

Matthew Francis Rarey
Curriculum Vitae
Updated October 2022

Contact

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Research and Teaching Interests

Visual cultures of the Black Atlantic world, early modern to contemporary; Slavery and its roles in the visual field; Arts of Afro-Atlantic religions; Mapping and cartography; Aesthetics of assemblage, ephemerality, and accumulation; Museum and curatorial studies; Critical intersectional studies of archives, diaspora, race, sexuality, and colonization.

Education

2014 Ph.D. University of Wisconsin-Madison, Art History and Latin American, Caribbean, and Iberian 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 Urbana-Champaign, Anthropology and Art History (Highest Distinction)
2004 Universidad Nacional de Trujillo (Peru), Certificate in Archaeological Studies

Positions Held

Academic Appointments Since Ph.D.

2021-Present Associate Professor of Art History, Oberlin College
2015-2021 Assistant Professor of Art History, Oberlin College
2014-2015 Visiting Assistant Professor of Art History, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Residential Fellowship and Visiting Scholar Appointments

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

Selected Fellowships, Grants, and Awards

External

2022 National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Institute, "Mapping the Early Modern World."
The Newberry Library, Chicago, Illinois
2020 Award for Excellence, Association of Art Museum Curators (shared with Andrea Gyrody)
2018-2019 National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowship
2012-2013 Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR) Mellon Fellowship for Dissertation Research
in Original Sources
2011 James R. Scobie Memorial Award, Conference on Latin American History

Internal (Oberlin College)

2022-2023 Oberlin College Research Status
2022 H.H. Powers Travel Grant

- 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”
2016 Oberlin College Teaching Grant to develop course “Looking for Africa in Brazil”
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Selected Publications

Books

- 2023 Rarey, Matthew Francis. [*Insignificant Things: Amulets and the Art of Survival in the Early Black Atlantic*](#) (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2023).

Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles and Book Chapters

- 2020 Rarey, Matthew Francis, with Henry John Drewal. “[Never at Rest: African Art at the University of Wisconsin.](#)” *African Arts* 53:4 (Winter 2020): 68-85.
- 2020 Rarey, Matthew Francis. “[‘And the Jet Would Be Invaluable’: Blackness, Bondage, and The Beloved.](#)” *The Art Bulletin* 102:3 (September 2020): 28-53.
*Selected as one of nineteen articles in Routledge’s [2022 Black History Month collection](#), made open-access through the end of 2022.
- 2018 Rarey, Matthew Francis. “[Assemblage, Occlusion, and the Art of Survival in the Black Atlantic.](#)” *African Arts* 51:4 (Winter 2018): 20-33.
*Translated into Brazilian Portuguese as “[Assemblagem, oclusão e a arte da sobrevivência no Atlântico Negro.](#)” *19e&20* 16:1 (January-June 2021).
- 2015 Rarey, Matthew Francis. “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 Rarey, Matthew Francis. “[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 Fullerton, Lindsay and Matthew Francis Rarey. “[Virtual Materiality: Collectors and Collection in the Brazilian Music Blogosphere.](#)” *Communication, Culture, and Critique* 5:1 (March 2012): 1-19.

Invited Contributions to Edited Volumes

- 2023 Rarey, Matthew Francis. “Leave No Mark: Blackness and Inscription in the Inquisitorial Archive.” In [Black Modernisms in the Transatlantic World](#), ed. Steven Nelson and Huey Copeland (Washington: National Gallery of Art and Yale University Press, 2023): 34-55.
- 2012 Rarey, Matthew Francis. “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.

Commissioned Entries in Dictionaries

- 2016 Rarey, Matthew Francis. “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).

