

CONNECTIONS INTERCONNECTIONS **DISCONNECTIONS**

Free Online Symposium

12 June 2022

10:30am (UK Time)

ISFC22



WELCOME

Welcome to the third annual International Symposium on Festival Culture. We are very honoured and thrilled to be hosting this exciting event which will take place online. While we are all still trying to reorient ourselves to return to normality after the past few years of a world health crisis, we are excited about the prospects and opportunities of holding our online symposium. It offers us the opportunity to engage with, and reach a wider audience. With this in mind, we have an exciting range of papers and sessions, with scholars from around the world in attendance, sharing unknown or little-known perspectives on varying aspect of rituals, traditions, heritage, music, folklore, religion and more.

Our symposium will commence a series of symposiums that explore the theme 'connections, disconnections and interconnections' that we feel paves the way to exploring cultures more broadly. What might we find out that perhaps has been overlooked or under explored? We are confident that this will be a positive platform to assemble and disseminate knowledge on emerging areas of research in culture from inter-, multi-, trans-, and cross-disciplinary approaches. But most importantly, a platform for participants to share experiences and knowledge through our sessions.

This symposium promises to be stimulating, engaging and enjoyable. We have an exciting day planned. Lectures and sessions have been scheduled and aim to suit all time zones, and provide the opportunity to our subscribers to participate anywhere in the world. There are 5 guest lectures, 13 video presentations (uploaded to our website before the symposium ahead of the panel discussions), and 3 panel sessions for Q and A. Submitted paper sessions have been organised to encourage discussions to explore not only the 'connections, disconnections and interconnections' individual works but also collectively within the session. It is our hope that you find this symposium inspiring, gratifying and meaningful for discussion and networking.

Our thanks go to our Co-Editor, the editorial and advisory board, Guest Speakers, symposium session Chairs, Moderators, presenters, and all our participants and supporters, for their continued involvement and support in hosting this vital symposium.

FCRE Network



PROGRAMME

Overview

12 June 2022

10:30am (UK Time)

10:30am - 11:00am	Welcome
11:00am - 12:00pm	Session One (Discussion/Q&A) Carnival, Memory, Film, Music and Traditional Festivals
12:00pm - 12:10pm	Break
12:10pm - 1:10pm	Session Two (Discussion/Q&A) Folklore, Rituals, Spiritual, Religious Festivals, (Life, Death, Birth, Re-birth)
1:10pm - 1:15pm	Break
1:15pm - 1:35pm	Chair Introduction and Guest lecture
1:35pm - 2:35pm	Session Three (Discussion/Q&A) Fairs, Gatherings, Festival Atmospheres, Space, Temporality and Liminality
2:35pm - 2:55pm	Chair Introduction and Guest lecture
2:55pm - 3:15pm	Chair Introduction and Guest lecture
3:15pm - 3:20pm	Break
3:20pm - 3:40pm	Chair Introduction and Guest lecture
3:40pm - 4:00pm	Chair Introduction and Guest lecture
4:00pm - onwards	Open Discussion

CHAIRS MODERATOR **OVERVIEW**



Dr. Jo Buchanan

Chair

Bio

Biography: Dr Jo Buchanan I am an Independent Specialist in Cultural Heritage and a member of ICOMOS-UK Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) Committee. At present I am involved in projects to increase visibility and viability of ICH in the UK, which recognises the complexities and diversity of heritage, including minority heritages. The latter work includes exploring potential benefits of ratification by the UK Government of the UNESCO Convention 2003 on the Safeguarding of the ICH. I have a doctorate from Northumbria University titled 'Valorising Cornish Minority Heritage: UNESCO and Performative Heritage'. The research was undertaken in the Faculty of Arts, Design and Social Sciences and aimed to explore the complexities of how heritage is valorised, and the importance of creating dialogue on cultural diversity.

The study has contributed to a report to the UK Government on creativity and heritage (Heritage Alliance, 2019) and will be in a forthcoming book by Routledge on performance and heritage. Previous to my PhD, I studied for an MA whilst I worked as manager of a historic house open to the public. My work involved close partnerships with creative practitioners increasing annual exhibitions and festivals within this heritage space. I therefore approach my work from a trans-disciplinary perspective linking research and practice. My research interests include ICH, the role of cultural practitioners in heritage-making, democratisation of culture and person-centered approaches that address inequalities.

Dr. Emily Allen

Chair

Bio

Dr. Emily Ruth Allen completed her PhD in Musicology at Florida State University, where she also received a Master of Music degree in Historical Musicology. Additionally, Allen holds a Bachelor of Music degree with Concentration in Outside Fields (Math) from the University of South Alabama. Her dissertation research focuses on Carnival parade musics in Mobile, Alabama, inspired by her experiences marching in the parades during her high school and college years. Her work has been supported by the Society for American Music's Adrienne Fried Block Fellowship, an FSU Graduate School Dissertation Research Grant, and other grants and fellowships.

Dr. Jarula M. I. Wegner

Chair

Bio

Jarula M. I. Wegner teaches at the Institute of English and American Studies at University of Frankfurt, Germany. He is Editorial Board member of the Festival Culture Research and Education network, co-founder and speaker of the Global Memories Working Group at the Memory Studies Association and co-founder of the Interdisciplinary Memory Studies Group at the Frankfurt Humanities Research Centre. He holds degrees in Chinese (BA), German (MA) and English (MA and PhD) with a doctoral thesis on "Transcultural Memory Constellations in Caribbean Carnivals: Literature and Performance as Critique." He has been Visiting Scholar at Columbia University (USA), the University of Warwick (UK) and the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine (Trinidad and Tobago). He has published with international, peer-reviewed journals, such as, ARIEL, Caribbean Quarterly, Journal of Aesthetics and Culture, Journal of West Indian Literature, Memory Studies and Wasafiri.

