyson Williams. H-AfrArts, H-Net Reviews, April 2010.
- 2009 “Rethinking Black and Christian Lives in New Spain: A Review of *Colonial Blackness: A History of Afro-Mexico*, by Herman L. Bennett,” with Alyson Williams. H-AfrArts, H-Net Reviews, November 2009.

Conferences, Panels, and Presentations

Conferences and Workshops Organized

- 2018 *Creating Space: Curating Black Art Now*. Co-organizer with Andrea Gyorody. Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio. November 1-2.
- African Art and Undergraduate Pedagogy*. Co-organizer with Susan Elizabeth Gagliardi, Ugochukwu-Smooth Nzewi, and Key Jo Lee. The Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland, Ohio. March 30.
- 2009 *Ways of Showing / Ways of Knowing: African/Diaspora Arts in a Museum*. Co-organizer with Henry Drewal and Freida High W. Tesfagiorgis. Chazen Museum of Art, University of Wisconsin-Madison. October 7-8.

Conference Panels Organized

- 2017 “Thinking About Slavery in African Visual Culture.” Triennial Conference of the Arts Council of the African Studies Association; University of Ghana, Legon. August 10.
- “Is There an African Atlantic?” Conference of the Midwest Art History Society, The Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland, Ohio. April 6.
- 2014 “African art and University Museums: Challenges and Goals in the 21st Century.” Museum Day, Triennial Conference of the Arts Council of the African Studies Association; Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, New York. March 19.

Conference Presentations

- 2018 “Dirt, Concrete, and the Substance of Memory in Slavery’s Dungeon.” *Honoring Ancestors in Africa: Arts and Actions*; University of Wisconsin-Madison. April 6.

- 2017 “Reframing the Quilombo: Aesthetic Strategies for the 21st Century.” Worldwide African Diaspora Biennial Conference; Universidad de Pablo Olavide, Seville, Spain. November 9.
- “At the Edge of the Water: Possibilities for a black Atlantic Art History.” *Exploring Beauty and Truth in Worlds of Color: A Conference on Race, Art, and Aesthetics in the 21st Century*; Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio. September 30.
- “Porous Objects: Pouches at the Edges of Black Atlantic Religion.” Triennial Conference of the Arts Council of the African Studies Association; University of Ghana, Legon, Ghana. August 11.
- 2016 “The Sorcerous Work of Classification.” Conference of the African Studies Association; Washington, DC. December 3.
- 2015 “*Bolsas de mandinga* and the Art of Survival in the African-Portuguese World.” Conference of the College Art Association; New York, New York. February 14.
- 2014 “Undermining Oversight: Secret Visualities and Rebellion in Bahia.” Congress of the Brazilian Studies Association; King’s College, London, United Kingdom. August 23.
- “*Aquilombado*: Fugitive Landscapes and the Politics of Cartography in Colonial Brazil.” Congress of the Latin American Studies Association; Chicago, Illinois. May 22.
- “The Provocations, Pitfalls, and Possibilities of Exhibiting African Art in University Museums.” Museum Day, Triennial Symposium of the Arts Council of the African Studies Association; Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, New York. March 19.
- 2013 “Codes of Looking and Counter-witnessing in the Visual Culture of Brazilian Slavery.” Conference of the American Historical Association; New Orleans, Louisiana. January 4.
- 2011 “Spectacle and Slave Punishment in Brazil: A Thesis on the Agency of the Visual.” Conference of the Southern Historical Association; Baltimore, Maryland. October 30.
- 2010 “‘Holy War in Bahia’: Representing Violence and Spectacle in Brazilian Slavery, 1760-1850.” Conference of the African Studies Association; San Francisco, California. November 20.
- “Virtual Materiality: Collectors and Collection in the Brazilian Music Blogosphere,” with Lindsay Fullerton. Conference of the International Communication Association; Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. June 22.
- 2009 “De-Territorializing the Borderland: Museums as Diasporic Journeys.” Newberry Library Seminar in Borderlands and Latino Studies; Chicago, Illinois. April 25.
- 2008 “Afro-Mexican Identity and Institutional Representation.” Congreso Internacional Diáspora, Nación y Diferencia: Poblaciones de Origen Africano en México y Centroamérica; Veracruz, Veracruz, México. June 13.

“Adrift on the Kalunga: The Transculturation of Kongo Minkisi.” Conference of the Midwest Art History Society; Chicago, Illinois. April 3.

“The Political Economy of Afro-Mexican Identity: Representing Race and Diaspora in an Institutional Space.” *Global Movements, Local Identities* Conference on Afro-Latino Studies; University of California, Los Angeles. March 7.