Reviews of Books, Films, and Exhibitions

- 2022 Rarey, Matthew Francis. [Review of *Second Careers: Two Tributaries in African Art*](#) (Cleveland Museum of Art, November 1, 2020 – March 14, 2021), curated by Ugochukwu-Smooth Nzewi. *African Arts* 55:2 (Summer 2022): 85-87.
- 2017 Rarey, Matthew Francis. [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 Rarey, Matthew Francis. [Review of *Jean-Michael Basquiat: Now's the Time*](#), ed. Dieter Buchhart. *CAA Reviews*, February 2016.
- 2015 Rarey, Matthew Francis. [Review of *Black Art in Brazil: Expressions of Identity*](#), by Kimberly L. Cleveland. *Luso-Brazilian Review* 52:1 (June 2015): 163-166.
- 2013 Rarey, Matthew Francis. [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.
- Rarey, Matthew Francis. “[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 Rarey, Matthew Francis. “[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 Rarey, Matthew Francis and Alyson Williams. “[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.](#)” H-AfrArts, H-Net Reviews, April 2010.
- 2009 Rarey, Matthew Francis and Alyson Williams. “[Rethinking Black and Christian Lives in New Spain: A Review of *Colonial Blackness: A History of Afro-Mexico*, by Herman L. Bennett.](#)” H-AfrArts, H-Net Reviews, November 2009.

Exhibitions and Curatorial Projects

- 2020 *Subjects of Freedom: Archives Against Slavery, ca. 1790-1980*. Mary Church Terrell Main Library, Oberlin College. Lead curator overseeing seven students of the advanced undergraduate seminar “Slavery, Freedom, and the Problem of the Visual” (Oberlin College, Fall 2019). February 10-29, 2020. Oberlin College Special Collections hosts [a digital version of the exhibition](#).
- 2019 *Afterlives of the Black Atlantic*. Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin College. Co-curator with Andrea Gyorody. August 20, 2019-May 24, 2020 [Closed in March 2020 due to COVID-19].

*Winner of the 2020 Association of Art Museum Curators’ Award for Excellence for an exhibition from an organization with an operating budget under \$5 million.

Reviewed in [African Arts](#), [Hyperallergic](#), [CAN Journal](#), [WKSU 89.7 / wksu.org](#), and [The Plain Dealer / Cleveland.com](#).

- 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; with significant changes to objects and labels in July 2019 and July 2020.
- 2015 Temporary installation of the Arts of Africa, Emile H. Mathis Art Gallery, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. August-December 2015.
- 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.
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Conferences, Panels, 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 John Drewal and Freida High W. Tesfagiorgis. Chazen Museum of Art, University of Wisconsin-Madison. October 7-8.

Conference Panels Organized

- 2023 “If There Is No Such Thing as Cartography, Then What Is a Map?” Co-chair with Susan Elizabeth Gagliardi. Conference of the American Association of Geographers; Denver, Colorado. March 23-27.
- 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.” Triennial Conference of the Arts Council of the African Studies Association; Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, New York. March 19.

Presentations at National and International Conferences

- 2023 “Cartographies of Diaspora: Black Mapmaking in the work of Jaime Lauriano and Rejane Rodrigues.” Conference of the American Association of Geographers; Denver, Colorado. March 23-27.

- 2020 “Afterlives of the Black Atlantic: Contemporary Art and Curatorial Practice in Slavery’s Wake.” Presented with Andrea Gyorody. Conference of the College Art Association; Chicago, Illinois. February 12.
- 2017 “Reframing the Quilombo: Aesthetic Strategies for the 21st Century.” Worldwide African Diaspora Biennial Conference; Universidad de Pablo Olavide, Seville, Spain. November 9.
- “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.” Presented with Lindsay Fullerton. Conference of the International Communication Association; Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. June 22.
- 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.

*Winner of the Graduate Student Presentation Award

“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.

Presentations at Specially Organized Conferences and Symposia

- 2024 “Altar-making and the Diasporic Reckonings of José Rodríguez.” Invited talk at *Yoruba/Lukumi Sacred Arts of the Black Atlantic: Multi-Sensorial Experiences*. University of the Virgin Islands, Charlotte Amalie. February (forthcoming).
- 2022 “Mapping Black Fugitivity in Colonial Brazil, September 1763.” Invited talk at *Unchaining/ Reconnecting: Rethinking Africa in the Arts of Brazil*. Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas. October 28.
- 2020 “Empty-Handed, But Not Empty-Headed: Lessons in Front of a Work by José Rodríguez.” Invited speaker at *Across Oceans and Hemispheres: The Career of Henry J. Drewal*. Smithsonian National Museum of African Art, Washington, DC. February 28.
- 2018 “Dirt, Concrete, and the Substance of Memory in Slavery’s Dungeon.” Invited talk at *Honoring Ancestors in Africa: Arts and Actions*; University of Wisconsin-Madison. April 6.
- 2017 “At the Edge of the Water: Possibilities for a Black Atlantic Art History.” Invited talk at *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.
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Participation in Academic Seminars

Participation in Academic Seminars (Refereed)

- 2023 Speaker at *Environmental Histories of the Black Atlantic World: Landscape Histories of the African Diaspora*. Dumbarton Oaks, Washington, DC. May 11-13.
- 2009 “De-Territorializing the Borderland: Museums as Diasporic Journeys.” Newberry Library Seminar in Borderlands and Latino Studies; Chicago, Illinois. April 25.

