

IN COMMON

NOV 30 DEC 2, 2023

SYMPOSIUM

ROMARE BEARDEN
AND NEW
APPROACHES TO
ART, RACE
AND ECONOMY

WELCOME

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Political Economy, The New School
Romare Bearden Foundation
Vera List Center For Art And Politics,
The New School
Institute Of Jazz Studies,
Rutgers University Newark

SYMPOSIUM

SYMPOSIUM

The New School is proud to present the symposium *In Common: Romare Bearden and New Approaches to Art, Race and Economy*, situated within the companion, three month long art exhibition *In Common: New Approaches with Romare Bearden*. We are grateful to our generous partners and donors for making this exciting program possible. This is a time of great need for innovation in policy and practice focused on social investments in multicultural communities and creative culture. We also want to thank the program's organizing collaborative, led by The New School based Institute on Race, Power and Political Economy with the Vera List Center for

Art and Politics, as well as the Romare Bearden Foundation and Rutgers University Newark's Institute of Jazz Studies. At The New School, supporters include the Office of the Provost, the Schools of Public Engagement, Parsons School of Design, the Anna Maria and Stephen Kellen Gallery, and the College of the Performing Arts. These times call for enhanced efforts to resist the worst of human impulses. Contemporary artists, creative culture workers, and the increasingly multicultural drivers of their products are uniquely situated to show us a better way forward. *In Common* is our response and our call to action.

Donna E. Shalala,
Interim President,
The New School

SYMPOSIUM

Michael Aghahowa
 Dwight Andrews
 Roc o Aranda Alvarado
 Aisha Benson
 Black Quantum Futurism
 Johanne Bryant Reid
 Terri Lyne Carrington
 C. Daniel Dawson
 Natalie Diaz
 Asali Devan Ecclesiastes
 Adrienne Edwards
 Nicole Fleetwood
 Darrick Hamilton
 Stefon Harris
 Diedra Harris Kelley
 Angie Kim
 Maurine Knighton

Carin Kuoni
 Jessica Lynne
 Robert G. OíMeally
 Evangeline Ordaz
 Eriola Pira
 Henry A. J. Ramos
 Mary Schmidt Campbell
 fayemi shakur
 Radhika Subramaniam
 Salamishah Tillet
 Eddie Torres
 Yvonne Watson
 Jordan Weber
 Charisse Pearlina Weston
 Ren e T. White
 Calvin Williams
 H. Sharif Williams
 Wayne Winborne

SPEAKERS

DAY 1
 THUR, NOV 30, THE AUDITORIUM
 AT 66 WEST 12TH STREET

DAY 2
 FRI, DEC 1,
 STARR FOUNDATION HALL

5PM
 Reception, Wollman Hall
 Hors d'oeuvres and drinks

8:30AM
 Continental Breakfast

6:00PM 6:15PM
 Welcome, Event Overview, and Kick Off Program
 *Darrick Hamilton, University Professor, Henry Cohen Professor of Economics and Urban Policy; Founding Director, Institute on Race, Power and Political Economy, The New School, New York
 *Henry A. J. Ramos, Senior Fellow, Institute on Race, Power and Political Economy, The New School, New York

10:00AM 11:00AM
 Day 2, Opening Plenary: The Artist as Activist
 *Mary Schmidt Campbell, PhD, Bearden scholar and former president, Spelman College, New York
 *Introduction: Johanne Bryant Reid, Co Director, Romare Bearden Foundation, New York
Romare Bearden scholar Mary Schmidt Campbell will examine the role of Bearden and his late twentieth century BIPOC contemporaries in advocating for notions of racial and economic justice in their day and will reflect on the current imperatives facing BIPOC artists and creatives.

6:15PM 6:35PM
 Greetings and Context
 *Dr. Ren e T. White, Provost and Executive Vice President, The New School
 *Introduction: Carin Kuoni, Senior Director/Chief Curator, Vera List Center for Art and Politics, The New School
Dr. White will speak to The New School's long history of supporting creative culture leaders of color and the importance of that work for the health and vitality of our democracy, civic culture, and economy.

11:00AM 12:15PM
 Day 2, Panel 1: The Case for a More Engaged Creative Community
 *Dwight Andrews, composer and Professor of Jazz Studies, Emory University, Atlanta, GA
 *Robert G. OíMeally, Zora Neale Hurston Professor of English, Columbia University, New York
 *Introduction: Diedra Harris Kelley, Co Director, Romare Bearden Foundation, New York
Professors Andrews and O Meally will discuss the reasons why art and inclusion matter. Among related topics, they will discuss Bearden and his contemporaries, the role they played in challenging themselves and other artists to address the issues of their day bearing on equality, and the special role that jazz has played in providing a window into new possibilities for human expression and relations.

6:35PM 7:55PM
 The Power of Purposeful Creativity:
 A Conversation and Performance

Presenters
 *Stefon Harris, four time Grammy Award nominated jazz musician, New York
 *Maurine Knighton, Chief Program Officer, Doris Duke Foundation, New York
 *Terri Lyne Carrington, NEA Jazz Master and three time Grammy Award winning drummer, producer, and educator, New York
The evening will close with a conversation on Romare Bearden's purposeful creativity and its relevance to current times, followed by a complementary live jazz performance evocative of Bearden's legacy and the main themes to be covered during the balance of the symposium.

(15 min break)

7:55PM 8:00PM
 Closing remarks, preview of Day 2 agenda and logistics

12:30PM 2:00PM
 Lunch Keynote: Multiculturalism, Activism, and Art
 *Natalie Diaz, Pulitzer Prize winning author (*Postcolonial Love Poem* et al), MacArthur Fellow, and Senior Fellow, Institute on Race, Power and Political Economy, The New School, Tempe, AZ

*Introduction: Yvonne Watson, Interim Executive Dean, Parsons School of Design, New York
Renowned poet and public intellectual Natalie Diaz will offer prepared remarks on next generation opportunities to advance multiculturalism and activism through writing, spoken word, and other forms of creative expression and community building.

(15 min break)

2:15PM–3:30PM

Day 2, Panel 2: Artists as Champions of Racial and Economic Reform

*Nicole Fleetwood, Curator, *Marking Time: Art in the Age of Mass Incarceration*; James Weldon Johnson Professor of Media, Culture, and Communication, Steinhardt School, New York University, New York

*Angie Kim, President, Center for Cultural Innovation, Los Angeles, CA

*fayemi shakur, Director of Arts and Culture, City of Newark, NJ

*H. Sharif Williams, PhD, Professor of Africana Studies, Documentary Filmmaking and Poetics, Goddard College, New York

*Moderator: Asali DeVan Ecclesiastes, Executive Director, Ashé Cultural Center, New Orleans, LA
This session will examine the role of BIPOC artists and cultural institutions in advancing and lifting up new strategies and initiatives that promote racial justice and economic reform, including public and private policy, practice, and investment bearing on multicultural arts and opportunities for community development, liberation, and expression.

(15 min break)

3:45PM–5:00PM

Day 2, Panel 3: New Opportunities for BIPOC Leadership in Creative Culture and Economy

*Eddie Torres, President, Grantmakers in the Arts, New York

*Calvin Williams, Senior Advisor, Social Impact & Advocacy, Think Common Entertainment, Oakland, CA

*Aisha Benson, President, Nonprofit Finance Fund, New York

*Adrienne Edwards, Director of Curatorial

Affairs, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York

*Moderator: Rocío Aranda-Alvarado, Senior Program Officer, Creativity and Free Expression, Ford Foundation, New York
This session will examine emerging opportunities for BIPOC leaders to shape the future of creative culture and economy through innovation, new voices and perspectives, and enhanced investments in multicultural arts and community building. Panelists will identify spaces and ways in which BIPOC leaders are changing the conversation and the content produced and financed by large arts institutions and their benefactors, government agencies, private investors, and the major media, and will assess the impacts of this trajectory on local economies, civic culture, and communities of color.

