

**CURRICULUM VITAE
(September 2011)**

**Elizabeth Alexander
Thomas E. Donnelley Professor of African American Studies
African American Studies Department
Yale University
81 Wall Street
New Haven, CT 06510**

EDUCATION

1984 BA, English, Yale University
1987 MA, English (Creative Writing), Boston University
1992 Ph.D., English, University of Pennsylvania

ACADEMIC POSITIONS

2010- Thomas E. Donnelley Professor of African American Studies, Yale University
2009- Chair, African American Studies Department, Yale University
2005- Professor, Departments of African American Studies, American Studies and English, Yale University
2000-2005 Associate Professor (Adjunct), African American Studies Department, Yale University
1997-1999 Grace Hazard Conkling Poet-in Residence, Smith College
1997-1999 Inaugural Director, The Poetry Center at Smith College
1991-1997 Assistant Professor, English Department, University of Chicago
1990-1991 Dissertation Fellow, English Department, Haverford College

PUBLICATIONS

I. Books

“Cemetery for the Illustrious Negro Dead: A Prehistory of African American Studies” (in progress)

Crave Radiance: New and Selected Poems 1990-2010, Graywolf Press, 2010
(Winner, Paterson Prize for Poetry; nominee, Hurston-Wright Award for Poetry)

Praise Song for the Day (chapbook), Graywolf Press, 2009

Canto de Alabanza por el Dia (chapbook; translated with Rodrigo Rojas), Graywolf Press, 2009

Poems in Conversation and a Conversation, (with Lyrae Van Clief-Stefanon), Slapering Hol Press, 2008

Power and Possibility: Essay, Reviews, Interviews, University of Michigan Press, Poets on Poetry Series, 2007

Miss Crandall's School for Young Ladies and Little Misses of Color, (with Marilyn Nelson. Winner, Connecticut Book Award) Front Street Press, 2007

American Blue: Selected Poems, Bloodaxe Books (U.K.), 2006

American Sublime, Graywolf Press, 2005. (American Library Association 25 Notable Books of the Year; Pulitzer Prize finalist; Connecticut Book Award finalist)

The Black Interior: Essays, Graywolf Press, 2004 (Finalist for best non-fiction, Hurston-Wright Foundation, 2005)

Antebellum Dream Book, Graywolf Press, 2001 (Village Voice 25 Best Books of 2001)

Body of Life, Tia Chucha Press, 1996

The Venus Hottentot, University Press of Virginia, Callaloo Poetry Series, 1990. Reissued by Graywolf Press, 2004

II. Edited Volumes

"12x12: American Poetry Today" (in progress)

"The Library of America Book of African-American Poetry" (in progress)

The Essential Gwendolyn Brooks, ed. and introduction, Library of America "American Poetry Project," 2005

Love's Instruments by Melvin Dixon, ed. and introduction, Tia Chucha Press, 1995

III. Essays (selected)

"Free Black Men," in "The New Face of Race," ed. Ken Mack and Guy-Uriel Charles, The New Press (forthcoming)

“We Were Here and We Are Here: The Cave Canem Poetry Workshop,” in *Poetry in Communities*, ed. Kate Coles, Poetry Foundation, 2011

“Harlem Plays the Best Ball in the World,” in *Harlem: A Century in Images*, ed. Thelma Golden, Rizzoli, 2010

“Jean Toomer Travels to Sparta, Georgia,” *New Literary History of America*, ed. Werner Sollors and Greil Marcus, Harvard UP, 2009

“My Grandmother’s Hair,” in *The Black Body*, ed. Meri Nana-Amah Danquah, Seven Stories Press, 2009

“Second Spring,” Meridel LeSeuer essay, *Water*Stone*, Fall 2007

“Five Portraits,” in Deb Willis, ed, *Let Your Motto Be Resistance: African American Portraits*," Smithsonian and ICP exhibition and catalogue, 2007

“Contemporary African-American Poetics,”(with Harryette Mullen) in *Cave Canem Tenth Anniversary Anthology*, ed. Toi Derricotte and Cornelius Eady, University of Michigan Press 2006

“The Negro Digs Up Her Past,” *SAQ*, Fall 2005

“Some White Men,” in *Some of My Best Friends: Writings on Interracial Friendships*, ed. Emily Bernard, HarperCollins, 2004

“The Genius of Romare Bearden,” in *Something All Our Own: The Grant Hill Collection of African-American Art*, ed. Alvia Wardlaw, Duke University Press, 2003

“‘The Space Between’: On Etheridge Knight” in *Poetry Speaks*, ed. Elise Paschen and Rebecca Presson Mosby, Sourcebooks, Inc., 2001