Rhonda Allen

Moderator

Bio

Rhonda Allen is a former Director of the Sheffield Carnival involved in organising its first virtual carnival in 2020. She has judged costume competitions in Trinidad and Tobago, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and the UK, and has been on the judging panel at Sheffield Theatres selecting plays to be performed for the theatre season. She is also in full costume for Luton carnival in 2022, and currently working on the Preston carnival to develop their costume judging programme. Rhonda has many years experience working in carnival in various capacities that has encouraged her to focus on carnival costume judging, its traditions, practices and contemporary perspectives. Her research focuses on carnival, in particular, the aesthetics of costume design and performance and how it is judged both in Trinidad and Tobago and the UK. She is currently exploring costume making, costume design and performance, embodiment, traditions, heritage, the costumed body, and autoethnography.

GUEST SPEAKERS **OVERVIEW**

The background of the page is a dark green field filled with numerous small, multi-colored dots (blue, yellow, purple, orange, pink, cyan) that form various abstract, flowing patterns and trails, resembling a digital or particle-based visualization.

Dr. Hanna Klien-Thomas

Digital On-line Festival Communities and Communication

Abstract

Due to the pandemic legislation and Covid19-related restrictions, Caribbean Carnival practitioners and organisations in the UK have created a broad range of digital programmes, which both demonstrate a pioneering role in exploring the creative potential of networked digital communication as well as spotlight the limitations of the virtual experience. During the crisis, many festivals and public cultures have experienced a shift towards the digital. While digital media practices play an increasingly significant role in generating notions of public time, place and community before and beyond the pandemic, their pervasiveness in all areas of social and cultural life has become more visible (and debated) in the context of the pandemic. Questions about how the festival experience can be digitised, how established and new audiences respond, and who benefits from emerging forms of engagement are related to wider public discourses and power dynamics. In this paper, I am discussing connections in terms of the continuity of pre- and (post-)pandemic digital media practices and disconnections as the disjunctures in the global cultural economy. My focus is on how users negotiate the meaning of their everyday media practices and experiences, highlighting the interconnections between online and offline spaces which contest the notion of separate spheres. The discussion draws on preliminary results of empirical research on digital media practices in Caribbean Carnival communities and how digitalisation of public culture is perceived and negotiated.

Bio

Dr. Hanna Klien-Thomas is a research fellow in Creative Industries and her research is situated in transnational screen studies, visual and popular cultures. Based on a digital ethnographic approach, her current research project explores media practices and notions of public culture in the context of Caribbean Carnival in the UK. Her PhD project focused on Bollywood audiences in the Anglophone Caribbean and was funded by the Austrian Academy of Sciences. In 2012, she spent a year as an affiliate scholar at the Institute of Gender and Development Studies at the University of the West Indies, working on intersectional perspectives on gender, ethnicity and youth. Hanna obtained an MA in Anglophone Literatures and Cultures, an integrated BA/MA in Spanish as well as Cultural and Social Anthropology at the University of Vienna. Previous work includes an ethnography of the 'second generation' in the Cuban Hip Hop movement, various publications on Hindi cinema and stardom, and exploratory research on Caribbean feminist hashtag campaigns.

Dr. Melanie-Marie Haywood

Postcolonial Curriculum and Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

Abstract

Curriculum was used as a core strategy to marginalise indigenous peoples, and rid with local culture that was different and strange to white europeans during colonialism. Through the prioritising of standard english, the enforcement of traditional subjects such as science, mathematics, and literature - but from a eurocentric perspective - local culture, science, language, and literature was removed from the curriculum. Engagement with culturally relevant pedagogy from this postcolonial perspective allows us to decolonise our curriculum and present an accurate view of the histories, and cultures that we have come from. This discussion proposes that effective engagement with culturally relevant pedagogy allows for curriculum to meaningfully engage with the cultural experiences of those who remain true to their indigenous identities.

Bio

Dr Melanie-Marie Haywood is the Director of Education Development Service (EDS) at Birmingham City University, and has a passion for educational development, quality, and equity in education and leadership. She has worked across the field of education in primary, secondary and higher education, both in the Caribbean and the UK. Dr Haywood has attained professional and academic qualifications in a variety of education studies, specialising in assessment and post-colonial education. She is one of less than 1,500 global Principal Fellows of the Higher Education Academy (PFHEA). Her heritage, and time in the Caribbean developed a passion for success of marginalised students, anti-racist pedagogy, and decolonising the curriculum. She has worked with numerous organisations and HEI's in the UK to develop anti-racist and inclusive approaches for improved outcomes for students and staff of colour.

Dr. Priyanka Basu

Presentation: South Asian Performance, Curation, and Digital/Physical Archives

Abstract

Naya is a small scroll-painters' village in the eastern Indian village of West Bengal. The community of scroll-painters, commonly known as patuas, practice an art/craft/performance form called patachitra (scroll-painting). The scrolls have traditionally included stories from epics, mythologies, local lore, and popular narratives. Over the course of time, however, the scrolls have changed their format, content and medium to incorporate modern themes aimed more at an urban international cosmopolitan clientele. This paper focusses on the NGO intervention in the village of Naya and an annual event called the POT-Maya Festival that takes place in the village. The three-day festival allows the scroll-painters to showcase their wares to visiting tourists, regular customers, academic researchers as well as local inhabitants. More recently, the curated festival space has come to include folk performances in alignment with a set theme for the event. Focussing on the pre-COVID-19 space of the 2019 POT-Maya festival, this paper underscores the complexities of 'authenticity' in folk art forms, the cultural politics of their showcasing for multiple audience groups and the consummatory-documentary participation of audiences. The curated space of the festival also highlights the shifting gender roles of women artists and how they have become the face of the art form jostling domestic and public spaces. It also highlights the necessity of festival themes like climate crisis. The paper seeks to understand how 'authenticity' can be used as a framework to understand the connections, interconnections, and disconnections of the patachitra art form within and beyond the temporary festival space.

Bio

Dr. Priyanka Basu is a Lecturer in Performing Arts in the Department of Culture, -Media, and Creative Industries at King's College London. She is a Visiting Fellow at the Institute of Advanced Studies, UCL and was a Visiting Scholar at the SOAS South Asia Institute. She has previously worked as the Curator of the 'Two Centuries of Indian Print' project at the British Library (2016-2021). She is currently finishing her first monograph based on her doctoral research, and co-editing a journal special issue on ecology, music, and community in contemporary South Asia. Her research interests include cultural histories of performances, folk performances in South Asia, dance studies, film archives, and the relationships between print, performance and intermediality.