(60 min break. Move to Kellen Gallery for Exhibition Viewing and Performance Art Program)

6:00PM–7:25PM

Performance: *Layer Time: The Past is Already Rearranged by Our Gaze*

The Anna-Maria and Stephen Kellen Gallery

*Black Quantum Futurism, Los Angeles, CA

*Introduction: Eriola Pira, Curator and Director of Programs, Vera List Center for Art and Politics, The New School, New York

Black Quantum Futurism's performative lecture explores the confluence of Romare Bearden's collage artistry, black spatial agency, temporal autonomy, and quantum physics within the exhibition. Ungluing Bearden's layered and complex narrative of African American life and human existence, they draw parallels between collaging and quantum superposition, delving into how Bearden's collages encapsulate a continuum of temporal experiences.

7:25PM–7:30PM

Closing remarks, preview of Day 3 agenda and logistics followed by reception with hors d'oeuvres and drinks

DAY 3
SAT, DEC 2, WOLLMAN HALL

8:30AM

Continental Breakfast

10:00AM–11:15AM

Day 3 Opening Plenary: Contemporary Artists, Social Content, and Public Engagement

*Michael Aghahowa, artist-activist, RAW Artworks, Lynn, MA

*Salamishah Tillet, Founder, New Arts Justice Initiative, Express Newark, Newark, NJ

*Jordan Weber, artist-activist, New York

*Charisse Pearlina Weston, artist, Brooklyn, NY

*Moderator: Jessica Lynne, Founding Editor, *ARTS.BLACK*, New York

This session will highlight the evolving work of artists and creatives of color in furtherance of social change and public engagement, including strategies and initiatives that advance creative economy innovations and new possibilities in civic activism affecting BIPOC people and communities.

(15 min break)

11:30AM–12:45PM

Confronting Efforts to Censor BIPOC Writers and Artists

*C. Daniel Dawson, artist/curator and Adjunct Professor of African American and African Diaspora Studies, Columbia University, New York

*Evangeline Ordaz, network TV writer/producer and justice activist, Los Angeles, CA

*Diedra Harris-Kelley, Co-Director, Romare Bearden Foundation, New York

*Moderator: Radhika Subramaniam, Associate Professor of Visual Culture, Parsons School of Design, The New School, New York

Leading thinkers and advocates in the arts, popular culture, and literature will examine current efforts in conservative circles to censor and silence BIPOC and other multicultural artists, writers, and creatives in education, cultural institutions, the media, and the public square. They will explore imperatives and strategies to combat this dangerous trend, including

efforts by creative culture leaders of color and their allies to advance more progressive and inclusive notions of art, free expression, and the Common Good.

12:45PM–2:00PM

Box Lunch with Summary Observations and Closing Comments

*Diedra Harris-Kelley, Co-Director, Romare Bearden Foundation, New York

*Carin Kuoni, Chief Curator/Senior Director, Vera List Center for Art and Politics, The New School, New York

*Wayne Winborne, Executive Director, Institute of Jazz Studies, Rutgers University Newark, Newark, NJ

*Moderator/Facilitator: Henry A. J. Ramos, Senior Fellow, Institute on Race, Power and Political Economy, The New School, New York

The symposium organizers will highlight key takeaways from the gathering and their implications for future examination and action, and lift up the value of, and need for, more cross-institutional collaboration focused on art, race, and economy.

2:00PM

Adjourn

WOLLMAN HALL
65 West 11th Street, 5th floor

THE AUDITORIUM AT 66 WEST 12TH STREET
66 West 12th Street

STARR FOUNDATION HALL
63 Fifth Avenue at 13th Street

KELLEN GALLERY
66 Fifth Avenue at 13th Street

INTRODUCTION

IN COMMON: ROMARE BEARDEN AND NEW APPROACHES TO ART, RACE AND ECONOMY

SYMPOSIUM

The Institute on Race, Power and Political Economy, based at The New School, in collaboration with the Romare Bearden Foundation, the Institute of Jazz Studies at Rutgers University, Newark, The New School based Vera List Center for Art and Politics, and The New School writ large presents a fall 2023 art exhibition and national symposium on the legacy of the great twentieth century artist and activist Romare Bearden (1911–88) and the significance of his art to contemporary realities facing Black Americans and other BIPOC communities.

Allied activities include a series of supporting performance art offerings and public dialogues, related media commentaries, and the publication of this comprehensive guide documenting the art and symposium that will be offered at and around the Anna Maria and Stephen Kellen Gallery at the Sheila C. Johnson Design Center, Parsons School of Design, The New School.

In today's increasingly divided political, cultural, and economic discourse, the arts and creativity offer pathways to human connectivity,

learning, and understanding. Through a combination of dialogues and analyses based on Romare Bearden's activist legacy and contemporary points of view featuring socially conscious and politically engaged BIPOC artists and commentators, we hope to lift up the potent, yet still too rarely acknowledged relationships between race, culture, economy, and the Common Good.

It is our great privilege to offer this program in collaboration with highly respected leaders and organizations that are integrally engaged at the intersection of the issues across the national landscape, and across The New School campus.

Thank you for joining us in this timely examination of the abiding power of art and culture to shape new possibilities for our humanity, our politics, and our economy.

Darrick Hamilton is University Professor, Henry Cohen Professor of Economics and Urban Policy, and Founding Director of the Institute on Race, Power and Political Economy, The New School.

Darrick Hamilton

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In partnership with the Romare Bearden Foundation, the Vera List Center for Art and Politics at The New School, and the Institute of Jazz Studies at Rutgers University Newark, the Institute on Race, Power and Political Economy is pleased to offer *In Common: Romare Bearden and New Approaches to Art, Race and Economy*.

This much needed platform for cross disciplinary learning, dialogue, visual art, performances, and allied public communications is intended to lift up the continuing legacy of the late, iconic African American artist Romare Bearden for present day activist artists, scholars, civic leaders, and community change agents.

One of our nation's greatest visual artists and activists, Romare Bearden came of age during the Harlem Renaissance and was a leading voice of late twentieth century Black struggles for political and economic justice. In his extensive and wide ranging work, he addressed the African American community's long journey of struggle against institutionalized racism and poverty in the United States, as well as the resiliency of Black people in responding to inequality and injustice through the power of community, collective action, faith, music, and dance.

Bearden was the product of the Great

Migration, which brought his family from North Carolina to New York City's Harlem neighborhood in the early part of the twentieth century. During his formative years, he worked as a New York City social worker; he steeped himself in visual art and jazz; he met and aligned with important members of the Harlem Renaissance such as Duke Ellington, Ralph Ellison, Langston Hughes, Jacob Lawrence, and Paul Robeson; and he helped to establish important centers of gravity for Black/BIPOC centered exchanges on art and politics, such as the downtown based Cinque Gallery (1969–2010) and the Spiral Group (1963–65), both of which served as important exhibition venues and meeting points for activist BIPOC artists of the day.

Recalling such work is especially timely. More and more, the power of culture—from the performing arts, film, fashion, and design to literature, poetry, and prose—defines public identity and popular expression in the twenty first century, in many instances even more than politics and economics. We believe that Bearden's grounding in community and the Black experience in America continues to have real significance and value in the contemporary context of present day US discourse on matters of race, power, and political economy.

The symposium focuses on opportunities to

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examine Bearden's creative and social justice legacy in a historical context, while also helping to distill and inspire twenty first century opportunities for contemporary artists to lead even more potent efforts to advance racial and economic justice through the power of their own creative voices. Indeed, our program examines the role of artists of color and their allies, ranging from Bearden to present day creators, in advancing art that calls for a fundamental rethinking, or correction, of too long established systems of racial and class exclusion.

