



NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

JAMES BALDWIN'S GLOBAL IMAGINATION

A MULTI-SITE CONFERENCE EVENT

Program in Africana Studies, Department of Social & Cultural Analysis
NEW YORK UNIVERSITY, New York, NY

February 17-20, 2011



James Baldwin in 1958. (Photo: Mottke Weissman)

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| Program in Africana Studies, [NYU] | The Asian/Pacific/American Institute, [NYU] |
| Institute of African American Affairs, [NYU] | The Department of English, [NYU] |
| The Office of the Vice-Provost for Globalization and Multicultural Affairs, [NYU] | The Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, [NYPL] |
| The Humanities Initiative, [NYU] | The Studio Museum in Harlem |
| The Institute for Public Knowledge [NYU] | WNYC Radio 99.3FM/820AM |
| The Center for the Study of Gender and Sexuality, [NYU] | The Brecht Forum |
| | Queen Mary, University of London, UK |

CONFERENCE PROGRAM COMMITTEE

- ♦ AWAM AMKPA, New York University
- ♦ RICH BLINT, New York University
- ♦ DOUGLAS FIELD, Staffordshire University, UK
- ♦ BILL SCHWARZ, Queen Mary, University of London

Staged in the context of global economic insecurity, a planet gripped by the ravages of war and climate change, ever-increasing gaps in wealth, as well as rampant fundamentalism (East and West), “James Baldwin’s Global Imagination” is intended as an examination of globality not simply as a matter of demography but as an urgent call to re-consider the contemporary utility of Baldwin’s expansive injunction to William Faulkner (and, in fact, to us all), “[t]hat any real change implies the breakup of the world as one has always known it, the loss of all that gave one an identity, the end of safety.” These proceedings are thus proposed as an opportunity to take seriously Baldwin’s consistent and insistent proposal that categories of difference represent an early misnaming, a dangerous and cowardly misrecognition of the moral imagination required to confront not only our mortality but also the brutal legacies of our collective histories. Taking Baldwin’s vision as our starting point, this conference aims, among other related concerns, to make legible the continued impacts of U.S. state racism in this putatively post-racial period. In this post-Civil Rights epoch saturated by disorienting fictions of progress circulating alongside the vulgar traffic in difference that characterizes much of late-capitalist popular consumption, critical appraisals of such processes are timely and necessary. This orienting intellectual posture illuminates the continued structural and identitarian restraints which remain the most dominant features of global life, and has particular implications for policy-making, interdisciplinary scholarship, as well as twenty-first century conceptions of the self that refuse the false, or, more precisely, rigid, character of borders and disciplines.

CONFERENCE PROGRAM SCHEDULE

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2011, 7PM

The Studio Museum in Harlem, Galleries/Theatre
144 West 125th Streets between Lenox Avenue,
(Malcolm X Boulevard) and Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. Boulevard (7th Avenue),
NY, NY

Black and Latino Literary Salon: Re-Read: James Baldwin’s, “The Creative Process”

A collaboration between The Studio Museum, WNYC Radio, 93.9 FM, AM 820, and NYU’s multi-site conference event, “James Baldwin’s Global Imagination,” *Re-Read* is a new program series at the Studio Museum designed to re-engage classic and/or previously published texts. In tandem with WNYC’s signature Literary Salon, and New York University’s multi-site conference event, “James Baldwin’s Global Imagination,” (Feb.17th-20th), this program will highlight the essay, “The Creative Process,” originally published in *Creative America* (1962) and, most significantly, included in James Baldwin’s indispensable volume, *The Price of the Ticket: Collected Non-fiction 1948-1985*. Widely-known and frequently cited, this essay addresses complex issues of representation which are important for literature, visual art, and the full range of practices that comprise the discipline of art.

