

Griot (n): *a member of a class of traveling poets, musicians, and storytellers who maintain a tradition of oral history in parts of West Africa*

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## ---News from The Griot---

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Dear Griot Community,

At The Griot Institute, we revel in reflecting on the insights we gained exploring our theme over the course of an academic year. Hosting our final speaker of the year – phenomenal Artist Latoya M. Hobbs – and her amazing family exemplified the theme we curated this year *Joy: Embracing the Fullness of Black Humanity*. Hobbs and her family generously shared their time and knowledge with the Bucknell community during meals, a lecture, class sessions, an interview, numerous casual conversations, and an artist printmaking workshop. The embodied experience of learning to carve a block to make unique linocut relief blocks and then using a variety of tools to physically imprint those images on paper brought participants a sense of accomplishment, wonder, and joy. This was followed by learning a monoprinting technique, using paint and objects to create texture on a sheet of Perspex, and then printing an entirely unique, not reproducible print that could be overprinted with the linocut. Approximately 30 individuals participated in the art making experience with Hobbs. Attending Hobbs' lecture on her larger-than-life images of mundane and spectacular aspects of Black Lives and her depictions of scenes of Black cultures combined with making art gave participants a multilayered understanding of the joy and struggle involved in creating art that reflects the world around us.

Our six speakers this Spring created important memories through their interactions with students, staff, community members, and faculty. They also opened opportunities, through the questions they raised and the works they have produced, for community members to reflect on the tensions that exist in a concept like joy in the experience of Black people globally. We thank Tracey Lewis-Giggetts, Ayana Ife, T. Oliver Reid, Ibiyinka Alao, Morduan Adejunmobi, and LaToya M. Hobbs for pushing us to think about a myriad of topics including Black joy, art, and critical analysis of popular culture media that both reflects and brings joy. We are already nostalgic about this topic as we move on to planning next year. We are energized as we imagine all of the possibilities of the new theme related to education initially

proposed by rising senior Ninah Jackson '25. The Griot Advisory Board members have spent six months discussing the ideas presented by Ninah and have deliberated on how to bring together several strands of thought to expand the theme to *Decolonial Education and Liberatory Learning* for our Fall 2024 and Spring 2025 theme. As we reflect on the nearly 180 years of Bucknell University, the 149 years of Black students at Bucknell, and the 14 years of Griot (Toni Morrison) programming on campus 2025 will be a moment of milestones in the midst of continued need to create a Bucknell that demographically reflects the Black residents of Pennsylvania (12.7%) or at the least the nation (12.2%) in terms of students, faculty, and staff representation. Reflecting on the past, present, and future of Bucknell in conjunction with The Griot Institute for the Study of Black Lives and Cultures' theme *Decolonial Education and Liberatory Learning* will be a valuable exercise in analyzing where we have been, where we are, and where we are going and at what pace or speed. The importance of an institute focused on Black Lives and Cultures on Bucknell's campus (a PWI/TOI) is immeasurable as it ensures the presence of a myriad of descanting Black intellectual voices not sporadically, but consistently, and loudly to reflect Black thought traditions from across the globe.

The 2024/25 theme *Decolonial Education and Liberatory Learning* will be an opportunity to bring in thinkers in the arts, humanities, social sciences, sciences, and from the professional world to imagine and think through questions of decolonial education and what liberatory learning looks like in the past, present, and future and from different perspectives in Black lives and cultures. While our focus is on the intellectual work being produced, created, and done inside and outside the academy – in classrooms, with publics by activists, and across art spaces – we also will attend to the lived and embodied forms of knowledge. We do believe that descanting voices will provide a capacious pool of ideas to draw upon as we think through the ideas and possibilities. As we get into the theme readings and the speaker series, some in the community may also think about how to implement decolonial education and liberatory learning ideas and practices that benefit the different needs and interests of our community.

We thank all of our co-sponsors, partners, and attendees at events this year. If your department or unit is interested in co-sponsoring a Griot event in the Fall or Spring or the entire series, please reach out to Cymone Fourshey or Michelle Lauver through the Griot email [griot@bucknell.edu](mailto:griot@bucknell.edu) to share your interest and whether you would like to meet to discuss the idea.

We are finalizing all of the last details of Bucknell in the Caribbean which will have 14 students learning about histories and continued legacy impacts of slavery and colonialism. While there are still a few weeks of work for all of us and some important student events and performances coming up on campus, we hope that the winding towards summer process goes well for each of you.

