

Salon

Spring

2025



Thursday

May 1

7pm

S P E A K I N G
I N
T O N G U E S



In Dialogue with
Christopher Harris



VSW Salon - May 1, 2025

Speaking in Tongues

In Dialogue with Christopher Harris

Christopher Harris's films are visually musical compositions that use experimental techniques to call attention to the political aesthetics of racism, capitalism and African American culture. Influenced by avant-garde cinema, jazz music, and archival media, Harris's body of work includes 16mm film, HD video and multimedia installation. Harris' films fluidly engage elements of duration, absence and silence to bring viewer's attention to the experience of film as a temporal and spatial medium, while also celebrating the poetic, sensorial experience of the moving image and its associations. As part of our In Dialogue series, Harris has selected a program that includes films from the VSW archive along with his own works, including his most recent film, *Speaking in Tongues: Take One*. Christopher Harris will be in person for a Q&A following the screening.



Still from *Halimuhfack* (2016)

PROGRAM

Halimuhfak

2016 / 16mm to DV / color / 4m

Courtesy of Video Data Bank

A performer lip-synchs to archival audio featuring the voice of author and anthropologist Zora Neale Hurston as she describes her method of documenting African American folk songs in Florida. The flickering images were produced with a hand-cranked Bolex so that the lip-synch is deliberately erratic and the rear-projected, grainy, looped images of Masai tribesmen and women, recycled from an educational film, become increasingly abstract as the audio transforms into an incantation.

Reckless Eyeballing

2004 / 16mm / b&w / 14m

Courtesy of Canyon Cinema

Taking its name from the Jim Crow-era, this hand-processed, optically-printed amalgam reframes desire by way of everything from D.W. Griffith to Foxy Brown and Angela Davis: "Your lover belongs to this band of murderous outlaws."

Help Police Your Neighborhood

1984 / 16mm / color / 15m

VSW Film/Video Collection

Fat Albert and the Cosby Kids learn to keep their eyes alert. Shows how young people can help the police and keep their neighborhood safer.

Defense Against Invasion

1943 / 16mm / color / 10m

VSW Film/Video Collection

Animated cartoon explains how vaccination makes the body immune to certain diseases.

Speaking In Tongues: Take 1

2024 / 16mm to DV / b&w / 15m

Courtesy of Christopher Harris

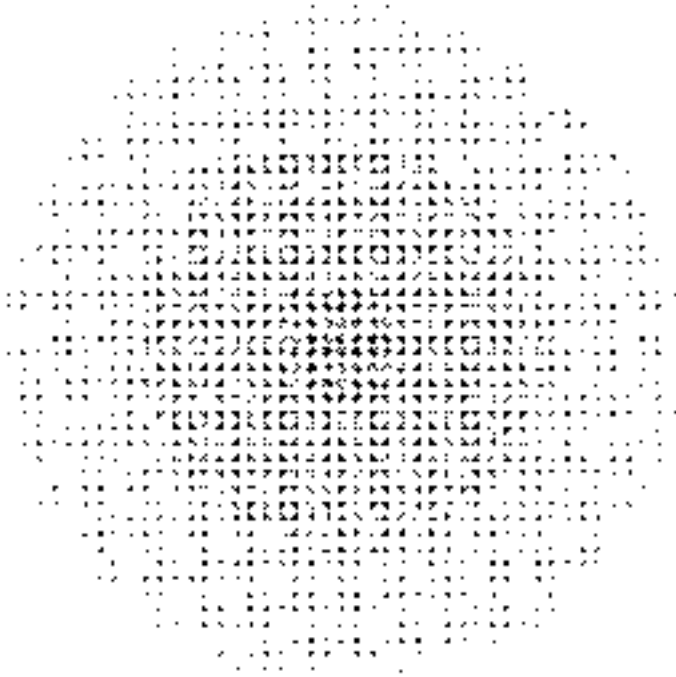
A film about Black ecstasy and the carceral forces arrayed against it.

A Slave story: Running a Thousand Miles to Freedom (Part 1)

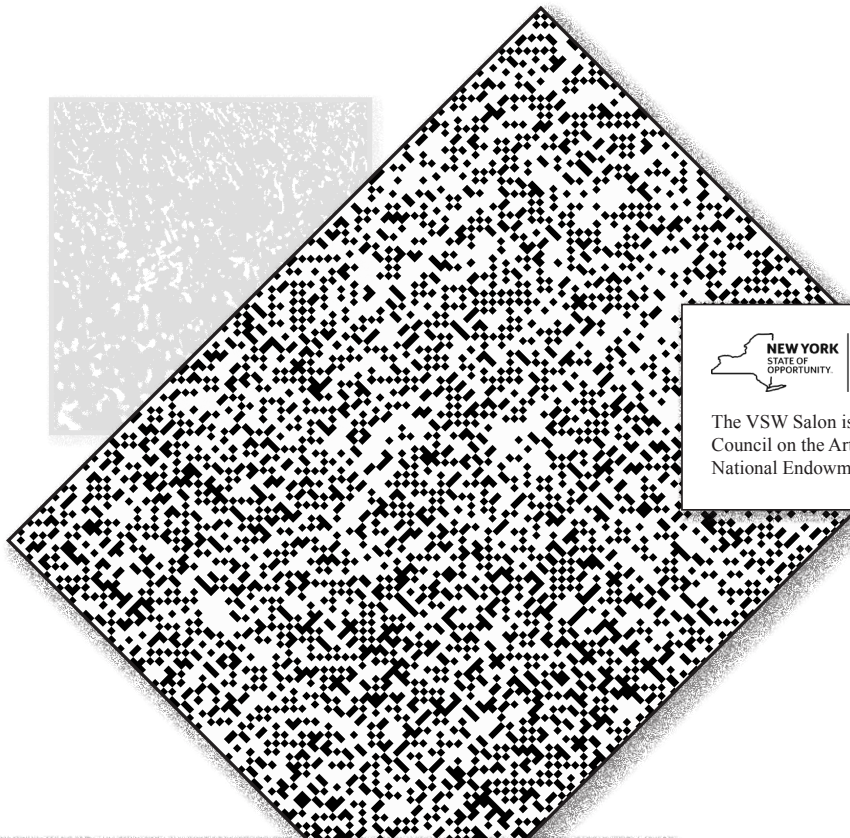
2025 / 35mm filmstrip / color / 20m

A live performance by Christopher Harris, utilizing educational classroom filmstrip materials from the VSW archives. Projected in 35mm filmstrip with digital sound.

Cover: Still from *Reckless Eyeballing* (2004)



Visual Studies Workshop nurtures experimental and expansive approaches to photography and media arts, and builds community among artists and the public through exhibitions, publications and residencies. VSW envisions a society that values the human need to create and share ideas.



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