Rubadiri Victor

Carnival Combined Arts: Making, Remaking and Performance (Street/Stage)

Bio

Rubadiri is a multi-media artist from Trinidad & Tobago working in 8 mediums (painting, theatre, music, film, photography, carnival arts, writing & publishing, design & curation, and lecturing). He has an extensive catalogue of work in all of these media spanning 20+ years. He is founder of the Artists' Coalition of Trinidad & Tobago - T&T's primary artist representative body. Many current State policies and programmes for the Creative Industries were authored or leveraged by Rubadiri and his group. His multi-media work and multiple apprenticeships with Elder Master Artists informed his art and activism, and has led him to become a scholar with new critical takes on contemporary cultural theory.

He's author of *'Meditation on the Traditions'*- a photo-essay on Trinidad Carnival's traditional masquerade- and publisher of *'Generation Lion Magazine'*.- the largest glossy magazine in the Caribbean. *'Passion Fruit'*- an anthology of his newspaper columns from the country's 2 largest dailies- is to be published later this year.

Rubadiri is also founder and Artistic Director of the *'Wire Bend Folklore Theatre'*. The troupe combines costumes and sets created by traditional Master Artisans with interactive digital animation and new media onstage to depict ancestral and contemporary folklore.

Rubadiri's books *Anansi And The 10 Dragons* and *Anansi And The Book Of Night* are the first and second parts of a 21-part 'New Adventures of Anansi' series depicting the adventures of 3 generations of the Anansi family. The series is part of a larger Universe of Magical Realism books by Rubadiri's Passion Fruit Publishing company entitled *'Myths for a New Time'*. This year he will be releasing 4 books of photography & writings with collaborator Dexter Browne.

Dr. Sarah Feinstein

Festival Fever: The Political Agency of Festival in Museums

Abstract

What does a festival do in a museum context, specifically what is its political agency? One of the primary vehicles for colonialism and white supremacy has been museums, the prime example of which is the late 18th and 19th Century World Fairs and International Expositions. If the origin of the festival in the museum is one of embedding and embodying white supremacy (Bennett 1995), the festival and the museum since the late 1960s has often been an attempt to realign its relevance in relationship (or response to) social justice movements that sought to (at the least) democratise representation. Taking an audience development perspective, does this create a liminal intervention or gesture towards institutional change? What might be a model to turn celebration and representation into structural disruption?

In this talk, I want to consider the tension inherent in the function of festival culture as both liberatory and regulatory in relationship with existing power dynamics inherent in museums. To unpack the connection, I want to start with an examination of the festival in the museum's relationship to the past in the present filtered through various cosmopolitan frameworks: aesthetic (Sassatelli 2019) and vernacular (Bhabha 1996 & 2000). However, connection and interconnection are to be read also as relevance: what our traditions, rituals and celebrations mean to our current realities, how they inform our sense of identity and also our sense of hope. I want to end on the ways in which co-production might support a decolonisation that moves the potential of festival beyond a gesture of audience development to a catalyst for change. .

Bio

Dr. Sarah Feinstein has over twenty-years experience working in the cultural and heritage sector. In the United States, Sarah worked in Conservation at the National Gallery of Art and Repatriation at the National Museum of Natural History. Sarah has worked as a researcher in the United Kingdom with organisations such as the Women's Art Library and Prisons Memory Archive. She received a Master's in Critical and Creative Analysis from Goldsmiths University London in 2012 and her doctorate in Arts Management and Cultural Policy from the University of Manchester in 2018. She is currently a Teaching Fellow at the School of Performance and Cultural Industries at the University of Leeds and Programme Leader for the Master's in Audience Engagement and Participation.

ISFC 2022 PRESENTERS' SUBMISSIONS



Session One

Carnival, Memory, Film, Music and Traditional Festivals



PRESENTERS

- **Stephanie R. Espie, US**
Carnival Embodied Performance
- **Dr. Meagan Avion Sylvester, TT**
Carnival Music
- **Kyna Morgan, UK**
Film Festivals As Cultural Intervention
- **Dr. Erin Gould, US**
Festival Memory
- **Dr. Ovie-Jack Matilda Eyituoyo, NG**
Traditional Festival, Tourism

Stephanie R. Espie

The Spirit of Carnival: Embodied Performance in Junior Panorama

Abstract

Modelled after the famous Panorama steelband competition, the Junior Panorama competition is held annually during Trinidad and Tobago's Carnival season. While historically notably smaller than its senior counterpart, Junior Panorama has grown substantially over the past twenty years with as many as 66 bands competing in the most recent 2020 competition. Aimed at the youth population of Trinidad and Tobago, Junior Panorama is divided into three categories for competing ensembles – primary schools, secondary schools, and under 21 non-school ensembles. While there are notable differences across these three categories, they all are structured utilizing the same framework developed for the Panorama competition. One of the important carry overs from the senior competition is the adjudication of the “Spirit of Carnival.” Within both Panorama and Junior Panorama, the “Spirit of Carnival” is defined as “the ability of the band to capture the light heartedness of Carnival both in their body language and musical presentation.” In this paper, I explore how the “Spirit of Carnival” is understood, judged, and embodied within youth performances. Further, I examine how these embodied performances differ than those within senior Panorama. Through these analyses of embodied performances, I argue that despite the similarities within the competitions, youth understandings of Carnival are different than their adult counterparts, solidifying the need for more research on children's perspectives within Carnival studies.

Bio

Stephanie R. Espie is a currently a PhD candidate in Musicology at Florida State University. She holds a Master of Music in Ethnomusicology from the University of Florida and a Bachelor of Music Education from the University of Delaware. Her research interests include issues in world music pedagogy as well as steel-band education both in Trinidad and the United States. Her dissertation will explore the local, national, and global understandings of the annual youth steel-band competition Junior Panorama in Trinidad and Tobago.

