

# RaceB4Race™



# APPROPRIATIONS

Tempe, Arizona  
Arizona State University  
January 2020

**ASU** Arizona State University

I refused to do the play [*Desdemona*, Morrison's appropriation of *Othello*] unless Peter Sellars permitted me to get rid of Iago all together. Out. Because he's everywhere; he's talking constantly... He's gobbling up the play, and no one can just live....

It was so liberating in the writing and in the imagination to get rid of the character that was manipulating everybody, to see what they would be like—to see what they would say to one another—if he wasn't there.

# Toni Morrison

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On *Desdemona*

*Hay Book Festival, Wales*

ABOUT

# Appropriations

The RaceB4Race symposium that was co-hosted by the Folger Shakespeare Library in September 2019 explored the meaning of the periodization categories “medieval” and “early modern” as they pertain—or not—to the emerging field of early critical race theory.

This RaceB4Race event focuses on how the term appropriation has recently signified in different ways for early modernists and medievalists.

For early modernists, “appropriation” figures in crucial analyses of cultural productions, rewritings, and reimaginings of older narratives, most typically those by Shakespeare. “Appropriation” exists in a complex relation to “adaptation,” raising questions about who has the power, authority, and desire to liberate, alter, or personalize narratives.

Medievalists, in contrast, have increasingly deployed “appropriation” to discuss the ways white supremacists use the period’s imagery for overtly political purposes; and medievalists have been asking whether such uses constitute appropriations, misappropriations, or reflections of an inherent ideological stance within medieval studies as a whole.

Bringing scholars into dialogue about these facets of appropriation, we ask how these different arenas for appropriation, and their various implications, intersect and if they can expand our insights into early critical race studies.

ABOUT

# ACMRS

The Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies (ACMRS) was established in 1981 by the Arizona Board of Regents as a state-wide, tri-university research unit that bridges the intellectual communities at Arizona State University, Northern Arizona University, and the University of Arizona. Located centrally on the campus of Arizona State University, ACMRS is charged with coordinating and stimulating interdisciplinary research about medieval and early modern literature and culture.

Our mission is to enable and promote the most expansive, creative, and daring scholarship in medieval and renaissance studies. We do this not only by fostering a vibrant intellectual community for the faculty at our three universities, but also by publishing forward-looking, vanguard research through our in-house press. ACMRS promotes work that is historically grounded and theoretically expansive, with the aim of advancing dialogues that reach into the present moment and point us to different, more inclusive, futures. Moreover, we develop projects that explore complex topics in an accessible manner so as to reach as wide an audience as possible. In keeping with the ASU charter, we believe that our success in realizing this vision for premodern scholarship should be judged not by whom we exclude, but whom we include, and how they succeed.

- **Fellowships**
- **Flexible residencies**
- **Conferences**
- **Symposia**
- **Internships**
- **Distinguished lectures**
- **Scholarly journals**
- **Monographs**

Learn more at [acmrs.asu.edu](http://acmrs.asu.edu)



# Marlon James

## Reclaiming the Fantasy Novel: A Dialogue with Marlon James

This event is sponsored by the Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies and the Virginia G. Piper Center for Creative Writing.

In this evening dialogue, Michael Bennett and Marlon James will discuss the literary, historical, and cultural influences on James' novel *Black Leopard Red Wolf*. How does a global medievalism move into Afrofuturism? How do we transcend the worlds of Tolkien and Martin as writers, as readers? What does it look like to reclaim and reinvent the fantasy novel?

**January 17, 2020 | 7:00 PM**  
**Carson Ballroom, Old Main**  
**Arizona State University**

## RaceB4Race executive board

Patricia Akhimie (Rutgers University, Newark)  
David Sterling Brown (Binghamton University)  
Seeta Chaganti (University of California, Davis)  
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Kim F. Hall (Barnard College)  
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Shokoofeh Rajabzadeh (University of California, Berkeley)  
Carla Maria Thomas (Florida Atlantic University)  
Ayanna Thompson (Arizona State University)  
Cord Whitaker (Wellesley College)

