

The Africa Multiple Cluster Gender and Diversity Office
presents an ICDL Lecture by

Dr. Stella Nyanzi (PhD)



Discussant:
Dr. des. Linda Besigiroha
Deputy GDO,
Africa Multiple Cluster
University of Bayreuth

Rethinking Queer Africa As A Dynamically Productive Locus of Knowledge Production

Given the stated (academic and political) objectives of the Intersectional and Critical Diversity Literacy (ICDL) lecture and workshop series that is a core component of the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence, my aim of this paper is to explore how the germane interdisciplinary field of Queer African Studies/ African Queer Studies can consciously be harnessed in the broader program of “Reconfiguring Africa Studies: Doing African Studies with African Scholars.”

Positioning myself as

- (1) a Ugandan medical anthropologist trained in both Uganda and the United Kingdom with funding from the United States of America,
- (2) as a radical queer feminist activist with a track record of resistance praxis and theorizing in East Africa, West Africa and South Africa,
- (3) as a dissident artist specializing mainly in poetry as a genre that I perform publicly and publish both online on my social media spaces as well as in books, magazines and literary journals, and
- (4) as a politician actively located in the opposition political party called Forum for Democratic Change in Uganda, I reflect on the historical silences, current silencing and prognoses of un-silencing of the interactions between queerness and Africanness.

After smashing the silences confounding the intersections within Queer Africa/ African Queerness, I analytically explore the profound productive possibilities of building confidence in this field as an academic, activist, artistic and agitational politics project. Engagement with my ideas will hopefully offer an invitation to members of the Cluster to venture (more) purposefully into the largely untapped frontier of Queer Africa.

Chaired by:

Dr. Christine Vogt-William
Director of the Gender and Diversity Office
Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence, UBT Germany

Thursday, 21 July 2022
2 – 4 PM

Cluster Knowledge Lab
Room S 135, NW II,
University of Bayreuth, Germany

This is a hybrid event:

[https://uni-bayreuth.zoom.us/j/68396130569?pwd=K2500G9IS3F30X](https://uni-bayreuth.zoom.us/j/68396130569?pwd=K2500G9IS3F30XVrdUFBL2UzUIFSZz09)

[VrdUFBL2UzUIFSZz09](https://uni-bayreuth.zoom.us/j/68396130569?pwd=K2500G9IS3F30XVrdUFBL2UzUIFSZz09)

Meeting ID: 683 9613 0569

Passcode: 897688



Stella Nyanzi
Scholar of Writers-in-Exile
Program,
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Unconventional, anti-establishment, and a feminist activist against gender oppression and patriarchy, Stella Nyanzi wears many hats. She advocates for human rights, gender justice and queer rights. She is also an opposition politician in Uganda.

Nyanzi holds a Bachelor of Arts in Mass Communication and Literature from Makerere University (1993-1996) and a Master of Science in Medical Anthropology from University College London (1999-2000). She completed her PhD in Anthropology from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine in 2008. Her widely cited research centres social anthropology, sexuality, youth and health policy, and she was one of the first scholars to publish research on African homosexuality. As a poet, she regards writing to be her greatest weapon against the oppressive order.

Nyanzi is both revered and despised in Uganda and abroad for her activist style of 'radical rudeness'. She has been incarcerated by the Ugandan government for, in her words, daring to "poke the leopard's anus", a phrase that has made it into colloquial Ugandan speech to mean criticising the over-30-years oppressive rule of President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni. In fact, she uses the phrase 'back at' Museveni, whom she has described as a complex mix of clever wit and brute killer (in Alice McCool, 2020).

In 2020, Nyanzi was honoured with the PEN International Award for Freedom of Expression. Fearing for her life and that of her children after continuous threat, Nyanzi sought political asylum in Kenya in January 2021. On 01 February 2022, the news of Stella Nyanzi's acceptance of the German PEN Writer's-in-Exile fellowship was officially announced in a PEN press release.

Stella Nyanzi reflected on Twitter: "Today, I start my Writers-in-Exile scholarship with @PEN_Deutschland. While grateful to be in Germany with my 3 children, I am also painfully aware of rising repression, abduction, torture during interrogation, and unjust criminalization of writers critical of dictator Museveni" (@drstellanyanzi, Twitter, 02.February 2022).