Dr. Meagan A. Sylvester

Unpacking the Connections, Interconnections and Disconnections of Kaisofusion in the Diaspora

Abstract

This paper will place focus on the connections, interconnections and disconnections between expressions of festival culture between Trinidad and Tobago and New York City. Festival culture will be operationalized to mean “festival music” and as a subset of that, the genre which will be explored will be Calypso and its various hybrid forms of kaisofusion like Calypso-jazz, Calypso-R&B and Calypso-pop. The backdrop for this work is set against ongoing research taking place on the musical relationships and synergies between musicians, songwriters, Calypso orators, background singers, Calypsonians and other contributors to Calypso music who participate in the festival culture of Trinidad Carnival who were birthed in Trinidad and Tobago but migrated and now reside in New York City. Important to this scholarship is the perspective that festival culture is not limited to time or space but can be realized, created and re-created where the performer is. Further, credit must be given to the impact of migratory movements and the reality of cultural transfer and their ability to shift the power differentials and transform cultural expressions in new places and space.

Bio

Dr. Meagan Sylvester is a published author from the Caribbean twin island of Trinidad and Tobago. She is a University of the West Indies, St. Augustine graduate and a Caribbean scholar whose doctoral research focused on Narratives of Resistance in Calypso and Ragga Soca music. Her continuing interrogation within the academie, centers on Music, Gender, and National Identity in Calypso and Soca, Music of Diasporic Carnivals, Music and Human Rights and Steelpan and Kaise Jazz musical identities.

Kyna Morgan

Resisting the Hostile Environment: Hybrid Film Curation and the GRAMNet Film Series

Abstract

In 2010, the Glasgow Refugee Asylum Migration Network was founded in a city that receives the UK's largest number of refugees and is the most culturally and racially diverse in the country. Two years later, then-UK Home Secretary Theresa May publicly discussed creating a 'hostile environment for illegal immigrants', a policy put into practice within the UK immigration system. Its legacy may be seen today in the Nationality and Borders Bill sponsored by current UK Home Secretary Priti Patel, a bill that has been described by many UK refugee rights organisations as seeking to punish refugees and asylum-seekers and as violating international law. In its geographic and cultural location, and amidst ongoing anti-immigrant efforts in the UK government, the GRAMNet Film Series is positioned to contribute to a cultural and intellectual resistance of the 'hostile environment'. Its curatorial-activist activities incorporate public scholarship and are carried out through a public engagement design that draws from embodied, discursive communication with communities around needs and identities. By combining an activist practice with a process of knowledge creation and circulation with and amongst the wider community, GRAMNet Film Series sets up a hybrid framework of film curation, one examined here as a 'curatorial-activist public scholarship' model.

Bio

Kyna Morgan is a Research PhD student in Film & TV Studies at the University of Glasgow. Her research focuses on how film festivals can act as sites of cultural intervention around issues of decolonisation, with particular attention to experiences of individuals of racialised diasporic backgrounds. She holds a MA in Global Film and Television from the University of Hertfordshire where her thesis analysed the film *Get Out* and sociopolitical horror cinema. Her earlier research on African American women filmmakers in the silent film industry is published in the Women Film Pioneers Project at Columbia University.

Dr. Erin Gould

“And then out of the blue, it pops back out”: Memory, Revitalization, and the Festival National des Arts Populaires in Marrakech, Morocco

Abstract

In the age of modernity, there is an increased obsession with memory and the fear of forgetting. To combat this fear, groups immortalize history and culture through large cultural events, including festivals. An example is the annual Festival National des Arts Populaires (FNAP) in Marrakech, Morocco, established in 1956 after Morocco gained independence from France. Through this festival, the Moroccan government hoped to embody a sense of Moroccaness, highlighting the collective memory of diversity through ethnic and cultural group performances. While this festival celebrates the history of Morocco, it also displays a performed, yet static, view of Moroccan heritage. However, in 2012, festival organizers included an additional stage featuring prominent Moroccan rap and hip-hop artists and youth activities to attract a younger audience less interested in Morocco's traditional performances. By incorporating contemporary performers and youth activities, festival organizers created new spaces for connection between Morocco's past and present ideas of performance and entertainment to bring revitalization to a festival losing relevance as audiences get further and further away from the times of gaining independence. Through an examination of festival marketing materials, interviews with event organizers, and fieldnotes from the 2018 iteration of the festival, this article demonstrates that the efforts of the 2012 festival organizers to connect with multiple generations were successful, but these incentives were not continued in future iterations.

Bio

Erin Gould is a cultural anthropologist and Assistant Professor at Johnson County Community College. In her research, Erin has examined cultural change within festival culture and storytelling practices in Morocco, which considered factors including memory, globalization, revitalization, and cultural shift. While living in Morocco for fieldwork, she has been able to experience different storytelling and festival events in Marrakech, Morocco, which has expanded the types of research she wants to conduct in the future. In addition to her research, Erin works to bring multi-modal and participatory activities, inspired by her work with storytelling and festival culture, into her classroom.

Dr. Ovie-Jack Matilda Eyituoy

The Aesthetics Of The Ayakoromo Olorogun Masquerade Festival

Abstract

The Ayakoromo Olorogun masquerade festival is a cultural festival that integrates diverse elements of art such as songs and music, dance, masks, costumes, rituals and active audience participation to showcase the glamour of the Ayakoromo artistic and cultural heritage. The festival is a veritable tool used by the Ayakoromo people to promote peace and unity. The primary aim of the festival is entertainment, and to provide the podium for quality leisure time to watch and consume the enthralling displays of the Olorogun masquerade. This paper in its descriptive nature adopts the sociological and performer centric approaches and avails itself of data from photographs, video recordings, interviews and personal observation and participation at the festival. This paper examines the potentials of harnessing the festival to promote tourism for sustainable development and encourage organisers to look beyond mere performance. The conclusion is that, tourism development for societal advancement via masquerading in Ayakoromo community is possible if the government can shift a little attention to the development of the masquerade tradition of the Ayakoromo people.

