

The UCSB Department of Religious Studies Colloquium Series Presents

## *Transcorporeality in Black Atlantic Religions*

Roberto Strongman



Wednesday, February 28 / 4:00 pm / 3041 Humanities and Social Sciences Building

This talk will explore transcorporeality as the distinctive Afro-Diasporic cultural representation of the human psyche as multiple, removable, and external to the body that functions as its receptacle. This unique view of the body, which is preserved in African religious traditions on both sides of the Atlantic, allows the re-gendering of the bodies of initiates who are mounted and ridden by deities of a gender different than their own during the ritual ecstasy of trance possession. Drawing on novels, paintings, films, and interviews, Strongman will interpret a representative collection of such transcendent moments in which the commingling of the human and the divine produces subjectivities whose genders are unconstrained by biological sex due to the flexibility that this non-Cartesian corporeal model affords.

Roberto Strongman is Associate Professor of Black Studies at UCSB. His research interests focus on comparative Caribbean cultural studies from an interdisciplinary perspective that encompasses the fields of religion, history, and sexuality. His new book, *Black Atlantic Transcorporeality: Queering Black Atlantic Religions*, will be published by Duke University Press in 2019.

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