



SAWYER SEMINAR AT RUTGERS NEWARK
**NATIVES AND NATIVISTS
MIGRANTS AND IMMIGRANTS
IN AN AMERICAN CITY**

RUTGERS
UNIVERSITY | NEWARK

SAWYER SEMINAR AT RUTGERS NEWARK
**NATIVES AND NATIVISTS
MIGRANTS AND IMMIGRANTS
IN AN AMERICAN CITY**
A CONVERSATION ABOUT WHO WE ARE AS A NATION

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 16
**MIGRATION, DISPLACEMENT,
AND THE ARTS**

CO-SPONSORED BY **MEDITERRANEAN DISPLACEMENTS PROJECT,**
INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF GLOBAL RACIAL JUSTICE, AND
CENTER FOR MIGRATION AND THE GLOBAL CITY

The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation has awarded a grant of \$225,000 dollars to Rutgers University—Newark to support a Sawyer Seminar on the Comparative Study of Cultures entitled “Natives and Nativists, Migrants and Immigrants in an American City.”

The seminar series will be organized by Belinda Edmondson, professor of African American and African Studies, Kornel Chang, associate professor in History and American Studies, and Sean Mitchell, associate professor in Sociology and Anthropology.

Based at Rutgers-Newark, a university with a highly diverse student body, a highly active scholarly faculty, and deep roots as an anchor institution in the city of Newark, this seminar series will examine the past, present, and future of Newark in order to examine race, inequality, and immigration in the constantly changing immigrant cultures of America's cities.

It comes at an especially critical moment in our nation's history, when race, immigration and inequality can no longer be ignored or sidelined.

In the project abstract, the researchers assert that during the current global pandemic, the future of US cities—of immigration and urbanization; nativism and inclusion; gentrification and urban abandonment—has been thrown into question in a way that has not been true for decades or perhaps more. “Newark, NJ has long been a microcosm of such conflicts, in both reality and in popular imaginations.

From the Jewish Newark threatened by US nativism imagined in Philip Roth's *The Plot Against America*; to the Newark of an African American uprising and white flight of the 1960s and 1970s; to today's Newark of diverse immigrant populations and fraught immigrant politics; to the always-on-the-cusp of gentrification Newark, imagined by developers to be “the next Brooklyn” there is no better site to think through the tensions of urbanization brought to light by the COVID-19 pandemic than Newark.”

During the Fall 2022 and Spring 2023 semesters, “*Natives and Nativists, Migrants and Immigrants in an American City*” will comprise of a series of panels and workshops that draw on the expertise and research projects of Rutgers-Newark faculty and graduate students, local, national, and global scholars, and bring together community activists, scholars and local artists who focus on these issues.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 16

MIGRATION, DISPLACEMENT, AND THE ARTS

Scholarship on migration and displacement focuses mostly on the conditions that force people to leave their places of origin or the challenges that people face during their departure or arrival. In this sense, academic research on migration tends to reproduce particular frameworks shared across the disciplines of demography, sociology, political science, economics, and history. Relatively absent from these discussions are artistic expressions. By bringing together scholars and performers, this seminar examines the intersections between migration and the

arts to consider questions about the role of music, dance, and performance in articulating displaced identities in urban migrations, how literary and visual arts can evoke memories of war, or how the culture of cities has been formed and transformed by global migration. It will also consider how aesthetic vocabularies are maintained and repurposed in adopted homelands, and how expressive culture impacts processes and perceptions of belonging and alienation in both origin and host contexts.

SCHEDULE

PANEL

3:00-5:00 PM

Alexandra Vázquez, Associate Professor, Performance Studies, New York University

Yona Stamatis, Associate Professor, Ethnomusicology, University of Illinois Springfield

Daniel Da Silva, Assistant Professor, Spanish and Portuguese, Rutgers University, New Brunswick

Amir ElSaffar,
Musician/Composer

PERFORMANCES AND

**PARTY AFTER THE
SEMINAR AT ODR**

**STUDIOS (89 MADISON
ST, NEWARK)**

6:00-11:00 pm

Performances by
Amir ElSaffar and **Two Rivers
Ensemble**

Janétza Miranda, singer-songwriter and classical Spanish guitarist of Taína descent from Newark, NJ
Deborah Ovalles, Afro-Caribbean and Brazilian dance

MEET OUR PARTICIPANTS

PANELISTS



Alexandra T. Vazquez, Associate Professor, Performance Studies, New York University

Alexandra T. Vazquez is Associate Professor in the Department of Performance Studies at New York University. She is the author of *The Florida Room* (Duke 2022) and *Listening in Detail: Performances of Cuban Music* (Duke 2013, winner of the American Studies Association's Lora Romero First Book Prize). Vazquez's work has been featured in NPR's "Turning the Tables" series, *American Quarterly*, *small axe*, *Social Text*, *women and performance*, *the JPMS*, and in the edited volumes *Keywords in Latina/o Studies*, *The Tide Was Always High*, *Nonstop Metropolis: A New York City Atlas*, *Reggaeton*, and *Pop When the World Falls Apart*. She is a proud graduate of New World School of the Arts High School in Miami, Florida.

