ANNOUNCEMENT

Community-Engaged Early Career Fellow, 2020-2021

Francesca D’Amico-Cuthbert

Francesca D’Amico-Cuthbert holds a doctorate in American History from York University. Her research interests include the history of urban popular music forms in the United States and Canada, feminist readings of popular culture, and the relationship of racialized artists to social justice movements and state apparatuses and discourses. Francesca is also a filmmaker working on a forthcoming full-length documentary film (and accompanying film curriculum) on mixed race identities, with a second film in the initial stages of development.

The Politics of ‘Urban Music’:
A Case Study of the Toronto Hip Hop Community and Rap Music Marketplace, 1985-2010

Francesca’s research project will analyse the interface of race, art, community, commerce, and ‘urban music’ in the City of Toronto. She explores the role of the urban imaginary in shaping the racial economy of creative industries, the poetics of community politics in late-20th-c. Canada, and the collective agency and standing of the Toronto Hip Hop community in the national music marketplace. This study will root the social power relations that characterise the infrastructure of the music industry in a much longer African-Canadian past. During her time at the JHI, Francesca will conduct oral interviews, consult archival collections, and identify industry practices that have shaped the commercial trajectory of the Toronto Hip Hop community’s entry into the Canadian music marketplace. Her work will take the form of conference presentations, an academic monograph, and a story-mapping website. The project will highlight how the development of an ‘urban music’ market in and beyond Canada has been intimately shaped by the poetics and politics of Hip Hop as well as narratives of belonging and representations of the national imaginary.

About this fellowship

The Community-Engaged Early Career fellowship is offered for the second time in 2020-2021 as a component of the research project, Humanities at Large, which is generously funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. The fellowship is designed to enable knowledge transfer in and out of the academy, and during her year with the JHI, Francesca will be engaged in some of the pillar activities outlined in this project, along with her own research.