Stanford



Robin Balliger

Lecturer, Anthropology

Curriculum Vitae available Online

Bio

BIO

Robin Balliger earned her PhD in anthropology at Stanford University and currently serves as Lecturer in the Anthropology Department. She was Associate Professor and Chair of “Art, Place, and Public Studies” at San Francisco Art Institute for over twenty years (until SFAI closed in 2022). Balliger’s current project is on the City of Oakland, particularly on arts, culture, and racial politics in the context of urban restructuring. In 2019 she was invited to present her research on precarity at the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology in Germany and subsequently published articles in Art and Gentrification in a Changing Neoliberal Landscape and Journal of Urban Cultural Studies (2021). Balliger previously conducted extensive research in Trinidad on popular music, media expansion, and identity formation in national/transnational space, work described by scholars as “pioneering” in music and sound studies. She received fellowships from Fulbright, MacArthur Foundation, National Science Foundation, Wenner Gren, Mellon Foundation, she was awarded the Textor Award for Outstanding Anthropological Creativity, and students have honored her with teaching awards. Earlier publications appear in The Global Resistance Reader, Trinidad Carnival: The Cultural Politics of a Transnational Festival, Media Fields Journal, and Race, Poverty, and the Environment. Prior to graduate school, Balliger was a musician, activist, and co-founder of Komotion International, a legendary artist collective, gallery, and performance space that exemplified the radical politics and creativity of San Francisco’s Mission District.

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

- Lecturer, Anthropology

PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

- BA, University of California, Berkeley , Music
- PhD, Stanford University , Anthropology (2001)

Research & Scholarship

CURRENT RESEARCH AND SCHOLARLY INTERESTS

Robin Balliger’s current project is on the City of Oakland, particularly on arts, culture, and racial politics in the context of urban restructuring. This long-term ethnographic project focuses on lived experiences of disinvestment, gentrification, precarity, policing, and mutual aid in the 21st century, and how these urban processes articulate with the production of space through public art and creative practices. Balliger previously conducted extensive research in Trinidad on popular music, media expansion, and identity formation in national/transnational space, work described by scholars as “pioneering" in music and sound studies.

Teaching

COURSES

2026-27

- Method and Evidence in Anthropology: ANTHRO 91 (Aut)

2025-26

- Policing and Incarceration in Anthropological Perspective: ANTHRO 189 (Aut)

2024-25

- Urban Culture in Global Perspective: ANTHRO 126, URBANST 114 (Aut)

2023-24

- Theory of Cultural and Social Anthropology: ANTHRO 90B (Aut)

Publications

PUBLICATIONS

- **Painting over Precarity: Community Public Art and the Optics of Dispossession, Gentrification, and Governance in West Oakland, CA** *Journal of Urban Cultural Studies*
  Balliger, R.
  2021; 8 (1): 81-107
- **Proximal Disruptions: Artists, Arts-Led Urban Regeneration and Gentrification in Oakland, California** *Art and Gentrification in the Changing Neoliberal Landscape*
  Balliger, R.
  Routledge.2021: 39-56
- **Mediating the Local: Radio and the Neoliberal Cultural Economy of Space in Trinidad** *Media Fields Journal*
  Balliger, R.
  2012; 4