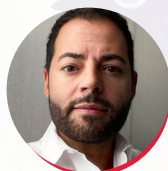
Yona Stamatis, Associate Professor, Ethnomusicology, University of Illinois Springfield

Yona Stamatis is Associate Professor of Ethnomusicology and Director of the Music Program at the University of Illinois Springfield. Her research interests center around the intersections of music and social justice a special focus on Greek folk and popular song broadly conceived. Her research has been supported by the Fulbright Foundation, the Mellon Foundation, and by the Constantine Tsangadas Fellowship for Hellenic Studies at the University of Michigan. She received her doctorate in ethnomusicology from the University of Michigan



Daniel Da Silva, Assistant Professor, Spanish and Portuguese, Rutgers University, New Brunswick

Daniel da Silva has a Ph.D. in Latin American and Iberian Cultures from Columbia University. Born and raised in Newark, NJ's Ironbound neighborhood, his research centers voice, music, and queer performance in the study of gender, sexuality, race, and popular music in Lusó-Afro-Brazilian Cultures, with a forthcoming book, *Trans Tessituras: Queer Repertoires and Black Diaspora in Lusophone Popular Music*.



Amir ElSaffar, Musician/Composer

Composer, trumpeter, santur player, and vocalist Amir ElSaffar is an expert trumpeter with a classical background, conversant not only in the language of contemporary jazz, but has created techniques to play microtones and ornaments idiomatic to Arabic music that are not typically heard on the trumpet. Additionally, he is a purveyor of the centuries old, now endangered, Iraqi maqam tradition, which he performs actively as a vocalist and santur player. He currently leads four critically-acclaimed ensembles: *The 17-piece Rivers of Sound Orchestra*; *Two Rivers*, which combines the musical languages and instrumentation of Iraqi Maqam and contemporary jazz; the *Amir ElSaffar Quintet*, performing ElSaffar's microtonal compositions with standard jazz instrumentation; *Safaafir*, the only ensemble in the US performing and preserving the Iraqi Maqam in its traditional format; and *The Alwan Ensemble*, the resident ensemble of Alwan for the Arts, specializing in classical music from Egypt, the Levant, and Iraq.



PERFORMANCES BY



Marcy DePina, DJ and MC

DJ MD (Marcy DePina) curates vibes and sounds that reflect her passion for music, art, and the cultures of the world under the banner of FORSA! Media Group LLC. Celebrating music as the universal language, DJ MD spins tracks from Africa and its expansive and innovative Diaspora, with the purpose of raising frequencies and promoting unity through sound. For over a decade DJ MD has been a radio host, producer, and deejay, and she currently hosts a monthly radio show called FORSA! on Rise Radio in Brooklyn, NYC. DJ MD has performed at special events and venues around the world such

as the Atlantic Music Expo (Cabo Verde), Lincoln Center (NYC), Black Girls Rock! (BET), Casa Independente (Lisbon, Portugal), Lincoln Park Music Festival, Afrobeat Festival, Club New York (Guadeloupe, France), Newark Arts Festival, New Jersey Performing Arts Center, Halsey Fest, Superchief Gallery, Marcus B&P, SOBs, Akwaaba Gallery, and DROM, to name a few. In addition to live events, DJ MD is the resident Music Curator for the renowned Newark Museum of Art and has curated music and performances for the United Nations, Afropop Worldwide/NPR, Lincoln Center, Central Park Summerstage, Festival Mawazine (Morocco), Caribbean Fashion Week (Jamaica), ResiliArts / UNESCO International Jazz Day (Angola), WBGO Jazz Radio, Panasonic, Newark Arts Council and others. Based in Newark, New Jersey, USA, with ancestral roots in Cabo Verde, DJ MD is an ethnomusicologist, a speaker of four languages, and an avid traveller who wanders the globe in search of music that makes your soul vibrate.