Bio

Dr. Ovie-Jack .Matilda Eyituoyo, has attended several conferences, co-authored several published texts by reputable authors and has several articles in magazines and journals. She has interest in African Oral and Written Literature, currently teaches English in the Delta State School of Marine Technology, Burutu. Ovie-Jack Matilda Eyituoyo, lives in Warri, Delta State, Nigeria.

Session Two

Folklore, Rituals, Spiritual, Religious Festivals (Life, Death, Birth, Re-birth)

PRESENTERS

- **Aleida Bertran, LV**
Folklore Festivals
- **Antara Chakrabarty, IN**
Folklore and Religion
- **Rishab Manocha, IN**
Asian Kumbh Festival
- **Brady Schuh, US**
Burial Ritual, Religion and Culture

Aleida Bertran

Bonding through Baltic Ethnogenesis: Disconnections and Connections of a Festival Community in the Baltica Web-Forum 2021

Abstract

'Authentic' folklore "offers a sense of place and community, a means of connecting or disconnecting across time and space, a point of affective orientation" (Feinberg, 2018: 22). Nevertheless, there is a need within festival studies for research on historical, temporal and spatial dimensions (Getz et al., 2010: 55; Frost, 2016). This paper investigates the International Folklore Festival Baltica, a project that emerged to foster Baltic unity and an 'authentic' ethnic-folk identity under the umbrella of the Singing Revolution (1987-1991). After joining UNESCO's CIOFF network in 1991, the festival focused on showcasing authenticity and multiculturalism. With the coronavirus pandemic, the festival is reconfigured into an intimate, live virtual folk project of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia named Baltica Web-Forum 2021. Through archival research and online participant observation, I examine how the virtual format brings together organisers and disconnected foundational members while salvaging the festival's original narratives on Baltic ethnogenesis, namely a constructed Baltic folklore family with shared cultural practices and values. I develop my argument by exploring the power of "community-marked narratives and images" as sites for instilling "compelling memories into individuals" (Noyes, 2012: 24). The paper also reflects on how their participation in the festival's performance has incorporated them "into the body", where "they feel connected, responsible, bound in history [...] to those who have shared the powerful experience" (ibid.). The Baltica Web-Forum 2021 as a virtual space enables a re-negotiation of connections through the concepts of community and time that only emerge when delving into the festival's history.

Bio

Aleida Bertran is a PhD candidate in Theory of Culture at the Latvian Academy of Culture (Riga, Latvia). She holds a BA in Translation and Interpreting Studies at the Autonomous University of Barcelona and an MSc in Cultural Resource Management at Heriot-Watt University. Her academic research focuses on identity in the field of international folklore festivals, exploring the cultural connections between Latvian and Catalan national folklore. She has lectured the course Social Movements and Culture at the Latvian Academy of Culture and is currently affiliated with the Intercultural Spaces, Languages and Identities Research Group of Pompeu Fabra University.

Antara Chakrabarty

'Tomar Ghare Basat Kare Kay Jana?': The Study of Sylheti Sanmelans in India

Abstract

"Banglar rashtra seema hote, Nirbasita tumi, sundari Sreebhumi." "From the state borders of Bengal Exiled you, beautiful Sreebhumi" (Goswami 2000, 87)

These prophetically prescient verses by the poet Rabindranath Tagore seemed to have sealed the question that the proposed research seeks to unravel, i.e. who constitutes a 'true' Sylheti today. Sreebhumi was the land of Sreehatta, also interchangeably and officially known as Sylhet. Premised on the background of an emotional and ethnolinguistic solidarity among the Sylhetis across Assam and Bangladesh there is a problematic cartographic and ethnic history dwelling on self and other vis-à-vis Sylheti and Bengali. This summons a critical and ethnographically substantiated engagement with borders as 'privileged site [s]' for assessing the power and formations limitations of the identity and one's sense of 'belonging'. In this backdrop the proposed paper seeks to collect an empirical and ethnographic account to decipher performative assertions of identity, at a particular field known as Barak Valley in Assam in the border region of Bangladesh. The notion of belonging helps to illuminate Sylhet's acrimonious historical and contemporary cultural politics, as well as its articulations with broader events in postcolonial South Asia. Sylheti culture has been studied to an extent taking cues from the yearly sanmelans held with the idea of upholding a distinct culture, mandatorily passing it to the next generations. However, this study shall focus on the such annual Sanmelans that are being held in India across states. These sanmelans not only celebrate the Sylheti culture through its songs and performances but also the cuisine. Hence, all the senses are at work as one may say. The Sylheti folklore present myths, jokes and legends to assure a sense of cohesion and cultural crystallization too. These collective memories symbolize and encapsulate the loss of a distant home. The ethnographic research envisages to put together the components of this collective memory.

Bio

I am interested in refugee and diaspora studies, cultural studies, memory studies, folklore, performative traditions in digital age. I am currently a doctoral candidate, Sociology at South Asian University, New Delhi, India. I have completed a MPhil in Development Studies from Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi, MA from Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi and BA from Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Maharashtra, India. I am also the Chief Editor of a Youtube based intellectual forum, Galp Lok.

Rishab Manocha

Tantric Aghoris: The Ultimate Conquest and Celebration of the Body, Mind and Soul

Abstract

Aghoris are an Indian ascetic group of Sadhus (monks), with radical spiritual and physical practises that typically set them apart from mainstream Hinduism. The Aghoris follow a tantric style of Hinduism and reject any materialistic possessions, considering them to be useless. Since their ultimate objective is to be freed of the unending cycle of death and rebirth, they see the body as a mere heap of flesh and blood deserving of no bodily consolation. The Aghoris claim miraculous healing powers. Rural Indians may seek the Aghoris' help to cure disease, ill health, or disaster. The Aghoris claim to be able to take ailments from their patients and expel them through sorcery. They think that by doing so, they will please their supreme deity, Lord Shiva, who will then grant them more strength and super natural powers. They are used to eating the dead and rotting corpses of bodies floating in the holy Ganga or they may use the bodies as altars for rituals, sip wine from the skulls, or manufacture jewellery from the dead's bones. This paper analyses the significance of the historic tradition of the Kumbh Festival that brings together the two indelible desires of humankind: immortality and the reign of good over evil. It attempts to ascertain the relationship between the Aghoris philosophical concepts and their out-of-body cannibalistic religious practises.

