

WORKING PROGRAM / RELEASE MARCH 18, 2024

**The Second Academy of Scholars Annual Lecture
in the Arts and Humanities**

“NOTES TOWARD A GLOBAL LABOR HISTORY OF DETROIT”

Robin D.G. Kelley

Distinguished Professor and Gary B. Nash Endowed Chair in U.S. History
University of California, Los Angeles

Author of *Africa Speaks, America Answers: Modern Jazz in Revolutionary Times* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2012); *Thelonious Monk: The Life and Times of an American Original* (The Free Press, 2009); *Freedom Dreams: The Black Radical Imagination* (Beacon Press, 2002); *Race Rebels: Culture, Politics, and the Black Working Class* (New York: The Free Press, 1994)

Friday, March 29, 3:00–4:00 PM

Schaver Music Recital Hall, Old Main Building, Wayne State University
480 West Hancock, Detroit (enter West Hancock)

Introductions: [Pres. Espy or Provost Clabo; Charles Schiffer, AOS]

Prospectus: “Prof. Kelley will discuss the recent UAW victory in Detroit and its global implications, broadening its context to consider historical struggles in the Labor Movement, primarily focusing on the Black working class and its links to Palestinian workers through the League of Revolutionary Black Workers. He will also address Fordism and labor struggles with the Ford Motor Company in South Africa, as well as other international labor connections to Detroit. His talk will also consider the Arab working class in Detroit and identify parallels between the 1967 Rebellion to the concurrent Arab-Israeli War.”

Hybrid format; Zoom link here (registration):

https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZclcOGhpzotHdGOEcc5gBdDPQY9xcnWQE_a

Open to WSU faculty, students, and general public

Graduate and faculty seminar

“ON THE IMPERIAL HIGHWAY WITH JAYNE CORTEZ”

Friday, March 29, 11:00 AM–12:30 PM

Tierney House, Wayne State University

5510 Woodward Avenue, Detroit (parking available)

Prospectus: poet Jayne Cortez (1934–2012) has been called many things—a jazz poet, a blues poet, a political poet, an ecofeminist poet, a surrealist, a superrealist, and a “supersurrealist.” Her work combines multiple influences of the diasporic tradition—Langston Hughes, Nicolas Guillen, Federico Garcia Lorca, Richard Wright, Bob Kaufman, Billie Holiday, Bessie Smith, Big Mama Thornton, Memphis Minnie, Charlie Parker, John Coltrane, and particularly the Negritude poets, Aime Césaire, Leopold Senghor, and Léon-Gontran Damas. Prof. Kelley will delineate the global influences brought together in the dynamic lyricism of her poetry and performance.

Open to WSU graduate students and faculty

Biography: Robin D.G. Kelley is a scholar of African American music, culture, and history, publishing on a range of topics that include race, class, and labor history to jazz (Thelonious Monk) and diasporic surrealism. As a public intellectual, he writes on social movements, the African diaspora, black intellectuals, music, visual culture, Marxism, and other topics. His essays have appeared in a wide variety of professional journals and general publications, from *Journal of American History* to *The Black Scholar*, *Journal of Palestine Studies*, and *Boston Review*, for which he is a co-editor. Current book projects include *Black Bodies Swinging: An American Postmortem*, on the Black Spring protests of 2020; a biography of the journalist Grace Haswell, author of *Soul Sister: The Journal of a White Woman Who Turned Herself Black*; and a co-authored general survey of African American history. He teaches at University of California, Los Angeles.

The lecture series is in memory of Guy Stern, founder of the Academy of Scholars at Wayne State University; sponsored by the Academy of Scholars; the Humanities Center; the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences; African American Studies; Classical and Modern Languages, Literatures, and Cultures; the Emeritus Academy; Labor@Wayne; and the Helen R. DeRoy Chair.

For more information, contact: [t/k]

[Lecture program mission statement]

The Academy of Scholars Annual Lecture series was launched in 2023 as a forum for research-intensive and critically challenging work in the humanities and arts. Beginning with historical, critical, and ethical reflection on the central moral events of our epoch—the destruction of war and genocide, the legacy of colonialism, civil and human rights, political and economic inequality, the global world order, challenges of new technology, new planetary understandings, new literature and art—the series will ask fundamental questions through a wide range of disciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches. Our audience is the university community, faculty, staff, and students in the humanities, arts, and sciences, embracing both basic and applied research, as well as the larger public of metropolitan Detroit, Southeastern Michigan, and beyond: an intellectual, scholarly, and creative community connecting to Wayne State University. The series and its featured presenters thus seek to take an exemplary role in the presentation of research and informed debate in the university community.

[Guy Stern bio]

The lecture series was inaugurated in 2023 in honor of Distinguished Emeritus Professor Guy Stern, founder of the Academy of Scholars. Prof. Stern was among the most accomplished scholars affiliated with Wayne State University; a Holocaust survivor and celebrated member of the famed “Ritchie Boys” intelligence program; a specialist in German literature of the postwar period. He celebrated his 100th birthday in January 2022 and passed away in late 2023. For more background on Prof. Stern, his life and works, see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guy_Stern.