Through Bearden's groundbreaking embrace of art and activism, he and the artists around him carved out a compelling role for themselves and other creative culture leaders of color in a time of great historical struggle and progress. In many ways, they established pathways for subsequent generations who seek to counter the devastating legacies of slavery and colonialism by seeking to correct dominant historical narratives and providing new and more empowering perspectives on the issues.

Our line of inquiry, exchange, and action builds on this history and several informing questions pertinent to our present reality:

How and in what ways did Romare Bearden and his BIPOC contemporaries in the creative fields influence political and economic change through their work and activism?

In today's context, how might multicultural creative practices and community driven social innovations like those of Bearden and his allies advance our current democracy, and the health, vitality, and success of marginalized populations seeking new

opportunities to gain economic agency and voice?

What are the emerging models in culture and economy that are helping low income and otherwise marginalized populations of color to achieve greater social inclusion, political agency, prosperity sharing, and upward mobility?

What are the implications and opportunities for public, private, and nonprofit sector leaders to scale and accelerate facilitative investments and support in these directions?

How can various stakeholders interested in this work be better equipped and incentivized to join forces in ways that enhance their collective messaging and impact?

In order to examine these questions in the most meaningful possible way, *In Common: Romare Bearden and New Approaches to Art, Race and Economy* features leading multicultural thinkers, practitioners, and activists from multiple fields, including but not limited to creative culture, inclusive economy, civic affairs, community enterprise, media, and related public policy.

We welcome you to partake of these important offerings and voices as we seek to establish a more unified and mutually beneficial way forward for BIPOC leaders in creative culture, community, politics, and economy.

Henry A. J. Ramos is an artist and Senior Fellow and Project Lead, Institute on Race, Power and Political Economy, The New School.

ROMARE BEARDEN AND JAZZ



Romare Bearden, *Jamming at the Savoy*, 1975, etching and aquatint, 25 x 32 inches. Courtesy of Nanette Bearden Trust.

Born out of an intense, almost primordial need to express humanity in an inhumane context, jazz is a profound expression of resistance in the face of racial oppression—a manifestation of the deep spirit of a people struggling against insanely brutal treatment, and an expression of their hope, longing, and perseverance. One of the only art forms created entirely in the United States, it has been called a gift to the world, America's classical music, and its greatest global contribution. Jazz historian Ted Gioia has called its development an actual transfer of totally African ritual to the native soil of the New World—and the period of its earliest development in New Orleans the

beginning of the Africanization of American music.¹

From its inception, jazz has reflected the past, present, and future, and virtually every iteration of it that has ever existed continues to be actively performed. Jazz mirrors core aspects of Romare Bearden and America: the melding of cultures to create something entirely new, the hopefulness of a people with little practical reason to have any, and the continual forward gaze, striving for something and someplace better while drawing strength from the past. Further, just as jazz musicians constantly improvise individually and collectively, Bearden's collages are a visual

improvisation: fragments of reality creating a new, harmonious whole. His layering of images and bold colors evokes the rhythm and vitality of both the music and the community that birthed it. Viewers can see the sound of the saxophones and trumpets that characterized the music and feel the syncopated dance and beats of West Africa, New Orleans, and Harlem. His work celebrates the resilience, creativity, and cultural richness of this community, and his use of jazz imagery and African symbolism underscores the interconnectedness of African heritage and African American struggle. Through this work, he highlights the enduring spirit of a people who, like jazz, have found a way to improvise, adapt, and persevere.

Bearden's relationship with jazz has been explored beautifully and comprehensively by many writers and thinkers, notably the great writer Albert Murray, scholar Robert O'Neil, and the artist himself who was explicit in the ways in which jazz influenced him: Jazz has shown me the ways of achieving artistic structures that are personal to me. Moreover, Murray wrote that it was a matter of record, that he learned to work in his own way with the separation between colors and with the different values of a given color by studying the expressive use of interval in the piano style of Earl Hines and that his application of what he learned from Hines led him in due course also to the realization that his basic orientation to aesthetic statement had been conditioned by the blues idiom in general and jazz musicianship in particular all along.³

Romare Bearden and jazz also share a close biographical history. Born in 1911 in Charlotte, North Carolina, Bearden grew up immersed in a rapidly expanding world for African Americans and their artistic and cultural expression. Consider, in 1913, the word jazz appears for the first time in print in the *San Francisco Bulletin*; W.C. Handy publishes *St. Louis Blues* in 1914, one of the most recorded songs in the twentieth century; in 1915, Jelly Roll Morton publishes *Jelly Roll's Blues*, considered by many to be the first jazz composition; and in 1917, the all white, Original Dixieland Jassí Band records what is widely considered the first jazz album, although there is much more nuance to the story when one considers the recordings of Wilbur Sweatman and James Reese Europe.⁴

Like other African American families, the Beardens would leave the South seeking better economic opportunities, improved living conditions, and refuge from oppressive racial segregation. Between 1910 and 1970, millions of African

Americans headed to the northern and western regions of the US in one of the most significant demographic shifts in American history. When the migration began, 90% of all African Americans lived in the South, but by the mid 1970s, that figure was 54%. This mass movement reshaped the social, cultural, and political fabric of the nation, leading to the emergence of the civil rights movement among other significant contributions to American culture. Similarly, greater economic and educational opportunities led to a flourishing of African American literature, intellectual expression, and art, especially music.

It is within this fertile social, cultural, economic, political, and technological world that both Romare Bearden and jazz would develop over the course of the twentieth century. Both would absorb and use all the raw intellectual and physical material around them. Both would remain deeply rooted in the community that birthed them but would draw upon the techniques, learnings, and approaches of the community that oppressed them, incorporating all into a coherent personal style—an African American style—that would change the world.

Over the course of his life and career through his art, Bearden would continually explore and pursue an understanding of the individual self, always in the context of a broader identity, according to O'Neil and others. His collages then speak not only to the fragmentation of Black selves and communities but also their complex layeredness,⁵ illustrating a profound understanding of a people who have had to push back against definitions formed by others and how that complexity manifested within himself. Bearden embraced fully and drew strength from his blackness and the Black American community more broadly and was able to visually represent what jazz musicians sought sonically.

O'Neil states that:

It is his proclaiming, through collage, the truth of both of these perspectives, fragmentation and reassemblage, that may be Bearden's greatest achievement. Even more profound than his work's answers to the question repeated in this essay's paragraphs—Who am I?—is the set of answers to that other question implied everywhere in Bearden's oeuvre: Who are we?

Indeed, this is a question for us all. Consideration

of others, (of *the other*), is central to Bearden, to great jazz, and is essential to collaborative problem solving and collective policymaking. Bearden's art, like jazz improvisation, is increasingly relevant today as we all confront a shifting landscape of challenges and possibilities that demands the ability to improvise at a high level. Jazz improvisation requires practice, diligence, commitment, and an ability to admit and learn from past mistakes. Like Bearden, it also requires deep attention to history and tradition, alongside a willingness to challenge and even move past both. At its best, jazz realizes an equilibrium between virtuosity and empathy and reflects a perfectly balanced interplay between the individual and the collective. This balance is precisely what a healthy, functioning democracy seeks. Thus, a wide swath of disparate people from activists to economists to regular citizens can find meaning if not guidance from Bearden and jazz.

Romare Bearden's art and jazz are inseparable companions in the cultural landscape of America. His collages are a visual representation of the improvisational and collaborative spirit of jazz, capturing the essence of a music genre that has touched the souls of millions. Bearden's work also serves as a testament to the African American experience, celebrating the resilience and creativity of a community that has contributed immensely to the tapestry of the United States. Through his art, Bearden invites us to see and hear the world through the harmonious rhythms of jazz, reminding us of the enduring power and potential of creativity and the human spirit to address complex issues and questions in a manner that assures mutual benefit and consideration of both the self and others.

