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YALE UNIVERSITY

Focus on *Africa*



In this edition of Focus on Africa we present an array of highlights showcasing notable speakers and visitors on campus, faculty news, student and alumni profiles and educational programs on the continent. We also bring you a snapshot of the various activities on campus that serve as an invaluable platform for substantive inquiry and discourse on Africa. Over the last few months, we have been pleased to welcome several alumni to campus, including renowned human rights lawyer Pheroze Nowrojee '74 LLM and novelist Deji Olukotun '00 B.A. We hope you enjoy this issue.

- Eddie Mandhry, Director for Africa

Faculty Research



Faculty Awarded Two Grants to Support Health System in Liberia

Faculty at the Yale School of Medicine have been awarded two grants by the World Bank and the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) to support and strengthen medical education and health management in Liberia. The Yale Team will be led by Dr. Asghar Rastegar, professor of medicine and director of the Office of Global Health in the Department of Medicine, and will include Onyema Ogbuagu, assistant professor of infectious diseases, and Dr. Kristina Talbert-Slagle, assistant professor of general internal medicine. [More >>](#)

Kate Baldwin Appointed the Strauss Assistant Professor of Political Science

Kate Baldwin was newly named as the Peter Strauss Family Assistant Professor of Political Science. She focuses her research on political accountability, state building, and the politics of development, with a regional focus on sub-Saharan Africa. Baldwin is the author of the book



"The Paradox of Traditional Chiefs in Democratic Africa," which received an Honorable Mention for the Riker Award recognizing the best book in political economy published in the previous three years. [More >>](#)



Nutrient Uptake and Metabolism Short Course in Kenya

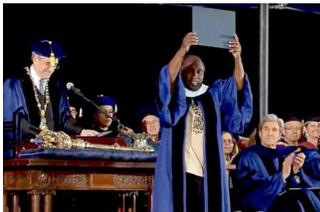
Mara Project Professor of Ecology and Evolutionary Ecology David Post, and Doctoral Student Christopher Dutton, along with scientists from the University of Notre Dame, Utah State University, and the University of Montana, conducted a short course on River Nutrient Uptake and Metabolism, 31 July - 3 August, in and around the Maasai Mara, Kenya. The Mara Project focuses on how different forms of animal inputs into the Mara River shape ecosystem processes and food web dynamics. [More >>](#)



Postdoctoral Fellow on Urban "Middle Class" Milieus

Yale's Center for Cultural Sociology welcomed Florian Stoll from Bayreuth University, Germany for a year-long stay in October 2016. As his time comes to an end, Florian Stoll sits down with the Africa Initiative to discuss his research and experience at Yale. Doing his time here, he taught a class related to his research on "Middle Class Milieus in the Global South" during the Spring 2017 semester. [More >>](#)

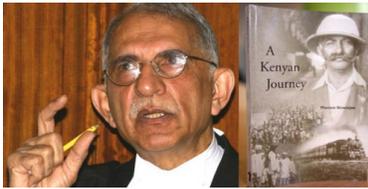
Campus News



Ngugi wa Thiong'o Awarded Honorary Degree

Acclaimed Kenyan writer, scholar, playwright and activist Ngugi wa Thiong'o was awarded a Doctor of Letters honorary degree at Yale University's 316th Commencement in May 2017. The award was in recognition of his profound contribution to literature, and his commitment to highlighting the importance of African languages through writing in Gikuyu. Ngugi became the 10th African recipient of an honorary degree from Yale. [More >>](#)

Pheroze Nowrojee '74 LLM Delivers Annual Gandhi Lecture



Pheroze Nowrojee LL.M. '74, the renowned human rights lawyer and author, gave the South Asian Studies Council's Annual Gandhi Lecture on October 2, M. K. Gandhi's birthday, in Henry R. Luce Hall Auditorium at the MacMillan Center. Senior counsel and advocate in the High Courts of Kenya, Tanzania, and Zanzibar, Nowrojee was awarded the International Bar Association's Bernard Simons Memorial Award for the Advancement of Human Rights, among many other honors, in a distinguished career. [More >>](#)



2017 African Literature Association Conference at Yale

On June 14-17, Yale University hosted the 2017 African Literature Association (ALA) Annual Conference. It was the biggest Africa-focused conference ever to take place at Yale, bringing together more than 550 participants from around the world, and 45 practitioners from the fields of African film, literature, music, and performance. Organized by Professor of English Stephanie Newell, this year's conference explored the theme: "Africa and the World: Literature, Politics, and Global Geographies". [More >>](#)



YYAS Concludes 2017 Program Sessions

The Yale Young African Scholars (YYAS) Program completed its 2017 session offering academic opportunities to secondary school students this past July and August in three locations on the African continent: Accra, Ghana; Kigali, Rwanda; and Harare, Zimbabwe. This year, YYAS brought together 300 students between the ages of 14 and 18 and introduced them to the demanding U.S. university and financial aid application processes and requirements. [More >>](#)



