

Kofi Bazzell-Smith

Artist | Educator | Professional Boxer | U.S.- Japan Bridging Scholar
bazzell1@illinois.edu
www.kofimanga.com

Education

University of Illinois Master of Fine Arts in New Media; currently enrolled
HRI Mellon Foundation Interseminars Initiative Fellow 2022-23
FLAS Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellow (Japanese) 2021-22
Graduate Coursework: Japanese Cinema, Japanese 440-441, Word and Image in Chinese Art,
Graduate seminars 593/595

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

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
Activator Magazine illustrations and short works 2018-2020

Teaching

Manga Production Course; Instructor (first in US history) 2022 University of Illinois
Art for non-majors; Instructor 2022 University of Illinois
Guest Lecture/Workshop; Manga; 2022 Illinois Wesleyan University
Guest Lecture; Japanese Manga: Conveying movement; 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

Panel Discussion; Decolonizing Art Education and Professional Development; 2022 Krannert Performing Arts Center University of Illinois
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

BIPOC POP Conference Panel Discussion 2022 University of Texas at Austin
Artist Talk 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

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

Solo Exhibition; Manga as a tool for Global Engagement 2022
University of Illinois YMCA
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

Awards

Mellon Foundation Interseminars Initiative Fellowship, 2022-23
Humanities Research Institute, University of Illinois (\$35,000)
Fulbright Alternate Japan 2022
Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Fellowship 2021-22 University of Illinois
Graduate Image of Research Award Honorable Mention 2022 University of Illinois
Fulbright Semi-Finalist Japan 2021
AIGA Worldstudio scholarship 2021
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
Study Abroad Student of the Year 2020 Eastern Illinois University
Talented Student Award Art Department 2019/2020 Eastern Illinois University
U.S.-Japan Bridging Foundation Scholarship 2019
Freeman Asia Scholarship 2019

Talented Student Award Study Abroad 2019 Eastern Illinois University
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