

# Un colloque

*Afrofuturisme: centrer l'imaginaire  
de l'Afrique diasporique*

*Afrofuturism: centering  
the African-Diasporic Imagination*



*Jeudi 9 février 2023 :*

Débats à la Maison de la Recherche  
de l'Université Paris 8 | Vincennes - Saint Denis

Concerts à Pantin,  
à La Dynamo des Banlieues Bleues

*Vendredi 10 février 2023 :*

Débats au Centre parisien  
de l'Université de Chicago

Concerts à Fontenay-Sous-Bois,  
dans le cadre du festival Sons d'hiver

Université Paris 8 | Vincennes - Saint Denis

2, rue de la Liberté - 93526 Saint-Denis cedex

Access :

the entrance to the University is on rue Guynemer, opposite the metro,  
stop Saint-Denis – Université, line 13

To find the Maison de la Recherche where the colloquium is taking place  
look for the word "MR" at the bottom left of the map:



Centre parisien de l'Université de Chicago

6, rue Thomas Mann - 75013 Paris

Access :

- Subway line 14, stop Bibliothèque François Mitterrand
- RER C, stop Bibliothèque François Mitterrand
- Bus 62- 64 - 89 - 132 – 325, stop Bibliothèque François Mitterrand

# International symposium

## *Afrofuturism: Centering the African-Diasporic Imagination*

Thursday 9 and Friday 10 February 2023

*This event is dedicated to Greg Tate*

	<u>THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 9</u>	<u>FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 10</u>
	<u>P8</u>	<u>UofC</u>
<u>9am/10am : keynote speeches</u>	<u>Nicole M. Mitchell</u> <i>presentation : Makis Solomos</i>	<u>Fred Moten</u> <i>presentation : Alexandre Pierrepoint</i>
<u>10am/12 : morning session</u>	<p><b><u>Milestones of Black Speculative Thought</u></b> <i>moderator : Asaf Bachrach</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sheree Renee Thomas</li> <li>- James Gordon Williams</li> <li>- Frederico Lyra de Carvalho</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>African-Diasporic Futurism : Across Borders and Disciplines</u></b> <i>moderator : Aliocha Imhoff</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- David Virelles</li> <li>- Guillaume Dupetit &amp; Monika Kabasele</li> <li>- Oulimata Gueye</li> </ul>
<u>12/2pm : lunch</u>		
<u>2pm/4pm : first afternoon session</u>	<p><b><u>Stopping the Same and Doing the Different : Human as Praxis</u></b> <i>moderator: Andrée-Anne Kekeh-Dika</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ytasha Womack</li> <li>- Dénètem Touam Bona</li> <li>- Moor Mother (to be confirmed))</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Black Mythologies : Utilizing Cultural Codes and Symbols within Afrofuturist Artforms for Liberation</u></b> <i>moderator: Sara Lehad</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lauren Bernard</li> <li>- Philippe Michel</li> <li>- Travis A. Jackson</li> </ul>
<u>4pm/4:30pm : break</u>		
<u>4:30pm/6:30pm : second afternoon session</u>	<p><b><u>Fostering Collective Imagination: The Chicago Connection</u></b> <i>moderator : Makis Solomos</i></p> <p>Round table with Jamika Ajalon, Coco Elysses, Nicole M. Mitchell, Alexandre Pierrepoint</p>	<p><b><u>Space is the Place : Black Imaginative Space as Refuge for Freedom</u></b> <i>moderator : Yves Citton</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Frédéric Neyrat</li> <li>- Norman Ajari</li> <li>- Tamara Singh</li> </ul>
<u>6:30pm/8:00 : break</u>		
<u>Evening Concerts</u>	<i>At La Dynamo, 8:30pm</i>  TONN3RR3 BIKAY3 + The Bridge 2.9 & Nicole M. Mitchell	<i>At Sons d'hiver Fest, 8pm</i>  Abel Selaocoe "Chesaba" feat. Moor Mother + Moor Mother & Band presents: "Jazz Codes"

Scientific committee composed of Asaf Bachrach (CNRS, Structures formelles du langage team); Yves Citton (professor of literature and media at the University of Paris 8 | Vincennes - Saint Denis / Fab Litt research team - EA 7322); Guillaume Dupetit (lecturer at the University Gustave Eiffel / LISAA Laboratory - EA 4120, CCAMAN team for: Confluences, Cinematographic, Audiovisual, Musical and Digital Arts); Philippe Michel (lecturer HC at the University of Paris 8 | Vincennes - Saint Denis); Alexandre Pierrepont (lecturer - HDR in anthropology, at the University of Paris 8 | Vincennes - Saint Denis) & Makis Solomos (professor of musicology at the University of Paris 8 | Vincennes - Saint Denis / Laboratory MUSIDANSE - E.A. 1572: Aesthetics, musicology, dance and musical creation).

Organizing committee at the **University of Paris 8 | Vincennes - Saint Denis / MUSIDANSE Laboratory (E.A. 1572: Aesthetics, musicology, dance and musical creation)**: Sara Lehad (doctoral student); Alexandre Pierrepont (lecturer - HDR); Jordi Tercero (doctoral student), from the Department of Music of the UFR Arts, Philosophy, Aesthetics + Nicole M. Mitchell (Professor at the University of Virginia, Charlottesville) & Frederico Lyra de Carvalho (ATER in philosophy of art at the University of Picardie Jules Verne / Universidade de São Paulo (DF).

