

# EDI FRIDAYS

LEARNING ABOUT EACH OTHER — ONE FRIDAY AT A TIME



**Friday, April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

*Learning about each other...one Friday at a time*

# KNOWLEDGE

## DEFINITIONS

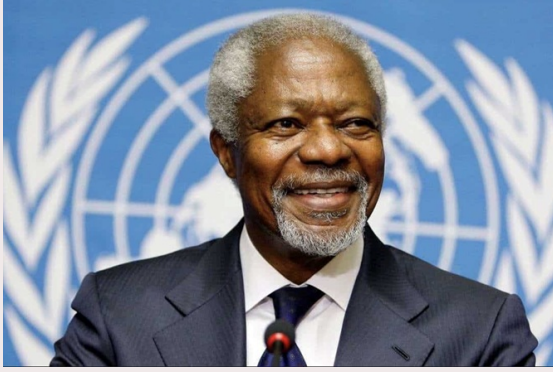
### CULTURE

---

**Culture** is the set of shared attitudes/values, customary beliefs, and social practices that characterizes a societal group (i.e., religious, racial, ethnic, etc.). The embrace of one's culture provides a stronger sense of belonging.

## QUOTES OF THE WEEK

**"People of different religions and cultures live side by side in almost every part of the world, and most of us have**



overlapping identities which unite us with very different groups. We can love what we are, without hating what—and who—we are not."

**Kofi Annan**

*Former Secretary-General of the United Nations*

[Biography](#)

---

"Culture is the arts elevated to a set of beliefs."

**Thomas Wolfe**

*Novelist*

[Biography](#)



# SPOTLIGHT

## Faculty/Staff Spotlight

**ASHAKI ROUFF**

(She/Her)

**Associate Professor | Earth & Environmental Sciences**

**Associate Director | [P3](#)**

**[Collaboratory](#)**



## Biography

**Hobbies:** Caribbean cooking, hiking, all sorts of puzzles (wordle and shaped jigsaws are favorites), curating.

---

"I do equity work because to solve complex environment problems we need scientists from all walks of life."

---

"Equity work is essential to me because everyone should have access to the resources and opportunities to flourish and succeed."

---

## Student Spotlight

**DEVONNA BROCKMAN**  
(She/Her)

Senior, Mason Gross School  
of the Arts

**2023 Commencement Student Speaker**

Major | **Filmmaking**  
Hometown | **Kansas City, Kansas |  
suburbs of St. Louis | Chicago**  
Hobbies | **Poetry, singing,  
modeling/fashion, writing**



"Fighting for social and racial equity is important to me because studying the needs of every individual person or group to best equip them with what will lead to their success is how we reach justice."

---

"As someone who is a woman, black, and has a chronic disease, I am very passionate about equity because of my intersectionality and want to fight for everyone like me to receive the specific resources that will help them to thrive."

---

"The acknowledgement, understanding and embracing of our differences leads to the realization of injustice that sparks the desire to create an equitable world."

If we all develop empathy, we are a step closer to achieving equity."

---



## Artist Spotlight

**SHAWN SNYDER**

(He/Him)

*Assistant Professor, Filmmaking*  
Mason Gross School of the Arts  
Rutgers University

[Website](#)

### ***Why did you want to be a filmmaker?***

"Growing up, my mother encouraged me to live my dreams and my father was a lover of films. But during my 20s, I traveled the country performing as a singer-songwriter before I went to grad school."

"I like the collaborative process of filmmaking. It also always forces me to process my feelings. I was a Religion major in undergrad (Harvard University), so existential questions come natural to me."

### ***Tell us about To Dust.***

"I received a grant from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation. They fund projects where science and the arts intersect. Due to the loss of my mother, I was obsessively thinking about her death and body. I was curious about how people find meaning in their tragic losses."

[Trailer](#).

### ***What was it like to work with Matthew Broderick?***

"He was very supportive and professional. And so was Géza Röhrig. I was the least experienced in the room, so I had to focus – one foot in front of the other. But I was enthralled. I felt privileged and joy and lucky all at once. It's rare."