Wayne Winborne is the Executive Director of the Institute of Jazz Studies, Rutgers University Newark, Newark, NJ.

- 1 Ted Gioia. *The History of Jazz* (Cambridge, England: Oxford University Press, 2011).
- 2 Robert G. O'Neil, ed. *The Romare Bearden Reader* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2019).
- 3 Ibid.
- 4 Dan Morgenstern elaborates on this notion in an essay in *Records At Play: The Institute of Jazz Studies@50* (Newark, NJ: Rutgers University Newark, 2017).
- 5 O'Neil.

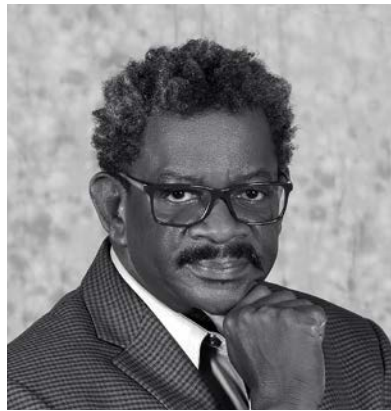
Wayne Winborne

SYMPOSIUM SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES



MICHAEL TERRELL
AGHAHOWA

is an American artist and professor based in Lynn, Massachusetts. He is a dynamic creator, most known for his allegorical paintings and community engagement. His work has many facets that range from looking like a cartoon to fine art that mixes elements of realism with collage, spray paint, and sculptural materials like card board and glass. Through diverse media, Aghahowa creates to provoke thought and emphasize representation of Black and brown folks, pulling references from his personal life and art history. *Photo: Cinda Danh.*



DWIGHT ANDREWS, PhD

is a composer and multi instrumentalist, Professor of Music Theory and African American Music at Emory University, and Pastor of First Congregational Church, UCC, in Atlanta. He has performed on over twenty jazz and new music recordings and served as music director for the Broadway productions of August Wilson's *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*, *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*, *Fences*, *The Piano Lesson*, and *Seven Guitars*. He also served as music director for the Broadway revival of *Ma Rainey*, starring Charles Dutton and Whoopi Goldberg, and collaborated with director Kenny Leon on the Broadway production of *A Raisin in the Sun*, starring Sean Combs and Phylicia Rashad. Andrews was the Artistic Director of the

National Black Arts Festival (1996-1998) and currently serves as Artistic Director of the Atlanta Music Festival. In 2019, he curated a special program celebrating the opening of the exhibition *Something Over Something Else: Romare Bearden's Profile Series* at the High Museum in Atlanta. The event, entitled *Bearden's Blues and Other Colors*, featured Branford Marsalis and his Quartet.



ROC O ARANDA ALVARADO,
PhD

is an art historian and curator focused on modern and contemporary US Latinx, Caribbean and African American art. Prior to her work at Ford Foundation, she was Curator at El Museo del Barrio in New York and at Jersey City Museum, where she organized numerous exhibitions,

including El Museo's 45th anniversary exhibition and two versions of *The S Files/La Bienal*, El Museo's biennial exhibition of emerging artists, *PRESENTE! The Young Lords in New York* (2015), and *Antonio Lopez: Future, Funk, Fashion* (2016), among many others. Dr. Aranda Alvarado has taught in the Art Department at the City College of New York and in the MA program at Hunter College's Art and Art History Department. Her writing has appeared in various publications including catalogue essays for several museums.



AISHA BENSON

is a community development finance professional with thirty years' experience in banking and Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs). She is CEO of Nonprofit Finance Fund (NFF), a lender, consultant, and advocate that boosts the collective success and power of nonprofits to advance racial equity, and community wealth building and well being. NFF has invested over \$1.1B in financing and leveraged over \$4.4B in projects for thousands of organizations nationwide. Prior to NFF, Benson was COO for TruFund Financial Services, a CDFI serving disadvantaged small businesses. She sits on the

Board of Opportunity Finance Network and is on the advisory boards of the White House Economic Opportunity Coalition and the Federal Reserve Bank of NY. She graduated Cum Laude from Columbia University.



BLACK QUANTUM FUTURISM
Photo: Ebru Yildiz.
For bio, see Page E 22.



JOHANNE BRYANT REID

is Co Director of the Romare Bearden Foundation, New York. She is a graduate of West Virginia University and completed independent study in decent education at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Bryant Reid joined the Foundation as a board member and served as the primary fundraiser for seven years. An accomplished Human Resources Executive with Merrill Lynch for two decades, Bryant Reid has

travelled extensively throughout the United States, Canada, Japan, Hong Kong, Singapore, and Europe. With a long standing commitment to cultural development and studies of fine arts and music, she has sponsored individual artists and organized art exhibitions and benefit auctions for various organizations and community groups. Bryant Reid has served on not for profit boards in philanthropy and the arts including Artists Space New York; the Borough of Manhattan Community College, New York; The Women's Center, New York; James Robert Braxton Scholarship Fund and the West Virginia University Foundation, Morgantown, WV. She also chaired the Arts Committee and the International Trends Committee for the Bergen County New Jersey chapter of The Links, Incorporated. *Photo: E. Lee White Photography.*



TERRI LYNE CARRINGTON

is an NEA Jazz Master, a Doris Duke Artist, and four time GRAMMY award winning artist/producer. She has most notably been the drummer for Herbie Hancock, Wayne Shorter, Esperanza Spalding, and also for late night TV shows, The Arsenio Hall Show and Quincy Jones' VIBE TV. In 2022,

she authored two books: *New Standards: 101 Lead Sheets By Women Composers* and *Three of a Kind*, a children's book about the Allen Carrington Spalding trio. In recognition of her contributions to jazz, she received the prestigious Doris Duke Artist Award, as well as honorary doctorates from Manhattan School of Music, York University and Berklee College of Music, where she established the Berklee Institute of Jazz and Gender Justice. *Photo: Michael Goldman.*



C. DANIEL DAWSON

is a photographer, filmmaker, curator, arts administrator, and consultant with a research focus on the African diaspora and its culture. Professor Dawson has taught seminars on African spirituality in the Americas. He served as Curator of Photography, Film and Video at the Studio Museum in Harlem, Director of Special Projects at the Caribbean Cultural Center, and Curatorial Consultant and Director of Education at the Museum for African Art, all three in New York. As a photographer, he has shown his work in more than thirty exhibitions. Dawson has also curated more than forty exhibitions, including *Harlem Heyday: The Photographs of James Van Der*

Zee and The Sound I Saw: The Jazz Photographs of Roy DeCarava. Dawson has been associated with many prize winning films, including *Head and Heart* by James Mannas and *Capoeiras of Brazil* by Warrington Hudli.



