

Transnational Perspectives on Black Germany
University of Toronto
Innis Town Hall, 2 Sussex Avenue,
Toronto, Ontario
May 23-25, 2018

CONFERENCE PROGRAM

WEDNESDAY

TIFF Bell Lightbox, 350 King Street West

7:00 p.m. **Screening: *At Second Glance* (Sheri Hagen, Germany, 2012, 92 min)**

Moderators: Angelica Fenner and Karina Griffith

With director in attendance. Sheri Hagen was born in Lagos, Nigeria and grew up in Hamburg. She studied at the Stage School of Dance and Drama, as well as in the Studio *Theater an der Wien*. Besides numerous works in film, she has performed in diverse theater productions. *At Second Glance* is Sheri Hagen's debut feature film that was accomplished as her own production in 2012.

THURSDAY

Innis Town Hall, 2 Sussex Ave.

9:15 – 9:30 a.m. **Welcoming Remarks**

Rosemarie Peña, President, Black German Heritage and Research Association
Markus Stock, Chair, Germanic Languages & Literatures, University of Toronto
Angelica Fenner, Associate Professor of German and Cinema Studies, University of Toronto

9:30 - 11:00 a.m. **Panel 1: Framing Oral Histories in Scholarship, Arts, and Activism**

Moderator: Rinaldo Walcott, University of Toronto

Silvia Wojczewski, University of Lausanne, *Afro-german, Afro-pean-, Afro-politan –The Relation Between Travel and the Practice and Narration of Diasporic Selves*

Daniel Williams, St. Catherine University, *Constructing Black German Identities Through Local, National, and Global Blackness: Germany from a North American Perspective*

Jessica Lauren Elizabeth Taylor, Artist, filmmaker and community organizer, *Archiving as Resistance: Documenting Ancestral Narratives of the Diaspora*

11:15 - 12:15 p.m. **Panel 2: Intersectional Canadian Life Narratives**

Moderator: Warren Crichlow, York University

Michèle Newton, *My Better Together Journey*, Freelance writer and creator of “Our Mosaic Lives,” a blog celebrating Black Canadian women.

Mark Morrison-Reed, *I Was Simply a Living Wonder: Reflection on my life in Switzerland*, Unitarian Universalist minister and historian of the African American experience within Unitarian Universalism.

12:15 - 1:30 p.m. **Buffet Lunch / Innis College Courtyard**

1:30 - 3:00 p.m. **Panel 3: Belonging and Resistance**

Moderator: Karina Griffith, University of Toronto

Jamele Watkins, Stanford University, *Afrolocken: Natural Hair in Germany*

Folashade Ajayi, Humboldt University, *Making Diversity Work and Fight—Black Political Organizing in Germany*

Melba Boyd, Wayne State University, *From Black Detroit to Green Bremen*

3:00 - 3:30 p.m. **Coffee Break**

3:30 - 5:00 p.m. **Keynote: Fatima El-Tayeb**

Moderator: Sara. Lennox, University of Massachusetts

Beyond the Black Paradigm? Afro-diasporic Strategies in the Age of Neo-Nationalism

Fatima El-Tayeb is professor of Literature and Ethnic Studies at the University of California, San Diego. Her work deconstructs structural racism in “colorblind” Europe and centers strategies of resistance among racialized communities, especially those that politicize culture through an intersectional, queer practice. She is the author of three books and numerous articles on the interactions of race, gender, sexuality, religion and nation. She is active in Black feminist, migrant, and queer of color organizations in Europe and the US.

5:00 - 7:30 p.m. **Dinner On Your Own**

7:30 - 9:00 p.m. **Dance Performance / Robert Gill Theatre, 214 College St.**

Layla Zami/Oxana Chi: *I Step on Air*

The performance *I Step on Air* was originally conceived by Oxana Chi in 2012 as a commissioned work for Humboldt University. It carries into the future the life and legacy of May Ayim (1960-1996), who was an internationally celebrated Afro-German poet, performer, linguist, scholar, and feminist activist, also known in Europe as “the Afro-German Audre Lorde.” In this dance-music-word-performance, the audience is invited to reflect upon May Ayim’s afterlife, and to commemorate and celebrate her performative talent, lifelong community engagement and struggle for liberation and solidarity.

FRIDAY

Innis Town Hall, 2 Sussex Avenue

9:30 - 11:00 a.m. **Panel 4: Cinema, Archives, Authorship**

Moderator: Angelica Fenner, University of Toronto

BethAnne Dorn, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill/Duke University, “*Poor Otomo*”: *Frieder Schlaich’s Otomo and the Persistence of the Colonial Gaze*

Alexa Mendez, University of Pennsylvania, *Afro-Germans in Grass Skirts: The Exploitation of Blackness in Nazi German Cinema*.

Imke Brust, Haverford College, *Transnational Dimensions of Heimat and National Images of Hybridity in Mo Asumong’s Roots Germania*

11:15 - 12:30 p.m. **Panel 5: Life Lines: Transatlantic Adoption**

Moderator: Rosemarie Peña, Rutgers University

Screening of *Liebe und Wut* (Love and Rage, dir. Jule Ritter, 2015, 52 min.)

followed by Skype discussion with **Diane Truly and Andreas Nakic**

The German documentary is based on the life and reunion story of Andreas Nakic, adopted in Colorado and raised in Germany. Diane Truly is Andy’s mother.

12:30 - 1:45 p.m. **Buffet Lunch / Innis Courtyard**

1:45 - 3:15 p.m. **Panel 6: Intertextuality, Mobility, and Global Blackness**

Moderator: Deborah Janson, Western Virginia University

Philipp Rohrbach, University of Vienna, *Tabooed History: The Life Stories of Austrian Children of Black American Occupation Soldiers*

Priscilla Layne, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, *The Stakes of Representation and Fantasy in Black German Theater: Simone Dede Ayivi’s First Black Woman in Space*

Sara Phillips Casteel, Carleton University, *Broken Citizenship: Hans J. Massaquoi’s Survivor Memoir and Its Literary Influence*

3:30 - 5:00 p.m. **Keynote: Noah Sow**

Moderator: Rosemarie Peña, Rutgers University

Activists // Academia: Visions and Challenges for Black German Studies 2.0

Noah Sow is Germany's most prominent speaker and lecturer on the topics of Black German politics, arts and resistance. She is also a writer, artist, media personality, theorist and activist. Her writings have considerably influenced German popular media and academia, and her book *Deutschland Schwarz Weiß* has become a standard in discussion and education about racial equality in Germany.

5:30 p.m. Banquet for Registrants

2