

Kofi Bazzell-Smith

Artist | Educator | Professional Boxer | U.S.- Japan Bridging Scholar
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Education

University of Illinois *Master of Fine Arts in New Media*; 2021-2024

Created an international residency for Japanese Artist Kazuo Maekawa via a \$15K grant 2023
Grant Writer, Host, Event Organizer, Teaching Assistant, and Japanese-English Interpreter

Kate Neal Kinley Memorial Fellow 2023-24 (\$10K)

Humanities Research Institute Mellon Foundation Interseminars Fellow 2022-23 (\$35K)

FLAS Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellow – Japanese 2021-22 (\$15K)

Graduate Coursework: Japanese Cinema, Japanese 440-441, Word and Image in Chinese Art,
Graduate Art seminars 593/595, ARTS 591 Interdisciplinary Seminar

Independent Research in Japan 5/2023-6/2023 and 8/2022-9/2022

Eastern Illinois University 2021; *BA in Studio Art, Asian Studies Minor*

Magna Cum Laude; Founder/President Japanese Culture Club; Independent Studies in
Japanese, Mandarin, Drawing, Painting and Digital art; Completed Chinese language program;
Study Abroad Student of the Year; Two Studies Abroad in Japan

Virtual Study Abroad; Advanced Japanese 2021 *Osaka Gakuin University*

Study Abroad; Japanese Language Courses, Manga Course; Hirakata, Japan 2019 *Kansai Gaidai*

Parkland Community College *Associate's in General Studies*, August 2018

Published work

"Karasu" in "Interseminars: Speculation and Imagining Otherwise." Academic book
produced during the interdisciplinary fellowship sponsored by the Mellon Foundation
Humanities Research Institute, University of Illinois 2023

4 Pages | 16 Bars: A Visual Mixtape; Black Comics Anthology 2021

Azuki Self-published Children's Book Series 2018-2020

Jiyu; manga anthology; Kansai Gaidai University 2019

Teaching

Manga Workshops (in Japanese)

Middlebury College Summer Intensive Language Program Japanese School 2023

Boxing Workshops (in Japanese)

Middlebury College Summer Intensive Language Program Japanese School 2023

Manga Production (Studio); Instructor 2023 University of Illinois

Guest Lecture Developing a Global Practice Musashi University 2023
Guest Lecture Networking Abroad Aoyama Gakuin University 2023
Guest Lecture Visual Communication University of California Los Angeles 2023
Manga Drawing and Storytelling Workshop University of California Los Angeles 2023
Guest Lecture Historical Context and Idiosyncrasies of Japanese Manga
Auburn University Art and Art History Department 2023
Comic Paneling Composition Workshops
Auburn University Art and Art History Department 2023
Intersections between art practice and engagement work in Japan
Auburn University Art and Art History Department 2023
Manga Storytelling Workshop 2023 University of Texas at Austin
Guest Lecture on Art composition 2022 Middlebury College Advanced Japanese Course
Guest Lecture; Middlebury College Course on Japan and the Body
Manga Production (Studio); Instructor 2022 University of Illinois
Art for non-majors (Studio); Instructor 2022 University of Illinois
Guest Lecture/Workshop; Manga; 2022 Illinois Wesleyan University
Guest Lecture; Conveying movement in Sequential Art; 2022 UCLA
Graduate Teaching Assistant; Visualization Drawing; 2021 University of Illinois
Guest Lecture: Art and Studying Abroad; 2021 University of Illinois
Guest Lecture: Manga production; 2021 Japan House University of Illinois
English as a Second Language; Teaching Internship 2019 TLC (The Language Company)