NATALIE DIAZ

was born in the Fort Mojave Indian Village in Needles, California. She is Mojave and an enrolled member of the Gila River Indian community. She earned a BA from Old Dominion University, where she received a full athletic scholarship. Diaz played professional basketball in Europe and Asia before returning to Old Dominion to earn an MFA. She is the author of the poetry collections *Postcolonial Love Poem* (2020), winner of the Pulitzer Prize, and *When My Brother Was an Aztec* (2012), which *New York Times* reviewer Eric McHenry described as an ambitious beautiful book. Her other honors and awards include the Nimrod/Hardman Pablo Neruda Prize for Poetry, the Louis Untermeyer Scholarship in Poetry from Bread Loaf, the *Narrative Poetry Prize*, and a Lannan Literary Fellowship. Diaz is co director of the Borderlands Fellowship, a joint initiative between The New School's Vera

List Center for Art and Politics and Arizona State University's Center for Imagination in the Borderlands, of which she is the founder. She is also a Senior Fellow at The New School's Institute on Race, Power and Political Economy. *Photo: Deanna Dent/ASU Now.*



ASALI DEVAN
ECCLESIASTES

is a mother, daughter, educator, organizer, author, event producer, performance artist, and community servant. Most know her by her many pursuits, but the way she knows herself and the world around her, is through her exploration of the word. Embedded in the cultural soil of New Orleans and watered by the writings of her literary idols, Kalamu ya Salaam, Sonia Sanchez, and Toni Morrison, Ecclesiastes has grown to bask in the sun of her literary heritage from the sages who transformed pharaoh to God in Ancient Khemet to the Spy Boys who chant the way clear for Big Chiefs on Carnival Day. Ecclesiastes excitedly brings her deep roots in New Orleans' Indigenous culture to her work as the Chief Equity Officer of Ash Cultural Arts Center. *Photo: Eric Waters.*



ADRIENNE EDWARDS,
PhD

is Engell Speyer Family Curator and Director of Curatorial Affairs at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York City. She co curated the 2022 Whitney Biennial and was President of the International Jury of the 59th Venice Biennale. She is currently organizing an exhibition and catalogue on the choreographer Alvin Ailey, which opens at the Whitney in September 2024. Previously, she served as Curator of Performa in New York City and as Curator at large for the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis. Edwards's curatorial projects have also included the traveling exhibition and catalogue *Jason Moran* at Walker Art Center, ICA Boston, Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus (2018–2019); *Moved by the Motion: Sudden Rise* (2020), a series of performances based on a text co written by Wu Tsang, boychild, and Fred Moten at the Whitney; Dave McKenzie's first solo museum exhibition in New York City, *The Story I Tell Myself*, and its pendant performance commission *Disturbing the View* (2021) at the Whitney; and the performance collective My Barbarian's twenty anniversary exhibition and catalogue (2021–2022) at the Whitney. She was part of the

Whitney's core team for David Hammons's public art monument *Day's End*. Edwards has taught art history and visual studies at New York University and The New School. *Photo: Bryan Derballa.*



NICOLE FLEETWOOD

is the inaugural James Weldon Johnson Professor of Media, Culture, and Communication in the Steinhardt School at New York University, New York. A MacArthur Fellow, she is a writer, curator, and art critic whose interests are contemporary Black diasporic art and visual culture, photography studies, art and public practice, performance studies, gender and feminist studies, Black cultural history, creative nonfiction, prison abolition and carceral studies, and poverty studies. Her publications include *On Racial Icons* (Rutgers University Press, 2015) and *Troubling Vision* (University of Chicago Press, 2011). Fleetwood has co curated exhibitions and public programs on art and mass incarceration, and her traveling exhibition *Marking Time: Art in the Age of Mass Incarceration* at MoMA PS1 was listed as one of the most important art moments in 2020 by the *New York Times*. *Courtesy of John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation.*



DARRICK HAMILTON

is University Professor, the Henry Cohen Professor of Economics and Urban Policy, and Founding Director of the Institute on Race, Power and Political Economy at The New School. Considered one of the nation's foremost public intellectuals, Hamilton has been profiled in the *New York Times*, *Mother Jones*, *Bloomberg Businessweek* and the *Wall Street Journal*. Hamilton was named a Freedom Scholar by the Marguerite Casey Foundation and the Group Health Foundation. He has been involved in crafting policy proposals that have garnered media attention and inspired legislative proposals at the federal, state, and local levels, including baby bonds, guaranteed income, and a federal job guarantee. He has testified before several Senate and House committees, including the Joint Economic Committee and the Senate Banking Committee. He was born and raised in the Bedford Stuyvesant section of Brooklyn, New York. He is a graduate of Oberlin College and received a PhD in Economics from the University of North Carolina.



STEFON HARRIS

is an acclaimed American jazz vibraphonist and four time Grammy Award nominated recording artist. In addition to his leadership in the performing arts, he helps leading companies innovate and get comfortable with the unknown by creating platforms to solve business challenges related to management, relationships, and team dynamics, encouraging business solutions rooted in empathy. As a thought leader, he makes presentations at corporate leadership gatherings on team empowerment at Fortune 50 companies using jazz as a metaphor. His inspiring 2012 TED talk *There Are No Mistakes on the Bandstand* has gained over 750,000 views to date. Harris has served on the Board of Directors for Chamber Music America and WBGO FM, and is currently on the Board of Advisors for the Percussive Arts Society.



DIEDRA HARRIS KELLEY

is Co Director of the Romare Bearden Foundation. Harris Kelley is also the niece of Nanette Bearden who founded the Foundation in 1990. With an MFA degree from University of Michigan, she currently teaches a seminar course on Romare Bearden at Barnard College, and has taught studio art at New York University, Parsons Studio Program, and for alternative high school and elementary school programs. She also conducts professional development workshops and lectures on art. Harris Kelley was a member of the curatorial team of *Jazz at Lincoln Center* (2009-2012) and is the author of *Revisiting Romare Bearden's Art of Improvisation*, published in *Uptown Conversation: The New Jazz Studies* (Columbia University Press 2004), and *My Life in Movement: Inheriting the Dancing Body* (*Scholar & Feminist Online*, issue 19.1, Summer 2023). Harris Kelley's own artwork has been published on book covers, and most recently shown in a solo exhibition at the Newhouse Center for Contemporary Art in New York. *Photo: Julian Elijah Martinez.*



ANGIE KIM, PhD

has served as President and CEO for the Center for Cultural Innovation (CCI), a California based knowledge and financial services incubator for individual artists, since 2014. She is also the founder of CCI's national, pooled fund program, AmbitioUS, which invests in alternative economic paradigms of and federated infrastructure by those most dispossessed primarily African American and Native American communities who are seeking financial self determination in order to preserve and support their cultural identity and artistic expressions on their own terms. Kim has over twenty years of experience in the arts and in philanthropy having worked in various roles in grantmaking, public policy, evaluation, and communications at the Getty and Flintridge Foundations, and as Director of Programs at Southern California Grantmakers. *Photo: Knowbody Foto.*



MAURINE KNIGHTON

is the Chief Program Officer at the Doris Duke Foundation also oversees the Foundation's five national grantmaking programs: Arts, Environment, Medical Research, Child Well Being, and Building Bridges. Joining in 2016, Knighton served as Program Director for the Arts, leading the development and oversight of grant programs supporting artists, and contemporary dance, theater, and jazz organizations. During her tenure, Knighton oversaw the Foundation's signature programs, such as the Doris Duke Artist Awards. A former board member of the Association of Performing Arts Professionals and Grantmakers in the Arts (GIA), Knighton chaired GIA's Racial Equity Committee. Additionally, she has served as a panelist and advisor to the National Endowment for the Arts, the New England Foundation for the Arts, and many others. She currently serves on the boards of Firelight Media and the Upper Manhattan Empowerment Zone Development Corporation, chairing its Cultural Investment Fund Committee.