Acknowledgements: Andrée-Anne Kekeh-Dika (lecturer in Anglophone studies at the University of Paris 8 Vincennes - Saint Denis); George E. Lewis (Edwin H. Case Professor of American Music, Composition & Historical Musicology at Columbia University); Frédéric Neyrat (associate professor in the Department of Comparative Literature at the University of Wisconsin-Madison) & Matthieu Renault (lecturer in philosophy at the University of Paris 8 | Vincennes - Saint Denis).

And in partnership with :

The Parisian Center of the University of Chicago  
The Dynamo of Banlieues Bleues in Pantin  
The Sons d'hiver Festival

[www.univ-paris8.fr/Colloque-international-Afrofuturisme-Centrer-l-imaginaire-de-l-Afrique](http://www.univ-paris8.fr/Colloque-international-Afrofuturisme-Centrer-l-imaginaire-de-l-Afrique)  
<https://musidanse.univ-paris8.fr/afrofuturisme-centrer-l-imaginaire-de-l-afrique-diasporique>  
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## Program of interventions

Thursday, February 9, 2023 – Université Paris 8 | Vincennes - Saint Denis

### **Keynote speech : Nicole M. Mitchell**

Among the main issues for flutist, composer and improviser Nicole M. Mitchell (visiting professor at the Department of Music of the University of Paris 8 - Vincennes - Saint-Denis, in February 2023): how to transcend artistic practices and incorporate them into our lives; how to create a world that would finally support the diversity of "ways of being human"? Where technology, rethought, would finally be the remedy it has always promised to be, in resonance with what is not in its domain? Afro-futurist perspectives have placed the challenges of symbiosis at the heart of current struggles. Black thought constitutes a privileged, omni-temporal observatory – just as music can be a ground for emancipation, transforming reality and realities.

### **1. Milestones of Black Speculative Thought**

*(Reflections on the landmarks of Afrofuturism)*

#### Sheree Renée Thomas: Dangerous Muses of the Black Speculative Arts Movement

Black speculative fiction writers are dangerous muses, innovators whose work is inspiring a global new, intergenerational renaissance, a re-emergence of Afrofuturism in all its many forms. They use and retool genre conventions to revise and reverse long held meanings that define community and communal storytelling. They defy old meanings imposed on Black bodies and amplify their voices, creating characters that become the s/heroes of their own adventures, creators of their own unforgettable tales. Their choice of characterization, language, themes, and setting do not reinforce traditional notions of whose stories are worth telling, nor even how stories should be told. They are dangerous to the status quo, destroying the old temples of golden ages past, and are stealthily building the world anew in their own remarkable image. "Dangerous Muses" explores how select writers from the 1800s to today repurpose the speculative fiction genre to identify sites of intervention and reconnection. Through their imaginative works, they offer spaces for Black writers and readers to inhabit, new dimensions of consciousness, and innovative new narratives to interrogate family, race, gender, class, identity.

#### James Gordon Williams: Theorizing Creative Music Through Ubuntu Philosophy

Creative musicians have left us with a vast repository of work that demonstrates their ability to transform trauma into expressions of artistic beauty. Yet it is important to expand our understanding of Black musical responses to systemic injustices outside the common discourse of musical resistance (Lewis 2019). I use an ubuntu philosophy lens as a foundation for understanding creative musical practices that subvert the archetype of the Black protest musician while also building on the work of cultural theorists who explore African American cultural production outside the hegemonic framework of direct racial politics. Consequently, I explore theories such as "quiet interiority" and "Black aliveness" (Quashie 2012; 2021), as well as the possibilities of "reinventing the terms of Black life" (McKittrick 2021) within the context

of musical practices. I contend that this ubuntu-based theorizing will expand our understanding of the rich, ontological kaleidoscopic musical practices that reflect the complexities of Black life.

Frederico Lyra de Carvalho: The Dialectic of *Afrologic* and *Eurologic*

In this paper, we will deal with the theoretical unfoldings of the concepts *afrological* and *eurological* coined by George E. Lewis in 1996 and developed in his work, and in some other authors dealing with this conceptual pair. In an epistemological triangulation, we will try to elaborate the underlying issues in this theoretical elaboration from the prism of Brazilian critical theory. We will try to show one hypothesis concerning what is the historical, territorial and materialist background of this antagonism and how an actualisation of this theory can help us to think about the situation of the contemporary world from music and beyond.

**2. Stopping the Same and Doing the Different : Human as Praxis**

*(Counter-narratives to Western hegemony, in conversation with Silvia Wynter's Human as Praxis)*

Ytasha L. Womack : Afrofuturism as Creative Practice and Being

Afrofuturism is a way of thinking about the world that is informed by African Diasporic and Continental relationships to space and time, many of which are evident in art. In this talk, writer Ytasha Womack, will explore Afrofuturism as a practice to unleash and embrace creativity.

Dénètem Touam Bona : Afrodiasporic sub-versions: living and resisting in minor mode

The mischievous wisdom of the lianas invites to a practice of alliance between "minor" forms of life. "Minor", because they are minorities, even damned, but also because they are part of an art of running away, of which marooning is one of the strongest expressions: a game of hide-and-seek, with multiple variables, which subverts assigned roles and places, thus sketching alternative futures. Far from any requiem, the *fugue* mobilizes the memory only to make it a fabulist power. By its musical connotations (polyphony, baroque), the notion of "fugue" manifests the creative dimension of the various forms of "fugitivity" (dodging, camouflage, clandestinity, furtive secession, etc.). It is first of all from the experience of a brown body - a fugitive body – that Dénètem Touam Bona thinks the fugue, and tries to develop a musical and choreographic conception of subaltern resistances.