Service to University

Organizer, host, and Japanese-English interpreter for multiple lectures and workshops
Kazuo Maekawa Visiting Artist Residency 2023 University of Illinois
Graduate Student Advisory Representative 2022-23 Art & Design University of Illinois
Networking Lecture for Art Education PhD students 2022 University of Illinois
Artist Talk; Manga as a tool for Global Engagement 2022 University of Illinois YMCA
Panel Discussion; Decolonizing Art Education and Professional Development
Krannert Performing Arts Center University of Illinois 2022
Public Artist Talk/Critique; Azuki Manga Series 2022 University of Illinois
Artist Talk; Manga, Boxing and Japan; Asian American Cultural Center
2021 University of Illinois
Small Press Fest! Manga Storytelling Workshop 2020-21 University of Illinois
Founder/President Japanese Culture Club (JCC) 2018-2021 Eastern Illinois University
International Education Committee member 2020-21 Eastern Illinois University
Japanese language instruction (club activity) 2018-20 JCC Eastern Illinois University
Artist Talk; Power Talks: Visual Storytelling 2020 Eastern Illinois University
Asian Studies Conference Talk 2019 Eastern Illinois University
East Asian Languages Workshop 2018 Eastern Illinois University
Manga Storytelling Workshop 2018 Eastern Illinois University
Global Cultural Night Emcee 2018 Eastern Illinois University
President Japanese Culture Club 2019 Parkland College

Manga Storytelling Workshop 2018 Parkland College
Student Senator 2015 Parkland College

Service to Community

Artist and Panelist Melanated and Animated: Black and Japanese Cross-Cultural Connections; Japan Arts Foundation; Logan Theatre in Chicago 2023
Public Manga Workshop Auburn University Draughton Library 2023
Panel Discussion on the Japanese manga industry with Kazuo Maekawa; C2E2 Guest Speaker; Japanese Language Festival 2023 Japan-America Society of Washington
Panel Discussion "I-as-We" Comics 2023 BIPOC POP Comics and Multimedia Symposium University of Texas at Austin
Artist Talk: Networking in Japan 2022 Central Connecticut State University
Artist Talk: Manga as a Tool for Global Engagement 2022 Murray State University
Artist Talk: Manga as a Tool for Global Engagement 2022 Nihon Manga Juku (Japan)
Artist Talk: Manga as a Tool for Global Engagement 2022 Bunsei University of Art (Japan)
BIPOC POP Symposium Panel Discussion "Global Forms and Ancestral Identities" 2022 University of Texas at Austin
Artist Talk: Creating a Global Career 2022 Parkland College
Open to public Free Manga Workshop 2021 University YMCA University of Illinois
Manga Workshop for ELL students 2021 Urbana High School
Panel Discussion: BIPOC Liberation fest 2021 University of Illinois
TEDx Talk 2021 University of Illinois at Chicago
Artist Talk 2021 University of Illinois Graphic Design department
Artist Talk: Manga 2021 Edison Middle School 2021
Artist Talk: Black History Month, Black Joy 2021 Metcalf Middle School
Boxing Trainer 2014-21 Luyando Boxing
Anime and Manga: Afro-American Intersections with Japanese Culture co-presenter with Eric Calderon; US Japan Bridging Foundation 2020
Panel on James Baldwin with Princeton Scholar Dr. Eddie Glaude Jr. 2020 University of Illinois
Artist Talk 2020 University of Illinois East Asian Languages and Cultures department
Poetry reading and discussion 2020 UNESCO Center for Global Citizenship
Sounds Like Community; Artist Talk 2020 Urbana Independent Media Center
James Baldwin Commemoration Artist Talk 2020 Champaign-Urbana
TOMODACHI Generation Summit Conference 2019 Showa Women's University; Tokyo
Panelist; International Engagement 2019 UIUC International and Area Studies Library
Free Manga Storytelling Workshop 2019 Urbana Free Library
Free Manga Storytelling Workshop 2019 Parkland College
Public reading in Mandarin for Christmas at Tarble center 2018 Eastern Illinois University
English Conversation Partner Volunteer 2010-15 Intensive English Institute

Public Interviews

Fuji Television Japanese National TV interview 2023
WCIA Channel 3 Artist Interview 2022

Fuji Television Japanese National TV interview 2022
Shining Otaku Podcast 2022
Subsume Media Black Futures Month 2022
Comics Talk podcast 2022
Professor LatinX Comics Scholars Channel 2020
Japan Station Podcast 2020
Harukana Show 2019/2020
Young, Gifted and Abroad 2020
Smile Politely Artist Interview 2020
Unity in Action Magazine 2020