Bio

With over 24 years' experience in Fashion Education, Rishab has worked, with some of the biggest brands in U.K and India. A proud alumnus of the prestigious Central Saint Martin's College of Art & Design, London, he has worked in the British Education Industry for 10 years, out of which 4 years were spent working at Marks and Spencer. He has also worked at the British Council Social Services in providing Art Education to adults with learning disabilities. In 1998, Rishab launched his label 'Vanitas Collections' and is currently employed as an Associate Professor at Pearl Academy, Jaipur, Indi.

Brady Schuh

Ancient Jewish Burial Rituals in relation to Ossuaries

Abstract

Jewish ossuaries are bone boxes from the Middle East. These roughly-femur-sized limestone chests were used to hold the desiccated remains of Hebrew-speaking people living in and around Jerusalem at the turn to the Common Era. They first appear in tombs of elites under Herod the Great (about 20 BCE) and are last used as Jerusalem's Temple burned (in 70 CE). As expensive and elective burial forms used chiefly in a hub of interprovincial travel, they clearly had something to do with antique and multicultural thoughts on and practices around death and dying. Jewish burial ritual from the period is well-recorded in literature from/about the Second Temple Period, and ossuary burial has special mention within this corpus. This textual attestation conforms to what is observed archaeologically, but only to a certain degree; upon closer investigation, there are two major ways in which the practice of ossuary burial, archaeologically, does not comport with its textual descriptions. In these ways, it breaks with texts about the rituals of ossuary burial and with Jewish religious restrictions. This presentation explores ancient Jewish burial rituals in relation to ossuaries. After outlining the phenomenon of ossuary burial, I identify ways in which ossuary burial both conforms to and differs from its textual record. Doing so leads me to ask questions about the prescriptive, descriptive, or memorializing nature of these texts. Ultimately, I find that the example of ossuary burial provides a case study in the ways traditions influence and are influenced by their recording.

Bio

Brady Schuh is an incoming graduate student at Harvard Divinity School studying the intersection of religion, culture, and literature. He has a specific focus on issues of eschatology, both apocalyptically and in terms of death and dying. Graduating from St. Edward's University in 2017, they spent much of his time as an undergraduate conducting and presenting research in the areas of apocalyptic rhetoric, queer and feminist textual interpretation, and Jewish ossuaries.

Session Three

Fairs, Gatherings, Festival Atmospheres, Space, Temporality and Liminality



PRESENTERS

- **Marta Kupis, PL**
Festival Influence and Temporality
- **Chiara Cocco, UK**
Affective Atmospheres
- **Dr. Maria Bareli, GR**
Time, Space, Gift Exchange
- **Dr. Jacob S. Dorman, US**
World's Fair 1893

Marta Kupis

Woodstock in Poland: Influences of the original Woodstock Festival on Polish Woodstock Station/Pol'and'Rock Festival

Abstract

The Woodstock Music and Art Fair from 1969 in many ways formed both the ethos of a music festival and the image of entire flower power generation. Until this day it remains an important point of reference for any popular music event, embodying the spirit of freedom, fun and interpersonal connection one has on such events. For the Polish people the same values are best represented at the Pol'and'Rock Festival, which directly references the legendary American festival, not least in its name, which until 2017 was Woodstock Station. Organised annually as a form of thanks to the Great Orchestra of Christmas Charity foundation's volunteers, it is free for anyone willing to come and, for this and many other reasons, the biggest music event in Poland. What is also noteworthy is that it is one of the oldest events of this kind in the hosting country, as it was established in 1995, so only a few years after the collapse of soviet regime in the Eastern Bloc. Not surprisingly, the organisers found the original Woodstock festival an excellent inspiration for bringing a free spirit into post-transformational Poland. The aim of proposed presentation is to analyze the ways in which the 1969 event influenced the Polish one on the artistic and logistical levels. Hopefully, this will also serve as a way to explore the connections between the 60s' American culture and that of 90's Poland.

Bio

Marta Kupis is a doctoral student at the Jagiellonian University's Doctoral School of Humanities in Kraków, Poland. Her PhD thesis focuses on Pol'and'Rock Festival, analyzing its audience's behaviours online. She obtained her MA diplomas in sociology and international cultural studies at the same university. Since 2019 she participates in the international HERA funded FestiVersities project, focusing on the ways in which music festivals help connect people of diverse origins and identities. Her research interests lie in audience and fan activities, surrounding both live events and media texts, as well as the Internet culture.

Chiara Cocco

Understanding Devotion and Attachment in Religious Festivals through the Senses: An Emotional Account of the Festival of Sant'Ef시오, Sardinia

Abstract

The Festival of Sant'Ef시오 in Sardinia (Italy) is a series of sacred and secular events which orbit around a religious procession in honour of Saint Ef시오, where the statue of the Saint is carried and followed by devotees for 80km to fulfil a vow after a plague in the 17th century. The start of the procession is undoubtedly the busiest and most attended event, which I look at as a liminal experience with a transformative potential (Turner, 1967, 1969, 1974; Schechner, 2003; Fischer-Lichte, 2008) for the participants both at individual and social level. During this event, "the city transforms into countryside" as it pullulates with oxen and horses, people parade wearing the traditional clothes of their villages, and the streets are covered in flowers to honour the saint. Thousands of people, regardless of their faith, gather in the streets where they find themselves deeply immersed in this powerful sensescape. Here they join together into 'emotional communities' (Fischer-Lichte, 2009; 393-394) bonded by a somewhat compelling devotion to the figure of Saint Ef시오 which strengthens beyond the festival time frame. The participants engage in these common sensorial experiences, which encourage the formation of 'communitas' (Turner and Turner, 1978) where individual and social transformation takes place through processes of emotional interaction. In this paper I delve into these 'affective atmospheres' (Anderson, 2009; 78) and illustrate how they contribute to the attachment of the people towards this ancient tradition through narratives and experiences from my research fieldwork undertaken in Sardinia between 2018 and 2022.