Panelists:

- ♦ Hilton Als, staff writer, *The New Yorker*
- ♦ Darryl Pinckney, novelist, playwright, essayist; frequent contributor to the New York Review of Books

Co-Moderators:

- ♦ Celeste Headlee, host of WNYC’s *The Takeaway*
 - ♦ Patrick Henry Bass, senior editor at *Essence Magazine* (WNYC moderators)
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FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2011, 5:30PM

The Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture,
Langston Hughes Auditorium, NYPL
515 Malcolm X Boulevard (@135th Street), NY, NY

Opening Reception: 5:30pm-6:15pm

Opening Plenary Roundtable: 6:30pm-8:15pm

“James Baldwin’s Global Imagination”

- ♦ Herb Boyd, Baldwin Biographer
- ♦ Aisha Karefa-Smart, Niece of James Baldwin
- ♦ Randall Keenan, author, ed., James Baldwin- *The Cross of Redemption: Uncollected Writings*
- ♦ David Leeming, Baldwin Biographer
- ♦ Hortense J. Spillers, Vanderbilt University

Moderator: D. Quentin Miller, Suffolk University, Boston

Concert: 9:00pm-10:30pm

"Come out the Wilderness: The Lyric Seduction of James Baldwin", \$25⁰⁰

- ♦ Rashidah Ismaili AbuBakr
- ♦ Courtney Bryant
- ♦ Marc Carey
- ♦ Latasha N.
- ♦ Nevada Diggs
- ♦ Tamar Kali
- ♦ Morley
- ♦ Somi
- ♦ Imani Uzuri

FEBRUARY 19 & 20, 2011

**New York University, Hemmerdinger Hall, Silver Building,
100 Washington Square East, NY, NY**

Saturday, February 19, 2011

Opening Remarks: 9:00am-9:30am

- ♦ Rich Blint, New York University
- ♦ Bill Schwarz, Queen Mary, University of London

Plenary I: 9:30-10:45am

James Baldwin and Collaboration: An Exchange

- ♦ Jennifer Brody, Duke University
- ♦ Nicholas Boggs, Columbia University
- ♦ Margo Crawford, Cornell University
- ♦ Brian Norman, Loyola University, Maryland

Moderator: Cora Kaplan, Queen Mary, University of London

Panel I: 11:00-12:45pm

James Baldwin and the Transatlantic

- ♦ Alice Mikal Craven, American University of Paris, "Reading Baldwin in Barbès."
- ♦ Carter Mathes, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, "Dimensions of Sound: Black Radicalism and Critical Dissonance in James Baldwin's *No Name in the Street*."
- ♦ Bill Schwarz, Queen Mary, University of London, "Foreclosing the White World."
- ♦ Christopher Winks, Queens College, CUNY, "Into the Heart of the Great Wilderness: Understanding James Baldwin's Quarrel with Negritude."

Moderator: Douglas Field, Staffordshire University, UK

Lunch: 12:45pm-2:00pm

Plenary II: 2:00pm-3:30pm

James Baldwin and the Writerly Imagination

- ♦ Rashidah Ismaili AbuBakr, poet
- ♦ Gale P. Jackson, poet and professor
- ♦ Darryl Pinckney, novelist, playwright, essayist; frequent contributor to the *New York Review of Books*
- ♦ Shariffa Rhodes-Pitt, author

Moderator: Esther Armah, journalist and playwright

Panel II: 3:45pm-5:00pm

Re-Reading James Baldwin's *Giovanni's Room*

- ♦ Alex Corey, University of Colorado-Boulder, "Making Room for Giovanni: Sex, Murder and Refusal in *Giovanni's Room*."
- ♦ Douglas Field, Staffordshire University, UK, "*Giovanni's Room* and the Queer Atlantic: Sailing and Cruising from New York to Paris."
- ♦ Stephanie Li, "Imagining Blackness in James Baldwin's *Giovanni's Room*."

