

Johari Jabir

**University of Illinois Chicago
Department of African American Studies**

Associate Professor
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EDUCATION

- 2007 Ph.D., Religious Studies, University of California Santa Barbara
One More Valiant Soldier Here: Music, Manhood, and Masculinity in the Black Religious Imaginary
Women's Studies Emphasis
- 2003 MDiv., Masters of Divinity, Pacific School of Religion, Berkeley, CA.
Emphasis: Cultural and Historical Studies in Black Religion
- 1990 B.A., Music (Performance/Voice) Fontbonne University, St. Louis, MO.
- 1986 Advanced Studies Certificate, L'Ecole Hindemith Institute,
Vey Vey, Switzerland

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

Associate Professor, University of Illinois Chicago
Department of African American Studies
(promoted to associate in 2017)

PUBLICATIONS

Book

Conjuring Freedom: Music and Masculinity in the Civil War's "Gospel Army",
Ohio State University Press (2017)

Articles

"When Giants Leave the Forest, the Trees Carry Their Songs," *Kalfou*, 5:2
(2018), 412-418. A Memorial Tribute article on Clarence Fountain of the Five
Blind Boys of Alabama, Edwin Hawkins, arranger of "Oh Happy Day," and the
Queen of Soul, Aretha Franklin.

"The Black Church: A Tree with Many Branches," *Kalfou*, 4:1 (2017) 18-29

“On Conjuring Mahalia: Mahalia Jackson, New Orleans, and the Sanctified Swing.” *American Quarterly*, 61.3 (2009) Commemorative Volume on Katrina: 649-669.

“Peace Be Still: Rev. James Cleveland and the Paradox of Peace in the Modern Civil Rights Era,” in *T & T Handbook of African American Theology*, eds., Daymond, A., Ware, F., Williams, E.L.

“On the Urgency and Risks of Safe Space,” in Exhibition Catalogue. Gallery 210, University of Missouri St. Louis, August 2019.

PEER REVIEWED CREATIVE WORK

“Requiem for a Sunbeam,” a work of magical historical realism to be published in a forthcoming special issue on HIV/AIDS in African American communities. SOULS Journal of Race and Class.

MEMBERSHIP – AFFILIATIONS

2014 - Black Metropolis Research Consortium (BMRC)

2009 – American Studies Association (ASA)

FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS

2016 - Ella Baker Visiting Professorship, Department of Black Studies, University of California Santa Barbara (declined)

2015 (UIC) Dean’s Research Award: “The Archive Project for the National Convention of Gospel Choirs and Choruses,” est. 1932.

2007 Andrew Mellon Post-Doctoral Fellowship, Northwestern University

2007 Presidential Post-Doctoral Fellowship, University of California (declined)

2006 North American Doctoral Fellowship, Fund for Theological Education

2005 Visiting Artist in Residence, Duke University, Durham, N.C.

PROFESSIONAL REFERENCES

George Lipsitz, Department of Black Studies,
University of California Santa Barbara
glipsitz@blackstudies.ucsb.edu

Maurice Wallace, Department of English and African American Studies
Rutgers University, New Jersey
mw925@english.rutgers.edu

Bette Bottoms, former Dean, Honors College
University of Illinois Chicago
bbottoms@uic.edu

Rachel Buff, Department of History
University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee
rbuff@uwm.edu

Bernie Schlager, Pacific School of Religion,
Berkeley, California
bschlager@psr.edu

CONFERENCES AND PANELS

2019 Conference: Illinois Coalition for Higher Education in Prison,
Springfield, IL.

Paper title: “Nobody Knows: On the intersections of Love, Abolition, and Critical
Justice Pedagogy.”

2019 “Art and Activism” Conference,
University of California, Santa Barbara

2016 “Pilgrim Baptist Church, Gospel Music, & The Great Migration”
coordinated this symposium in support of my role as coordinator of the “Gospel
Archive Project” for the National Convention of Gospel Choirs and Choruses.

2016 “Gospel Fest: Preserving Gospel Music.”

2015 “Billy Strayhorn Festival.”

Performer and panelist for Chicago’s centennial celebration of Billy
Strayhorn.

2015 “Peace Be Still! Rev. James Cleveland the Paradox of Peace in the
Modern Civil Rights Era.”
Humanities Festival, Chicago.

2015 “Behind Uncle Tom’s Cabin: Black Life in the 19th Century.”
UIC Library.

2015 “The Paradox of Africa in the Age of Obama.”
UIC African Student Council

2014 “Conjure & the African Meta-Voice in 12 Years a Slave.” Conference on
African Vocality, Columbia College, Chicago, IL.

2014 “Come on in this House: Ritual and Ring Shout in Chicago House Music.”
Conference on House Music, Columbia College, Chicago, IL.