Bio

Chiara Cocco is a PhD student at the Department of Languages and Intercultural Studies at the Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh. She holds an MSc in Cultural Resource Management at the Heriot-Watt University. Her research interests include ethnographic methods in festival studies and cultural heritage research. She is particularly interested in performance theory and liminality and its application to the study of festivals. Her current research project explores the performance of heritage, community and gender in cultural festivals by analysing the Festival of Sant'Ef시오 in Sardinia. She is also an active member of the Intercultural Research Centre (IRC) in Edinburgh.

Dr. Maria Bareli

Em-Placing Festivals: Practices of the Gift and Facets of the Commons in the Paniyria of A Greek Island

Abstract

This paper addresses the interconnections of festivals to time and space. It focuses on the annual festivities held on saints' name-days in the villages of the Greek island of Ikaria, to explore issues of locality; how are paniyria connected or disconnected to natural, social or historical time? How are they connected or disconnected to religious, agricultural or historical landscapes? Furthermore, it asks how place, communities and identities are historically reconstructed in/through paniyria.

The multiple temporalities and spatialities condensed in the "here and now" of a paniyiri are approached using the Bakhtinian notion of the "chronotope" (1981). Drawing from extensive ethnographic research on the island of Ikaria, I will sketch out three distinct chronotopes of a paniyiri; the time-space of its preparation, its culmination and closure. Within these interconnected festive chronotopes, I will point to practices of gift exchange and to facets of a long tradition of the commons, or what Ruth Behar calls a "culture of common fields" (1986). This paper argues that the paniyria are the epitome of a local gift economy, which thus can be viewed through the lens of Mauss's gift (1999 [1925]). It also argues that the keystone of this gift economy has been the island's commons. In the multiple threads that wave together the commons, the gift and the market economy, this paper finds a way to em-place paniyria, making apparent their (dis-)connections and (dis-)continuities, hence proposing a way to think about how festivals, which are as diverse as gift economies, might be universally connected.

Bio

Dr. Maria Bareli's research is situated at the crossroads of ritual and festive studies, economic and historical anthropology. During her long-term fieldwork, she came to realize the importance of the commons for communities and convivial subjects. Her PhD thesis involves the study of the annual paniyria held in the Greek island of Ikaria, which she has approached through theories of the gift and the commons. Bareli's scholarly interests include the historicity of festivals, alternative economies and community-based research methodologies. She has published a few peer-reviewed articles and, currently, she is working in converting her thesis into her first book.

Dr. Jacob S. Dorman

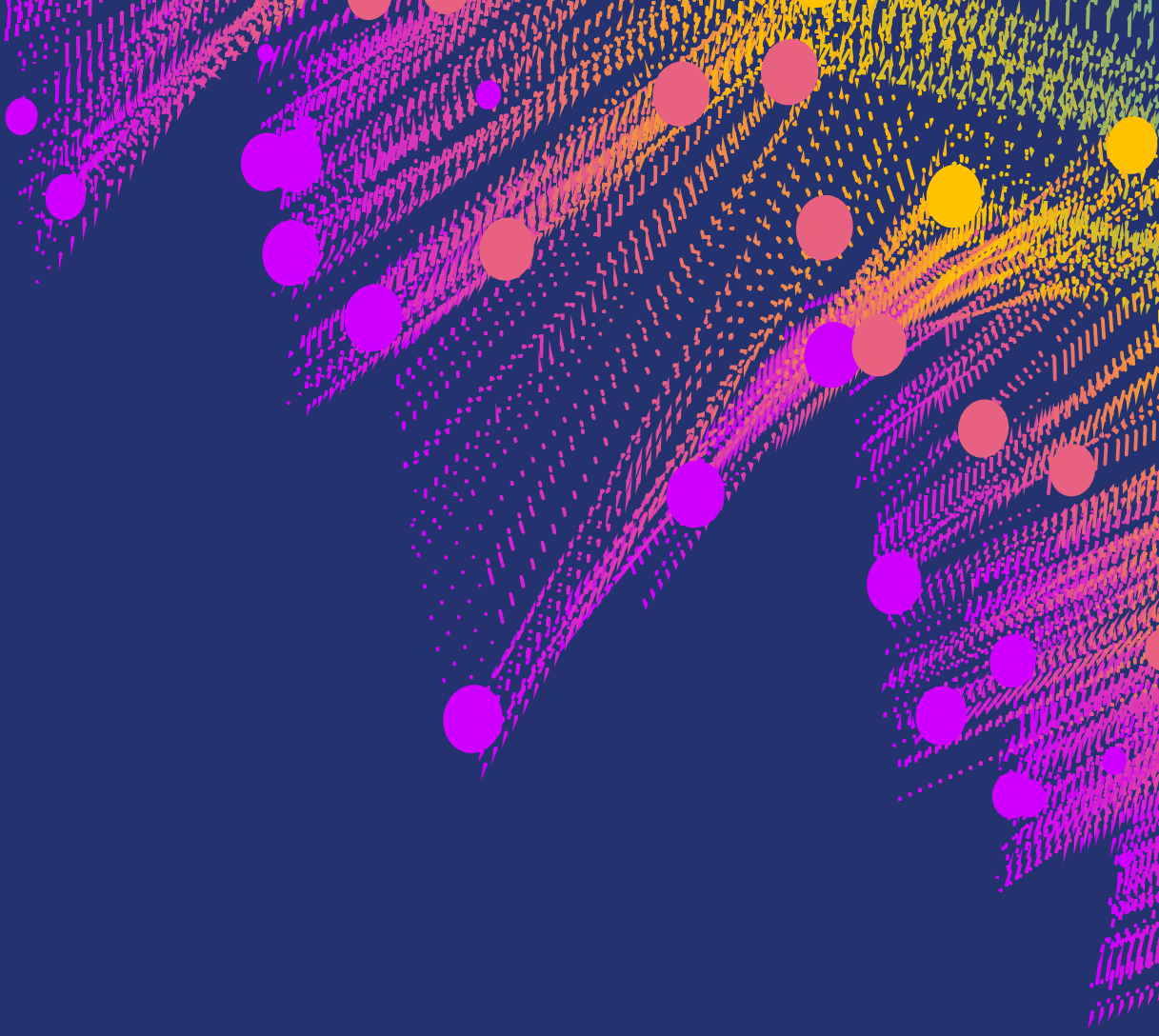
Carnavalesque Pluralism: Racial Diversity and Antiracism at Chicago's Columbian Exposition of 1893

