

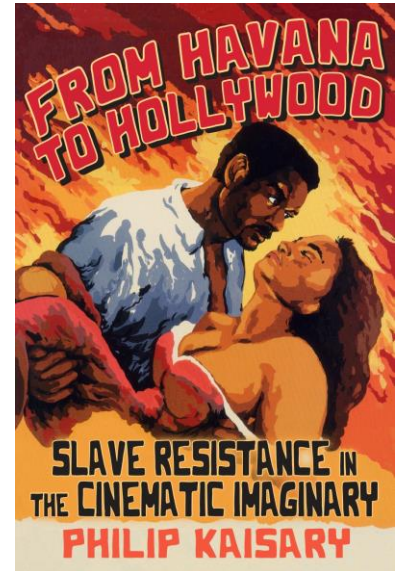
Thursday 14 March - 5:15pm

Room 204 - CLAS, Second Floor, Alison Richard Building

From Havana to Hollywood: Slave Resistance in the Cinematic Imaginary

[Philip Kaisary](#) (Carleton University)

From Havana to Hollywood: Slave Resistance in the Cinematic Imaginary examines the presence or absence of Black resistance to slavery in feature films produced in either Havana or Hollywood—including Gillo Pontecorvo's *Burn!*, neglected masterpieces by Cuban auteurs Tomás Gutiérrez Alea and Sergio Giral, and Steve McQueen's Oscar-winning *12 Years a Slave*. Drawing on Edward Said's argument for *worldliness* as a critical-ethical imperative, I argue that, with rare exceptions, the representation of Black agency in Hollywood has always been, and remains, taboo. Contrastingly, Cuban cinema foregrounds Black agency, challenging the ways in which slavery has been misremembered and misunderstood in North America and that have reckoned with slavery's inheritance is the question: how might the medium of film contribute to a renewal of emancipatory politics today.



Philip Kaisary is the 2023–25 Ruth and Mark Phillips Professor in Cultural Mediations and an Associate Professor in the Department of Law & Legal Studies, the Department of English Language and Literature, and the Institute for Comparative Studies in Literature, Art and Culture at Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada. He is the author of *The Haitian Revolution in the Literary Imagination: Radical Horizons, Conservative Constraints* (University of Virginia Press, 2014) and *From Havana to Hollywood: Slave Resistance in the Cinematic Imaginary* (SUNY Press, July 2024). His other writings have appeared in *Atlantic Studies*, *Law & Humanities*, *MELUS* (Multi-Ethnic Literature of the United

States), *PALARA* (Publication of the Afro-Latin/American Research Association), and *Slavery & Abolition*, as well as in peer-reviewed edited volumes including *ReFocus: The Films of Steve McQueen* (Edinburgh University Press, 2023), *Langston Hughes in Context* (Cambridge University Press, 2022), *Social Rights and the Politics of Obligation in History* (Cambridge University Press, 2022), *Racialized Visions: Haiti and the Hispanic Caribbean* (SUNY Press, 2020), and *Race and Nation in the Age of Emancipations* (University of Georgia Press, 2018). He is currently working on a new book project, titled *Worlding Law and Literature: A Materialist Critique and Reconstruction*. For further information on Philip's teaching and research activities, please see: <https://philipkaisary.net>.