

Arif Smith

Education

- 2014 Northwestern University, Evanston, IL
Graduate Program in Performance Studies
- 2004 Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK
Graduate Program in Sociology
- 2002 BA, Psychology, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK
Certificate in Africana Studies

Selected Professional Experience

- 2026 – Present Director of Programming, Community Ventures, Old Town School, of Folk Music, Chicago, IL
- 2018 – 2025 Program Manager, [Music Moves](#), Old Town School of Folk Music, Chicago, IL
- 2018 – Present Research Associate, Keller Science Action Center, Field Museum, Chicago, IL
- 2019 – 2020 Artist-in-Residence, Dance Department, Williams College, Williamstown, MA
- 2017 – 2018 [Artist-in-Residence](#), Arts + Public Life and Center for Race, Politics, and Culture, University of Chicago, Chicago, IL
- 2016 – 2018 Program Manager, Changing Worlds, Chicago, IL
- 2010 – 2013 Education Services Coordinator, Public Strategies, Oklahoma City, OK
- 2008 – 2010 Assistant Director, Multicultural Center, Williams College, Williamstown, MA
- 2006 – 2008 Campus Life Coordinator for Multicultural Advising and Programming, Office of Campus Life, Williams College, Williamstown, MA

Selected Exhibitions and Presentations

- 2026 Artist, Lakansyél, Instigation Festival, New Orleans, LA
- 2025 Artist, Tengo Lincoln Park en me corazón, DePaul Art Museum, Chicago, IL
- 2022 Artist, All That Light: AIRS Ten Year Retrospective, Reva and David Logan Center for the Arts, Chicago, IL
- 2021 Artist, Earth and the Alter, DuSable Black History Museum and Education Center, Chicago, IL
- 2021 Artist, Asterisks in the Grand Narrative of History, Longwood Center for the Arts, Farmville, VA
- 2020 Artist, Artists Run Chicago II, Hyde Park Art Center, Chicago, IL
- 2019 Producer and Artist, TUTU: Honoring Truth and Healing through the Saints, Green Line Performing Arts Center, University of Chicago, Chicago, IL
- 2018 Artist, Carrying A Place Called Home Exhibition, Arts Incubator, University of Chicago, Chicago, IL

- 2017 Artist, [Petty Biennial Exhibition](#), Arts Incubator, University of Chicago, Chicago, IL
- 2016 Discussant, Transnational Latino Conference: Arts Advocacy and Activism, DePaul University, Chicago, IL
- 2016 Discussant, Our Duty to Fight Exhibition, Gallery 400, University of Illinois, Chicago, IL
- 2015 Producer, [Candela](#) with Brenda Torres-Figueroa and Bomba con Buva, Chicago, IL
- 2014 Musician, Tamboula Ethnic Dance Company, Vodou: Sacred Powers of Haiti Exhibition, Field Museum, Chicago, IL
- 2014 Solo Performance, [Frog Belly: A Choreo-story of Marronage](#), Northwestern University, Evanston, IL
- 2014 Presenter, Roots and Routes: Afro-Latinidad in Motion Symposium, Columbia College, Chicago, IL
- 2014 Presenter, Dancing the African Diaspora Conference, Duke University, Durham, NC
- 2014 Presenter, The Black Body as Archive Symposium, Northwestern University, Evanston, IL
- 2010 Moderator, Performance Politics: New Oceania, Dance, and Resistance with Neil Ieremia and Black Grace, Williams College, Williamstown, MA
- 2009 Musician, Cleo Parker Robinson Dance, 100th Anniversary Celebration of Katherine Dunham, Williams College, Williamstown, MA
- 2008 Choreographer and Artist, Danza Carnival with Danys “La Mora” Perez, Williams College, Williamstown, MA

Selected Nonprofit Leadership

- 2014 – 2016 Producer, Chicago Home Theater Festival, Chicago, IL
- 2013 – 2015 Board of Directors, SixTwelve, Oklahoma City, OK
- 2011 – 2012 IdeaLab Committee, Individual Artists of Oklahoma, Oklahoma City, OK
- 2010 – 2013 Artistic Director, Urban Roots, Oklahoma City, OK
- 2008 – 2009 Executive Committee, State of The Black World Conference, New Orleans, LA

Selected Exhibitions and Programs Curated

- 2016 Black + Brown Series, Rebuild Foundation, Chicago, IL
- 2013 Wanderlust by Eljuan Henderson, co-curated with Ebony Iman Dallas, Urban Roots, Oklahoma City, OK
- 2012 Curator, Idealab: Orange Balloon Installation with Amber Gulilat, Individual Artists of Oklahoma, Oklahoma City, OK
- 2012 Curator, History Bound Exhibition with Amber Gulilat, Urban Roots, Oklahoma City, OK
- 2011 Segmentation by Tiffany McKnight, Urban Roots, Oklahoma City, OK
- 2011 The Promised Land by Eyakem Gulilat, co-curated with Tiffany Barber, Urban Roots, Oklahoma City, OK

- 2010 [New Meanings: Afro-descendant Percussion Practices Symposium](#),
Williams College and Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art,
Williamstown and North Adams, MA
- 2010 Journey Woman by Helina Metaferia, Williams College, Williamstown, MA

Performance Ensembles

- 2025 – Present Founding Member and Co-Director, Los Médicos, Chicago, IL
- 2018 – Present Musician, Black Monument Ensemble, Chicago, IL
- 2015 – Present Musician and Co-Director, Iré Elese Abure, Chicago, IL
- 2013 – 2023 Musician, Bomba con Buya, Chicago, IL
- 2014 – 2015 Musician, Tamboula Ethnic Dance Company, Chicago, IL
- 2010 – 2013 Founder and Director, Grupo AfroCaribeño, Oklahoma City, OK
- 2006 – 2010 Musician and Dancer, Kusika, Williamstown, MA
- 2006 – 2010 Musician, Zambezi Marimba Band, Williamstown, MA
- 2006 – 2010 Director and Choreographer, Ritmo Latino, Williamstown, MA