Warmly,

Catherine Cymone Fourshey

Professor of History and International Relations

Director of the Griot Institute for the Study of Black Lives and Cultures

**The Griot Institute 2024 - 2025 Theme:**

# **Decolonial Education and Liberatory Learning**

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## **---General Information---**

- [Griot Institute Webpage](#)
- [The Griot Institute Intern Blog](#)
- [Link to subscribe to the Griot Institute Public Event Calendar](#)
- Email: [griot@bucknell.edu](mailto:griot@bucknell.edu); Phone: 570-577-2123; Follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#)
- Director: [C. Cymone Fourshey](#); Program Manager: [Michelle Lauver](#)
- The Griot Institute offices are on the 2nd floor of Hildreth-Mirza. The hours are M-F, 8-3. Other hours are available by appointment.

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**The Griot Institute recently celebrated National Student Employment Week!**

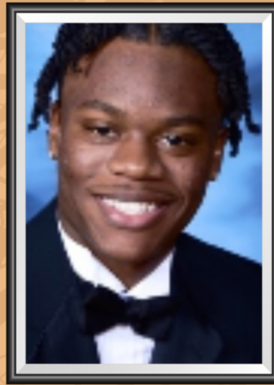
**A special shout out to the students below for their teamwork and contributions!**

**We appreciate each of you!**

## Special thanks to . . .



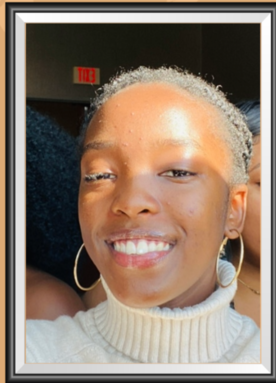
Michaiah  
Augustine '24



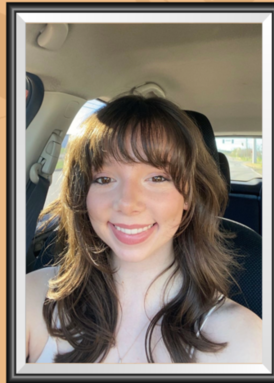
Jeremiah  
Charles '27



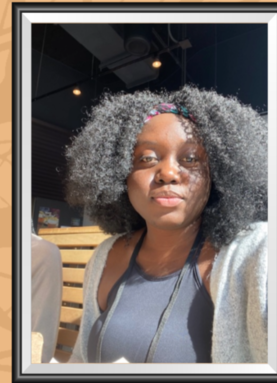
Ninah  
Jackson '25



Holiness  
Kerandi '26



Ryleigh Roberts,  
Graduate Student



Barbara  
Wankollie '26

*We appreciate you!*

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Griot Institute  
for the Study of  
Black Lives & Cultures

## The Griot Intern Blog

For more information on specific Griot Institute events, please read our intern-authored blogs throughout the academic year.

The blogs also include many updates and reports on what is happening around campus in connection to Black lives and cultures.

\*\*Griot intern contributors: Michaiah Augustine '24, Jeremiah Charles '27, Ninah Jackson '25, Holiness Kerandi '26, Ryleigh Roberts '25 (graduate student and editor), and Barbara Wankollie '25.



## New Blog Posts:

(Click on each link to read more)

[Moradewun Adejunmobi: "Joy and Pleasure Matters: African Pop Culture"](#) by Ryleigh Roberts

[LaToya Hobbs: "An Embodiment of Joy, Rest and Renewal"](#) by Ryleigh Roberts

[By the Fireplace: A Conversation w/Dr. Moradewun Adejunmobi](#) by Holiness Kerandi

[The Pieces I Am: Campus Theatre Film Screening](#) by Barbara Wankollie

[Exploring Black Joy Through Art and Storytelling: An Interview with Ibiyinka Alao](#) by Michaiah Augustine

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## Check Out MediaSpace!

If you missed a Griot event or speaker or want to relisten to a speaker's lecture, check out the recordings on MediaSpace. Likewise, if you are interested in The Griot Institute Storytelling Project and want to hear what others have to share, get on MediaSpace!



Anyone with Bucknell credentials can access MediaSpace. The Griot Institute maintains three channels:

1. [The Griot Institute](#) - This channel has many recordings of Griot Institute guest speakers from 2012 - 2024. Most recently, from the 2024 Series, we've added lectures from

- [Tracey Lewis-Giggetts](#)
- [Ayana Ife](#) and
- [Ibiyinka Alao](#)
  
- \*Recordings of T. Oliver Reid, Dr. Moradewun Adejunmobi and LaToya Hobbs will be added soon!

