

ifeanyi awachie

education

NYU Tisch School of the Arts, New York, NY

Ph.D. Cinema Studies

Corrigan Fellow

2020–

SOAS University of London, London, UK

M.A. Global Creative + Cultural Industries

2016-2017

Yale University, New Haven, CT

B.A. English Language + Literature (Writing Concentration)

GPA: 3.5

professional experience

Assistant Curator, Institute of Contemporary Arts, London, UK

December 2017–September 2020

- Co-founded The Politics of Pleasure, a multidisciplinary Black feminist collective and project investigating pleasure as a politics of refusal; curated Black feminist programming
- Supported all aspects of exhibitions, live events, talks and other programs, as well as assisted with aspects of the learning program
- Assisted Curatorial Team with the creative planning process
- Generated schedules and organizational systems to aid the effective work of the Curatorial Team
- Managed the production of exhibitions and events, in collaboration with members of the Curatorial and Technical Teams, to ensure that exhibitions and events came to fruition in a timely fashion and to high standard
- Supported research around exhibitions and events
- Monitored payments and contractual obligations in relation to external artists and other partners, liaising with the Finance Team
- Managed projects in support of external artists and other partners
- Liaised with colleagues in the Communications and Development Teams to ensure clear and timely communication of ideas and narratives behind programs

Intern, TAFETA Gallery, London, UK April 2017–December 2017

- Assisted with exhibition installation and management of public program

- Supported development strategy by helping cultivate client relationships and identify potential partners
- Helped manage communications by composing and circulating announcements, press releases and artist catalogues
- Helped support operations by developing project timelines and internal databases, and helping complete art fair applications

Senior Correspondent, Globetrotter Magazine, *digital* August 2016–July 2017

- Identified and critiqued cutting-edge Black and African arts and culture in London and beyond
- Wrote news stories and longform features
- Generated social media content

Founder + Curator, Literary Happy Hour, *New Haven, CT* November 2015–July 2016

- Founded interdisciplinary reading and performance series featuring literary artists of color in New Haven, Connecticut, developing vision into grant-supported monthly gathering boasting 60+ regular attendees
- Curated monthly lineup of 6 diverse writers and performers
- Won \$2,000 Arts Council of Greater New Haven Community Engagement Grant and used funds to compensate featured writers and performers, helping them sustain themselves financially through their craft
- Successfully facilitated change in leadership to new local, Black curator

Program Coordinator + Teaching Artist, *The Word Poetry, New Haven, CT*

September 2015–July 2016

- For transformative literary arts program *The Word Poetry*, recruited 16 young spoken word poets in New Haven, CT to hone their craft through weekly workshops
- Liaised between youth poets, 19 public schools, and sponsoring organization The Institute Library
- Assisted in managing budget of \$18,000+ to support program operations
- Developed and taught weekly spoken word workshops at Institute Library and in English classrooms as resident teaching artist in public middle schools
- Met need of local public schools for poetry expertise by organizing teaching artist residencies
- Managed social media and communications between *The Word* and external partners, increasing Instagram following by 97%
- Coordinated logistics, publicity, and participation of 48 students from 16 public schools in two poetry performance showcases

Yale Africa Curator, Yale MacMillan Center for International + Area Studies,

New Haven, CT August 2015–May 2016

- As founder of contemporary African arts and culture festival, executed week-long, high-profile international event

- Curated, directed and managed publicity for festival and 5 affiliated events
- Networked with 13+ relevant organizations and departments across university and externally to secure institutional and financial support
- Managed significant budget
- Consulted to relevant organizations to develop and promote similar programs

Woodbridge Fellow, Yale Office of International Affairs, New Haven, CT

August 2014–August 2015

- Having developed the festival as an undergraduate, executed AFRICA SALON, the first contemporary African arts and culture festival at Yale; curated 20 artists and speakers, coordinated logistics, crafted branding and publicity, and managed festival budget
- Managed Yale’s Africa communications by building website; producing, updating, and circulating online newsletter; planning, filming, editing, and circulating video series; reporting for YaleNews; and creating social media platforms and growing followers on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter
- Coordinated logistics of campus engagements for 50+ visiting African dignitaries and international engagements for Yale faculty
- Provided programming, institutional support, and mentorship to 50+ African students

News Intern, 90.1 WABE News, Atlanta, GA June 2012–August 2012

- Wrote, produced, and voiced 5-10 radio news stories per week on topics including public health, terrorism, unemployment, and campus crime for Atlanta’s National Public Radio station

publications

“I Just Want it to Feel Like Something Real’: What Museums Can Learn from Independent Black Feminist Curating,” chapter in *Institutional Change for Museums: A Practical Guide to Creating Polyvocal Spaces*, edited by Marianna Pegno and Kantara Souffrant, published by Routledge, forthcoming 2023

