

# SA Smythe

pron: they/them (ENG)  
pronoms: iel/ellui (FRA) || elle/ele (ESP)  
lui / desinenze 9 and 3 or \* (ITA)

[www.ESSAYSMYTHE.com](http://www.ESSAYSMYTHE.com)

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## Education

PhD in History of Consciousness, University of California, Santa Cruz

MA (Hons.) in History of Consciousness (Concentrations in Literature & Feminist Studies), UC, Santa Cruz

Dual Degree in Italian (Hons.), Russian Language and Literature, and Philology CUNY (Queens / Graduate Center)

non-degree in Semiotics | Italian Language & *Corso di perfezionamento* (CEFR: C1/ILR 4)

Alma Mater Studiorum Università di Bologna, Bologna, Italy

## Artist Residencies & Awards (selected)

- 2025 Leighton Studios artist-in-residence, Banff Centre for Arts & Creativity, Banff, Canada
- 2024 Villa Lena artist-in-residence, Villa Lena Foundation, Toiano, Tuscany, Italy
- 2024 Composer-in-residence (Winter AiR), Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, Mt. San Angelo, USA
- 2023–24 MacDowell Fellowship in Multimedia Installation, Peterborough, USA (Winter AiR)
- 2023–24 Program for the Arts Award (Theme: “Absence”), Jackman Humanities Institute, University of Toronto
- 2023 The Church at Sag Harbor, invited artists-in-residence (as **THEYFXRST**), New York City, USA
- 2023 Bell Gallery/Brown Arts Institute, invited artists-in-residence (as **THEYFXRST**), Providence, USA
- 2023 [Birds of Passage](#), BASE Milano artist-in-residence inaugural winner, Milan, Italy
- 2022 Centro nazionale di produzione Virgilio Sieni (CANGO), AiR with Autumn Knight, Florence, Italy
- 2022 *Acque ed altare* (“water and altars”), Black History Month Florence/YGBI Artists Residency, Florence, Italy, February (as YGBI annual artist-in-residence/mentor in Italian + English)
- 2022 *Transoceanic Relations*, Knight Foundation Art + Research Center, Institute of Contemporary Art, Miami (as invited seminar leader + artist)
- 2021–22 Rome Prize for Modern Italian Studies, The American Academy of Rome, Rome, Italy

## Exhibitions, Performances & Poetry Readings (recent and selected)

- 2025 **Marked for Disposal** at the 2025 [Vector Festival](#) (12<sup>th</sup> edition), Toronto, ON  
performance activation of the flagship exhibition, “404\_not\_found”  
Curator: Dallas Fellini for InterAccess Toronto
- 2024 **Difference of a Shared Spirit** at 32 Lisgar and Park, Toronto, ON  
programmed in the 2024 Toronto Biennial of Art: “Precarious Joys”  
performance activation of Maria Hupfield’s installation, “The Supernatural Powers of Fabulous Panther (Biimskojiwan)” (2024) with Maria Hupfield and Olivia Shortt  
Curators: Dominique Fontaine and Miguel A. López (TBA); Jenn Goodwin (TBA Public Programs)
- 2024 **scores of rememory** at It’sOK\* Studios, Toronto, ON  
commissioned performance, for *Possibility: Difficulty Archives. Difficult Memo*  
Curated by: Memo Lab, dir. Kamari Maxine Clarke
- 2023 **Oñi Ocan – The Heart of Sweetness** at Berkeley Arts Centre, Berkeley, CA
  - live performance by conceptual visual artist Courtney Desiree Morris, September 8th  
with SA Smythe as Sound Designer (violin, piano, theremin, mbira, synth, production)  
with Martin Perna (tenor saxophone, Batá drum, flutes, production)
  - film installation by Courtney Desiree Morris, October 6, 2023–May 5, 2024, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts  
with SA Smythe as Composer (five-channel film installation score & sound composition)