“Meditations on ‘Mecca’: Gwendolyn Brooks and the Responsibilities of the Black Poet,” in *By Herself, Women Reclaim Poetry*, ed. Molly McQuade, Graywolf Press, 2000. Also published in *Associated Writing Programs Chronicle*, March 2000

"Real/Not Real," catalogue essay, *Real: Six Black Figurative Painters*, Bass Museum of Art, Miami, 1996

"A Black Man Says 'Sorbet,'" catalogue essay, *Two Cents: The Art of Jean-Michel Basquiat and the Poetry of Kevin Young*, Miami-Dade Community College Wolfson Galleries, 1995

“‘We Must Be About our Fathers' Business': Anna Julia Cooper and the Incorporation of the Turn-of-the-Century Aframerican Intellectual," *Signs* (Winter 1994)

"Memory, Community, Voice: African-American Poetry in the Age of AIDS," *Callaloo*, (Spring 1994)

"'Coming out Blackened and Whole': Fragmentation and Reintegration in Audre Lorde's *Zami* and *The Cancer Journals*," *American Literary History* (Winter 1994)

"'We're Gonna Deconstruct Your Life!': The Making and Un-Making of the Black Bourgeois Patriarch in 'Ricochet'," in *Representing Black Men*, ed. Marcellus Blount and George P. Cunningham, Routledge, 1996

"Can you Be BLACK and Look at This?": Reading the Rodney King Video(s)," in *Public Culture* (Fall 1994), and Whitney Museum, *Black Male* (ed. Thelma Golden), 1994

"Walt Whitman and Gwendolyn Brooks," *Voice Literary Supplement*," April 1994

"Living in the *Jet Stream*," *Voice Literary Supplement*, February 1994

"The Anxiety of Authority," *The Women's Review of Books*, February 1994

IV. Poetry and fiction in journals and anthologies (widely published; furnished upon request)

AWARDS, GRANTS, AND FELLOWSHIPS

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| 2011 | Paterson Poetry Prize for <i>Crave Radiance</i> , sponsored by the Poetry Center at Passaic County Community College |
| 2010 | Anisfield-Wolf Award for Lifetime Achievement in Poetry |
| 2009 | Honorary Doctorate, Simmons College |
| 2009 | Honorary Doctorate, College of St. Benedict |
| 2009 | Alumni of the Year, Sidwell Friends School |
| 2009 | Inaugural Poet, President Barack Obama |
| 2007-2008 | Mildred Londa Weisman Fellow (invited), Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study, Harvard University |
| 2007 | Jackson Poetry Prize (inaugural recipient) |

- 2005 Alphonse Fletcher, Sr., Fellowship, “for work which promotes the broad goals of the Brown v. Board of Education decision” (inaugural class)
- 2002 John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship
- 1999-2000 Visiting Fellow, Whitney Humanities Center, Yale University
- 1997 Quantrell Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching, University of Chicago
- 1993-1994 Chicago Humanities Institute Fellowship, University of Chicago
- 1994 Fellow, Ragdale Foundation
- 1992 NEA Creative Writing Fellowship
- 1990, 1991 Fellow, Corporation of Yaddo

INVITED LECTURES (selected)

“Cemetery for the Illustrious Negro Dead,” DuBois Institute Fall Colloquium Series, Harvard University, September 2011

“Open the Unusual Door,” Keynote Address to the Freshman Class, Yale University, August 2011

“Ripping out the Seams: New Thoughts on Black Experimental Poetry,” Hopwood Lecture, University of Michigan, April 2011

“Cemetery for the Illustrious Negro Dead,” Keynote address, Columbia University Conference on Black Women’s Intellectual History, April 2011

“Hearing America Singing,” University of Washington Graduate School, April 2011

Commencement Address, College of St. Benedict, May 2010

Commencement Address, Simmons College, May 2010

“Venus Revisited,” Keynote address, Venus 2000 conference, NYU, March 2010

“Free Black Men,” Race in the Age of Obama Conference, Duke University Law School, March 2010

“In the Company of Scholars,” Yale Graduate Dean’s lecture, March 2010

Drue Heinz lecture, Pittsburgh, PA February 2010

Keynote Address, Zora Neale Hurston Festival, Eatonville, FL, January 2010

Martin Luther King Keynote address, Wittenberg University. January 2010

Martin Luther King Keynote address, University of Pennsylvania, January 2010

“Anna Julia Cooper in Washington,” Conference on Anna Julia Cooper, Penn State University, October 2008

James Baldwin Lecture, Hampshire College, March 2007

“The Ongoing Influence of Paul Laurence Dunbar on 20th Century African-American Poetry,” Dunbar Conference, Stanford University, March 2006