Yale Welcomes Three World Fellows from Africa

Liberian doctor Ibrahim Ajami, Cameroonian educator Melvis M. Ndiloseh, and Nigerian entrepreneur Chude Jideonwo are among the sixteen globally engaged leaders who comprise the 2017 World Fellows welcomed to campus. Since its inception, this program has welcomed 56 World Fellows from 17 African nations in the fields of education, medicine, business, governance, media and sustainability amongst others. [More >>](#)

Njideka Crosby '11 M.F.A Named MacArthur Fellow

Visual artist Njideka Akunyili Crosby '11 M.F.A was among the 24 individuals named 2017 MacArthur Fellows. Raised in



Nigeria and currently living in Los Angeles, Njideka was described as ""a figurative painter whose large-scale works express the hybridity characteristic of transnational experience through choices of subject matter, materials, and techniques." [More >>](#)



Novelist Credits Yale for Inspiring Sense of wonder

Deji Olukotun '00 B.A visited New Haven in June to participate in the African Literature Association's annual conference. His first novel, "Nigerians in Space," which was published in 2014, and the sequel "After the Flare," hit shelves in September. In addition to writing fiction, Olukotun directs global advocacy campaigns for Access Now, a nonprofit that defends the rights of digital technology users throughout the world. While on campus, he spoke to YaleNews about his work, and how he nurtured his love of writing and literature as an undergraduate at Yale. [More >>](#)



Africa Salon Showcases Contemporary African Arts

Africa Salon, Yale's university-wide celebration of African arts and culture, was held on campus, bringing together artists, activists and scholars to discuss contemporary artistry from across the continent. Featured artists included renowned spoken word poet winner of the 2016 Sillerman First Book Prize for African Poets Safia Elhillo, writer for The New Yorker and the group blog Africa is a Country, Anakwa Dwamena, and student artists like Anna Wane '17, Tsedenya Simmie '19 and Jesse Kimotho '20 [More >>](#)

Spotlights



YASA: A Resource and Community for Students from and Interested in Africa

African and Africanist students meet in the Lighten Room of Yale's Afro-American Cultural Center to discuss their unique experiences as Africans at Yale, and debate political and socio-economic issues facing the African continent. [More >>](#)

Dzana: Yale's Only Afrobeats Dance Group Nurtures a Sense of Camaraderie

The members of Dzana, Yale's first Afrobeats dance group,



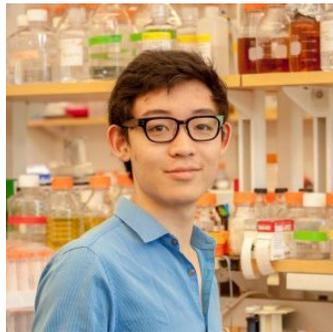
share at least three things in common: an interest in exploring new aspects of African culture, a passion for dancing, and a desire to be part of a vibrant community.

[More >>](#)



Kehinde Wiley '01 M.F.A Remixes Classical European Art with Black Urban Youth

Renowned portrait painter Kehinde Wiley '01 M.F.A, who was awarded the US State Department Medal of Arts in January, and whose retrospective recently opened at the Brooklyn Museum is best known for recasting European masterpieces with African American subjects. [More >>](#)



Kasidet Manakongtreecheep '18 Works with Red Cross and UNICEF in Kenya

Thai undergraduate Kasidet Managkongtreecheep '18 sat down with the Yale Africa Initiative to talk about his semester in Nairobi, Kenya. He describes his work with the American Red Cross and UNICEF, his impressions of Nairobi, and the lessons on development he took from his time in Kenya.

[More >>](#)



Charles Riley '02 M.A. on his Trip to Dakar and Abidjan

Yale's Librarian for African Studies Charles Riley '02 M.A recounts the highlights of his trip to Dakar, Senegal, and Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire. During this trip, he obtained books for the library from publishers and non-profits that we hadn't gotten much from in the past nine or ten years; and presented at a conference on Mande Studies, the Mande being a group of ethnicities and language family widely dispersed throughout West Africa. [More >>](#)

WHAT'S HAPPENING ON CAMPUS

November 6th - 12th: Africa Week 2017, a week-long celebration of contemporary Africa hosted by the Yale African Students Association, will be held November 6th - 12th 2017. This year's edition is themed "Tomorrow in Africa". The goal is to reflect on the past, dissect the present with its trends, opportunities and challenges in order to predict the future of the African Continent in various fields. [More >>](#)

November 8th: Come join us for the release of Yale World Fellow Chude Jideonwo's new

book: "How to Win Elections in Africa." From their frontline role in two democratic revolutions (Nigeria, 2015 and Ghana, 2016) the authors of 'How to Win Elections in Africa' - Chude Jideonwo and Adebola Williams highlight their experiences and draw parallels with global events like Brexit, and the recent election of Donald Trump. [More >>](#)

December: Holiday Indaba hosted by Director for Africa, Eddie Mandhry. As we conclude 2017, please join us for an informal social gathering to celebrate, build, and connect our African community. Look out for upcoming details.

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