

# Surrealism: A Scattershot of Anticolonial Thought



Art by Wifredo Lam, *La jungla* (The Jungle) 1942-43

Jean-Paul Sartre once wrote “something almost happened” in the interwar years before war and fascism shattered everything. This talk reconstructs what almost happened by examining the byways that psychoanalysis opened up for anticolonialism in the 1930s-40s, from Surrealist poetry and painting to Négritude and structural anthropology. These experiments pointed to a “new humanism” anchored in the global periphery that was overshadowed by decolonization’s subsequent failures.

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Thursday,  
**September 25, 2025**

5:00PM to 6:30PM

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In-Person & via Zoom

**The Rifkind Center**

NAC 6/316

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SCAN TO JOIN VIA ZOOM



## Kevin Duong

Associate Professor, University of Virginia

Kevin Duong teaches modern intellectual history and political thought at the University of Virginia. He is the author of *The Virtues of Violence: Democracy Against Disintegration in Modern France* as well as many articles on revolutionary theory and political culture in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. His talk comes from a work-in-progress titled: *Freud against Empire: an Experimental History*.