“Re-defining Experimental Black Poetry,” CUNY Graduate Center, March 2005

“Why Amistad, Why Now?: History Poems and the Contemporary Moment,” Yale University, “Why Literature Matters” Conference, April 2005

“The ‘kitchenette’, The World: On Gwendolyn Brooks,” Keynote Address, Medgar Evers College, Gwendolyn Brooks Symposium

The Windfall Address, Nichols College, Dudley, MA, October 2004

Commencement Speaker, Yale University Black Graduation, May 2004

“Black Alive and Looking Back at You,” Keynote Address, June Jordan Memorial Conference, LaGuardia Community College, May 2003

Alice Moore Dunbar Nelson Scholar-in-Residence Address, Dillard University, New Orleans, February 2003

“Rethinking the Black Female Body,” Keynote Address, “Writing and the Difference ‘Race’ Makes” Conference, Southern Connecticut Community College, September 2002

“Langston Hughes and the Road to New Negro Poets USA,” Keynote Address, “Langston Hughes and His World” Conference, Yale University, February 2002

“Toward the Black Interior,” John Hope Franklin Center for Interdisciplinary Study, Duke University, February 2002

“On Black Masculinity,” Princeton Conference on Black Masculinity, November 1997

Keynote Address, "Affirmative Action Babies, Bourgeois Blues," Unnatural Acts Conference, UC Riverside, Riverside, CA, April 1997

"'The Block' and Beyond: Bearden, DuBois, and Collage," Symposium on Romare Bearden, University of Pennsylvania, September 1996

"Writing the Venus Hottentot," Riverfront Forum, University of Chicago, November 1994

"Memory, Community, Voice: African-American Poetry in the Age of AIDS," Conference in Honor of Melvin Dixon, CUNY Graduate Center, March 1994; Black Women in the Academy Conference, M.I.T., Jan. 1994

"Can you be BLACK and Look at This?": Reading the Rodney King Video(s)," Midwest Faculty Seminar, University of Chicago, April 1993; Contested Boundaries Conference, University of California-Irvine, May 1993; Society for Cinema Studies Conference, February 1993

"Re-Visions of 'Two-Ness': Du Bois and Beyond," Midwest Faculty Seminar, University of Chicago, January 1993

"Issues in Black Women's Literature," Mellon Literacy Program, U. of Chicago, October 1992

"On Romare Bearden," UCLA, Wight Art Gallery, Jan. 1992

"New Approaches for Teaching Afro-American Poetry," PATHS/PRISM workshop, Philadelphia, PA, 1989

PERFORMANCE

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| 2010 | Premiere, "City Song," with Lewis Spratlan (Composer), Woolsey Hall, Yale University, Yale Glee Club |
| 2009 | Premiere, "Five Men," with Elena Ruehr (Composer), Kennedy Center Terrace Theater, Washington Vocal Arts Society |
| 1997 | Collaborator, "Doppler Incident," conceived and directed by Kerry James Marshall, BAM/New Wave Festival, New York City |
| 1996 | "Diva Studies," full-length verse drama (directing thesis commissioned by Yale School of Drama) University Theater, Yale University |

POETRY READINGS (extensive national and international readings since 1986; furnished upon request)

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES AND AFFILIATIONS

- 2010 Judge, United States of Artists fellowship competition
- 2010 Panel Chair, National Book Award for Poetry
- 2010 Judge, Naomi Long Madgett Book Prize, Lotus Press
- 2010- External Advisory Committee, Black Metropolis Research Consortium
- 2009 Judge, Cave Canem Book Prize
- 2009 Judge, Rona Jaffe Foundation
- 2008 Advisor, Poetry Foundation Website
- 2006 Phi Beta Kappa Poet, Harvard University
- 2005- Nominator and nominee evaluator, U.S. Artists, Whiting, Rona Jaffe, and MacArthur Foundations
- 2005 Judge, Bollingen Prize for Poetry, Yale University Libraries
- 2005 Phi Beta Kappa Poet, Yale University
- 2005 American poetry representative, Pablo Neruda Centennial Celebration, Santiago, Chile, sponsored by Fundacion Neruda and Universidad Diego Portales
- 2003-2006 Judge, Whiting Foundation
- 2003-2006 Judge, James Laughlin Award, Academy of American Poets
- 2002-2004 Judge, O.B. Hardison Award, Folger Shakespeare Library
- 2002 New Haven Arts Awards Selection Committee
- 2002- Program consultant, International Festival of Arts and Ideas, New Haven, CT
- 2002 Poetry Judge, National Book Award
- 2002 Interdisciplinary Panel Juror, Pew Charitable Trusts Arts Grants
- 2002-2007 Board, Poetry Society of America
- 2000-2004 Board, Gwendolyn Brooks Center, Chicago State University
- 2000- Advisory Board, Furious Flower Foundation for African American Poetry