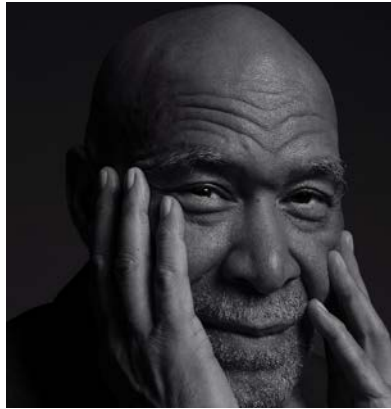
CARIN KUONI

is a curator and writer whose work examines how contemporary artistic practices reflect and inform social, political, and cultural conditions. She is Senior Director/Chief Curator of the Vera List Center for Art and Politics at The New School and Assistant Professor of Visual Studies at the university. A founding member of artist collective REPOhistory, she has curated numerous transdisciplinary exhibitions, and is the editor or co editor of anthologies such as *Energy Plan for the Western Man: Joseph Beuys in America* (Four Walls Eight Windows); *Considering Forgiveness* (Vera List Center); *Entry Points: The Vera List Center Field Guide to Art and Social Justice* (Duke University Press/VLC); *Assuming Boycott: Resistance, Agency, and Cultural Production* (OR Books/VLC); *Forces of Art: Perspectives from a Changing World* (Valiz/Prince Claus Fund); *Studies into Darkness: The Perils and Promise of Freedom of Speech* (VLC/Amherst College Press); and *Maria Thereza Alves: Seeds of Change* (VLC/Amherst College Press).



JESSICA LYNNE

is a writer and art critic. She is a founding editor of *ARTS.BLACK*, an online journal of art criticism from Black perspectives. Her writing has been featured in publications such as *Artforum*, *The Believer*, *Frieze*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *The Nation*, and *Oxford American*, where she is a contributing editor. She is the recipient of a 2020 Research and Development award from the Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts, a 2020 Arts Writer Grant recipient of The Andy Warhol Foundation, and the inaugural recipient of the Beverly Art Writers Travel Grant awarded in 2022 by the American Australian Association. Lynne is currently an Associate Editor at Momus. Alongside Rianna Jade Parker, she is co author of the forthcoming publication *Image and Belief: An Unfinished History of Black Artists* (Frances Lincoln/Quarto Books 2024).



ROBERT G. O'CONNELL

is the Zora Neale Hurston Professor of English and Comparative Literature at Columbia University, where he has served on the faculty for thirty five years. The author of *The Craft of Ralph Ellison*, *Lady Day: The Many Faces of Billie Holiday*, *The Jazz Singers*, and *Romare Bearden: A Black Odyssey*, O'Connell co produced a Smithsonian record set called *The Jazz Singers*, which was nominated for a Grammy Award. He has co curated exhibitions for the Smithsonian Institution, Jazz at Lincoln Center, and the High Museum of Art, Atlanta. His most recent books are *The Romare Bearden Reader* (Duke University Press, 2020) and *Antagonistic Cooperation: Collage, Jazz, and American Fiction* (Columbia University Press, 2022). His current research concerns August Wilson and Jorge Luis Borges. *Photo: Gioncarlo Valentine.*



EVANGELINE ORDAZ

grew up in Los Angeles, but has also lived in South East Asia and Mexico. Her experience growing up as a child of low income Mexican immigrants instilled in her a passion for social justice, prompting her to earn a law degree from the University of California Berkeley. Before becoming a writer, she practiced public interest law. Ordaz writes and produces theater, television, film, and digital media. By writing intimate and personal stories of under represented and excluded communities she seeks to elevate those communities to promote just inclusion and explore universal truths. Before becoming a screenwriter, Ordaz practiced law for seven years and has experience in fair housing, slum litigation, immigration, human rights, and criminal appeals.



ERIOLOA PIRA

is the Curator and Director of Programs at the Vera List Center for Art and Politics at The New School, where she works closely with artists to generate and present new ideas and work on art and its politics. Previously, as Director of Programs, Pira led Art in Generalís international collaborations, residencies, public events, and fellowship programs, building on her professional networks and experiences as Program Director and Curator at the artist founded NARS Foundation and as Program Director for The Foundation for Culture and Society. She has organized and participated in several international exhibitions, performances, publications, and symposia and collaborated with institutions worldwide. A native of Albania, Pira has an MA in Visual Culture Theory from New York University and is the recipient of a Fulbright Fellowship. *Photo: Ali Zdunczyk.*



HENRY A. J. RAMOS

is a senior fellow at the Institute on Race, Power and Political Economy. He is a past staff member at the Ford Foundation, the James Irvine Foundation and Levi Strauss Foundation, and has served on various important boards, including those of the Nonprofit Finance Fund, *The Harvard Journal of Hispanic Policy*, the Womenís Foundation of California, the Romare Bearden Foundation, and Asian Americans Advancing Justice. He is also a former appointee of ex California governor Jerry Brown (D CA) to the California Community Colleges Board of Governors. His published works include the book *Democracy and the Next American Economy* and recent op eds in *Newsweek*, the Hechinger Report, and *The Hill*. In addition, Ramos is a visual artist whose paintings and collage works have been presented in Berlin, Los Angeles, and New York. He received a BA in Political Economy and a JD from UC Berkeley, and an MPA from Harvard University.



MARY SCHMIDT CAMPBELL, PhD

is an art historian, who served as Director of the Studio Museum in Harlem, New York City Commissioner of Cultural Affairs, and, for over two decades, Dean of New York Universityís Tisch School of the Arts, New York. She is the recently retired president of Spelman College and a leading Bearden expert and biographer, having written the highly regarded *An American Odyssey: The Life and Work of Romare Bearden* (Oxford University Press, 2018) and co authored *Memory and Metaphor: The Art of Romare Bearden 1940 1987* (Oxford University Press, 1991). *Photo: Julie Yarborough.*



FAYEMI SHAKUR

is a writer, interdisciplinary artist, and arts advocate residing

in Newark. She currently serves as Arts and Cultural Affairs Director for the City of Newark. She has held appointments as Visiting Lecturer at Rutgers University. Department of Art, Culture and Media, and as an Artist Advisory Council Member for Newark Arts. Her reputation demonstrates a commitment to cultural organizing, mentorship, and engaging programming that explores art that challenges the way we see and experience the world, ourselves, and each other.



RADHIKA SUBRAMANIAM

is Associate Professor of Visual Culture in the School of Art and Design History and Theory at Parsons School of Design/The New School where she was also the first Director/Chief Curator of the Sheila C. Johnson Design Center from 2009 17. Her interdisciplinary practice explores the poetics and politics of crises and surprises, particularly cities and crowds, cultures of catastrophe, migration and mobilities, walking, art, and human animal relationships. Previously, she was Director of Cultural Programs at the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council and the founding executive editor of an interdisciplinary journal, *Connect: Art. Politics. Theory. Practice*, published by Arts International. *Photo: Ron Goodman.*



SALAMISHAH TILLET

is the Henry Rutgers Professor of Africana Studies and Creative Writing and the Director of Express Newark, a center for socially engaged art and design at Rutgers University Newark. She won the 2022 Pulitzer Prize for criticism for her work at *The New York Times* magazine, and is the author of *Sites of Slavery: Citizenship and Racial Democracy in the Post Civil Rights Imagination* and *In Search of The Color Purple: The Story of an American Masterpiece*. She was the curator of *Pulling Together*, the first ever public art exhibition and longest running event on the National Mall in Washington, DC, which presents works from a diverse range of artists telling previously untold stories about our nation's historic monuments.



EDDIE TORRES

is President & CEO of Grantmakers in the Arts. Torres most recently served as Deputy Commissioner of Cultural Affairs for New York City, where they played a leadership role in the development of the city's long term sustainability plan, the city's first cultural plan, and a study of and efforts to support the diversity of the city's cultural organizations. Prior, Torres was a program officer with The Rockefeller Foundation, where they supported arts and culture, jobs access, and resilience. Torres has also served in the dean's office at Parsons School of Design, on the arts and culture team at the Ford Foundation as well as on the staff of the Bronx Council on the Arts. Torres serves on the board of directors of United Philanthropy Forum, as well as its Public Policy Committee. Torres holds an MA in Art History from Hunter College and an MS in Management from The New School.