Participation in Academic Seminars (Invited)

- 2023 Invited speaker at *The Fetish A(r)t Work: African Objects in the Making of European Art History, 1500-1900*. The Clark Art Institute, Williamstown, Massachusetts. October 19-20.
- 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.

Individual Public Lectures and Presentations***Public Lectures and Workshops***

- 2022 “Mapping Marronage: A Fugitive Landscape in Colonial Brazil, September 1763.” University Seminar in the Arts of Africa, Oceania, and the Americas, Columbia University, New York, New York. March 3.
- 2020 “*Bolsas de mandinga*: Amuletos Africanos no Mundo Atlântico” [*Mandinga* Pouches: African Amulets in the Atlantic World]. Lecture for the series “Amulets,” organized by Galeria Alice Floriano, Porto Alegre, Brazil. October 20.
- 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 to lead faculty and graduate student workshop for the series *Visualities Beyond Ocularcentrism*, Center for Visual Cultures, University of Wisconsin-Madison. May 4.
- “Camera Lucida Mexicana.” Annual Graduate Lecture delivered 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.

Invited Participation in Panels, Roundtables, and Symposia

- 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.

- 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.

Guest Lectures in University Classes

- 2021 “Visualizing the Slave Coast: Art and Forced Labor in Benin.” Otis College of Art and Design, Los Angeles, California. September 7.
- 2020 “Afterlives of the Black Atlantic: Art and Curatorial Practice in Slavery’s Wake.” Delivered with Andrea Gyorody. Sarah Lawrence College, Yonkers, New York. November 18.
- 2019 “Assemblage, Occlusion, and Possession: Servitude in the Afro-Atlantic Religions.” Department of Religion, Amherst College. February 26.
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Teaching Experience at Oberlin College

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)

- Arth 154 Approaches to African Art* (Spring 2022)
- Arth 270 Africa, Europe, and the Art of Colonization* (Spring 2022)
- Arth 271 Looking for Africa in Brazil* (Fall 2021)
- Arth 272 Sacred Arts of Vodou and Santería* (Summer 2021)
- Arth 370 Slavery and the Problem of the Visual* (Fall 2021)
- Arth 371 African Art in Museums: From Collection to Display* (Fall 2016)
- Lats 100 What is Latin America? Issues in Latin American Studies (Fall 2021; Team-taught course)
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Advising

Oberlin College (B.A. with Honors)

- 2021 Madi Goetzke, “Plasticity and the Art of Recovery: Wangechi Mutu’s Praxis of Afrofeminist Reassemblage.” (Chair)
- 2018 Michelle Fikrig, “Haunted by Solitude: Isolation and Communal Representation in Zanele Muholi’s Archive” (Chair)
- 2017 Alexandra Nicome, “Visualizing Postcolonial Identities in J.D. ‘Okhai Ojeikere’s *Hairstyles* Series” (Chair)

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 (Journal Articles unless otherwise indicated)

2021 *Routledge* (Edited volume – African diaspora art history)
History Compass
Perspectivas Afro: Revista de investigaciones en estudios afrolatinoamericanos y afrocaribeños (In Spanish)

2020 *Colonial Latin American Review*

2019 *African Arts*

Other Professional Service

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

Committee Service at Oberlin College

2021-2022 Public Humanities Concentration Planning Committee

2021-2022 Diversity Studies Committee

2020-2022 Latin American Studies Program Steering Committee (Chair, 2021-2022)

2019-2021 Mellon AMAM/Oberlin College Library Faculty Advisory Committee

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

2017-2018 Haskell Lectureship Committee

2016-2018 Latin American Studies Program Steering Committee

2016-2018 Honorary Degrees Committee

Other Service

2019-Present Member of the Advisory Board, ATNSC: Center for Healing & Creative Leadership, Cleveland, Ohio.

Professional Memberships

African Studies Association
Arts Council of the African Studies Association
Association of Art Museum Curators
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)