2006 “Our Tibetan Cabinet: Jamba Juice, *Enlightened* Smoothies, and the Commodification of Tibet.” TRANS: A Visual Culture Conference; University of Wisconsin-Madison. October 22.

Invited Talks, Lectures, and Workshops

Invited Lectures and Workshops

2019 “Pouches Archives, and the Art of Survival in the black Atlantic.” Program of African Studies, Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois. March 6.

“Leave No Mark: Traces of Blackness Inviolable.” Department of Religion, Amherst College, Amherst, Massachusetts. February 26.

2018 “Glimpsing the Flight from Enslavement.” Department of the History of Art & Architecture, DePaul University, Chicago, Illinois. October 18.

“Questions of Value and Bondage at a Hotel in London, March 1865.” Center for Visual Culture, Bryn Mawr College, Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania. September 12.

2013 “The Plantation, *Aquilombando*: Rebellious Landscapes and Colonial Visuality.” Institute for Research in the Humanities, University of Wisconsin-Madison. October 28.

2011 “Torture and Spectacle.” Invited workshop for the series *Visualities Beyond Ocularcentrism*, Center for Visual Cultures, University of Wisconsin-Madison. May 4.

“Camera Lucida Mexicana.” Annual Graduate Lecture to the Friends of Art History, Department of Art History, University of Wisconsin-Madison. February 2.

2010 “The Cross and the Pelourinho: Christian Violence, Visual Culture, and the Memory of Slavery in Brazil.” Inaugural Joaquim Nabuco Award Lecture; Brazil Initiative of the Latin American, Caribbean, and Iberian Studies Program; University of Wisconsin-Madison. September 14.

“Sculptors of Our Own Brains: Thoughts on the Definition of Neuroaesthetics.” UW Eye Research Institute; University of Wisconsin-Madison. May 11.

“Designing UW-Madison’s First Permanent Gallery of African Art.” Department of Art History, University of Wisconsin-Madison. April 29.

2009 “Mirror Neurons and the Transmission of Culture.” *Perception*; part of *Parallax: Changing Perspectives in Visual Culture*; Center for Visual Cultures, University of Wisconsin-Madison. February 13.

Invited Participation in Panels, Roundtables, and Symposia

2019 Invited participant, “Seminar Papers: Black Modernisms: Part 2,” organized by Huey Copeland and Steven Nelson. Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts, National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC. April 10-11.

2018 Invited participant, “Seminar Papers: Black Modernisms: Part 1,” organized by Huey Copeland and Steven Nelson. Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts, National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC. October 12.

Invited participant, *A State of the Field Convening: The Future of African Art*. Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri. March 22-24.

2017 Invited speaker and panelist, “Memória da Ancestralidade da Pequena África e Sua Resistência: Avanços e Desafios.” [“Ancestral Memory of Rio de Janeiro’s *Little Africa* Neighborhood and its Resistance: Advances and Challenges”]. Roundtable held at the Casa da Tia Ciata and organized by the Organização Remanescentes da Tia Ciata, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. January 13.

2014 Invited panelist, “The Place of Place in the Humanities.” Institute for Research in the Humanities, University of Wisconsin-Madison. May 5.

2013 Invited speaker and panelist, “Coordinated Seeing? Thinking with Vision, Hand, and Mind: A Symposium Exploring the Intersections of Brain Research, Vision Science, and the Humanities.” Organized by the Center for Visual Cultures and the McPherson Eye Research Institute. Chazen Museum of Art, University of Wisconsin-Madison. November 1.

2011 Invited panelist, “New Directions in Curatorial Practice and the University Art Museum.” Department of Art History Alumni Symposium, University of Wisconsin-Madison. October 28.

2007 “Afro-Mexican Cultural Production and Identity.” Panelist at “Graduate Student Research in Latin America” Colloquium; Latin American, Caribbean, and Iberian Studies Program; University of Wisconsin-Madison. December 4.

Curatorial Experience

2019 *Afterlives of the Black Atlantic*. Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin College. Co-curator with Andrea Gyrody. August 2019-May 2020.

2017 Installation of the Arts of Africa, Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin College. Lead curator overseeing fifteen students of the advanced undergraduate seminar “African Art in Museums: From Collection to Display” (Oberlin College, Fall 2016). Opened January 31, 2017.

2011 Installation of the Arts of Africa, Chazen Museum of Art, University of Wisconsin-Madison. Co-curator with Henry J. Drewal and Freida High W. Tesfagiorgis. Opened October 22, 2011.