Moderator: Steven Fullwood, The Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, NYPL

Plenary III: 5:15pm-7:00pm

James Baldwin in the "Age" of Obama

- ♦ Kendall Thomas, Columbia University
- ♦ Hortense J. Spillers, Vanderbilt University
- ♦ Cheryl Wall, Rutgers University, New Brunswick

Moderator: Manthia Diawara, New York University

Featured Event: 7:00pm-9:00pm

James Baldwin on Film

***James Baldwin: From Another Place* [Sedat Pakay|12mins|1973]; *I Heard it Through the Grapevine* [Dick Fontaine|85mins|1982] - With Post-Screening Discussion with Filmmakers**

Co-Moderators:

- ♦ Magdalena Zaborowska, University of Michigan
- ♦ Joan Harris, actor, journalist

Sunday, February 20, 2011

Plenary IV: 9:30am-10:45am

James Baldwin and Performance

- ♦ Tamara Bransburg and Matthew Sheriff-Cullick, Smith College, "The Politics of Self-Narration: Performing Identities On and Off the Stage in Baldwin's *Tell Me How Long the Train's Been Gone*."
- ♦ Joshua Lubin-Levy, New York University, "Emancipation Choreographies: The Appositionality of Form in James Baldwin and Jack Smith."
- ♦ Koritha Mitchell, Ohio State University, "How Theater 'Re-created' James Baldwin."

Moderator: Awam Amkpa, New York University

Panel IV: 11:00am-12:30pm

"James Baldwin and the Social (Sciences)"

- ♦ Richard Sennett, New York University
- ♦ John Kuo Wei Tchen, New York University

Moderator: Avital Ronell, New York University

Lunch 12:30pm-1:30pm

CO SPONSORS:

Panel V: 1:30pm-3:00pm

James Baldwin: Love, Freedom, and the Fabrication of the Self

- ♦ Marcellous Blount, Columbia University, "James Baldwin: The Price of Love."
- ♦ Yasmin DeGout, Howard University, "James Baldwin and Politics of Christian Love: Rewriting Identity Politics Through Representations in Fiction."
- ♦ Ben De Witte, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, "Another Love, *Another Country*: James Baldwin's Reconfiguring of Relationality."
- ♦ Joanna Jeskova, Suffolk University, "Love Transcends Anti-racism in James Baldwin's *Another Country* and *Just Above My Head*."
- ♦ Seth Silberman, Independent Scholar, "What Can it Make of What it Sees?' Secrecy, the Knowledgeable, and Queer Theory."

Moderator: Marcellus Blount, Columbia University

Panel VI: 3:45pm-5:30pm

James Baldwin and the State

- ♦ Kaveh Landsverk, Columbia University, "Undefined and Currently Undefinable: Rethinking James Baldwin and Black Power (s)."
- ♦ Zach Manditch-Protas, Columbia University, "A Change Gonna Come: A Comparative Analysis of James Baldwin's Treatment of The Nation of Islam in *The Fire Next Time* and the Black Panther Party in *No Name in the Street*."
- ♦ Shawn Anthony Christian, Wheaton College, "The (new?) Rap on Race: Historicizing the Racial Dialogue Trope in Speeches by Barack Obama and Eric Holder."
- ♦ Fred Smith, University of California-Berkeley, "Baldwin, Republicanism, and A Forgotten Guarantee."

Moderator: Avital Ronnell, New York University

Final Plenary Roundtable: 5:30pm-7:00pm

"James Baldwin and the Contemporary Scene"

- ♦ James Campbell, author and editor; Baldwin Biographer
- ♦ Colm Tóibín, author
- ♦ Patricia J. Williams, Columbia University
- ♦ Magdalena Zaborowska, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

Co-Moderators:

- ♦ Rich Blint, New York University
- ♦ Bill Schwarz, Queen Mary, University of London

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- ♦ **Schedule subject to change.**
 - ♦ **All events are FREE and OPEN to the PUBLIC unless otherwise noted.**
 - ♦ **Seating is limited and registration is required. For sessions scheduled at New York University (February 19-20, 2011), please e-mail baldwinconference@gmail.com to RSVP. For tickets to the concert, "Come out the Wilderness: The Lyric Seduction of James Baldwin," please contact The Schomburg Center directly at 212-491-2200. Seating for the event scheduled at The Studio Museum on February 17, 2011, is on a "first-come, first-served" basis.**

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