- 2023 / **soft flux** / at FADO Performance Centre, Toronto, ON  
commissioned score, live sound composition & performance for *A Score of Scores*: Spring Exhibition  
with co-scorewriter Autumn Knight (a THEYFXRST score and production)  
Co-Curators: Shannon Cochrane and Francesco Gagliardi
- 2023 **{spirit forged}** at The Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery, Toronto, ON  
commissioned soundscape composition & performance activation of  
Amartey Golding's Winter exhibition *In the comfort of embers*  
Curator: Joséphine Denis
- 2023 **Speaking Volumes** at the Art Gallery of York University (AGYU), Toronto, ON  
commissioned response to Meleko Mokgosi's Winter exhibition *Imaging Imaginations*  
selected ekphrastic poems published in Mokgosi's catalogue for *Imaging Imaginations* (2024)  
Curator: Felicia Mings, AGYU
- 2022 **proclivity (opening suite)** at SPAZIO GRIOT @ Mattatoio Museum, Rome, Italy  
SEDIMENTS. After Memory, Group Exhibition and Live Performance Series  
Curators: Johanne Affricot and Eric Otieno Sumba
- 2022 **ALTRIMENTI - Altre/menti** (collaborative performance with visual artist Autumn Knight)  
at PIA | Palazzina Indiano Arte, Florence, Italy  
programmed in "Estate Fiorentina 2022" Centro nazionale di produzione Virgilio Sieni,  
Curator: Serena Trincherio
- 2022 **untitled**  
Winter Open Studio Group Exhibition, American Academy in Rome, Rome, Italy  
Curator: Lindsay Harris, Arts Director, AAR
- 2021 **Hope for All Who Enter**  
Scuderie del Quirinale, Rome, Italy (commissioned sound piece in response to *Inferno* Exhibition  
commemorating the 700th anniversary of the death of Dante Alighieri)  
Curator: Anna Matirolo
- 2021 Keynote Reading, "Black Possibility across the Mediterranean" Kampnagel Theatre
- 2021 *Abolition Tour* (with the UC Cops Off Campus Coalition)
- 2020 *Dark Matter Cypher*, Sage Ni'Ja Whitson (choreographer/director) / Fathomers (producers)
- 2019 *JELLY*, GxrlSchool and The Department of Cultural Affairs for *ComposeLA*, Los Angeles, CA
- 2016 *Sex, Love & Poetry*. Headline event for *Africa Writes* Literary Festival, London, UK

### Artist Lectures/Workshops (recent and selected)

- 2024 "Blackness at Sea," Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montréal, Canada
- 2023 Black Poiësis: Gaëtane Verna and SA Smythe in conversation, Black Research Network, University of Toronto [postponed in support of the call for Global Strike in support of Gaza's liberation]
- 2023 Improvisation, Collaboration, and Blacktrans Poetics: A Conversation with THEYFXRST (Autumn Knight + SA Smythe), Bell Arts Gallery, Lindemann Performance Center, mod. curator Thea Quiray Tagle
- 2023 Afrophilia: Frantz Brent-Harris in Conversation with SA Smythe, BAND programming
- 2023 [Sensing Our Relations: A Sound & Writing Workshop](#), Blackwood Gallery, Toronto
- 2022 "Prendere la parola," Polo del '900, Turin, Italy
- 2022 "Oceans," Syracuse University School of Architecture, Florence, Italy

### Curatorial Projects

- ongoing *Black Studies and the Archive* (exhibition in progress)
- 2023-24 *Calling the Conjurers: Technologies of Black Life and Study* (symposium, film screening, and exhibition, May 2024)
- 2022-25 *Shared Horizons: Practices & Poetics of Transatlantic Abolition* (transnational/translingual digital archive)

## Employment

- 2025 – Associate Professor of Black Studies and the Archive in the Faculty of Information  
Director, [Collaboratory for Black Poiēsis](#)  
University of Toronto, Downtown/St. George campus
  
- 2022–25 Assistant Professor of Black Studies and the Archive in the Faculty of Information  
Director, [Collaboratory for Black Poiēsis](#)  
University of Toronto, Downtown/St. George campus
  
- 2018–22 Assistant Professor of Black European Cultural Studies, Trans Poetics & Contemporary Mediterranean Studies  
University of California, Los Angeles  
Departments of Gender Studies (2020–2022) and African American Studies (2018–2022)
  
- 2017–19 UC President’s Postdoctoral Fellow, University of California, Irvine  
Gender & Sexuality Studies (2017–2018) and Anthropology (2018–2019)