

SAILESH NAIDU

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POET | PERFORMER | RESEARCHER | FILMMAKER

Sailesh Naidu is a researcher, filmmaker and writer whose work explores the relationship between the deeply personal and the deeply connected through ritual, communal expression and storytelling.

GRANTS / FELLOWSHIPS / WORK EXPERIENCE

2023-Present: Temple Bandits Productions, Founder

Founded a multimedia production company focused on telling stories for, by and with trans/non-binary creatives with a focus on people from the global majority. In development: *CLAWS* — short film in co-production with Joy Productions (UK), *I Don't Belong Here* — series, *Rebel* — feature film.

2022-Present: Olafur Eliasson Studio, DEI Coach

DEI Coach to Olafur Eliasson and the Studio senior management team while facilitating intersectionality focused workshops to the studio staff.

2022: Hundefreund Film

Created and produced a comedy-drama short film exploring the complexities of race, intimacy and queerness in Germany. World Premiere — British Film Institute Flare Film Festival, March 2022. US Premiere — Tribeca Film Festival, June 2022. Nominated: Deutsch KurzFilmPreise (German Oscar), November 2022.

2022: Asian Performing Artist Lab

"The Cracks In Your Heart Can Be A Map" is a poetry performance exploring the depths of queer intimacy: Debuted at the Berliner Ring Theatre, May 2022.

2021: Poetic Interventions - The Queering, Senatsverwaltung für Justiz, Verbraucherschutz und Antidiskriminierung

The fifth instalment of this queer voices archival project is an 8 week poetry and performance workshop for 5 queer BPoC participants that will culminate in a performance evening and the publication of a poetry book with their collected works.

2021: Unknown Objects - Newly Told Stories, Schwules Museum

Commission writing piece for objects that remain without a history in the Schwules Museum Archive. *"A Letter To Our Queer Ancestors Both Born, Unborn, and of Spirit"* is part of the Schwules Museum Online-Exhibition.

2021: Sinema Transtopia: Film Workshop Facilitator

Facilitated a workshop on *"Storytelling and Finding the Narrative Within You"* for prospective BPoC filmmakers as part of a 6 week workshop series.

2021: General Federal Ministry for Culture & Media — Short Film Funding

Awarded 30.000 Euros in film funding to produce *Hundefreund* a German language short film about the dynamics of race, intimacy, and queerness.

2021: Ancestral Body Noise Rituals of Rel(ease) - Oyoun

Wrote, produced and directed poetry short film *"The Body Was Never Meant to be an Archive"* [LINK HERE](#)

2021: Sonder-Stipendium der Senatsverwaltung für Kultur und Europa

Awarded 9.000 Euros in project funding to pursue artistic research and writing for poetry film making on the intersections of race and migration in Europe.

2020: "Mind What You Tell You Daughter"

Editor of a poetry book by Aindre Maame Fosua-Evans, a queer Ghanaian researcher, writer, and poet.

2020: Zebra Poetry Film Festival, Haus fur Poise, Berlin

Opening for Film Festival, *DIG* explores the living memory of ancestral stories in our life. [LINK HERE](#)

2020: Reisezuschüsse für Auslandsvorhaben Gefördert durch die Senatsverwaltung für Kultur und Europa des Landes Berlin

Travel and Funding grant to implement *"Poetic Interventions: The Queering"*, a queer poetry workshop in partnership with Goethe Institute Mumbai, India.

2020: EXPLR Media LTD.

Developed national multi-sector education strategy for implementation across private, public, and home-schooling networks for a digital learning platform on global education.

2019: Mercy Corps Nepal

Field research and assessment in Western Nepal of the largest food security program funded by USAID. Identified best practices and developed presentation packets with artistic team.

GRANTS / FELLOWSHIPS / WORK EXPERIENCE

2018: Girl Effect University(GEU)

Working with a team of graphic and development specialists designed an interactive five-day training on how to work with and engage adolescent girls in East Africa, South East Asia, The Middle East, and Latin America.

2016-2018: Alexander Von Humboldt Bundeskanzler Stipendiat (German Chancellor's Fellow)

Fully funded 18-month fellowship under the mentorship of the Bundeskanzler Office. Research focused on understanding how refugee youth were adapting to the Berlin school system.

2015-2016: New York City Department of Education, Director of Project Management Office of Academic Policy

Led project management team for the Academic Policy Office for a school district of 1.1 million students. Ensured all Department policy offices were able to meet their compliance needs with the Department of Internet Infrastructure and Technology.

2015: Open Society Foundation

Developed global level indicators for input into Education Sustainable Development Goals on education equity, education in emergencies, and social-emotional learning.

2014-2015: Nike Foundation

Working with stakeholders from UNFPA, UNICEF & DFID developed a 5-day training and capacity building workshop for working with and engaging adolescent girls in Ethiopia, Rwanda, and Nigeria. This included country visits and temporary postings.

2011-2014: International Rescue Committee

Oversaw development of large scale multidimensional support services for refugee youth in New York City. Managed schooling program with 100+ teachers and volunteers to ensure the safe psycho-social development of newly arrived refugee families

2008-2011: Mercy Corps

Developed and managed a global program for youth social activism and leadership. Planned and implemented field visits to Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, Indonesia, and Gaza/West Bank, Palestine.

2006-2008: New York City Teaching Fellow, Secondary School Teacher

Taught English as an Other Language to Students with Interrupted Formal Education at Herbert Lehman High School, New York.