2009 “Stereopsis: Artists Take on Perception.” Co-curator with Willow Hagge. 734 Gallery, Madison, Wisconsin. February 7-14.

Teaching Experience

All course syllabi are self-designed. Courses I proposed and launched are indicated by an asterisk (*). Dates in parentheses indicate most recent term the course was taught.

Oberlin College (2015-Present)

Arts 154 Approaches to African Art* (Spring 2018)
Arts 334 De-colonizing African Art History* (Spring 2018)
Arts 357 Looking for Africa in Brazil* (Spring 2017)
Arts 358 Art and Religion in the Black Atlantic* (Fall 2016)
Arts 450 Slavery and the Problem of the Visual* (Spring 2017)
Arts 457 African Art in Museums: From Collection to Display* (Fall 2016)
Lats 100 What is Latin America? (Fall 2017; Team-taught course; I lead one or two sessions per semester)

University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (2014-2015)

Art Hist 104 African, New World, and Oceanic Art and Architecture (Spring 2015)
Art Hist 270 Contact and Cultural Change in the Americas (Spring 2015)
Art Hist 371 African Art (Fall 2014)
Art Hist 482 Black Atlantic Aesthetics* (Spring 2015)

Carthage College (2010-2011)

Art 115 Introduction to Art History (Fall 2010)
Art 305 Arts of Africa (Fall 2010)
Art 675 The African Diaspora: Arts, Music, and Ritual in the Americas* (January 2011)

Advising

Oberlin College (B.A. with Honors)

2018 Michelle Fikrig, “Haunted by Solitude: Isolation and Communal Representation in Zanele Muholi’s Archive” (Chair)

Sadie Gelman, “This Unleavened Bread: Matzot as an Insight into Iberian History, Culture, and Power Dynamics” (Committee)

2017 Alexandra Nicome, “Visualizing Postcolonial Identities in J.D. ‘Okhai Ojeikere’s *Hairstyles* Series” (Chair)

Elizabeth Halide Akant, “Organic Honey’s Immaterial Body: No-Wave Feminism, Deceptive Technology, and the Pre-Cyborg in Four Works by Joan Jonas” (Committee)

Jacob Roosa, “Sound and Silence in the Forge: Work, Space, and Communication in Early Cistercian Monasticism” (Committee)

Oberlin College (Mellon-Mays Undergraduate Fellows)

2017 Anthony Moaton, “‘To Make You Feel Something’: *An Octoroon* and the Boundaries of Black Art.”

University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (M.A. in Art History)

2016 Emily Ann Cornish, “Gender Politics, Presence and Erasure: Tattoo in *In Pursuit of Venus [infected]* and *Les Sauvages de la Mer Pacifique*.” (Chair)

Service**Peer Review**

2019 *African Arts*

Other service to the Profession

2017 Committee Member, Arnold Rubin Outstanding Book Award, Arts Council of the African Studies Association

2016 Committee Member, Joaquim Nabuco Award, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Oberlin College

2017-2018 Coordinator, Art History Honors Program

2017-2018 Haskell Lectureship Committee

2017-2018 Mellon AMAM/Oberlin College Library Faculty Advisory Committee

2016-2018 Latin American Studies Program Steering Committee

2016-2018 Honorary Degrees Committee

2016-2018 Art History Liaison to the Allen Memorial Art Museum

2016-2018 Coordinator, Art History Writing Associates Program

University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

2014-2015 Art History Gallery Committee

Professional Consulting on African Art

2017-Present Wright auctions, Chicago, Illinois

Community and Public Outreach

2019 Led screening and discussion of the film *Yeelen* (Souleyman Cissé, 1987) to the Northwestern University Cinema Club. February 8.

2012-2015 President, Board of Directors (elected), Evanston Escola de Samba (EEDS), Evanston and Chicago, IL. Non-profit organization working to foster community arts engagement and Brazilian-American cultural exchange in Chicagoland. In 2015, EEDS won the Brazilian International Press Award for Outstanding Promotion of Brazilian Culture in the United States.

2011-2012 Host, “The Black Atlantic: Musical Explorations through Africa and its Diasporas.” WNUR-FM Evanston-Chicago.

2010 Presentation on African art to third grade classes of Sauk City Middle School at Calabash Gifts, Madison, Wisconsin. February 3.

Professional Memberships

African Studies Association
Arts Council of the African Studies Association
Association for the Study of the Worldwide African Diaspora
Brazilian Studies Association
College Art Association
Midwest Art History Society

Languages

Portuguese	Reading (Fluent), Writing and Speaking (Highly Proficient)
Spanish	Reading, Writing, and Speaking (Proficient)
French	Reading (Proficient)