

**SARAH ELIZABETH LEWIS**

Assistant Professor

Harvard University

Departments of History of Art and Architecture and African and African American Studies

485 Broadway | Cambridge, MA 02138

(646) 594-6566 | sarahlewis@fas.harvard.edu

**EDUCATION**

**Yale University**

Ph.D., History of Art, 2015. Dissertation: *Black Sea, Black Atlantic: Frederick Douglass and the Performance of Racial Pictures*.

Committee: Alexander Nemerov and Robert Farris Thompson (co-advisors), Daphne Brooks, Matthew Frye Jacobson, and Deborah Willis.

**Courtauld Institute of Art**

M.A., History of Art, 2004.

*Distinction*. British Marshall Scholar.

**Oxford University**

M.Phil. Economic and Social History, 2003.

*Distinction*. British Marshall Scholar.

**Harvard College**

Bachelor of Arts, Social Studies and History of Art and Architecture, 2001.

*Magna Cum Laude*, Phi Beta Kappa.

**EMPLOYMENT**

- 2015-Present Assistant Professor, Harvard University, Departments of History of Art and Architecture and African and African American Studies
- 2014-2015 Dorothy Porter and Charles Harris Wesley Fellow, W.E.B. Du Bois Institute, Hutchins Center for African and African American Studies, Harvard University.
- 2009-2015 Yale University  
Critic, School of Art, Painting and Photography Departments, MFA Program.  
“Critical Theory for Artistic Practice,” graduate seminar on critical race studies in the context of their direct relationship to visual practice.
- 2009 Yale University  
Teaching Fellow, “American Photographs, 1839-1971: A Cultural History,” Alexander Nemerov.
- 2007-2008 Yale University  
Teaching Fellow, “From West Africa to the Black Americas: The Black Atlantic Visual Tradition,” Robert Farris Thompson.
- 2004-2007 The Museum of Modern Art, New York  
Curatorial Assistant in the Painting and Sculpture Department and the Department of Photography.

2003-2004 Tate Modern, London, England  
Curatorial Assistant for Senior Curator Donna De Salvo on the exhibition,  
*Open Systems, Rethinking Art c. 1970.*

## **PUBLICATIONS**

*Black Sea, Black Atlantic: Frederick Douglass and the Performance of Racial Pictures.* Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, forthcoming.

*Whitfield Lovell: The Kin Series.* New York: Monacelli Press, 2016.

*The Rise: Creativity, the Gift of Failure, and the Search for Mastery.* New York: Simon & Schuster, 2014.

*Romare Bearden: Idea to Realization.* New York: D.C. Moore Gallery, 2011.

Sarah Lewis and Daniel Belasco, *The Dissolve: The SITE Santa Fe Eighth International Biennial*, exh. cat. New York: Distributed Art Publishers, 2010.

## **Book Chapters:**

“Romare Bearden: In the Vision of Frederick Douglass,” *The Bearden Reader*, ed. Robert O’Meally. Durham: Duke University Press, forthcoming.

“The Civil War in the Caucasus,” *Oxford Handbook on the History of Race*, ed. Matthew Guterl. New York: Oxford University Press, forthcoming.

“Celebration and Critique,” in *Kehinde Wiley*. New York: Rizzoli, 2012, 84-91.

## **Selected Essays and Reviews:**

“Of Two Minds: ‘Powers of Two’ by Joshua Wolf Shenk,” *The New York Times*, August 22, 2014, 24.

“The Hidden Past of Sochi,” *The New Yorker*, February 19, 2014.

“Mickalene Thomas: On Beauty,” in *Mickalene Thomas: Origin of the Universe*. Santa Monica Museum of Art, 2012, 8-15.

“Unhomed Geographies: The Paintings of Julie Mehretu,” *Callaloo*, no. 1 (2010): 219-22.

“Wangechi Mutu,” in *Re: Collection: Selected Works from The Studio Museum in Harlem*. New York: The Studio Museum in Harlem, 2010, 108-109.

“Yinka Shonibare,” *Artforum*, no. 2 (2009): 227.

“A Reverence for Ordinary People,” in *Mercy, Patience and Destiny: The Women of Whitfield Lovell’s Tableaux*. Atlanta: Woodruff Arts Center and The Savannah College of Art and Design, 2009, 1-8.