Amir ElSaffar and Two Rivers Ensemble

Janétza Miranda, singer-songwriter and classical Spanish guitarist of Taína descent from Newark, NJ

Janétza Miranda is a Newark Native who combines the traditions of Jazz, Soul, Rhythm & Blues, Bolero, Bomba y Plena, Hip Hop, & More into a remixed sonic delight of vocalizations and rhythmic proclamations that transport you to a space that is suspended in time. As one of Newark's Talented and hardworking musicians, you can get blessed by her sultry and powerful vocals at venues big and small, not to mention the city's tourism video. Janétza has traveled across the nation for NBC's "The Voice" (Season 4) where she made it to Top 18 out of 60,000 artists who auditioned. She has also performed Internationally at events such as: Latino Americano Expo Milan, Italy 2013 International Jazz Day Luanda, Angola Africa 2022.



Deborah Ovalles, Afro-Caribbean and Brazilian dancer

Deborah Fogo Ovalles is an experience dance instructor and creative visionary with 9 years of experience teaching everything from exercise and fitness to performance based dance. Deborah has set goals to educate, engage, and express creativity and well being through dance and fitness.



MADE POSSIBLE BY OUR TEAM:



Belinda Edmondson, Principal Investigator

Belinda Edmondson is a scholar of Caribbean literature at Rutgers University, Newark, where she holds a joint appointment in English and Africana Studies. Her most recent book is *Creole Noise: Early Caribbean Dialect Literature and Performance* (Oxford UP, 2022).

Kornel Chang, Co-Principal Investigator

Kornel Chang is Associate Professor of History and American Studies at Rutgers University, Newark. His research and teaching interests include Asian American history, the United States in the Pacific world, and race, migration, and labor in the Americas. His current book project, tentatively titled *Occupying Knowledge: Expertise, Technocracy, and De-Colonization in the U.S. Occupation of Korea*, examines the role of technocrats and expert knowledge in the U.S. Occupation of Korea.





Sean T. Mitchell, Co-Principal Investigator

Sean T. Mitchell is Associate Professor of Anthropology and director of Peace and Conflict Studies at Rutgers University, Newark. He writes about inequality politics in Brazil and elsewhere. He is the author of *Constellation of Inequality: Space, Race and Utopia in Brazil* (Chicago 2017) and co-editor of *Precarious Democracy: Ethnographies of Hope, Despair and Resistance in Brazil* (Rutgers 2021), among other works.

Bernie Lombardi, Postdoctoral Associate

Bernie Lombardi is Postdoctoral Associate in Africana Studies at Rutgers University, Newark and has been on the team at the Newark City of Learning Collaborative since 2016. His publications have appeared or are forthcoming in *Research in African Literatures*, *College Literature*, *The Black Scholar*, and the edited collection *Langston Hughes in Context* (Cambridge UP 2023). He also blogs about books and contemporary literary culture on Instagram: @bernie.lombardi.

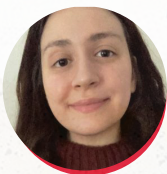


Mi Hyun Yoon, Graduate Assistant

Mi Hyun Yoon is a PhD candidate in American Studies at Rutgers University, Newark. Her research looks at the history of the Korean diaspora in the United States through the transnational context of Asian America and Korea. Her latest article is "Kung Flu and Roof Koreans: Asian/Americans as the Hated Other and Proxies of Hating in the White Imaginary" (*Journal of Hate Studies*, 2021).

Iliana Smith, Graduate Assistant

Iliana Smith is an English Master's Candidate at Rutgers University, where she focuses on Caribbean postwar literary movements and visual culture. She has presented at the 2022 Black Portraiture Conference, where she co-organized the panel "Performance, Poetics, & the Story: A Merging of Interdisciplinary Expression and Identity." She is currently working on a profile of the Caribbean writer and one of the founders of the Caribbean Artists Movement, Andrew Salkey.



Sara Márquez Durst, Graduate Assistant

Sara Márquez Durst is pursuing an MA in English here at Rutgers-Newark. Her background is in Old English Literature and Japanese Folklore Studies, which she studied at Rutgers-NB. Sara is a published short story author and combines her academic and creative interests to explore identity, time, and place.

Arshy Hernandez, Social Media Associate

Arshy Hernandez has an AA in graphic design and a BFA in Graphic Design. She is experienced in visual communications, social media management, illustration, and motion graphics. As a Dominican native female, she merges a strong connection to her culture and traditions with vibrant and bright colors to create beautiful pieces with a critical approach to design. Hernandez has created designs for the Rutgers Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences Institute, NJSBDC State Office as a graphic design intern.