Abstract

While racist and Social Darwinist ideas were common among the planners and visitors to the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago, there also were strains of carnivalesque pluralism, a kind of proto-pluralism from below that celebrated cultural and racial differences and questioned the superiority of Calvinist Northern European culture. Midway manager Sol Bloom repeatedly stated his belief that the Midway's cultures were superior to the main fairgrounds of the "White City." Meanwhile, the Midway's belly dancers largely disappointed American audiences, and Arab women refused to abide by the expectations of American men while Arab men found many admirers among white women. By taking a closer look at Exposition speeches, particularly those from the undeservedly overlooked African Ethnological Congress, we can see that the story of African American exclusion from the planning of the Chicago World's Fair silences another past, an equally worthy story of how Blacks and their white allies not only attended the Exposition, but frequently used it to criticize racism, segregation, and European imperialism. The Midway was confusing, contradictory, and destabilized racial hierarchies; it was not a didactic educator in white supremacy, despite the intentions of some of its planners. More closely examining the intellectual production and embodied experiences of pleasure and diversion on the Midway Plaisance gives us a better framework for understanding well-chronicled African American "uplift" ideology as well as the subversive potential of race-mixing, pleasure-seeking, and political speech at the famous Columbian Exposition.

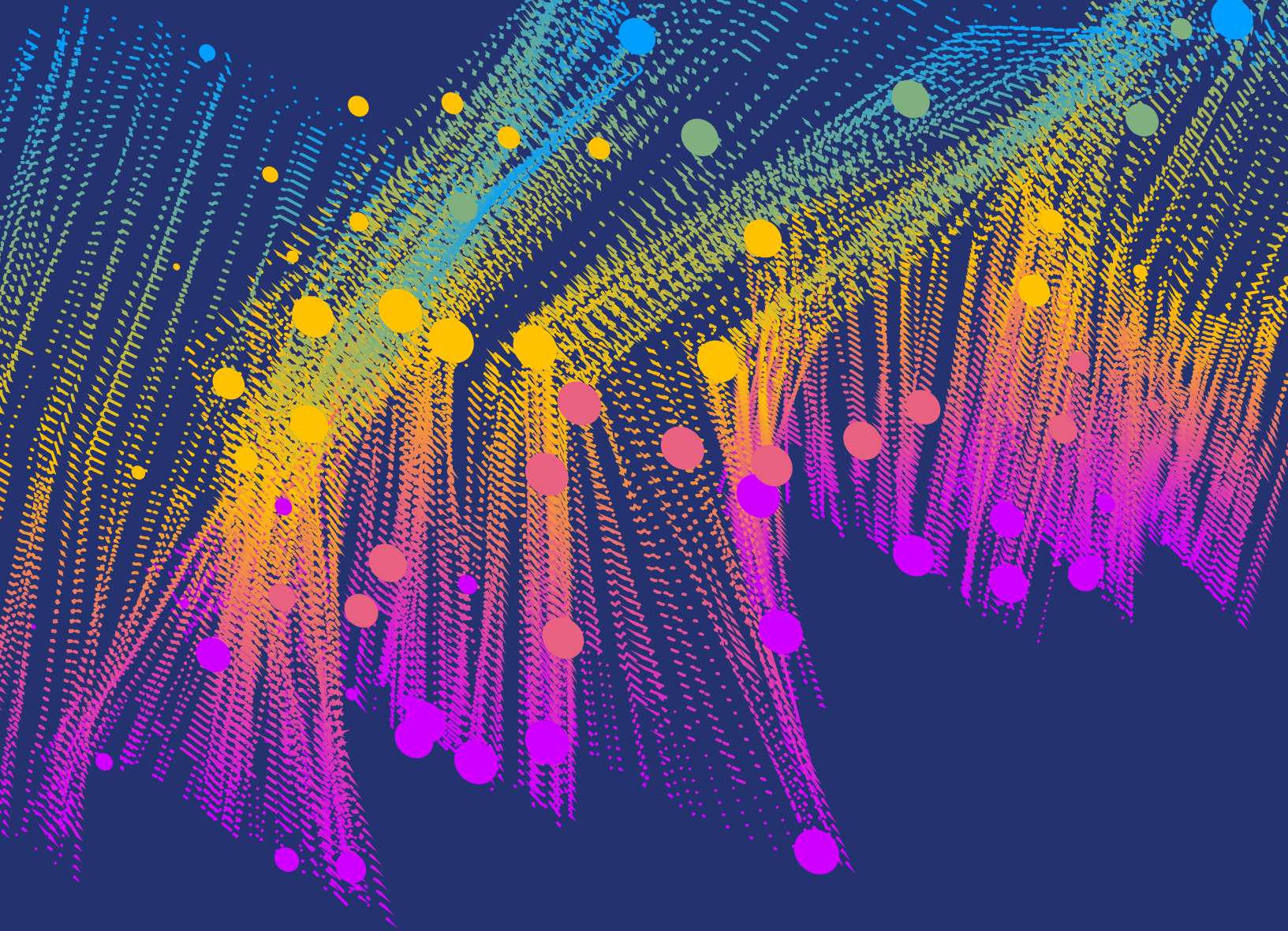
Bio

Jacob S. Dorman is Associate Professor of History at the University of Nevada, Reno. He received his B.A. with highest honors from Stanford University in 1996 and his Ph.D. in United States History from the University of California, Los Angeles in 2004. He is the author of many articles and the prize-winning histories *Chosen People: The Rise of American Black Israelite Religions* (Oxford 2013), and *The Princess and the Prophet: Magic, Race, and Black Muslims in America* (Beacon 2020). Dorman's work has been supported by funders including the National Endowment for the Humanities and the American Council of Learned Societies.



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