Moor Mother : Jazz Codes? (to be confirmed)

A look back at the experience and perspectives of Camae Ayewa, a.k.a. Moor Mother, who sees herself as a "time traveler" in an Afro-futurist vein that is not hypnotized by the way history is told, that forges her own paths between the past, present and future, and as a "truth teller."

**3. Fostering Collective Imagination : The Chicago Connection**

*(A Black artists' collective fostering Black creative thinking)*

This panel will discuss how Chicago as an arts center and spiritual force, and the AACM (Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians), a Black musicians' collective, have served as vehicles for the development of radically diverse and experimental Black art. Contributors to the panel include Nicole M. Mitchell, the first woman chair of the AACM, Coco Elysses, the present chair of the AACM, author/musician/poet Jamika Ajalon, and anthropologist Alexandre Pierrepont.



Friday, February 10, 2023 – Centre parisien de l'Université de Chicago

### **Keynote speech : Fred Moten / Sharing Eccentricity (Xenogenetic Style)**

In this talk I will consider the fate of individuation - as topic, as methodological constraint, as aesthetic aim in literary and musical composition - in the work of Octavia E. Butler and Nicole M. Mitchell, paying particular attention to the physical and social force of style in the mutually derivative entanglement of Butler's *Xenogenesis* trilogy and Mitchell's *Xenogenesis Suite*.

### **4. African-Diasporic Futurism : Across Borders and Disciplines**

*(Connecting examples of Afrofuturism throughout the African diaspora)*

#### **David Virelles : Folkloric Traditions and their Application in Modern Artistic Practices**

Traditional music can have the potential to suggest many artistic directions in modern music. Throughout his career, Mr. Virelles has worked with this information in different formats, ranging from solo piano work to electroacoustic soundscapes. In this lecture, he will introduce the audience to general concepts found in traditional Cuban music. Participants will listen to a variety of examples, audio recordings and videos, as well as examine foundational material and contemporary works. Mr. Virelles will illustrate ways in which this type of groundwork has informed his output as an improviser, composer, and instrumentalist.

#### **Guillaume Dupetit & Monika Kabasele : Sonic Fictions and Imagined Worlds**

The idea of "sonic fiction", proposed by Kodwo Eshun in 1998 in his book *More Brilliant Than the Sun*, refers to the ability to shape fantastic and virtual worlds through the manipulation of sound spaces loaded with references. Sonic fiction is material, but it is also historical according to Holger Schulze, and social we might add here. It is situated as soon as we listen, experiment, digest or anticipate a given sound event, as soon as we call upon our sensory sensitivity to represent the world around us. This paper aims to shed light on this state of passage, this moment when musical creation transports us to these imagined worlds, by looking at recent productions.

#### **Oulimata Gueye : Does Afrofuturism allow us to think about the place of Africa in the history of science?**

After having studied for several years the uses of science fiction on the African continent at the turn of the XXIst century, I wonder if Afrofuturism is a tool to think the place of Africa in the history of science and technology? Doesn't the seductive power of the term rather produce a specificity that obscures the exclusion of black men and women from a more global history of science and technology?

## **5. Black Mythologies : Utilizing Cultural Codes and Symbols within Afrofuturist Artforms for Liberation**

*(Analysis of literature, film, music)*

### Lauren Bernard : Blackness Within and Without: Digital Spaces and Real Places

The success of the *Black Panther* film franchise, Kendrick Lamar’s historic Pulitzer Prize win, and the development of the colloquially-termed “Black Siri”, all point to a growing acceptance of digital blackness within the twenty-first century zeitgeist, yet in our contemporary moment the “real-life” Black body and Black voice is far too often displaced, excluded, or subjugated to white supremacy. Digital or virtual Blackness is permissible in spaces where Black bodies are historically devalued. What makes technological, acousmatic, or virtual blackness acceptable and worthy, to the exclusion of real Black bodies? This paper interrogates the tension between the treatment and acceptance of blackness in digital versus real life spaces.

### Philippe Michel : When electric jazz extends the art of the master drummer

There are many ways to consider Afrofuturism. I would like to question, under the prism of this polysemic notion, the way in which certain groups of the years 1970-1980, starting with those of Miles Davis or Herbie Hancock, have in some way recovered, voluntarily or not, consciously or not, the art of the master drummer of West Africa, this by radicalizing, notably by the use of machines and electric/electronic instruments, a central formal tendency of the music called jazz: the cyclic, cumulative form, with which the deployment in time resembles an open construction (Umberto Eco), i.e. allowing various strategies of enunciation of a set of motives, sounds, phrases, etc., coming from a reservoir of possibilities more or less determined (or not) before the moment of the performance.

### Travis A. Jackson : Pasts, Projects, Movements: The Careers of Afrofuturism

From its first appearance in print, the term Afrofuturism, whether applied to the speculative fiction of African American writers or to the work of African American musicians, has occasioned resistance and debate. In this presentation, I follow the term’s career in musical contexts, arguing first that it is at best a weak descriptor when one considers the broad range of musical practices that animate the work of individual artists. Second, even in those situations where musicians specifically endorse it, it threatens to preclude deeper critical (and historical) engagement. I will consider a range of musical examples, but devote concentrated attention to Jake Blount’s 2022 concept album *The New Faith* and its provocative use of the term.