“Maps of Attachment: On re-orienting our language(s) for African art and culture,” article in *Seen Journal*, November 2023

“Beyond a Punctuated History,” exhibition review in *ASAP/J*, July 2022

“Archiving the African Feminist Festival through Oral Communication and Social Media,” article in *Feminist Review*, July 2020

conference papers
and invited
presentations

“Moving Through A Neon Igbo Girl’s World: Sheila Chukwulozie’s Filmmaking, Performance, and Installation Practices,” paper presented at the Association for the Study of the Arts of the Present Conference October 2023, Seattle, WA

“Vivid Escapisms for an Interior’: Curating and Archiving a Virtual Festival in Quarantine,”
paper presented at the **University of Pennsylvania Cinema and Media Studies Graduate Conference** February 2022, Philadelphia, PA

“Curating Zina Saro-Wiwa’s *Table Manners* (2014-2016),” paper presented at the **UCLA Art History Graduate Symposium** November 2021, virtual

Slade School of Fine Art Contemporary Art Lecture October 2021, virtual

“Archiving the African Feminist Festival through Oral Communication and Social Media,”
invited presentation as part of **Dr. Eleni Ikoniadou’s Fugitive Voices talk series**
October 2020, Royal College of Art, London, UK/virtual

“Incorporating Lived Experience and Positionality into SOAS Classrooms,” paper presented
with **Dr. Lindiwe Dovey** at the **SOAS University of London Learning and Teaching Conference**
June 2017, London, UK

Invited panelist, “Narratives of Hope? Curating Africa in the European Context,” May 2017,
University of Groningen, Groningen, The Netherlands

teaching
experience

New York University

Instructor

Contemporary African and Black Diasporic Filmmaking, Summer 2023

Sarah Lawrence College

Invited Lecturer

African Cinema and Its Diasporas taught by Anila Gill, Spring 2023

New York University

Teaching Assistant

Brazilian Cinema, Media, and Culture for Dr. Robert Stam, Spring 2023

Introduction to Cinema Studies for Dr. Michael Gillespie, Fall 2022

Television: History and Culture for Dr. Isabelle Freda, Spring 2022

American Cinema: Origins to 1960 for Nathaniel Brennan, Fall 2021

The New School

Invited Lecturer

Practicing Curating taught by Alhena Katsof, Fall 2021

SOAS University of London

Invited Lecturer

The Story of African Film taught by Dr. Lindiwe Dovey, Fall 2019

The Story of African Film taught by Dr. Lindiwe Dovey, Fall 2017

curatorial
practice

Founder and Curator, AFRICA SALON 2014-present

A contemporary African arts and culture festival, founded at Yale University in 2014. Embedded the festival, known as "Yale Africa Salon," at Yale University as a Woodbridge Fellow and Yale Africa Curator from 2014-2016. Co-curated *Creation as Ritual: Performing Disguise* at the Brooklyn Museum (2016). Curated ourselves + others: african feminist re-CREATIONS at SOAS University of London (2017). Registered AFRICA SALON UK as limited liability company in the UK in 2018. Curated The Infinite Body, a panel at Mystique Afrique (Toronto, CA, 2019); led VIP and public tours of 1-54 Contemporary African Art Fair (London, UK, 2019); and curated Julianknxx and Friends Presents Caleb Femi and Shingai at the Institute of Contemporary Arts (London, UK, 2019). In 2020, curated Vivid Escapisms for an Interior, a virtual edition of AFRICA SALON.

Curator, "RCA2020," Royal College of Art/virtual, London, UK July 2020

Curated Royal College of Art 2020 graduate exhibition, entitled "Sameness and Difference, Subject and Society." Wrote curatorial text and led session with Royal College of Art students and community to explore selected works.

Curator and Poet, "Five Volumes for Toni Morrison," Institute of Contemporary Arts, London, UK March 2020

Co-curated with Dr. Nydia A. Swaby a convening celebrating the life and work of Toni Morrison. For the event, "Five Poems for Toni Morrison," performed original, commissioned poem and moderated conversation with fellow poets Victoria Adukwei Bulley, Leo Hermitt, Kareem Reid, and Selina Nwulu.