- “A Lover’s War,” in *Mickalene Thomas*. Chicago: Rhona Hoffman Gallery, 2009, 1-10.
- “How to See a Work of Art in Total Darkness,” *Nka*, no. 22/23 (2008): 206-7.
- “Freedom Beyond Fort Monroe,” in Collier Schorr ed. *Freeway Balconies*, exh. cat. New York: Distributed Art Publishers and The Guggenheim Museum, 2008, 8-12.
- “Incendiary Acts,” in Cassandra Coblentz ed. *Lyle Ashton Harris: Blow Up*, exh. cat., Scottsdale, AZ: Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art and Greg Miller & Co., 2008, 93-104.
- “American Idols,” in Deborah Willis ed., *Let Your Motto Be Resistance: African American Portraiture from 1865 to the Present*, exh. cat., Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2007, 150-153.
- “Mark Bradford: The Evidence of Things Not Seen,” in *Street Level*, exh. cat. Durham, NC: Duke University Press / The Nasher Museum at Duke University, 2007, 12-30.
- “Arthur Simms at Five Myles,” *Art in America*, no. 2 (2006): 132.
- “Boris Achour,” *Notre Histoire: Une Scène Artistique Française Émergent*, exh. cat., Paris: Palais du Toyko, 2006.
- “De(i)fyng the Masters: Kehinde Wiley’s portraits meld urban street life and European high art traditions,” *Art in America*, no. 4 (2005): 120-25.
- “Off the wall,” *Recess: Images and Objects in Formation*, exh. cat. New York: Rush Arts Gallery, 2005.
- “Zoe Charlton,” in Thelma Golden ed., *Frequency*, exh. cat., New York: The Studio Museum in Harlem, 2005.

## **Scholarly Presentations:**

### **INVITED LECTURES / APPEARANCES**

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| June 2015 | American Library Association, President’s Keynote, San Francisco    |
| May 2015  | Aspen Institute Arts Summit at the Kennedy Center, Washington, D.C. |
| May 2015  | The Getty, Los Angeles, CA  |
| Mar. 2015 | Harvard University, History of Art and Architecture Department      |
| Feb. 2015 | Case Western Reserve  |
| Jan. 2015 | Duke University, Jean Fox O’Barr Distinguished Speaker Series       |
| Jan. 2015 | Brooklyn Historical Society, Conversation with Nell Painter         |
| Oct. 2014 | Boston Book Festival  |

- Sept. 2014 Harvard University, Du Bois Colloquium, *Black Sea, Black Atlantic*
- June 2014 Charlie Rose, Interview about *The Rise*
- Mar. 2014 The New York Public Library, Conversation with Anna Deavere Smith
- May 2013 “Photography in the Federal Art in Embassies Program,” National Gallery of Art, Washington, D. C.
- Mar. 2013 “African Art, New York and the Avant-Garde,” The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY.
- Dec. 2012 “A Writers’ Celebration of Romare Bearden, with Elizabeth Alexander, Stanley Crouch, Kwame Dawes, Khalil G. Muhammad, Sarah Lewis, and John Edgar Wideman,” 92<sup>nd</sup> Street Y, Poetry Center, New York, NY.
- Oct. 2012 “Nicola Green: Images of the 2008 Obama Campaign,” Library of Congress, Washington, D. C.
- May 2012 “Art and Architecture: Creating Community,” National Gallery of Art, Washington, D. C.
- Dec. 2011 “Pictures and Progress: Frederick Douglass, The Circassian Beauties, and American Racial Formation,” Yale University, History of Art Department.
- Apr. 2010 “‘Go Back to Russia! Go Back to Africa!’: Circassian Beauties and American Racial Formation,” The Gilder Lehrman Center for the Study of Slavery, Resistance, and Abolition, Yale University.
- Mar. 2008 “Africans in nineteenth-century British Colonial Photography,” public lecture, Georgia O’Keeffe Museum in conjunction with the Museum of International Folk Art, Santa Fe, NM.

#### CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

- Mar. 2015 American Studies Department, Conference on Racial Passing, Brown University.
- Dec. 2014 Global American Studies Symposium, Warren Center, Harvard University.
- Dec. 2014 Contemporary African Art at Harvard University’s Cooper Gallery, Hutchins Center, Harvard University.
- June 2014 Aspen Ideas Festival, Keynote talk about *The Rise*.
- Mar. 2014 TED2014, Main stage talk, Vancouver, Canada.
- Jan. 2014 Sundance Film Festival, Exploratory Detours panel with Robert Redford, Dave Eggers, Chris Stone, and Jill Soloway about *The Rise*.
- Nov. 2013 *Callaloo* Conference, Oxford University.
- Oct. 2012 “A Conversation with Haile Gerima,” Sarah Lewis and Dagmawi Woubshet interviewing Haile Gerima, *Callaloo* Conference, Princeton University.

- May 2012 “‘Pictures and Progress’: Frederick Douglass, The Circassian Beauties, and American Racial Formation,” Society of Early Americanists Conference, Chaired by Robin Bernstein.
- Oct. 2011 “Pictures and Progress,” American Studies Association, Baltimore, Maryland.
- Feb. 2011 Savannah College of Art and Design, deFINE Art Festival, Atlanta, GA.
- Feb. 2011 “Multiple Modernities and Global Art Worlds,” College Art Association, co-chaired with Leslie King-Hammond.
- Oct. 2009 “Enveloped in White: Barkley L. Hendricks’s Afroed Aesthetics” presented at the Barkley Hendricks Symposium, Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts.
- Apr. 2009 “Effecting Incredulity: Comic Resistance and the Imagination in Black Atlantic Visual Traditions,” James A. Porter Colloquium on African American Art, Howard University.
- Nov. 2007 “Critical Impositions and Artistic Intention in Black Atlantic Art,” Here and Now: African American Art and Film conference, sponsored by W.E.B. Du Bois Institute, Harvard University and Tisch School of the Arts, New York University.
- Apr. 2006 “Ellen Gallagher, Yinka Shonibare, and Wangechi Mutu: Unhomed Figuration as Resistance,” American Studies Association, Oakland, CA.
- Mar. 2006 “Contemporary Conjure Tales: The Figurative Fictions of Wangechi Mutu,” Romare Bearden / Conjuring Women Conference, Duke University.
- Feb. 2005 “Conceptual Reminders: Representing Black Forms in the Face of Hyperlegibility and Global Itinerancy,” College Art Association, Atlanta, GA.
- Apr. 2004 “The Importance of a Sankofa Sensibility: Contemporary West African Textiles on the Art Market,” African Studies Association, Harvard University.

#### **GRADUATE FELLOWSHIPS AND GRANTS (Yale University)**

- 2014-2015 Dorothy Porter and Charles Harris Wesley Du Bois Fellow, Hutchins Center, Harvard University
- 2012-2014 Henry S. McNeil Fellowship in American Art, Yale University
- 2011 Ford Foundation Dissertation Fellowship
- 2011 Chester Dale Fellowship, Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts (alternate)
- 2010 -2011 Nathaniel Currier Fellowship, Yale University
- 2008 The Gilder Lehrman Center for the Study of Slavery, Resistance, and Abolition, Graduate Fellowship

2008 Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Graduate Fellowship

### **UNDERGRADUATE FELLOWSHIPS, GRANTS, and HONORS (Harvard University)**

2001-2004 British Marshall Scholarship

2001 Phi Beta Kappa

2001 John Harvard Scholarship for Academic Achievement

2000 Mellon Minority Undergraduate Fellowship Scholar

2000 Goldman Sachs Scholarship for Excellence

### **PROFESSIONAL HONORS**

2008-2016 President Obama's Arts Policy Committee, Appointed Member

2013 Edward Bouchet Honor Society, Yale University

2006 Inaugural New Leadership Award Recipient, ArtTable

### **SELECTED EXHIBITIONS**

Center for Photography, Woodstock, "Race, Love, and Labor," 2014

SITE Santa Fe Biennial, Co-Curator, "The Dissolve," 2010.

### **ADVISORY BOARDS**

*The International Review of African American Art*, Editorial Board

*Callaloo Art*, Editorial Board

The Brearley School, Board Member

Creative Time, Board Member

The CUNY Graduate Center, Board Member

The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Board Member

### **PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS**

College Art Association, Modern Language Association, American Studies Association