

SA Smythe

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

www.ESSAYSMYTHE.com

Based between: Tkaronto, ON; Los Angeles, USA; and Bologna, Italy
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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 (12th 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 (Biimskojiwān)" (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: Difficult 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 Trinchero

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 Poiēsis: 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)