NEWS MEDIA / PUBLICATIONS

- 2022 *„Hundefreund“: Warum Dating in Berlin für Nicht-Weiße anders ist*. **Berliner Zeitung** [publication]
- 2022 *“Hundefreund at BFI Flare puts Germany’s microaggressions under the microscope”*. **gal-dem** [publication]
- 2021 *“Pushing Paper, Paper Spirit”*. **Oyouiverse** [interview]
- 2021 *“Moonlight Tapes with Sailesh Naidu”*. **Bel Ami Radio** [interview]
- 2020 *“Archiving Queer Lives Through Poetry”*. **The Hindu** [media]
- 2020 *“Rassismus Wir Sind Hier”* poem. **Die Zeit** [publication]
- 2020 *“American History”* poem. **Verse of Silence** [publication]
- 2020 *“Pen, Poem, and Personhood”*. **Business Line India** [media]
- 2019 *“Interview with Artist Luiza Prado, Transmediale”*. **Siegessäule** [publication]
- 2019 *“Sex, Intimacy, and Healing From Childhood Trauma”*. **Coven Magazine** [publication]
- 2018 *“An Open Letter to the Woman Who Asked Me If I Were Out To My Family in the Coat Check Line of Berghain”*. **Daddy Magazine** [publication]
- 2018 *“Shortly After 9/11”*. **Daddy Magazine** [publication]
- 2015 *“Capturing Quality, Equity, and Sustainability”*. **Open Society Foundation** [publication]
- 2012 *“6 Weeks to Adapt to America”* [multimedia]. **New York Times** [media]
- 2012 *“International Rescue Committee in NY Helps Youngest Refugees”*. **PBS Metrofocus** [media]
- 2009 *Leadership Summit Inspires Teens to Become Activists*. **Voice of America News Podcast** [media]

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PERFORMANCES / LECTURES / WORKSHOPS

- 2022** Urania Berlin: *Narratives of Transformation*; Screening of *Hundefreund* with panel discussion [LINK HERE](#)
- 2022** Gropius Bau: *On Caring, Repairing & Healing*; Screening of *Heundefreund* with panel discussion [LINK HERE](#)
- 2021** Literaturhaus Berlin 'Happy in Berlin- Then and Now?' Panel discussion and performance as part of a retrospective on queer writers in Berlin featuring works by Virginia Woolf, Christopher Isherwood among others.
- 2021** *Dear White People Symposium*: Conference on Intersectionality, Panelist on the of top of Queerness and The Post-Colonial Perspectives, Freiburg, Germany
- 2021** *Ancestral Body Noise Rituals of Rel(ease)* Closing Ceremony Premier of poetry film *Become*
- 2020** XPOSED Queer Film Festival Finalist: Finalist for funding to present "Hundefreund" a queer film about interracial dating
- 2020** *Blood of Poet*: Berlin Performance on Volksbühne main stage
- 2020** BIPOC Film Society Poetry Film Festival: Screening of *DIG*, panel discussion, and performance
- 2019** Gallery Am Wedding, Poetry Exhibition and Performance, Berlin, Germany
- 2019** Athens Queer Literary Festival Featured Poet and Performer in Athens, Greece
- 2018** Lizard Lounge: Boston, Massachusetts Featured poet at the historic Boston Poetry Institution
- 2018** Brooklyn Queer Comedy Festival: Headline comedian for the third annual queer comedy festival in Brooklyn, NYC.
- 2018** *Issa Comedy Show* Vol. 1-6: Comedian and producer for the city's largest comedy show in Berlin, Germany
- 2017** Round Table Participant at European Conference on the Contribution of Civil Society to the Integration of Refugees in Europe "Europe at the Crossroads" The Global Conference on Children" in Berlin, Germany
- 2017** Guest Lecturer at Humboldt University The European Context for Refugee/Asylum- A Path Towards Inclusive Development in Berlin, Germany
- 2016** Panelist- "Cultural Diversity and Discourse of Values – Civic Education in the Migration Society, DRA" Deutsch-Russischer Austausch e.V., Berlin, Germany
- 2016** Presenter- Social Innovation for Refugee Inclusion: Maintaining Momentum and Creating Lasting Change- European Economic and Social Commission, Brussels, Belgium
- 2014** Oversaw and designed content for a weeklong workshop on adolescent girl program design for 40+ participants in the Alliance to End Child Marriage in Bahir Dar, Ethiopia
- 2014** Developed curriculum and content strategy for a week-long workshop on adolescent girl program design with a focus on institutional program planning for 20+ organizations in Gisenyi, Rwanda
- 2014** Oversaw content creation and implementation of a one-day workshop with DFID Rwanda on FY15 program planning to include adolescent girl data indicators in Kigali, Rwanda
- 2011** Presenter at Harvard Graduate School of Education–International Education Policy Conference, The Importance of Global Citizenship Education
- 2010** Speaker at Oxfam Action to End Hunger Conference on Climate Change, Youth Action in the Fight Against Climate Change with Oxfam International

EDUCATION

Master of Science in Education, Literacy
City University of New York

Thesis: *The Use of Freirean Pedagogy of the Oppressed in Developing International Standards For Critical Literacy*

Bachelor of Arts, Political Science
Seton Hall University, Magna Cum Laude

German Proficiency: B1

CERTIFICATES

Reiki Master Certified
Mikao Usui Method Level III

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