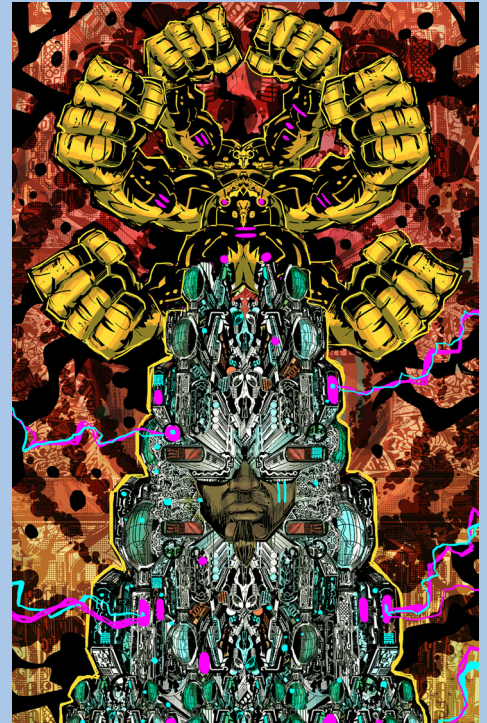


“John Jennings: The Cipher Back To Here”

Friday, Oct. 12, 12-1 pm, The Cohen Center (Madison Hall 4000)

In Hip Hop culture, a cipher is the name of a circle of freestyle rappers who are playing their skills against each other's in a battle: it is a key way in which freestyle rappers distinguish themselves as artists while also insisting on the communal nature of what they do. For graphic artist John Jennings, his work began at JMU, with his career changing series *Matterz of the Fact* which he executed as a Diversity Scholar in Residence over a decade ago.

In “The Cipher Back to Here,” Jennings will muse on his path as a designer, educator, and media scholar and his future projects, and how he hopes to provide guidance for future critical makers. The session will also provide attendees the opportunity to participate in a Q and A with Jennings about working in the graphic arts field.



John Jennings is a Professor of Media and Cultural Studies at the University of California at Riverside. Jennings is co-editor of the Eisner Award winning collection *The Blacker the Ink: Constructions of Black Identity in Comics and Sequential Art*. Jennings is also a 2016 Nasir Jones Hip Hop Studies Fellow with the Hutchins Center at Harvard University. Jennings' current projects include the horror anthology *Box of Bones*, the coffee table book *Black Comix Returns* (with Damian Duffy), and the award-winning New York Times best-selling graphic novel adaptation of Octavia Butler's classic dark fantasy novel *Kindred*.

John Jennings's visit is sponsored by the Department of English, JMU Libraries, Graphic Design, the Office of Access and Inclusion, the College of Arts and Letters, Cross Disciplinary Studies, Justice Studies, and the Cohen Center for the Humanities.



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