## **6. Space is the Place : Black Imaginative Space as Refuge for Freedom**

*(Music, art, dance provides a free place in the mind)*

### Frédéric Neyrat : Make Another Mistake: Afrofuturism in the Sun of Invention

My talk will explore the function of imagination in Afrofuturism and in art, as a source for reclaiming transcendental imagination from the techno-capitalist capture enterprises, which use datamining to anticipate and program our becoming. If, as Adorno and Horkheimer argued more than half a century ago, the culture industries “schematize in our place”, our place – our space, psychic and cosmological – can only be reclaimed by practicing a defunctionalizing imagination, that of *The Great Refusal* (Herbert Marcuse) which consists today in becoming unpredictable.



### Norman Ajari : A Black Future: Race, Technology and Afrofuturism

Blacks are without a future because the White World offers itself to them as the only desirable horizon, explains Frantz Fanon in *Black Skin, White Masks*. Even today, the worlds imagined by tech magnates, from Elon Musk to Peter Thiel, draw a landscape where Blacks are a negligible quantity. The objective of this intervention will be to think of Afrofuturism as a set of efforts to speculatively reinvent the relationship between blackness and technology that was catastrophically sealed at the time of the slave trade and impose the evidence of an African future.

### Tamara Singh : Freedom dreams in therapy

Art therapy as daily liberation: a critical clinic (think Jean Oury, Félix Guattari or Frantz Fanon) and *the arts of doing* – this short talk is an opportunity to share what I witness in my professional practice, where patients seize upon creative process as therapeutic salve. In the art studio they are invited and encouraged to delve into Afrodiasporic music, arts and poetic writings as a possible path of freedom from hyper-assimilationist injunctions, injunctions which are false, unhealthy and uncomfortable. Through the accompanied artmaking my patients create psychic and real spaces in order to also exist with their irreducible singularity.

## Biographies

### Nicole M. Mitchell

Nicole M. Mitchell, widely regarded as one of the world's leading flutists, was the first female president of the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians (AACM) in Chicago in the 2000s, before being appointed to professorships at the University of California, Irvine, the University of Pittsburgh, and now the University of Virginia, Charlottesville. Most of her musical or socio-musical ensembles are as much music groups as they are vehicles for exploring the human condition, particularly through the lens of the black experience of the modern world, whose goal would be "*to infuse the minds of men with thought-provoking beauty, and to offer a positive, wholesome, and culturally informed image of African Americans.*" An African American culture understood in all its complexity, never quite identical to itself, never strictly identity-based, opening another pathway, in constant becoming, to the universal.

Before arriving at this point, Nicole M. Mitchell was trained by trombonist Jimmy Cheatham, a veteran of Duke Ellington and Chico Hamilton's orchestras, who introduced her to Charles Mingus, Eric Dolphy and James Newton. Listening to Mingus, the flutist took a liking to labyrinthine compositions, blends of blues, gospel, bop and post-bop, neo-Orleans polyphonies brought up to date and symphonic reveries interspersed with spoken word. Listening to Dolphy, she discovered all the voices of the flute, ancestral and fabulous. Listening to Newton, but also in contact with him, as he became her teacher in the late 1980s, she learned to combine the concertante forms of contemporary classical music with Middle Eastern modes and African rhythms. And she learned how to make a large ensemble resonate in any formation, thanks to the richness of the backgrounds, thanks to these secret sequences at first, flanked by shutters that open and close on darker landscapes, on the back of solos penetrating in gales in the room of the pieces... Since then, she has continued to tour alongside Anthony Braxton, Hamid Drake, Rob Mazurek, Myra Melford, Muhal Richard Abrams, Joëlle Léandre, Steve Coleman, Roscoe Mitchell, Craig Taborn or Ballaké Sissoko...

Nicole M. Mitchell has a lifelong interest in African American science fiction writers such as Octavia E. Butler or Samuel R. Delany, and is herself one of the burgeoning branches, in music, of Afrofuturism. In her work, the most recognizable and delectable forms, and the most adventurous and mysterious, unfold to question our representations, the relationship between the familiar and the unknown, between technology and spirituality, between artistic experimentation and radical critique. "*What is progress, she asks? Do people treat each other better today than they did a few thousand years ago? Our Western way of life is undergoing a major environmental crisis. As global warming and climate change seriously endanger human life, our society continues to descend into the abyss. Perhaps we can move closer to a solution by learning to intersect the wisdom of ancient cultures (which have always been sustainable) with the technological innovations of the West, to create a new world that is technologically advanced and in harmony with nature. Mandorla Awakening II musically confronts some of these dualities, the urban vs. the rural, the ancient vs. the modern, the acoustic vs. the electric, and celebrates cross-cultural musical dialogue.*" From this questioning recently came a record, *Emerging Worlds*, which tells the story of a couple straddling two worlds, dystopian and utopian: one patriarchal, hierarchical and violent, the other matriarchal, egalitarian and peaceful, yet one cannot go without the other. Work that was elected record of the year by *The New York Times*.

### **Jamika Ajalon**

Interdisciplinary/multimedia artist, poet, performer, and author, x-pat Cosmonaut Jamika Ajalon's work has always integrated elements of the surreal with a nod to "afrofuturism" in her work. From her recent novel, *SkyePapers* (2021), through to her audio visual "*Anti Lectures*", sonic/visual art, experimental films (from the 90s to present) & music. She has a BA film video at Columbia College, Chicago, an MA communications culture & society at Goldsmiths University, London.