- 2013 “Black Arts Chicago: Moves and Movements.” Northwestern University, Spring 2013, Panelist and Curator. For the panel, “Rhapsody: The Music of Black Chicago,” I discussed the birth of modern gospel music in Chicago, which I described as an extension of the “Black Communal Conservatories” put forth in my monograph, *Conjuring Freedom*. In addition to my role as a panelist I arranged, conducted, and curated a tribute performance in honor of Thomas Dorsey, the “father” of gospel music. In this capacity, I taught the history and musical repertoire of Thomas Dorsey to the Northwestern Community Ensemble who performed Dorsey’s music as part of the conference.
- 2012 “Blackness and the Sacred Performative” Chair, ASA Panel
- 2012 “Black Queer Identities.” Triangle African American History Conference, University of North Carolina Chapel Hill.
- 2011 “Sally Hemmings the Aggrieved Witness.” University of Illinois, Chicago
- 2010 “In the Wake of Hurricane Katrina.” American Studies Association
- 2009 “The Death of the Queer Subject.” American Studies Association
- 2007 “Reverend James Cleveland and the Peace that Wouldn’t ‘Be Still.’” Purdue University, Indianapolis, Indiana.
- 2006 “The New Negro Church: Race, Religion, Citizenship and the Disciplining of Desire.” Howard University, Washington, DC.
- 2006 “The Homoerotic in James Baldwin’s *Just Above My Head*.” Multi-ethnic conference, University of California Santa Barbara.
- 2005 [coordinator] “Souls a’Fire” conference on Race, Religion, Class, Gender, and Sexuality, held at Chicago Theological Seminary, Chicago, IL.

LECTURES AND PRESENTATIONS

- 2018 Lecture: *In the Water: Queerness and Dissidence in Black Working Class Religious Culture*, Queer Theologians Illinois
- 2018 Facilitator: Workshop on Lorraine Hansberry’s *Raisin in the Sun*, McCormick Theological Seminary
- 2018 Facilitator: Workshop on James Baldwin’s *Fire Next Time* University of Wisconsin Milwaukee and Marquette University

- 2017 Facilitator: Workshop on Pedagogy, UIC Department of Psychology
- 2017 Facilitator: Workshop, Film Screening & Discussion, *I Am Not Your Negro*, a film by Raoul Peck, based on the words of James Baldwin McCormick Theological Seminary, Chicago, IL. (invited)
- 2017 “Afro-Curative Arts and the Legacy of Katherine Dunham.”
Alternative Remedies Symposium, African American Cultural Center,
University of Illinois, Chicago
- 2014 [lecture] “Rev. James Cleveland and the Peace that won’t ‘Be Still.’”
The Chicago Humanities Festival
- 2013 [public concert] “Blues for Water: Solo concert of love songs, blues, and
spirituals about water to benefit the Friends of the Middle East Earth
Project and Faith in Place.
- 2012 Lecture, “Martin, Mahalia, and the Movement: the Activist Partnership of
Mahalia Jackson and Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.,” Civil Rights Heritage
Center, Indiana University, South Bend.
- 2011 Keynote, “Eyes on the Prize and the Price of the Ticket.”
Martin Luther King Luncheon, University of Illinois Chicago.
- 2009 Workshop, “The Sound that Broke the Back of Words: Black Sacred
Music in the 19th Century.” Duke University

RELATED ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

- 2017 “Rolling the Stone Away: Generations of Love & Justice,” a conference
dedicated to archiving and documenting LGBTQIA saints and prophets.
(advisory)
- 2017 “Un-trouble the Waters.” As an associate with the UIC Fresh Water Lab I
helped to organize this 2-day summit on water equity in the Great Lakes.
For the opening of the summit I led the participants in a mass song of
solidarity, “Wade in the Water,” to which I adjusted the lyrics for the
occasion.
- 2016 “Keeping Precious Memories: An Archive Symposium.” I organized this
archive symposium on behalf of the National Convention of Gospel
Choirs and Choruses. I assembled and moderated a panel of scholars on
gospel music to discuss the importance of a gospel archive. The event was
held at Pilgrim Baptist Church in Chicago’s historic south side
neighborhood, Bronzeville, at Pilgrim Baptist Church.

- 2015 *NCGCC Archive and Oral History*, I have been appointed by the (NCGCC) National Convention of Gospel Choirs and Choruses to establish an Official archive and oral history for the organization, founded by Thomas A. Dorsey in 1933.
- 2012 *Archival Consultant*, Chicago Diocese of the Episcopal Church, researched and categorized historic documents dealing with topics of race and equal rights.
- 2011 *Archival Consultant*, Chicago Urban League, Researched and selected historic images for the Chicago Urban League's 50th anniversary Golden Dinner.
- 2000 *Project Coordinator*, African American Roundtable Project, Center for Lesbian & Gay Studies in Religion and Ministry, Pacific School of Religion, Berkeley, CA. Coordinated national meetings of Black LGBT clergy, scholars, and activists from Black faith communities.
- 2009 Guest Instructor/Scholar, *History and Culture of Black Sacred Music 19th-20th Century*, Chicago Theological Seminary, Chicago Illinois

COURSES TAUGHT

Introduction to African American Studies
 Introduction to Black Popular Culture
 African American History 1877-Present
 African American Religious Traditions
 Freshmen Seminar: History of Black Music
 Interdisciplinary Seminar: African American Religion and Arts
 Readings in Black Masculinities
 Three directed readings on James Baldwin
 Direct Readings in Black Feminist and Womanist Thought
 History of the Black Church: Refuge and Resistance
 Black Music and Black Feminism
 Black Lives in Historical Context: Black Work Matters!
 Religion and Black Popular Culture
 Direct Reading on the Mystical Paths in Black Spirituality.

