

Cheswayo Gabriel Mphanza

Education

Rutgers University, Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing, 2018

Middlebury College, Bachelor of Arts in English & American Literature, 2016

Books

The Rinehart Frames (University of Nebraska Press, 2021)

Awards & Honors

Hermitage Artist Fellow

Recipient in Literary Arts, 2024

Hurston/Wright Foundation

Poetry Fellow, 2017

Creative Capital Awardee

Recipient in Literary Arts, 2022

Callaloo Poetry Workshop in Barbados

Poetry Fellow, 2017

National Book Critics Circle

Finalist in Poetry for *The Rinehart Frames*, 2021

Rutgers University

Presidential Graduate Award, 2016-2018

Foreword Indies

Finalist in Poetry, 2021

Middlebury College

Stolley-Ryan Prize in American Literature, 2016

Sillerman First Book Prize for African

Poetry Winner for *The Rinehart Frames*, 2021

Cave Canem

Fellow, 2016, 2017

Boston Review Annual Poetry Contest

Winner in Poetry, 2020

Bread Loaf Writers' Conference

Fellow, 2015, 2017

Brunel International African Prize in

Writing Finalist in Poetry, 2018

Creating Connections Consortium (C3)

Fellow, 2015

Hurston/Wright Award in Writing Winner

in Poetry, 2017

Posse Scholar

Fellow, 2012-2016

Publications

Anthologized Poems

20.35 Africa: An Anthology of Contemporary Poetry, Vol. One — 2020 “Prodigal Son”

Publications cont.

Individual Poems

New England Review: 30th Anniversary of Chungking Express Edition — 2024

“Deleted Scene”

Boston Review: Ancestors Edition — 2021

“Notes Towards a Biography of Henry Tayali” and “Djibril Diop Mambéty Scene Descriptions”

The Paris Review — 2020

“Frame Six,” and “At David Livingstone’s Statue”

Hampden-Sydney Review — 2020

“The Code of Hammurabi”

Birdfeast — 2020

“That Same Pain, That Same Pleasure”

Lolwe — 2020

“Getting Lost with Hayao Miyazaki & Satoshi Kon” and “Pastoral”

RHINO — 2018

“Dap”

New England Review — 2017

“Lester Leaps In”

Prairie Schooner — 2017

“Ode to the #6 Jackson Park Express,” “Uncensored,” and “Caldonia”

American Literary Review — 2017

“Reprise”

Vinyl — 2017

“Love TKO”

New Orleans Review — 2017

“Prometheus Jones” and “The Swelling Scene”

Columbia Journal — 2016

“Ode to the Touch,” “A Taxi Driver Poem,” “Hail Mary,” and “Khadija with the Frowning Face”

Teaching Experience

Ubwali Literary Magazine

Faculty — August 2024

Led intensive one day creative writing workshop

The Center for Fiction

Faculty, To Render Human: On Blackness and the Implications of Persona in Poetry — July 2022

Conducted a three-week workshop on persona poetry and Afropessimism

National Louis University

Staff, Writing Specialist — January 2022

Constructed core and lab English courses for matriculating high school students to collegiate levels of reading, comprehension, and writing

The Center for Fiction

Faculty, Writing From Time: Documentary Poetry — August 2019

Conducted a three-week workshop on documentary poetry and archive theory

Heartland Alliance

Faculty, programming specialist — 2018-201

Curated English learning courses for undocumented minors matriculating to the U.S. and in search for Family Reunification Services

Rutgers University

Faculty, English Composition Instructor — 2016-2018

Constructed core and lab English courses for matriculating high school students to collegiate levels of reading, comprehension, and writing

New England Young Writers Conference

Faculty, Craft Workshop — May 2016

Chicago Public Schools: Medgar Evers Elementary School

Faculty, writing coach — 2016

Planned daily writing activities for elementary school students

Addison Center for Teens Art Program

Faculty, writing instructor and performance coach — 2012-2016

Curated weekly performance poetry classes

Relevant Experiences

National Louis University

Staff, Student Success Coach — 2022-Present

Serve as a guide to matriculating first year students by providing wraparound support to ensure their academic, career, and personal success

Middlebury College Archives

Research Assistant for Dr. Alvin J. Henry — 2014-2016

Worked with Dr. Alvin J. Henry in research for his culminating text *Black Queer Flesh: Rejecting Subjectivity in the African American Novel* (2021) and drafted theoretical approaches in memorializing Ellison's work

Columbia University GSAS Leadership Alliance Summer Research Program Research Scholar — 2015

Worked with Dr. Farah Jasmine Griffin to analyze and organize Gwendolyn Brooks's writings. Presented research findings to a national symposium of leading scholars in their respective fields

Middlebury College

Co-Founder, Oratory Now — 2014-2016

Serve as a public speaking and rhetoric coach and designed and facilitated oratory skill-building works to improve public speaking skills for classroom and professional settings

Selected Readings

George Mason University: Cheswayo Mphanza

Virtual — 2023

Woodland Pattern Reading: Saddiq Dzukogi, thabile makue, Romeo Oriogun, and Cheswayo Mphanza

Virtual — 2022

Middlebury College: Cheswayo Mphanza

Middlebury, Vermont — 2022

Boston Review: Sonia Sanchez, Tyehimba Jess, Domenica Ruta, Cheswayo Mphanza, Yeoh Jo-Ann

Virtual — 2021

Rutgers University: Tracy Fuad, Cheswayo Mphanza, Aana Portnoy Brimmer

Virtual — 2021

Cave Canem First Books: Afaa Michael Weaver and Cheswayo Mphanza

Virtual — 2021

SCAD Museum of Art: Ashley Toliver, Phillip B. Williams, and Cheswayo Mphanza

Virtual — 2021

The Segue Reading Series: Akeema-Zane and Cheswayo Mphanza

New York, NY — 2017

Editorial & Adjudicatory Positions

Dictionary Literary Biography: Twenty-First Century African American Poets

Contributing Editor, “On Afaa Michael Weaver,” — 2023

Lampblack: Diaspora Issue

Editor in Chief — 2022

Lampblack: Founder’s Issue

Poetry Editor — 2021

20.35 Africa Poetry Series

Guest Editor — 2020

Citations

Ifeanyi, Prosper. (2025). *Memory, idealism and the reimagination of history: Yusef Komunyakaa and Cheswayo Mphanza*. Safundi, 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17533171.2025.2501384>.

Abstract: This article examines memory in Yusef Komunyakaa’s *Dien Cai Dau* (1988) and Cheswayo Mphanza’s *The Rinehart Frames* (2021) by adopting idealism as a critical approach. In the analysis of their works, attention is paid to form and content; which is expressed in the use of the poet-persona derivative and free verse technique in streamlining history, down to the thematization of the spatiotemporal existence of memory.