### **Norman Ajari**

Norman Ajari is lecturer in Francophone Black Studies at the University of Edinburgh. He is the author of *Dignity of Death: Ethics and politics of race* (Polity, 2023) and *Darkening Blackness: Race, Class, Gender, and Pessimism in 21st Century Black Thought* (Polity, forthcoming). He's also a member of the Frantz Fanon Foundation's executive board.

### **Lauren Bernard**

Lauren Bernard is a doctoral candidate in historical musicology at Columbia University. Her research interests include the perception of race in timbre and sound, musical constructions of alterity and identity, and Afrofuturism. Her work has been featured at the Smithsonian Institute, MIT, Brandeis University, and her resident university, Columbia University. Lauren Bernard's dissertation project is concerned with chaos in the lives of Afro-diasporic peoples and their sonic abstractions in Afrofuturist music.

### **Dénètem Touam Bona**

Dénètem Touam Bona is an afropean thinker and artist who turns "marronnage" into a philosophical subject, an utopian experience serving as a basis to reflect on the contemporary world. He is the author of three philosophical and literary essays: *Cosmopoéticas do refugio* (éd. Cultura e barbarie, 2020, Brasil), *Sagesse des lianes* (éd. Post-Editions, 2021), *Fugitive, where are you running ?* (éd. Polity, 2022). Dénètem Touam Bona also collaborates on creative projects, mainly as a dramaturge in the dance and theater fields, and has recently curated a collective and afrodiasporic exhibition at the Centre International d'Art et du Paysage de Vassivière, entitled "The wisdom of lianas". Still on the island of Vassivière, with other artists, he inaugurated in November 2022 the collaborative work (performances, virtual reality, sculptures, etc.) "Spectrographies: tales of the starry island". Whether through his texts or his creative projects – two intertwined dimensions of his work – Dénètem Touam Bona attempts to implement a *cosmopoetics of refuge* based on the heritage of Afro-diasporic sub-versions.

### **Guillaume Dupetit**

Guillaume Dupetit is a teacher-researcher at the Gustave Eiffel University, responsible for the Music and Sound Professions degree. In a doctoral thesis exploring Afrofuturism, he specializes in funk music and the perception of groove. His current research focuses on the links between music, technologies and fictional universes: this is how he joins the multidisciplinary research program PARVIS (Paroles de Villes - imaginaires futuristes urbains) in 2019.

### **Coco Elysses**

Coco Elysses is a producer, composer, conductor, musician, beat maker, actress, voice-over artist, screenwriter, doula and poet. She is the Chair of the AACM in Chicago (Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians). She has performed at the Chicago Jazz Festival, the Hyde Park Jazz Festival, the Chicago Asian American Jazz Festival, the San Francisco Jazz Festival, the Havana Jazz Festival; the Made in Chicago Jazz Festival in Poznan, the Frankfurt

Jazz Festival, An Insolent Noise Festival in Pisa, SESC Jazz Pompéia, or São Paulo, Brazil. A few of her discography includes Nicole Mitchell's *Africa Rising* and *Resurrection Suite* with Ben LaMar Gaye & Carlos Pride, *The Best of the Miyumi Project*, *Skylanding - The Music of Yoko Ono*.

### **Oulimata Gueye**

Oulimata Gueye is a Senegalese and French critic and curator. Her curatorial approach is based on research at the intersection of digital science and technology, contemporary art and popular culture. Her work is interested in the intersections between fictions, sciences, technologies and knowledge with regard to the place of Africa and its diasporas, in a perspective of critical analysis and alternative position taking. She currently teaches and directs the Art post-graduate program at the National School of Fine Arts in Lyon (Ensba Lyon).

### **Travis A. Jackson**

Associate Professor in the Department of Music and the Humanities of the University of Chicago; Travis A. Jackson is interested, above all, in two intertwined processes: the ones through which musical sounds come into being and those that occur when groups and individuals engage with sounds—through listening, dancing, writing, etc. Much of his work, then, sits at the place where ideas about composition, recording and distribution meet those about reception and its embeddedness in culture, society, race, history and geography. What Travis A. Jackson hopes emerges from his writing and teaching is the sense that music is an essential, rather than ornamental, element of daily life, something human beings use to do more than reflect their times.

### **Monika Kabasele**

Monika Kabasele is a singer and composer of jazz and world music. A graduate of the Department of Modern Greek Philology in Athens, of Jazz Musicology in Athens and Paris VIII, she currently pursues musical studies at the PSPBB and the Gustave Eiffel University. She is also the founder of projects such as her recent *Grécofuturisme*, for which an album is expected for 2023.

### **Frederico Lyra de Carvalho**

Frederico Lyra de Carvalho is a musicologist and philosopher by formation. He is the author of a PhD thesis entitled *Improvisation, jazz and negative dialectics* submitted at the University of Lille, in which he tries to think of a notion of improvisation and the development of jazz through the negative dialectic of Adorno. His current research also focuses on Brazilian critical theory, contemporary aesthetics and philosophy of art, and Günther Anders. He is on the editorial board of the journals *Passages* in Paris, *Sinal de Menos* and *Jaggernaut*. A member of the association *Autres Brésils*, he is a researcher attached to the laboratory of philosophy at the University of São Paulo and an ATER at Picardie Jules Verne University.

### **Philippe Michel**

Pianist, composer, doctor in "Aesthetics, Sciences and Technology of the Arts", Philippe Michel is currently conducting research on the creative process in jazz and the limits of the notion of work. He is a professor of artistic education at the Conservatory and is currently a lecturer at the Music Department of the University of Paris 8. He is co-responsible for the Master's degree in Musicology in the field of Musical and Sound Creation and, since 1999, has been the pedagogical coordinator of the "Jazz and Improvised Music" program.