Exhibitions and Shows

Solo Animation Exhibition Design Festa Gallery Tokyo, Japan 2023
Solo Animation Exhibition Anime Central Convention in Chicago, Illinois 2023
Solo Digital Exhibition; Auburn University Technology and Innovation Center 2023
Art Show; Analog Wine Library Urbana, Illinois 2023
Artist's Alley print show; University of Texas at Austin 2023
Solo Exhibition; Uncanny Juxtapositions; McKinley Foundation Champaign, Illinois 2023
Solo Exhibition; Azuki the Rock Paper Scissors Champion 2022 University of Illinois YMCA
Art Display 2022 Champaign City Council Chambers 40 North Champaign Arts Council
Future Spaces in Community Places group exhibition 2022 Murray State University
Future Spaces in Community Places group exhibition 2022 Illinois Wesleyan University
Public Critique; MFA Program 2021 University of Illinois Art + Design
8 to Create Live Drawing Exhibition 2021 University of Illinois Art + Design
Research and Creative Works Conference 2020-21 Eastern Illinois University
Black Lives Matter Outdoor Installation 2020 Common Ground Food Co-op
Illinois Board of Higher Education Annual Gallery 2019
Solo Manga Art Exhibition for Asian Heritage Month 2019
Booth Library Eastern Illinois University
Solo Exhibition 2019 Art Department Passage Gallery
Booth Library Eastern Illinois University
Urbana Independent Media Center Exhibition 2018;2019
Boneyard Arts Festival 2017
C-U Changemakers Solo Art Exhibition 2016

Residencies

Summer Art Camp 2023 High Museum of Art
Visiting Faculty Middlebury College Intensive Summer Japanese Program 2023
Visiting Artist Residency University of California Los Angeles
Asian Languages and Cultures Department 2023
Visiting Artist Residency Auburn University Art and Art History Department 2023
Visiting Faculty Residency Middlebury College 2022

Grants and Awards

AIGA Scholarship: Coyne Family Foundation Illustration Award 2023 (\$3000)
Inaugural Comics Studies Society Frederick Luis Aldama Leadership Award 2023
Future Faculty Career Exploration Program Fellowship
Rochester Institute of Technology 2023
Kate Neal Kinley Memorial Fellowship
School of Fine and Applied Arts University of Illinois 2023 (\$10,000)
Center for Advanced Studies George A Miller Visiting Artist Grant 2023
(Kazuo Maekawa from Tokyo) University of Illinois (\$15,000)
Art & Design department Visiting Artist Grant 2023
(Maekawa residency) University of Illinois \$500
Graduate Spring Event Travel Competition University of Illinois \$500
Fulbright Semifinalist Japan 2023
Mellon Foundation Interseminars Initiative Fellowship, 2022-23
Humanities Research Institute, University of Illinois (\$35,000)
Fulbright Alternate Japan 2022
Teachers Ranked As Excellent By Their Students Summer 2022 University of Illinois
Teachers Ranked As Excellent By Their Students Spring 2022 University of Illinois
Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Fellowship 2021-22
Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures University of Illinois (\$15,000)
Graduate Image of Research Award Honorable Mention 2022 University of Illinois
Fulbright Semi-Finalist Japan 2021
AIGA Worldstudio scholarship 2021 (\$500)
Magna Cum Laude EIU 2021
All Student Show Digital Art 1st Place 2021/2020 Eastern Illinois University
Undergraduate Research Grant 2021/2020 Eastern Illinois University
Benjamin A. Gilman Scholarship 2020 Eastern Illinois University (\$5000)
Study Abroad Student of the Year 2020 Eastern Illinois University
Talented Student Award Art Department 2019/2020 Eastern Illinois University (\$1000)
U.S.-Japan Bridging Foundation Scholarship 2019 (\$2500)
Freeman Asia Scholarship 2019 (\$2500)
Talented Student Award Study Abroad 2019 Eastern Illinois University (\$1000)
Asian Studies Leadership Award 2019 Eastern Illinois University
Asian Studies Research/Creative Work Award 2019 Eastern Illinois University
Midwest Animation Promotion Society Manga Award 2019 (\$3000)