- 1997- Founding and Honorary Board Member, Cave Canem Foundation
- 1995- Visiting writer abroad, Berlin and Hamburg, Germany; Rio de Janeiro, Minas Gerais, and Salvador, Brazil; Santiago, Chile; Treasure Beach, Jamaica. Sponsored by Calabash; U.S. State Department; Goethe-Institut; Callaloo magazine
- 1994 Guest Editor, Missouri Arts Council Biennial
- 1993 Dramaturge, "Twilight" by Anna Deavere Smith, Mark Taper Forum, Los Angeles
- 1993 Poetry Panelist, National Endowment for the Arts
- 1993-1994 Consultant, Poetry Center of Chicago
- 1992-1996 Board, Tia Chucha Press

UNIVERSITY SERVICE (selected)

I. Yale University, 2000 to date

Faculty consultant to Yale Art Gallery for exhibition and programming, "Embodied: African American Art in the Yale collection," 2010-2011

Search committee member and/or chair for African American Studies Department senior and junior ladder faculty searches joint with Departments of Anthropology, English, American Studies, Theater Studies, Political Science, Art History, resulting in 6 hires, 2 pending, 2009-

Honorary Degrees Committee, 2009-

Poynter Journalism Fellowship Committee, 2009-

President's Committee on gender and admissions, 2009-

University Budget Committee, 2009-2010

Lecturer, Association of Yale Alumni (San Francisco, New York, Washington DC, New Haven), 2008-

Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Collection Advisory Committee, 2007-

Ribicoff Teaching Prize Committee, 2007

Founder and director, "New Ideas in African-American Studies" lecture series, 2007-

Nakanishi Prize selection committee, 2006, 2007

Director of Undergraduate Studies, African American Studies, 2006-2007

Affiliate faculty and Executive Committee member, Women's Gender, and Sexuality Studies Program, 2005-

Affiliate faculty and Executive Committee member, Theater Studies Program, 2005-

Board, African-American Cultural Center, 2003-

Graduate Admissions Committee, African American Studies, 2002-

Readings Committee, English Department, 2001-

Minority Graduate Affairs Advisory Committee, 2002-

Prize Committee, African-American Cultural Center, 2002-

Langston Hughes and His World Centennial Conference, Literary Director, 2002

Graduate Program Committee, African American Studies, 2002-

II. Smith College, 1997-1999

Director, Poetry Center at Smith College

Founding Collective and editorial board, *Meridians: race, feminism, transnationalism*

III. University of Chicago, 1991-1997

Co-convener, "Race and the Reproduction of Racial Ideologies" workshop

Co-convener, American Culture workshop

Founding Committee, Gender Studies Program

Co-founder, Committee on Racial Justice

Graduate Admissions and Aid Committee

University Policy Committee

Departmental Hiring Committee

Moody Lectures Series Committee (chair)

Morton Dauwen Zabel Committee (poetry readings)
Instructor, Mellon program for public high school teachers
Advisor, Women's Guide to the U. of C.
Board member, Community Service Center
Member, Committee on Critical Practice
Galler Prize Committee for Distinguished dissertations
Selection Committee, Mellon Minority Scholars

OTHER TEACHING

2007, 2009 Napa Valley Writers Workshop
2006 Visiting Associate Professor, English Department, University of Pennsylvania (Spring)
2004 Arvon Foundation Workshop, Yorkshire, England
2002 Yale University Summer School
2001, 2003 New York University, Graduate Creative Writing Program
1996- Cave Canem Poetry Workshop (founding faculty)
1996 Visiting Assistant Professor, English Department, Yale University (Spring)
1995 Visiting Assistant Professor, English Department, Northwestern University (Fall)
1993 Dunbar Vocational High School, N.E.H.-funded project on Gwendolyn Brooks
1992 Guild Complex, Chicago, IL
1991 Wesleyan University Summer Writer's Conference
1988, 1989 Germantown Friends School (Spring)
1987-8 University of Pennsylvania (freshman English seminars)
1985-1986 Boston University (undergraduate creative writing seminar)

OTHER PRIZES

- 2001, 2000,
1998 Pushcart Prizes for Poetry
- 1997 Honorable Mention, "Diva Studies," Jane Chambers Playwriting Award, Women and Theatre Program of ATHE
- 1997 George Kent Prize for Poetry, Chicago State Black Writers Conference
- 1994 Kenyon Review Prize for Literary Excellence
- 1993 Illinois Arts Council Literary Award
- 1992 George Kent Prize, Poetry magazine (awarded by Gwendolyn Brooks)
- 1986 Larry Neal Writer's Award for Fiction, D.C. Commission on the Arts and Humanities

Additional references available upon request