### **Moor Mother**

Camae Ayewa, better known by her stage name Moor Mother, is an American poet, musician, and activist from Philadelphia. She is one half of the collective Black Quantum Futurism. In the fall of 2021, Camae Ayewa began serving as an assistant professor at the University of Southern California's Thornton School of Music. To qualify her viscerally committed and professed poetry and her music which mixes free, noise, indus and rap (his first record under his name, *Fetish Bones*, was released on the punk label Don Giovanni Records), one spoke about "protest music", "slaveship punk", "hardcore poetry"...

### **Fred Moten**

Fred Moten lives in New York and teaches in the Departments of Performance Studies and Comparative Literature at New York University. His latest projects are a poetry collection, *Perennial Fashion Presence Falling* (Wave Books, 2023), a record album, *Fred Moten/Brandon López/Gerald Cleaver* (Reading Group Records, 2022) and an essay collection, *All Incomplete* (Minor Compositions, 2021), co-authored with Stefano Harney, Xun Lee and Denise Ferreira da Silva.

### **Frédéric Neyrat**

Frédéric Neyrat is a philosopher and professor in the Department of English at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He hosts the electronic platform Alienocene and has recently published *L'Ange Noir de l'Histoire : Cosmos et Technique de l'Afrofuturisme* (MF, 2021), *Cosmos expérimental* (Abrüpt, 2022), and *Le Cosmos de Walter Benjamin: Un Communisme du Lointain* (Kimé, 2022).

### **Alexandre Pierrepont**

Alexandre Pierrepont is a lecturer in anthropology at the Music Department of the University of Paris 8 | Vincennes – Saint Denis, and the artistic director of the Franco-American exchange program *The Bridge*. He works on the phenomena of "double consciousness" and internal alterities within Western societies – on the logics of what Patrick Chamoiseau has called "diversality", from the poetic to the political and back again. And more particularly on the music born of "the black experience of modernity" (Paul Gilroy), as an alternative social institution. Alexandre Pierrepont divides his time between North America and France, between the different "worlds of jazz", working to bring together, in the field or the playground, the universe of scientific research and that of musical or socio-musical experimentation.

### **Tamara Singh**

Ethnologist and therapist, Tamara Singh has practiced professionally between horticultural therapy and art therapy, sometimes at the NYU Langone Hospital in New York, sometimes at the Parisian psychiatric hospital of Sainte-Anne. She continues today in her practice, but also in a network. With *Nature the Arts Within*, an experience that is both modest and medicinal. This is not insignificant either, because self-care can be experienced in its radical form. An activist in queer and post-colonial mental health issues, she helps cultivate indoor and outdoor gardens. Her ephemeral installations are supported by a botanical treasure hunt practice. Once scrubbed, Tamara unabashedly vociferates in poetry, voice, and cello. She then visits the spirits of the sea and hell, reporting a dispute of souls between Mama Brigit and the Siren.

### **Sheree Renée Thomas**

Sheree Renée Thomas is a *New York Times* bestselling, two-time World Fantasy Award-winning author and editor. 2022 Hugo Award Finalist, she is the author of *Nine Bar Blues*, Marvel's *Panther's Rage* novel, and *Timebox Altar(ed)* with Janelle Monáe in *The Memory*

*Librarian*. She is the Editor of *The Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction*, the *AFRICA RISEN* and *Dark Matter speculative fiction anthologies that introduced W.E.B. Du Bois's science fiction*. She lives in her hometown, Memphis, Tennessee, near a mighty river and a pyramid.

### **David Virelles**

New York based Pianist David Virelles, who's also a tenured professor at the Zürich University of the Arts, grew up in a musical family in Santiago de Cuba, steeped in the music of the Afro-Caribbean diaspora and Western classical music. Moving to Canada in 2001 and to the United States in 2009, he organically brings together Cuban folkloric and New York improvisational worlds. While he views his work as "a hundred percent traditional," drawing from multiple traditions, in practice, he is creating a syncretic new personal music, rather than a mixture of elements or a recreation. Besides his solo work, he has also worked with Henry Threadgill, Andrew Cyrille, Reggie Workman, Oliver Lake, Bill Frisell, Román Díaz, Tomasz Stanko, Stanley Cowell, Terri Lyne Carrington, Sam Rivers, Chucho Valdés, Milford Graves, Chris Potter, Tom Harrell, Wadada Leo Smith, Steve Coleman, Mark Turner, Paul Motian, Marcus Gilmore, Hermeto Pascoal, Changuito and Juan Pablo Torres...

### **James Gordon Williams**

James Gordon Williams is a composer, pianist, improviser, and cultural theorist. An Assistant Professor of Composition in African American/Global-African Traditions in the Department of Music at the University of California, Santa Cruz, and a member of the Society of American Music and the American Musicological Society. He has worked with artists Crystal Z. Campbell, Cauleen Smith, Suné Woods, and Fred Moten. As pianist and improviser, he has performed with Anthony Davis, Miles Griffith, and Gregory Porter, George E. Lewis, Mark Dresser, Greg Osby, and Charli Persips' Supersound big band. As a scholar, he writes on how African American composers and improvisers express political thought through creative practices that connect to contemporary U.S. social movements. He is the author of *Crossing Bar Lines: The Politics and Practices of Black Musical Space* (2021).