**SAVE THE DATE**

# Politics

## A RaceB4Race symposium

**September 10–12, 2020**  
**Brandeis University**  
**Waltham, Massachusetts**



## SCHEDULE

# Friday

Carson Ballroom, Old Main  
Arizona State University

400 E Tyler Mall  
Tempe, AZ 85281

9:00 am - 9:45 am	Registration and coffee
9:45 am - 10:00 am	Welcome from Arizona State University
10:00 am - 10:45 am	<b>Matthew X. Vernon</b> Appropriating Du Bois: Theorizing a Romantic Consciousness
11:00 am - 11:45 am	<b>Kathryn Vomero Santos</b> Commemoration and Appropriation: Race, Translation, and the Politics of Preservation
12:00 pm - 12:45 pm	<b>Carissa M. Harris</b> Medieval Appropriations and American Misogynoir
12:45 pm - 2:15 pm	Lunch break
2:15 pm - 3:00 pm	<b>Vanessa I. Corredera</b> Resisting Lobotomized Shakespeare: Race in/and Appropriation
3:15 pm - 4:00 pm	<b>Eduardo Ramos</b> Sins of the Father: Academic Complicity in Racist Medievalism
7:00 pm - 8:30 pm	<b>Reclaiming the Fantasy Novel: A Dialogue with Marlon James</b>

## SCHEDULE

# Saturday

Carson Ballroom, Old Main  
Arizona State University

400 E Tyler Mall  
Tempe, AZ 85281

9:00 am - 9:45 am	Registration and coffee
9:45 am - 10:00 am	Welcome from Arizona State University
10:00 am - 10:45 am	<b>Justin P. Shaw</b> "A Song of Willow": Barbary's Blues and the Theft of Happiness in Early Modern England
11:00 am - 11:45 am	<b>Adam Miyashiro</b> Appropriating the Crusades: Were the Crusades a form of Medieval Colonialism?
12:00 pm - 12:45 pm	<b>Lehua Yim</b> In Appropriation
12:45 pm - 2:15 pm	Lunch break
2:15 pm - 3:00 pm	<b>Sierra Lomuto</b> Antiracism or Appropriation?: Performing Diversity Work in Medieval Studies
3:15 pm - 4:00 pm	<b>Arthur L. Little, Jr.</b> Shakespeare and the Police
4:00 pm - 4:15 pm	Closing remarks

Vanessa I. Corredera is an Associate Professor at Andrews University. She researches and teaches on race and representation in early modern drama, with a focus on Shakespeare, race, and appropriation. Her essays appear in *Shakespeare Quarterly*, *Journal of American Studies*, *Literature/Film Quarterly*, and *Early Modern Literary Studies*, as well as the collections *The Routledge Handbook to Shakespeare and Global Appropriation* and *Shakespeare and the Power of the Face*. She is working on a monograph entitled *America's Postracial Othellos: Appropriation, Race, and Representation*, which examines the racial frames authorized by the power of Shakespeare in appropriations of *Othello* created in "postracial" America.



**Vanessa I. Corredera**



Carissa M. Harris teaches English and Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies at Temple University in Philadelphia. Her first book, *Obscene Pedagogies: Transgressive Talk and Sexual Education in Late Medieval Britain*, was published by Cornell University Press in 2018. She has also written several public-facing essays about rape and consent in the Middle Ages and today. She is currently working on a co-edited collection of essays and medieval poems about sexual violence titled *Subjects of Violence: Women, Consent, and Resistance in the Late Middle Ages* as well as a second book on women's anger and medieval misogyny.

# Carissa M. Harris



Arthur L. Little, Jr. is an Associate Professor in the English Department at University of California, Los Angeles. He received his bachelor's degree from Northwestern, and his MA and PhD from Harvard. His research focuses on Shakespeare and early modern race, gender, and sexuality. He is the author of *Shakespeare Jungle Fever: National-Imperial Re-Visions of Race, Rape, and Sacrifice* (Stanford, 2000) and *Shakespeare and Race Theory* (forthcoming, Bloomsbury Arden Shakespeare) and editor of the soon-to-be-published *White People in Shakespeare* and *White Shakespeare*. He also has in progress a study entitled *Black Hamlet: Disciplining Race, Memory, and the Geno-Performative*. Little has published numerous articles and has lectured widely both nationally and internationally.



