

Finzi-Contini Lecture

# RACE

THE FANTASY OF

Yale / Fall 2021

# OFF:

RACE TRANSFORMATION

## Namwali Serpell

Winner of the Windham-Campbell Prize for fiction, Namwali Serpell (Harvard) is the author of the novel *The Old Drift*. Her book of essays, *Stranger Faces* (2020), was a finalist for a National Book Critics Circle Award for Criticism.

Thursday, September 23

5:00 ET / Zoom webinar

REGISTRATION LINK:

[https://yale.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_DJfUeI0ITW2S4T8Bp7PsEg](https://yale.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_DJfUeI0ITW2S4T8Bp7PsEg)

What if you could change your race? How do race fakers change their skin color, their hair texture, their voice? And why? Is it minstrelsy? Is it racial self-hatred, white guilt, the fetishism of others? From “passing” to cross-racial reportage to speculative fiction, the fantasy of changing your race cuts an electric line—thrilling, dangerous, illuminating—through the popular imagination. “Race Off” tracks this obsession with “switching” from black to white or vice versa in American texts from the nineteenth century to the present.



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The Finzi-Contini Lectureship honors Bianca M. Finzi-Contini Calabresi, a scholar of European literature and a native of Ferrara who left fascist Italy for the United States.

The lectureship was founded by her sons, the Honorable Guido Calabresi, Judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, and the late Dr. Paul Calabresi.

The event is cosponsored by *The Yale Review*.