Co-Curator, The Politics of Pleasure 2018-2020

Multidisciplinary Black feminist project co-led with scholar, creative writer, and performance lecturer Dr. Nydia A. Swaby and PhD Candidate Rita Gayle investigating pleasure as a politics of refusal. Curated The Politics of Pleasure Installation and The Politics of Pleasure Workshop at Fugitive Feminism, Black feminist convening led by Dr. Akwugo Emejulu (2018); The Politics of Pleasure Family Reunion, a program exploring intersections of pleasure, speculative fiction, breath work, dance, and food (2019); Pleasure Genealogies, a program including a visual art installation by artist Davinia-Ann Robinson, a talk with Booker Prize-winning author Bernardine Evaristo, and a performance lecture by DJ scholar Lynnée Denise (2019); and Weruzo Presents Sisi, a program inspired by Nollywood representations of sex work that included a conceptual fashion presentation exploring the politics of women's pleasure and power (2019).

other publications

"Vivid Escapisms for an Interior: Curating and Archiving the Virtual Festival," multimedia online publication for **"Expanded Visualities,"** NYU New Futures | New Histories and the Magnum Foundation, forthcoming 2023

"The Cyclic, Interdisciplinary Vocabulary of Grace Ndiritu," essay in *Grace Ndiritu: Healing the Museum*, SMAK Gallery (Ghent, Belgium) and Motto Books (Berlin, Germany), 2023

"What Constitutes the Future? A roundtable on capacity, complexity, and Afrofuturism" by Aurella Yussuf with Ifeanyi Awachie and Kareem Reid, *Seen Journal: The Dreams Issue*, Winter 2023, Issue 5, January 2023

"'The Sacredness of Everyday Things': Grace Ndiritu in John Latham's House," exhibition text for Flat Time House gallery, London, UK, June 2022

"With the End in Mind by Reginald Sylvester II at Maximillian William, London," exhibition review for *Lucy Writers*, University of Cambridge, August 2021

other speaking engagements

***I Am Afro Greek: Black Portraiture in Greece* Q&A, NYU Tisch School of the Arts, virtual**
December 2022

Moderated conversation with multi-format artist, scholar, curator, filmmaker, and healer Adéolá Naomi Adèrèmi about her short documentary film, "I am Afro Greek: Black Portraiture in Greece."

"Building Your Own Creative Platform and Business," Deptford X, London, UK/virtual
September 2020

Led session aimed at Black curators, producers, and practitioners discussing entrepreneurship as a creative practice, working outside of institutions as one solution to the problem of institutional anti-Blackness, and methods of curating that subvert the white gaze.

2020 AKO Caine Prize Conversation, London, UK/virtual July 2020

Invited by the Royal African Society to moderate a conversation between Erica Sugo Anyadike, Chikodili Emelumadu, Jowhor Ile, Rémy Ngamije, and Irenosen Okojie, writers shortlisted for the Caine Prize for African Writing.

"Black Feminist Transference: On Pleasure & Power(lessness)," Institute of Contemporary Arts, London, UK November 2019

Moderated conversation with poet and essayist Momtaza Mehri on her essay on the slipperiness of women's power, agency, and identification, curated as part of The Politics of Pleasure's Weruzo Presents Sisi program.

"In Conversation with Davinia-Ann Robinson," Institute of Contemporary Arts, London, UK

September 2019

Moderated conversation with artist Davinia-Ann Robinson about her installation *PLASTICISED SENSATION* (2019), curated as part of The Politics of Pleasure's Pleasure Genealogies program.

"The 90%," SOAS University of London, London, UK 2019

Invited to speak at SOAS Centre for Media and Film Studies on curation, key curatorial projects and practical advice for managing creative platforms and a creative career.

***Hale County This Morning, This Evening* Q&A, Institute of Contemporary Arts, London, UK**

December 2018

Moderated conversation with RaMell Ross, director of Oscar-nominated feature *Hale County This Morning, This Evening*, exploring the film's distinctive visual language, physicality, sound, and "the African-American mundane."

Panelist, "Cultura e Diversidade," Feira Preta, São Paulo, Brazil 2018

Alongside Jude Kelly of Women of the World Festival, discussed the importance of diverse curatorial voices at the largest Afro-Brazilian event in Latin America.

Panelist, "Co/producing feminist knowledge: a critical exchange," Tate Modern, London, UK 2018

Alongside artists and creatives including Adele Patrick of Glasgow Women's Library, presented research on oral, lived, and subjective feminist knowledge through reflections on 2017 festival ourselves + others: african feminist re-CREATIONS at SOAS.

Panelist, Afrolnova, Cali, Colombia 2017

Invited by former Minister of Culture Paula Moreno to the second meeting of Afrolnova, Colombia-based transnational working group, to participate in dialogue with local Black leaders on panel at the Universidad Autónoma de Occidente.

