

# liquid blackness

*journal of aesthetics and black studies*

## CFP – “META+PHYSICS OF BLACK ARTMAKING”

***liquid blackness: journal of aesthetics and black studies* 10, no. 1, Spring 2026**

**Submissions due January 15, 2025**

The meta-physical, spiritual, and transcendental impulse in black sound, art, film, and visual culture has been an ongoing preoccupation of *liquid blackness* founding member Michele Prettyman and, in this issue, we return to some of her provocations to build on [our collective experience](#) of how it is embedded in the practice and praxis of some contemporary black artmakers. Despite unavoidable anxiety in deploying such an overdetermined term such as “metaphysics,” we also heed to Prettyman’s call to claim it for a spiritual dimension of black creative life that is seldom considered. Accordingly, here we offer an anagrammatical approach to the intersection between “physics” (but also materiality and technics) and what lies beyond.

In black artmaking – which comprises all creative and aesthetic endeavors—this meta-physical impulse has often to do with a comportment toward one’s legacy: for instance, the spiritual “DNA” (à la Kendrick) inherited from previous creative practices and the determination to carry it forward. It may describe familial and ancestral energies creatives call upon to chart self-determined paths and survive alienating industrial and institutional demands, or radical insights from the past that need to be heard again. It may manifest as a commitment to living within extra-institutional and extra-industrial networks of care, but at the same time, to act as if *that* lifeworld was the *whole* world.

We find it in Bradford Young’s search for the “God particle” through his creative engagement with archives of unattended black practice to understand the technique and craft of a masters of the past – Roy DeCarava, Teenie Harris, Nat Brown, among others—and his belief in the radical power of opticality, which brought him to invest in a non-extractive, democratic and collective research: a company for rehoused vintage lenses he co-founded with Neil Fanthom, called [Tribe7](#).

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We find it in Kya Lou’s attention to the “spiritual metadata” embedded in decayed images from previous creative practices passed down in her family. The colors that register the images’ histories have become the North Star for her calibration practice.

We hear it in Shawn Peters’ description of improvisational creative choices (“shooting from the chakra”) grounded in the memories of familial intimacy—including their specific lighting conditions—and his openness to the “love relation” that might emerge on set when creatives are invested in the collectivity of the creative process.

We hear it in Stefani Saintonge’s reflection on the doubleness of “servitude” when it is extracted by the industry vs. when it is freely given to one’s kin. “Serving” the difference between them is a way to trust one’s sensibility rather than technical knowledge.

We find it in the breath and depth of Jenn Nkiru’s “cosmic archeologies”—impossible archives and archives of the impossible—and her insistence that the work is “evidence of the living”: the expression of creative practices that “do not sit on top of the notes, but in between them, not quite on the beat, but a little drunker.”

We see it in Elissa Blount Moorhead’s articulation of a desire to be an “emanation of black culture,” and in what Greg Tate called her “patternmaking” gift: the community ties she believes are the energy that sustains creative work and the only way it can be truthful to the living of which it is the expression.

Overall, this issue is devoted to black artmaking practices that thrive on un-encodable dimensions of aesthetic sensibilities shared and passed on across generations. It is committed to excavating and re-activating, alongside them, the radicalism that they carry forward and to understand the inspirations, motivations, knowledge, and life practices that sustain them.

We invite submissions to think expansively about the meta+physics of black artmaking from a variety of disciplinary formations, theoretical or practical inclinations, and modes of praxis that engage with, creatively respond to, as well as add to the following:

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- Spiritual metadata and other God particles
- Careful aesthetics/aesthetics of care
- DNAs, lineages, ensembles, tribes
- Inspirational and aspirational praxes
- Black intentionality/Intentional blackness
- Intuition and aesthetic knowledge
- Politics and economics of creative access
- Retooling/retro engineering/repurposing/rehousing
- Circles of creation/the insistence of creation

## **Submissions Due: January 15, 2025**

Please submit at: <https://mc04.manuscriptcentral.com/dup-lbk>

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## Author Guidelines & Submission Information

- Submission Types:
  - Traditional essays: approx. 3,000-5,000 words (including footnotes)—all essays should be accompanied by at least one image. (Please consider “fair use” of visual materials included, as you draft your piece and please consult previous journal issues for inspiration on how to be in dialog with visual materials)
  - We welcome submissions of interviews framed through an introduction to the artist/theorist that engages relevant scholarly literature and/or creative practice. Before submitting, please send your inquiries/proposals to [journalsubmissions@liquidblackness.com](mailto:journalsubmissions@liquidblackness.com)
  - Questions about the length, style, format of experimental submissions can be directed to [journalsubmissions@liquidblackness.com](mailto:journalsubmissions@liquidblackness.com)
- *liquid blackness* follows the formatting and reference guidelines stipulated by The Chicago Manual of Style
- All submissions, solicited and unsolicited, will be peer-reviewed
- Media Specifications

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- Media files such as video or sound clips, might be published as supplementary data. The following audio and video file types are acceptable as supplementary data files and supported by our online platform: .mp3, .mp4, .wav, .wma, .au, .m4a, .mpg, .mpeg, .mov, .avi, .wmv., html.
- Executable files (.exe) are not acceptable.
- There is no restriction on the number of files per article or on the size of files; however, please keep in mind that very large files may be problematic for readers with slow connection speeds.
- Please ensure that each video or audio clip is called out in the text of the article, much like how a figure or table is called out: e.g., “see supplementary audio file 1.”

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