

Revisiting Black Lesbian Legacies

Panel Discussion



Alexis Pauline Gumbs
Courtney Desiree Morris
Ayana Omilade Flewellen
& Savannah Shange



Moderated by
Ashara Ekundayo



Sponsored by Bay Area Lesbian Archives,
EastSide Arts Alliance, & Artist As First Responder

Friday, October 18th 2024 – 6:30PM

EastSide Cultural Center

2277 International Blvd. Oakland, CA

free rsvp, donations encouraged
tinyurl.com/blklezlegacy

Survival is a Promise: The Eternal Life
of Audre Lorde available by
Bandung Books

Join us for an engaging and thought-provoking panel discussion, "Revisiting Black Lesbian Legacies in Conversation with Dr. Alexis Pauline Gumbs", as we explore the expansive vision of survival through the work of Audre Lorde. Inspired by Gumbs' book *Survival Is a Promise: The Eternal Life of Audre Lorde* (Macmillan, 2024), this conversation will delve deep into Lorde's profound ecological understanding of survival, seeing it not just as resilience against oppression but as a practice that connects us to the earth and to each other.

The panel will also examine Lorde's transformative quote:

"While Black sisters don't like to hear this, I would have to say that all Black women are lesbians because we were raised in the remnants of a basically matriarchal society no matter how oppressed we may have been by patriarchy. We're all dykes, including our mommas. Let's really start getting past the shibboleths and taboos. They don't really matter. Being able to recognize that the function of poetry or any art is to ennoble and empower us in a way that's not separate from our living, that belief is African in origin."

– Audre Lorde

Through this quote and Gumbs' reflections, we will explore how art, survival, and identity intersect to challenge conventional labels and binaries while empowering us to envision new paths of liberation.

Revisiting Black Lesbian Legacies

Panel Discussion

Doors Open

6:00 PM

Check-in and light refreshments
available.

Panel Discussion & Q&A:

6:30 PM – 8:00 PM

Dive into a rich conversation led
by our distinguished panelists,
followed by a Q&A session with
the audience.

Networking & Conversation: 8:00
PM – 8:30 PM

Connect with fellow attendees
and the panelists in an informal
networking session.

FREE RSVP



Meet The Panelists Alexis Pauline Gumbs



Alexis Pauline Gumbs is a Queer Black Troublemaker and Black Feminist Love Evangelist and an aspirational cousin to all sentient beings. Her work in this lifetime is to facilitate infinite, unstoppable ancestral love in practice. Her poetic work in response to the needs of her cherished communities has held space for multitudes in mourning and movement. Alexis's co-edited volume *Revolutionary Mothering: Love on the Front Lines* (PM Press, 2016) has shifted the conversation on mothering, parenting and queer transformation. Alexis has transformed the scope of intellectual, creative and oracular writing with her triptych of experimental works published by Duke University Press (*Spill: Scenes of Black Feminist Fugitivity* in 2016, *M Archive: After the End of the World* in 2018 and *Dub: Finding Ceremony*, 2020.) Unlike most academic texts, Alexis's work has inspired artists across form to create dance works, installation work, paintings, processions, divination practices, operas, quilts and more. Alexis's new book, *Survival is a Promise: The Eternal Life of Audre Lorde* is now out.

Meet The Panelists Courtney Desiree Morris



Courtney Desiree Morris is a visual and performance artist and an assistant professor of Gender and Women's Studies at the University of California, Berkeley.

She is the author of *To Defend This Sunrise: Black Women's Activism and the Authoritarian Turn in Nicaragua* (2023, Rutgers University Press). Her work focuses on examining ancestral narratives and everyday ritual aesthetics of communities throughout the African Diaspora.

Meet The Panelists Ayana Omilade Flewellen



Ayana Omilade Flewellen (they/she) is a Black Feminist, an archaeologist, a artist scholar and a storyteller. As a scholar of anthropology and African and African Diaspora Studies, Flewellen's intellectual genealogy is shaped by critical theory rooted in Black feminist epistemology and pedagogy. This epistemological backdrop not only constructs the way they design, conduct and produce their scholarship but acts as foundational to how she advocates for greater diversity within the field of archaeology and within the broader scope of academia.

Flewellen is the co-founder of the Society of Black Archaeologists and sits on the Board of Diving With A Purpose.

They are an Assistant Professor in the Department of Anthropology at Stanford University. Her research and teaching interests address Black Feminist Theory, historical archaeology, memory, maritime heritage conservation, public and community-engaged archaeology, processes of identity formations, and representations of slavery and its afterlives. Flewellen has been featured in National Geographic, Science Magazine, PBS and CNN; and regularly presents her work at institutions including The National Museum for Women in the Arts.

(biography from anthropology.stanford.edu/people/ayana-omilade-flewellen)

Meet The Panelists Savannah Shange



Savannah Shange is an urban anthropologist who works at the intersections of race, place, sexuality, and the state. She is Assistant Professor of Anthropology at the University of California, Santa Cruz with research interests in circulated and lived forms of blackness, ethnographic ethics, Afro-pessimism, and queer of color critique. Her dissertation, "Progressive Dystopia: Multiracial Coalition and the Carceral State" is an ethnography of social justice activism in San Francisco, focused on how anti-Black and settler colonial logics are both combated and perpetuated in multiracial progressive movements. Savannah has been a Ford Foundation Dissertation Fellow, a Jack Kent Cooke Foundation Fellow, and a Point Scholar.

(biography from ucsc.academia.edu/SavannahShange)

Meet The Moderator Ashara Ekundayo



Ashara Ekundayo is a Black feminist interdisciplinary independent curator, visual maker, and cultural theologian whose creative practice is rooted in joy-informed pedagogies and the study of and creation of Black spaces and archives. She is the founder and director of Artist As First Responder, an international platform rooted in the Radical Black Tradition that centers on creativity & healing through arts praxis.

Ashara is currently curating the traveling exhibition “Frontline Prophet: James Baldwin” featuring more than 60 iterations of the Black American writer created by Sabrina Nelson. (www.Ashara.io)