YVONNE WATSON

was appointed Interim Executive Dean of Parsons School of Design in July 2022. A member of the School of Fashion faculty and leadership since 2010, Watson most recently served as Parsons' Dean of Curriculum and Learning and Advisor to the Provost's Office on Curriculum. As a member of the Parsons Deans' Council, Watson has been part of the process of developing a systematic approach to ensuring the programs at Parsons are designed within a culture of equity, inclusion, and social justice. As Associate Dean of Curriculum and Learning, Watson promoted a culture of assessment and support for faculty investment and pedagogical growth. Before then, she served as Associate Dean in the School of Fashion, where she was instrumental in the development and implementation of the BFA Fashion Design curriculum and articulation of pathways. *Photo: Sylvia Hokes.*



JORDAN WEBER

is a New York based regenerative land sculptor and activist who works at the intersection of social justice and environmental apartheid through grassroots arts collaboration in industrially polluted cities and neighborhoods such as Detroit, St. Louis, Minneapolis, Red Hook in New York, and Des Moines. Most recently Weber was included in the 2023 Venice Biennale of Architecture. In 2018-21, Weber was commissioned by the Walker Art Center to create a phytoremediation farm in North Minneapolis which is a counter tactic to industrial violence upon biodiverse lands and racially diverse communities. The project was produced at the height of George Floyd protests. Honors include the Guggenheim Award, 2023 Soros Open Society Award, 2022 United States Artist Award, and a 2021 Harvard LOEB Fellow. *Photo: Aram Boghosian.*



CHARISSE PEARLINA WESTON
For bio, see Page E 23



REN..E T. WHITE, PhD

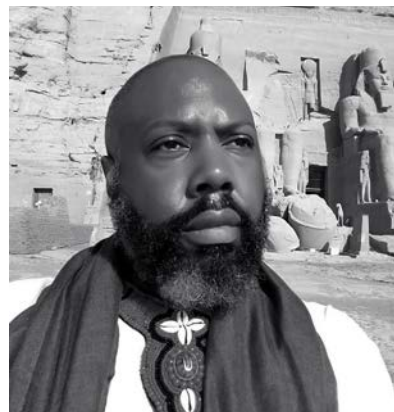
became Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs of The New School on August 1, 2021. She also serves as Professor of Sociology with tenure at The New School for Social Research. Dr. White holds an AB with honors from Brown University and an MA and PhD from Yale University, where she was awarded a Mellon Foundation doctoral fellowship. She is a member of the Editorial Review Board of the *Journal of Women and Gender in Higher Education*. She also serves on the Vision 2020 National Leadership Circle and served on the Chief Academic Officers Task Force of the Council of Independent Colleges (CIC) from 2019 to 2021. Dr. White is

the editor of four books, including the acclaimed *Spoils of War: Women of Color, Cultures, and Revolutions* and the recently published *Afrofuturism in Black Panther: Gender, Identity, and the Re Making of Blackness*. She is also the author of *Putting Risk in Perspective: Black Teenage Lives in the Era of AIDS*.



CALVIN WILLIAMS

a cultural strategist and social impact producer, joined the award winning artist, actor, author, and activist Common's Think Common Entertainment as Senior Advisor for Social Impact & Advocacy in 2022. In this role, he advises Common's social impact ventures, including Imagine Justice Society, a non profit organization that Common founded in 2018 to address mass incarceration. Williams has twenty years of social impact experience from his time working in philanthropy, cultural strategy campaigns, and social justice organizations. He holds a Masters in Public Administration from the former Bernard M. Baruch School of Public and International Affairs, City University of New York. He lives in Oakland with his wife Leila and son Malik. *Photo: Lara Kaur.*



H. HERUKHUTI SHARIF WILLIAMS, PhD

was born and raised in Brooklyn, New York, and is a cultural worker committed to making revolution irresistible through theater/performance art, filmmaking, poetics, and cultural criticism. The producer playwright director has presented work in and around New York City including the New York International Fringe Festival, Bronx Academy of Arts, Dance Blaktinx Festival, and the Caribbean Cultural Center African Diaspora Institute's Afribemb Festival. Dr. Herukhuti is the author of various published works including the poetry collection *Race. Resistance. Love.* and co editor of the Lambda Literary Award nonfiction finalist and Bisexual Book Awards nonfiction and anthology winner *Recognize: The Voices of Bisexual Men.* Dr. Herukhuti is executive producing and co directing a forthcoming documentary film about Black bisexual+ men and the producer playwright director of the Afrofuturist, funk, ritual play *In the Valley of Coming Forth.*



WAYNE WINBORNE

is Executive Director of the Institute of Jazz Studies at Rutgers University Newark, the largest and most comprehensive library and archive of jazz and jazz related materials in the world. He is also Assistant Professor in the Arts, Culture, and Media department and has written and spoken extensively about jazz, art, and culture, democracy, civic engagement, racial reckoning, non profit management, strategic planning, fund development, DEI, multicultural marketing, dialogue facilitation, and race and inter group relations. Winborne has produced recordings for the MaxJazz, HighNote, Satchmo, and Savant labels. He has also written and produced short documentaries, winning a Cine Golden Eagle award and two Telly awards. He has been honored by the Feminist Press, the Brooklyn Club of the National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women's Clubs, Inc., the Asian American Federation of New York, FraserNet, and the National Council for Research on Women. Winborne holds degrees from Stanford and New York University.

IN COMMON

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ECONOMY, THE NEW SCHOOL

The Institute on Race, Power and Political Economy was founded in 2021 to understand and advance economic inclusion, civic engagement, and equity. The Institute provides the intellectual and physical space to cultivate innovative policies, strategies and investments that break down restrictive hierarchies, empower people, and move society toward greater social equity by fusing insights from multiple disciplines to improve understanding of the causes, consequences, and remedies associated with racial, ethnic, gender, and other forms of stratification in a host of domains including education, employment, criminal justice, creative culture, health, housing, environment, asset accumulation, and other vital sectors across regional, national, and international landscapes.

www.racepowerpolicy.org



Institute on Race, Power,
and Political Economy

VERA LIST CENTER FOR ART AND POLITICS,
THE NEW SCHOOL

The Vera List Center for Art and Politics (VLC) is a non profit research center at The New School in New York. Founded in 1992, the VLC catalyzes and supports new forms of politically engaged art, research, public scholarship, and community around the world. The 2022-2024 Vera List Center Focus Theme *Correction** and the programs, fellowship projects, publications, and exhibitions dedicated to it explore the tension, discomfort, potential, and sociopolitical implications of correction. All VLC programs are supported by the members of the VLC Board, Vera's List, the VLC Producers Council, several foundations, and The New School.

www.veralistcenter.org



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www.newschool.edu



ROMARE BEARDEN FOUNDATION

The Romare Bearden Foundation is the non profit organization that perpetuates the artistic and intellectual legacies of the visual artist Romare Bearden. Founded in 1990 by the artist's widow, Nanette Bearden, the mission has been to make Bearden's ideas publicly accessible through exhibitions, symposia, curriculum, publications, and public school programs. In 2021 the Foundation partnered with the Wildenstein Plattner Institute to launch the *Romare Bearden Digital Catalogue Raisonné Project*. The ultimate guide to the unique works will be underway for some time, but materials from the Foundation archives are already being made available online for scholars, students, and the interested public to view. The Bearden Foundation's signature *Cinque Artist Program* provides a platform for mid career artists to talk about their work and network with wider audiences.

www.beardenfoundation.org



ROMARE
BEARDEN
FOUNDATION

INSTITUTE OF JAZZ STUDIES, RUTGERS
UNIVERSITY NEWARK

The Institute of Jazz Studies (IJS) is the world's foremost jazz archives and research library. Founded in 1952 by pioneer jazz scholar Marshall Stearns (1908-66), the Institute has been a pioneering institution in the preservation and access of jazz heritage. IJS relocated from Stearns' apartment to Rutgers University Newark in 1966, and is part of the Rutgers University Libraries. In 1994, IJS moved to spacious new quarters on the fourth floor of the John Cotton Dana Library at Rutgers University Newark. The Institute serves a broad clientele, including teachers, scholars, musicians, the media, record companies, filmmakers, and arts agencies.