### **Ytasha L. Womack**

Ytasha L. Womack is an award-winning author, director, independent scholar, and dance therapist. Her books *Afrofuturism: The World of Black Sci Fi & Fantasy Culture* is a 2014 Locus Awards Nonfiction Finalist. She was a cocurator of Carnegie Hall's Afrofuturism Festival, in 2022. Her other works include the sci fi novel *Rayla 2212*, the Kickstarter project *A Spaceship in Bronzeville*. Her nonfiction books are *Post Black*, and *Beats Rhymes and Life: What We Love & Hate About Hip Hop*. Her films include the Afrofuturist dance film *A Love Letter to the Ancestors From Chicago* (director) and *Couples Night* (screenwriter). Ytasha L. Womack was an inaugural resident for Black Rock Senegal helmed by artist Kehende Wiley in Dakar, showcasing her zine *Liquid* at the 2022 Dakar Biennial. A Chicago native (and an alumni of Columbia College in Chicago), she can be found dancing to house music and drinking unusual amounts of tea.

### **Session chairs :**

- **Asaf Bachrach** is project leader, researcher in cognitive neuroscience at the UMR "Structures Formelles du Langage" (CNRS).
- **Yves Citton** is professor of literature and media at the University of Paris 8 | Vincennes - Saint Denis.

- **Aliocha Imhoff** is a lecturer in plastic arts at the University of Paris 8 | Vincennes - Saint Denis
- **Andrée-Anne Kekeh-Dika** is a lecturer in Anglophone studies at the University of Paris 8 Vincennes - Saint Denis.
- **Sara Lehad** is a doctoral student in research-creation at the University of Paris 8 | Vincennes - Saint Denis (Department of Music; Research Unit MUSIDANSE / LLCP).
- **Makis Solomos** is a professor of musicology at the University of Paris 8 - Vincennes - Saint Denis and an honorary member of the Institut universitaire de France.

## Concerts

**Thursday, February 9th  
at La Dynamo de Banlieues Bleues in Pantin**

### **TONN3RR3 BIKAY3 + Nicole M. Mitchell**

Bony Bikaye: vocals  
Guillaume Gilles: keyboards, synthesizers  
Yoann Dubaud: machines, synthesizers  
Guillaume Loizillon: machines  
Olivier Viadero: percussions  
Gaëlle Salomon: percussions  
+  
Nicole M. Mitchell : flutes, voice

*This collaborative project is the fruit of sharing and tastes of common adventures in the electronic and organic forest of sounds of the group Tonn3rr3 and the singer of Congolese descent Bony Bikaye. On land, on the sea, in the air, more or less well-intentioned men have faced the elements to find fortune and knowledge. Explorers have collected samples of all kinds: human, vegetable, mineral, visual and sound. Music is linked to these adventures full of hopes, convictions and beliefs. It is in this adventurous position of hybridization and experimentation that Bony Bikaye had already explored sound travels between Africa and the West in the 1980s, notably in his work with Hector Zazou at Crammed Discs. Like a generational handover, it is more than 30 years later that Bony Bikaye is introduced to Guillaume Gilles (Tonn3rr3) through the composer and long-time sidekick Guillaume Loizillon (Cy1) to continue this exploratory work in constant mutation. Drawing its resources from the exploration of the semantic and musical links carried by the Congo and the roots of rumba, reshaping this knowledge with a palette of electronic, electric or traditional tools, Tonn3rr3 Bikay3 create an imaginary geographical space that extends the eternal rumba journey onto new fertile grounds..*



### **The Bridge 2.9 + Nicole M. Mitchell**

Ugochi Nwaogwugwu : vocals  
Julien Pontvianne : tenor saxophone, clarinett  
Sakina Abdou : alto & tenor saxophones, recorder  
Julien Chamla : drums, percussions  
Coco Elysses: percussions, diddley bow, vocals  
+  
Nicole M. Mitchell : flutes, voice



*What is left of this deliciously human desire of the impulse towards the unknown, whereas the eras of the great discoveries, the explorations, the terra incognita are declared closed? While the smallest detail of our environment is permanently mapped by satellites and camera vehicles? While daily life and interpersonal interactions are modeled and predicted by algorithms? These improvisers, in making their plans together, know full well that there is still so much to discover on the other side of the mirror. That beyond the simple process of exploration, the discovery can still be done by creating new worlds, by making singular individualities made of multiple worlds meet. These five creators have another point in common: they are experienced in collective exploration. In France, Sakina Abdou, Julien Chamla and Julien Pontvianne are respectively members of the Muzzix, Coax and Onze Heures Onze collectives. On the Chicago side, Coco Elysses is now president of the legendary half-century-old AACM, while Ugochi Nwaogwugwu lends her voice and poems to the South Side's art-based resettlement efforts. Collectively, these five have continued to deal with multiple identities and influences, from folk to noise to minimalism. What happens then, this deliciously human desire, the impulse towards the unknown? Plethora. The creators of worlds have now taken over from the explorers of worlds, they make the great leap towards the interior worlds to map the otherness. The new terra incognita are the product of individual and collective imaginations, and are called Alamut, Uluru or Xanadu..*

**Reservation :** [rp@banlieuesbleues.org](mailto:rp@banlieuesbleues.org)

**Banlieues Bleues – La Dynamo**

9, rue Gabrielle Jossierand – 93500 Pantin

Phone: 01 49 22 10 10

Access :