Speaker, Afrolnova, Cartagena, Colombia 2016

Invited by former Minister of Culture Paula Moreno to present at the inaugural meeting of Afrolnova, a Colombia-based platform and transnational expert working group for the development of the African Diaspora.

Panelist, "Emerging Social Entrepreneurs and Cultural Brokers," 1:54 Contemporary African Art Fair, New York, NY 2016

As recognized member of "upcoming generation of African social entrepreneurs ... seizing the opportunity to mobilize new platforms of discussion," participated as panelist in discussion "exploring the changing dynamics and growing interest in contemporary art and cultures of Africa and African Diaspora."

Wrote and directed a short narrative film exploring diasporic Nigerian experience, family, and reparations. Winner of the 2020 POCC Symposium Script Writing Contest. In 2022, premiered at the New York African Film Festival and was selected for screenings at the San Francisco Black Film Festival and the Morehouse College Human Rights Film Festival.

Writer, *Caldonia: Concert and Film Posters from the Collection of Ralph DeLuca*, Salon 94 March 2022

For the exhibition curated by Serubiri Moses, creatively responded to 1968 Aretha Franklin concert poster with a short fiction piece.

Writer, "A Dip of the Head, Not a Yes or a No," *Hennepin Review* February 2022

Short story selected for publication in February issue of *Hennepin Review*.

Judge, Paul Robeson Galleries 6th Artist-in-Residence Open Call 2021

Invited to select the 2021 Artist-in-Residence at the Paul Robeson Galleries at Rutgers University–Newark.

Artist, *How to Sleep Faster #11, Arcadia Missa* December 2020

Text-based conceptual work "Nonconsensual Photography" (2019) selected for publication in *Arcadia Missa* journal.

Writer, *Now Forget Everything You Ever Knew*, Chelsea Space August 2020

For the exhibition, "Now Forget Everything You Ever Knew," at Chelsea College of Arts, University of the Arts London, created original audio work in response to poem by conceptual artist John Latham, weaving together references to theorists Nana Adusei-Poku, Kevin Quashie, and Akwugo Emejulu, artists Bolade Banjo, Nkisi, and Zanele Muholi, and others to explore notions of nothingness and Black women's subjectivity. Spoke as invited panelist as part of exhibition program.

Poet, "Poetry Is Not A Luxury," SOAS University of London September 2017

Performed original work alongside poets including Momtaza Mehri and Belinda Zhawi.

Poet, "Arresting Patterns: Perspectives on Race, Criminal Justice, Artistic Expression, and Community," Artspace New Haven September 2015

Performed original poetry at interdisciplinary conference on art and racial justice hosted by the Yale University Art Gallery and Artspace New Haven.

Artist, *Receiving Line*, Artspace New Haven 2015

In collaboration with local practitioners and led by artist Tania Bruguera, conceptualized and executed performance art piece to address race and class divides in the local community.

Author, *Summer in Igboland* 2015

Wrote and independently published a work combining literary nonfiction and documentary photography to tell a story of personal discovery and everyday life in contemporary Nigeria.

Poet, Yale College Class Day, Yale University 2014

Selected to perform original poem as the "Ivy Ode," traditional poetic tribute to Yale College, at ceremony featuring Secretary of State John Kerry.

Poet, Columbia Review, Columbia University 2013

Poem *Telephones* selected for publication in Columbia University literary magazine.

media engagements

**"If You Like Warsan Shire, Here are 6 Other African Poets You Should Know,"
Ayiba Magazine 2016**

Featured artist alongside internationally known poets in article in prominent digital African arts and culture magazine.

"Where We Live – Nigeria: Stories from the Coast of West Africa," WNPR

2016

Interviewed on Connecticut's National Public Radio station about book *Summer in Igboland*.

"A First-Generation Nigerian Explores Her Identity in 'Summer in Igboland,'"

OkayAfrica 2015

Featured artist in article in prominent digital African arts, culture, and news magazine about book *Summer in Igboland*.

awards

Jonathan Ruffer Curatorial Research Grant 2019

Awarded Art Fund (UK) grant to support research trips to Dakar, Senegal and Nairobi, Kenya (trips not executed due to COVID).

Developing Your Creative Practice Award 2018

Received Arts Council England grant to support research on Afro-Brazilian arts fair Feira Preta in São Paulo, Brazil.

Michael Manzella Award 2014

Yale prize awarded to graduating senior who "inspired his/her classmates through kindness, dedication, and courage."

Tristan Perloth Prize for Summer Foreign Travel 2013

Yale prize awarded to undergraduates for summer travel outside of the United States to enhance understanding of foreign culture and/or international relations.

languages

Fluent French; conversational knowledge of Igbo, Hindi

references

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