Matthew Broderick and Professor Snyder appear on the PBS show "Amanpour & Co".

### ***How did the Jewish community react to the film?***

"I wasn't sure how *To Dust* would land on Jewish community. There's no Jewish monolith. Audiences were definitely passionate about the film, not just its content but the way it's told using comedy to deal with darkness. The movie I wrote is Jewish in its DNA, but I could not anticipate the response."



### ***How does your identity inform your work?***

"My Jewish identity frequently informs the way I approach storytelling, even when the content isn't explicitly Jewish. I always lean towards a

dialectic of answering questions with more questions, a certain brand of humanism informed by my Jewish upbringing and a spiritual use of comedy to shine light into dark places."

### ***What's next?***

"My next film project I'm just directing, so I didn't write it. I'm not an ego-driven director so this is really filling my desire for collaboration. And we're working on a TV pilot based on my experiences traveling the country playing gigs. Each episode will be in a different town. It's in the early stages of development."



# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## **2023 Rutgers Diversity/Equity/Inclusion Climate Survey**

[Link to survey](#)

Direct questions about the survey to [support@srsrv.com](mailto:support@srsrv.com) or 734-527-2199

---

## **MGSA Inclusive Community Award**

Now accepting nominations - Deadline: May 1, 2023

*Given annually to a Mason Gross faculty or staff member who has had an extraordinary impact in fostering a diverse, inclusive, and equitable environment for our school.*

[See here for instructions.](#)

---

## **Commissioning Competition for New Brunswick Chamber Orchestra**

Apply now! - Deadline: May 15, 2023

*The Composers Guild of New Jersey announces a commissioning opportunity for New Jersey composers to write a new 5-7 minute piece.*

[More info.](#)

---

## **2023 Newark Arts Festival: Celebrating Cross-Cultural Perspectives and Hip Hop's 50th Anniversary**

Deadline: June 1, 2023

*Calls for visual artists, artist collectives, performing arts proposals, and more.*

[More info.](#)

---

### **MGSA Inclusive Teaching Grants**

Now accepting applications - Deadline: June 1, 2023

*Mason Gross faculty are invited to apply for up to \$2,500 to revise their courses to reflect the values of equity, diversity, and inclusion.*

[See here for instructions.](#)

---

### **2023 Folk and Traditional Arts Grants**

Deadline: June 6, 2023

*Grants for artists for community-based projects.*

[More info.](#)



## **FOR THE NEXT 30 DAYS**

### **"The Trans Nineteenth Century" Symposium**

*Friday, April 28, 2023, from 10:00am-5:00pm*

*Location: Center for Social Justice Education*

[More info](#)

---

### **Pride Shabbat with Rutgers Hillel**

*Friday, April 28, 2023, from 7:00-10:00pm*

*Location: Rutgers Hillel - 70 College Avenue*

[More info](#)

---

### **Rainbow Graduation 2023**

*Wednesday, May 3, 2023, from 5:00-8:00pm*

*Location: College Avenue Student Center*

[More info](#)

---

**Access Thursdays**  
**Prioritizing Accessibility in Small Arts Organizations**

*Thursday, May 4, 2023, from 10:30am-12:00pm*

*Location: virtual*

[More info.](#)

---

**Bernard Fein Scholarship Walk**

*Saturday, May 6, 2023, from 9:30-11:00am*

*Location: Lucy Stone Hall - Livingston Campus*

[More info](#)

---

**Creating Change Symposium 2023**  
**"Collective Liberation for the NJ Arts Community"**

*Wednesday, May 10, 2023, from 9:30am-5:00pm*

*Location: Count Basie Theater (Red Bank, NJ)*

[More info](#)

---

**Rites of Passage Ceremony**

*Wednesday, May 10, 2023, from 3:00pm-5:00pm*

*Location: Jersey Mike's Arena*

[More info](#)

---

**Equity Fundamentals**

*Wednesday, May 17, 2023, from 12:00-2:00pm*

*Location: virtual*

[More info](#)