Christina Strasburger, Department Administrator, History and Africana Studies

Christina Strasburger is an administrative and academic professional with over two decades of experience in higher education. She provides a range of education, information, and advocacy services for students, faculty, staff, and community. She is co-founder of the award-winning Queer Newark Oral History Project, a community-directed initiative dedicated to recording and preserving the history of LGBTQ+ people in and of Newark, NJ.

CO-ORGANIZED BY



Kim DaCosta Holton, Professor, Spanish and Portuguese, Rutgers University, Newark

Kimberly DaCosta Holton is Professor in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese Studies at Rutgers University, Newark. Holton researches expressive culture in the Portuguese-speaking world, focusing on the intersections between politics, performance and migration. Holton is the author of *Performing Folklore: Ranchos Folclóricos from Lisbon to Newark* (University of Indiana Press 2005) and co-editor with Andrea Klimt of *Community, Culture and the Makings of Identity: Portuguese-Americans Along the Eastern Seaboard* (University of Massachusetts Press 2009). She has received fellowships from the Ford Foundation, the Social Science Research Council, and the Institute for Research on Women. Her scholarly articles and translations have appeared in numerous academic journals and edited volumes. Holton is the founder and director of the Ironbound Oral History Project and is currently at work on a book about fado performance in the US.

Tim Raphael, Professor, Arts, Culture, and Media, Rutgers University, Newark

Tim Raphael is a professor of Arts, Culture and Media at Rutgers University-Newark. He is the founding director of the Center for Migration and the Global City and the co-founder and co-director of Newest Americans. As a theater director, producer, and deviser he has developed over 50 new American plays. He has also published extensively on the intersection of politics and performance and is the author of *The President Electric: Ronald Reagan and the Politics of Performance*, which examines Reagan's training in radio, film and television to describe how the techniques and technologies of electronic media have transformed American politics and political representation.



Newest Americans is a multimedia art and documentary project that chronicles the immigrant experience from the vantage point of the most diverse national university in the United States for the past two decades and the global city of Newark, NJ. In 2014, partners Talking Eyes Media, VII Photo, and the Center for Migration and the Global City founded Newest Americans as a collaborative multimedia laboratory in which professional journalists, artists and media-makers work alongside research faculty and students at Rutgers University-Newark to document local immigrant stories with a global reach. The project conducts research and produces multimedia storytelling, gallery and museum exhibitions, interactive experiences and curriculum from the media it creates. Newest Americans award-winning films and photo essays have been screened at film and photography festivals and featured in national print and online publications including *National Geographic*, *The New York Times* and *The Nation*. In 2021, Newest Americans was named Online Storytelling Project of the Year by Pictures of the Year International.



Mayte Green-Mercado, Associate Professor, History, Rutgers University, Newark

Mayte Green-Mercado is an Associate Professor of History at Rutgers University-Newark. She is the Newark Campus Director of the Institute for the Study of Global Racial Justice and directs the Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies Minor. At Rutgers she teaches courses on Islamic civilization, medieval and early modern Iberian and Mediterranean history. She is the author of the award-winning book *Visions of Deliverance. Moriscos and the Politics of Prophecy in the Early Modern Mediterranean* (Cornell, 2019). Her current book project, *Mediterranean Displacements. Morisco Migrations in the Sixteenth Century* traces the history of migrations and displacement of Moriscos around the Mediterranean basin in the sixteenth century, before the 1609 expulsion from the Iberian Peninsula. She is founder and co-director of the Mediterranean Displacements Project at Rutgers-Newark.

FULL SCHEDULE

**RESPONDING TO
ANTI-ASIAN HATE:
POLITICS, ORGANIZING,
AND EDUCATION**
SEPTEMBER 28, 2022

**POLITICS ACROSS
BORDERS:
IMMIGRATION,
NATIVISM, ACTIVISM
AND TRANS-BORDER
POLITICAL SENTIMENT**
OCTOBER 27, 2022

**MIGRATION,
DISPLACEMENT,
AND THE ARTS**
NOVEMBER 16, 2022

BLACK CITIZENSHIP
MARCH 8, 2023

**THE PANDEMIC AND THE
CITY**
APRIL 12, 2023



**PROGRAM DESIGNED BY ARSHY
HERNANDEZ**

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PROJECT, INSTITUTE FOR THE
STUDY OF GLOBAL RACIAL
JUSTICE, AND CENTER FOR
MIGRATION AND THE GLOBAL CITY**

**SPECIAL THANKS TO SAYA
WOOLFALK FOR PERMISSION
TO USE HER ARTWORK
ENCYCLOPEDIA OF CLOUD
DIVISION (PLATE I) (2018)**



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