2. [The Griot Institute Storytelling Project](#) - This channel is an archive of interviews and conversations that attempt to define who we are at this moment in our collective history, with a particular focus on archiving Black lives and cultures connected to Bucknell. Recent recordings include:

- [Omuhle Ndhlovu '26](#) on 100 Years of Women in Engineering
- [Jackie Cooke](#), Class of 1977
- [Amarache Ekekwe](#), Class of 2018
- [Winnie Okello](#), Class of 2010

Look for more stories to be added!

3. [MLK Week](#) - Select events have been recorded during each MLK Week series since 2016. For MLK week 2024, the channel was updated with the following recordings:

- [Keynote Speaker, Gbenga Akinnagbe '00](#)
- [Fireside Chat with Frank Wood '62](#)

\*\*Special thanks to the following people for making these recordings possible: Ryleigh Roberts '25 (graduate student and editor), Ninah Jackson '25 (lead on the Griot Storytelling Project), Wes Bernstein (Digital Media Specialist), Jeff Campbell (Event Tech) and Jesse Greenawalt (Event Tech), as well as all of the individuals featured in the recordings!

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If you are interested in learning West African style drumming, please register for free lessons by emailing [griot@bucknell.edu](mailto:griot@bucknell.edu). Lesson will continue through April!

# West African Drumming Lessons

**Mondays, 4:30 - 5:30**

**Hildreth-Mirza Great Room**



**About the Instructor:**

**Urie Kline** is a versatile percussionist active across Central Pennsylvania. He first began studying West African drumming -- specifically the Jembe and Dunun tradition of the Mande -- in 2015. His educational experiences include masterclasses under both Dr. Djo Bi (Ivory Coast) and M'bemba Bangoura (Guinea). He has taught Mande drumming during his World Drumming course at Lycoming College since 2018 and started instructing at the Griot Institute in 2022.



**No experience needed! No cost!**  
**Email [griot@bucknell.edu](mailto:griot@bucknell.edu) to register.**

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for the Study of  
Black Lives & Cultures

Center for the Study of Race Ethnicity and Gender / Spring 2024

# MOUSTAFA BAYOUMI

Brooklyn College, CUNY, NY

## Seriously, Why Am I Still Made to Feel Like a Problem: Being Muslim in America Today



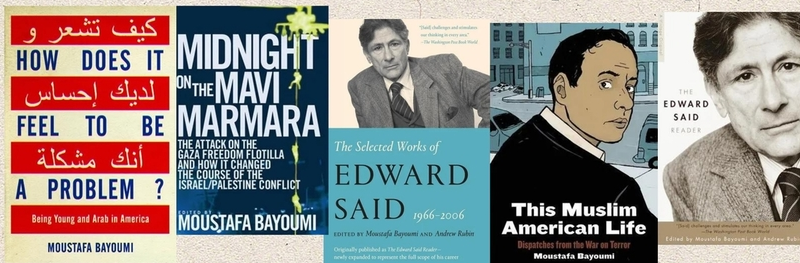
An accomplished journalist, Bayoumi is also a columnist for The Guardian, and his writing has appeared in The New York Times, New York Magazine, The Daily Beast, The Nation, CNN.com, The London Review of Books, The National, The Chronicle of Higher Education, The Progressive, and other places.

Tuesday, April 16

7:00pm

ELC Forum  
(ELC 213)

**Abstract:** It's been over fifteen years since Moustafa Bayoumi's book *How Does It Feel To Be a Problem?: Being Young and Arab in America* was first published, and more than twenty years since the attacks of September 11, 2001 occurred. Yet, being young and Muslim (or Arab, or Arab and Muslim) in the United States hasn't gotten any easier. This lecture examines Muslim American life through these years with a focus on current domestic tensions, overseas violence, and a looming US presidential election, one where Arab American and Muslim American votes could prove consequential.