Subway line 7 Aubervilliers – Pantin – Quatre Chemins

RER E Pantin

Bus 170 – 249 – 330

**Friday February 10th**  
**at the Salle Jacques Brel in Fontenay-Sous-Bois / Sons d'hiver Festival**

**Moor Mother & Band presents: "Jazz Codes"**

Moor Mother: poetry, voice, electronics  
Kyle Kidd: voice  
Alya Al-Sultani: voice  
Soweto Kinch: alto saxophone  
Aquilés Navarro: trumpet  
Luke Stewart: double bass, electric bass  
Lukas Koenig: drums  
Dudù Kouaté: percussion

Moor Mother, also known as Camae Ayewa, is an authority on politically lucid deconstructions and reconstitutions. *Sons d'hiver audiences have been treated to her astonishing performances before, with Irreversible Entanglements (2019, 2022) and the Art Ensemble Of Chicago (2020). Her latest group explicitly awakens our consciousness to this historical event called jazz. The Jazz Codes project is militant and memorial, respectful but full of the rage and urgency needed. It begins as poetry, but the hum of voices, their call and response, soon transcends and becomes music. Just as the onstage present dissolves time, evoking the past.*

Opening act: Abel Selaocoe "Chesaba", featuring Moor Mother.

**Reservation :** <https://www.vostickets.net/billet?ID=SONSDHIVER>

**Festival Sons d'hiver / Salle Jacques Brel**

164, boulevard Gallieni – 94120 Fontenay-Sous-Bois

Phone: 01 71 33 53 35

RER A : direction Torcy-Chessy/Marne-La-Vallée, stop Val-de- Fontenay.

RER E : direction Villiers-sur- Marne. Tournan, stop Val-de- Fontenay + bus 124, Hôtel de Ville.

**Translators of the conference :** Johanna Galis and the doctoral students of the Department of Anglophone Studies of the University of Paris 8 | Vincennes - Saint Denis.

**Layout artist :** Jacques G.



*Xenogenesis Suite* is an album by Nicole M. Mitchell with her Black Earth Ensemble, recorded in 2007 and released on the Firehouse 12 label. The work was commissioned by Chamber Music America and premiered at Vision Festival XII in New York City. It was her first suite based on the “Xenogenesis” novels of science fiction writer Octavia E. Butler.

Illustration : Megan Craig et Leslie Kuo.



Ces dernières décennies, ces derniers temps ou ces temps à venir, les perspectives afro-futuristes ont habilement posé, non seulement que la pensée noire diasporique, partagée par toutes et tous, avait été et serait un observatoire privilégié, omni-temporel, pour reconsidérer notre présence au monde, mais que les musiques issues de cette trans-histoire et de cette trans-culture en avaient été, de tous temps, comme la préfiguration. Un terrain d'émancipation, transformateur de la réalité, et des réalités. Retour sur un événement *phare* ?

*In recent decades, in recent times or in the times to come, Afrofuturist perspectives have cleverly posited, not only that diasporic black thought, shared by all and all had been and would be a privileged observatory, omni-temporal, to reconsider our presence in the world, but that the musics resulting from this trans-history and this trans-culture had been, from all times, like the prefiguration of it. A ground of emancipation, transforming reality, transforming realities. Let's go up in this lighthouse.*



Colloque proposé par Nicole M. Mitchell et Alexandre Pierrepont,  
organisé par le Laboratoire MUSIDANSE (UFR Arts, Philosophie, Esthétique)  
de l'Université Paris 8 | Vincennes – Saint-Denis,  
avec pour partenaires : le Laboratoire d'études et de recherches sur les Logiques Contemporaines de la Philosophie,  
et l'équipe de recherche Fab Litt de Paris 8 ;  
l'équipe SFL (Structures formelles du langage) du CNRS ;  
l'Université de Virginie à Charlottesville ;  
le Centre parisien de l'Université de Chicago ;  
La Dynamo de Banlieues Bleues à Pantin et le Festival Sons d'hiver.

Avec la participation de : Jamika Ajalon, Norman Ajari, Lauren Bernard, Dénètem Touam Bona, Guillaume Dupetit, Coco Elysses, Oulimata Gueye, Travis A. Jackson, Monika Kabasele, Frederico Lyra de Carvalho, Philippe Michel, Moor Mother, Fred Moten, Frédéric Neyrat, Tamara Singh, Sheree Renée Thomas, David Virelles, James Gordon Williams, Ytasha L. Womack...



Entrée libre sur réservation : [lyrafred@gmail.com](mailto:lyrafred@gmail.com).



Avec, en concert,

le jeudi 9 février à La Dynamo de Banlieues Bleues à Pantin : TONN3RR3 BIKAY3 + The Bridge 2.9 & Nicole M. Mitchell ;  
le vendredi 10 février à la Salle Jacques Brel de Fontenay-Sous-Bois,  
dans le cadre du festival Sons d'hiver : Moor Mother & Band presents: "Jazz Codes".



Réservation, pour La Dynamo : [rp@banlieuesbleues.org](mailto:rp@banlieuesbleues.org)  
Réservation, pour Sons d'hiver : <https://www.vostickets.net/billet?ID=SONSDHIVER>

[www.univ-paris8.fr/Colloque-international-Afrofuturisme-Centrer-l-imaginaire-de-l-Afrique](http://www.univ-paris8.fr/Colloque-international-Afrofuturisme-Centrer-l-imaginaire-de-l-Afrique)  
<https://centerinparis.uchicago.edu/event>



Illustration de Megan Craig et Leslie Kuo