**Arthur L. Little, Jr.**



**Sierra Lomuto**

Sierra Lomuto is an Assistant Professor of English at Macalester College, where she also holds a Consortium for Faculty Diversity Postdoctoral Fellowship (2018-2020). Her work explores the relationship between early globalities and racial formation in medieval literature, focusing in particular on Latin Europe and the Mongol Empire. Her articles appear or are forthcoming in *Exemplaria*, *postmedieval*, and *Deconstructing Medieval Margins and Marginality* (Routledge). Her public essays on appropriations of the medieval past have appeared in *In the Middle*, *Public Books*, and *Medievalists of Color*. She is currently working on her book, *Exotic Allies: Race, Literature, and the Construction of Mongols in Medieval Europe*.

Adam Miyashiro is an Associate Professor of Literature at Stockton University in New Jersey. He completed a PhD in Comparative Literature at Penn State University, and wrote a dissertation on medieval literature and the construction of race that he is currently revising as a book. He is an Executive Council member of the Delaware Valley Medieval Association and is also on the Advisory Board of the journal *Early Middle English*. He has a book chapter forthcoming on "Race, Environment and Culture," and articles on Beowulf and the concept of "Anglo-Saxon" racializations in *Literature Compass* and *postmedieval*. He has published articles and reviews in *Comparative Literature Studies*, *Journal of Law and Religion*, *Notes and Queries*, and *Neophilologus*. He is currently the Executive Vice President of Stockton Federation of Teachers, an American Federation of Teachers local union.



# Adam Miyashiro





Eduardo Ramos is a PhD candidate in the English Department at Penn State University. He holds an MA in English Literature from the same university and an MA in Medieval Icelandic Studies from the University of Iceland. His research focuses on cross cultural contact in the Global North Atlantic. His dissertation, tentatively titled *Saracen Vikings: Narratives of Invasion in Medieval England*, traces how the legacy of literary responses to the Viking incursions in England influenced depictions of Muslims in early Middle English romances.

# Eduardo Ramos



Kathryn Vomero Santos is Assistant Professor of English and Public Humanities Fellow at Trinity University. Her research focuses on early modern cultural histories of translation as well as the intersections among race, gender, and linguistic identity in contemporary adaptations and appropriations of Shakespeare. Her current book project on early modern interpreters explores the performative practices of translating in real time between speakers of different languages in a wide range of social, cultural, commercial, political, and colonial interactions. Santos co-edited *Arthur Golding's A Moral Fabletalk and Other Renaissance Fable Translations* with Liza Blake for the MHRA Tudor & Stuart Translations Series (2017), and she has published essays in *Philological Quarterly*, *Shakespeare Studies*, and several edited collections. With Louise Geddes and Geoffrey Way, she is co-editing *Shakespeare Between Performance and Appropriation*.



**Kathryn Vomero Santos**



**Justin P. Shaw**

Justin P. Shaw is a PhD candidate in English at Emory University and the James T. Laney Dissertation Fellow in the James Weldon Johnson Institute for the Study of Race and Difference. His dissertation, "Race and Melancholy in Early Modern English Literature," uses literary texts to explore how the language of melancholy was employed in early modern processes of racial identification, and develops a praxis for examining race through the histories of medicine, science, and disability. His essays are forthcoming in the journal *Early Theatre*, on disability in *Othello*, and in the volume *White People in Shakespeare*, on Dryden's scientific racism.

Matthew X. Vernon is an Associate Professor of English Literature at the University of California, Davis. He is the author of *The Black Middle Ages* about African American writers' use of medieval tropes. He has written articles on Gerald of Wales, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, and several comic books.

# Matthew X. Vernon





Lehua Yim is an independent scholar in San Francisco, CA. She received her PhD in English Literature from Brandeis University in 2005; in May 2020, she will receive her JD from the University of San Francisco. A Folger Shakespeare Library and Newberry Library fellowship recipient, her research on water law and Elizabethan nationalism in Shakespeare's history plays, Spenser's poetry, and prose chorographies is the focus of a book in progress. In addition, she has regularly presented papers on Shakespeare in the Hawaiian language newspapers, contemporary legal issues in Hawai'i, and other topics at the intersection of politics and Indigenous Studies.

# Lehua Yim



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Arizona Center for Medieval and  
Renaissance Studies

The College of Liberal Arts and  
Sciences, Division of Humanities