Co-Sponsors: The Departments of Religion, Sociology/Anthropology, Critical Black Studies, English, and Arabic Studies



Zoom Link:  
[https://bucknell.zoom.us/j/96792772962?](https://bucknell.zoom.us/j/96792772962?pwd=TWNNM2U1VGp6ejBzSWJPK3ZocExyQT09)  
[pwd=TWNNM2U1VGp6ejBzSWJPK3ZocExyQT09](https://bucknell.zoom.us/j/96792772962?pwd=TWNNM2U1VGp6ejBzSWJPK3ZocExyQT09)

## VOCA: A Not So Quiet Nocturne

Jaye Austin Williams (Critical Black Studies) is currently on sabbatical pursuing two very exciting projects. She is developing an adaptation for the stage of Canadian author, Dionne Brand's landmark text, *A Map to the Door of No Return; Notes to Belonging*. Jaye was artist-in-residence at York University in Toronto in February, and will be in residence in early April at the Park Avenue Armory in New York City to continue the adaptation's development. In addition, her 1997 play, *A Not So Quiet Nocturne*, about a Black Deaf woman confronting AIDS in the early

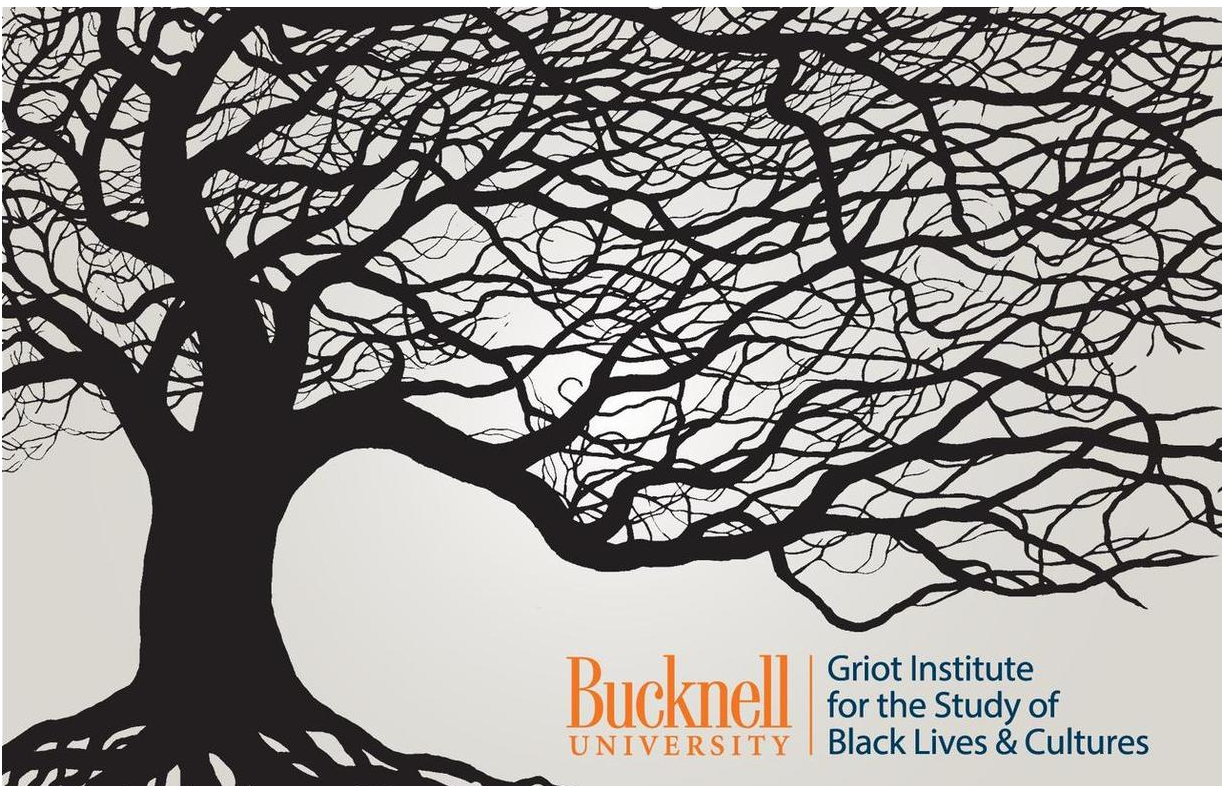
1990s, is having a revival at the Atlas Performing Arts Center in Washington, D.C., produced by Visionaries of the Creative Arts. She is also doing research for her second monograph.

If you are going to be in the DC area during the second half of April, or know anyone who is, here's the info on *Nocturne*:

<https://www.vocarts.org/production2023-2024/anotsoquietnocturne>



[Click here for more information.](#)





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