OFF CAMPUS OUTREACH AND ENRICHMENT

- 2019 – Prison Neighborhood Arts Project (PNAP). I am currently teaching a course at Stateville Prison entitled, “African Americans and the Civil War.”
- 2018 - Visiting Scholar and Instructor, McCormick Theological Seminary, seminar on Jams Baldwin

GRADUATE COMMITTEES

PhD

Abdul Hamid, Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, California
Benjamin Reynolds, Chicago Theological Seminary

University Service

Search Committee: UIC African American Cultural Center
Executive Committee: UIC Humanities Institute,
Search Committee: Director of Jazz Studies, UIC Department of Theater and Music
Search Committee: Head Basketball Coach, University of Illinois Chicago
Chancellor's Committee on the Status of Blacks
Dean's Council on Diversity
Advisory board member, Gender and Sexuality Center
Search Committee: GWS Popular Culture
Facilitator: Readings by James Baldwin for the community organization, *On Building Community*.

Departmental Service

Co-convener with John D'Emellio: 12th Floor Colloquium for the departments of African American Studies and Gender and Women's Studies.
Teaching and Learning Committee,
Programming Committee
Faculty co-sponsor, African American Studies Club

Community Service

2012 *Broadway Youth Shelter*, shelter for homeless LGBTQ youth.
2011 *Yes to Life!* Taught free community course on spiritual formation sponsored by "Affinity Community Services," a social justice community organization in Chicago, IL.
2010 *Seminary of the Street*, board member, Oakland, CA.
2013 *United Africans Organization*, volunteer for citizenship workshops.
2015 *Barbershop Rap*, humanities tutor (volunteer) for monthly neighborhood meetings in support of black male youth.
2017 Kufi Club of Roseland, Chicago, IL

PROFESSIONAL PERFORMANCES AND EXPERIENCE

Current: Director of Music, St. George and St. Matthias Episcopal Church
Soloist and Collaborator: *The Last March: An Evening of Spoken Word, Music, and Reflection* commemorating the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. First Church of the Brethren, Chicago, IL., 2018
Director of Music, St. George & St. Mathias Episcopal Church, Chicago, IL.
Musical Accompanist, *Tribute to Mahalia Jackson*, Concert, Sixth Grace Presbyterian Church, Chicago, IL. 2015
Musical Accompanist, Sixth Grace Presbyterian Church, Chicago, IL., 2011-2016
Musical Director, *The Piano Lesson*, UIC Theatre Department, 2015

Soloist, Composer and Collaborator: *Blues for Water*, collaboration between myself and UIC Professor Rachael Haverlock.

Musical Director, *Seven Guitars*, UIC Theatre Department, 2014

Featured Artist, *Blues for Water* concert to raise awareness of the Global Water Crisis, Sixth Grace Presbyterian Church, Chicago, IL, 2013

Guest Artist & Director, *How I Got Over*, multi-media production at Duke University, Durham. NC., Fall 2008

Guest Soloist, *Negro Spirituals 2000*” Zellerbach Hall – Berkeley, CA Feb. 2000

Guest Composer, *Gospel Christmas* St. Louis Symphony – 1996 – 2001

Director of Music, *Church by the Side of the Road*, Berkeley, CA.

Director, *For Colored Boys* Theatre Rhinoceros, San Francisco, May 2002

Guest Soloist, *Handel’s Messiah* Herbst Hall – UC Berkeley, CA Dec. 1999

Guest Soloist, *The Gospel Mass* Carnegie Hall, New York, Jan. 1999

Guest Soloist, *Healing* Footprints Dance Company, New York. June 1994

Guest Soloist, *Schubert Mass in G*, Sheldon Concert Hall – St. Louis, MO 1993

Music Director/Arranger *Tambourines to Glory!* St. Louis Black Repertory Theatre, 1998

Musical Director, *Echoes of Harlem* Pamoja Theatre Co. August 1991

Musical Director, *The Gospel at Colonus* St Louis Black Repertory Theatre, 1997

Musical Director, *The Gospel at Colonus* Kansas City Rep. March 1998

Musical Director, *Lady Day at Emerson’s Bar & Grill* Oakland Ensemble Theatre, Oakland, CA. May 1999

Director of Choral Activities and Teacher of Voice, *The Young Musicians Program*, University at California Berkeley, Berkeley, CA., 1998-2002

Musical Director, *Tambourines to Glory* St. Louis Black Repertory Theatre. April 1996

Assistant Conductor & Accompanist, *St. Louis Symphony IN-Unison Chorus*, St. Louis, MO., 1994-1997.

Musical Director, *West Side Baptist Church*, St. Louis, MO.

Assistant Conductor, *The Wiz*, National Broadway Tour, 1992 – 1993

Director, *New Blood Symphony*, National Black Arts Festival, Atlanta, GA.

Musical Director, *New Sunny Mount Baptist Church*, St. Louis. MO. 1989