www.libraries.rutgers.edu/newark/visit-study/institute-jazz-studies



IN COMMON

NOV 9, 2023 JAN 15, 2024

EXHIBITION

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IN COMMON

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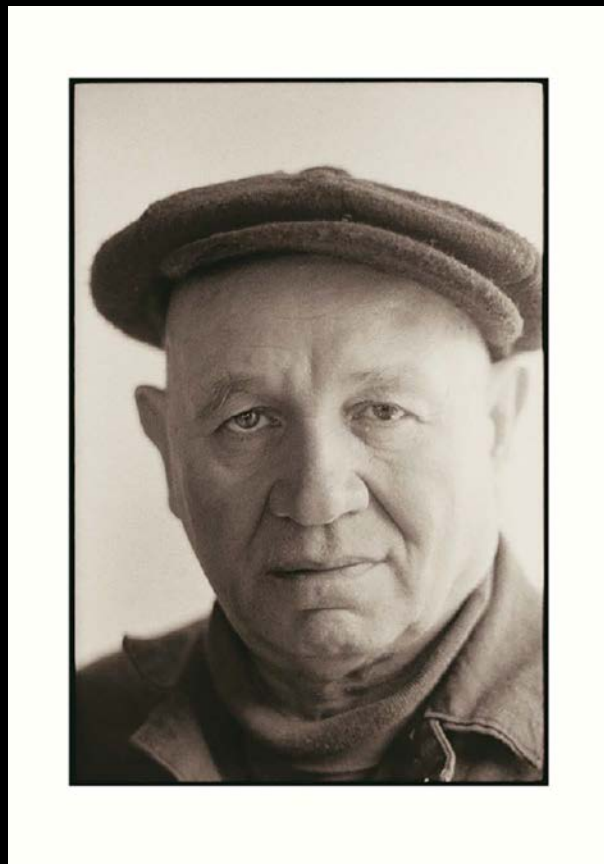
ARTISTS

EXHIBITION

EXHIBITION

ROMARE BEARDEN

EXHIBITION



Romare Bearden, 1979. Photo by Frank Stewart. Courtesy of the artist and Romare Bearden Foundation.

Romare Howard Bearden was born on September 2, 1911, in segregated Charlotte, North Carolina, and died in New York City on March 12, 1988. Recognized as one of the most creative and original visual artists of the twentieth century, Bearden had a prolific and distinguished career.

Bearden and his family moved between New York and Pittsburgh, with a brief stay in Canada before settling in Harlem. As a young boy, Romare would return to Charlotte to visit his grandparents, and southern culture remained a constant source of inspiration. After college, he embarked on a lifelong study of art, gathering inspiration from Western masters ranging from Duccio, Giotto, and de Hooch to Cézanne, Picasso, and Matisse, as well as from African sculpture, masks and textiles, Japanese prints, and Chinese landscape paintings. Bearden became a great chronicler of African American life and culture by drawing from these many cultures and art forms to distill his own experiences into universal statements with wide appeal.

Bearden attended Lincoln and Boston University before completing his studies at New York University, graduating with a degree in education. There, he began his career in art as a lead cartoonist and art editor for the monthly journal *The Medley*. After graduating in 1935, Bearden became a weekly editorial cartoonist for

the *Baltimore Afro-American*. He also attended the Art Students League in New York, where he met the German satirist George Grosz, who introduced him to the great draftsmen of art history.

In 1935, Bearden became a caseworker with the New York City Department of Social Services, where he worked mostly with the Gypsy community (as it was referred to at the time) until 1969. He was drafted into the US Army in 1942 and served in a segregated unit. He continued to work on his art nights and weekends, and his success as an artist was recognized with his first solo exhibition in Harlem in 1940 and his first solo show in Washington, DC, in 1944.

Bearden was also a respected writer and an eloquent spokesperson on artistic and social issues and advocated for artists' rights. Through the Harlem Artists Guild and the 306 Group, he became acquainted with artists associated with the Harlem Renaissance: Charles Alston, Henry Bannarn, Gwendolyn Bennett, Stuart Davis, Aaron Douglas, and Augusta Savage, among others. In the 1960s, he helped organize artists through the Studio Museum in Harlem, the Spiral Group, and Cinque Gallery, which he founded with Ernest Crichlow and Norman Lewis in 1969.

In 1950, Bearden used the G.I. Bill to study philosophy at the Sorbonne in Paris. There, he met artists Georges Braque and Constantin Brancusi, as well as American writers James Baldwin, Albert Murray, and Richard Wright. Hoping to earn enough money to return to Paris, Bearden took a turn at writing lyrics for a songwriting team. When finally returning to painting in the late 1950s, he made highly experimental abstract works in oil, far from the Cubism-inspired works he was known for throughout the late 1940s, but a precursor for the iconic collage compositions to come. The artist was greatly affected by the civil rights movement, and his work in the 1960s reflected the urgent need for change and new forms of political engagement. Collage became Bearden's primary method.

In the early 1970s, he and his wife Nanette (née Rohan) established a second residence on

the Caribbean island of Saint Martin, his wife's ancestral home, and his later work reflected the island's vibrant colors, lush landscapes, and mysticism. Nanette established the Romare Bearden Foundation in 1990.

Bearden was a prolific artist whose works were exhibited during his lifetime throughout the United States and Europe. His work is included in many important public collections, including New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art, and the Studio Museum in Harlem, as well as the Philadelphia Museum of Art and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, among others. He has had retrospectives at the Museum of Modern Art, New York (1971), the Mint Museum of Art, Charlotte, NC (1980), the Detroit Institute of the Arts (1986), as well as posthumous retrospectives at the Studio Museum in Harlem (1991) and the National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC (2003).

Publications include *The Painter's Mind: A Study of the Relations of Structure and Space in Painting* (1969); *Six Black Masters of American Art* (1972); *The Caribbean Poetry of Derek Walcott and the Art of Romare Bearden* (1983); and *A History of African American Artists: From 1792 to the Present*, coauthored with Harry Henderson and published posthumously in 1993.

Bearden received honorary doctorates from Pratt Institute, Carnegie Mellon University, Davidson College, and Atlanta University, to name but a few. He was one of the founding members of the Black Academy of Arts and Letters in 1970 and was elected to the National Institute of Arts and Letters in 1972. He received the National Medal of Arts, presented by President Ronald Reagan, in 1987.

Diedra Harris-Kelley is a writer, curator, Adjunct Professor in Africana Studies (the Harlem Semester) at Barnard College, and Co-Director of the Romare Bearden Foundation.

EXHIBITION

E-2

Diedra Harris-Kelley

E-3

IN COMMON: NEW APPROACHES WITH ROMARE BEARDEN

Two generations after the passing of American icon Romare Bearden in 1988, the significance of his art to contemporary realities and circumstances facing Black and other communities of color persists.

Drawing from the collections of the Romare Bearden Foundation, The New School, and private collectors, this exhibition showcases a selection of works in which Bearden explores race and racial stereotypes, often taking inspiration from history, literature, the Bible, jazz, and African American communities. His work is complemented by six leading and emerging contemporary Black artists—Black Quantum Futurism, Kahlil Robert Irving, Lorraine O’Grady, Hank Willis Thomas, Mickalene Thomas, and Charisse Pearlina Weston—whose practices and values resonate with those of Bearden and contribute to a multi-generational dialogue on the political agency of art.

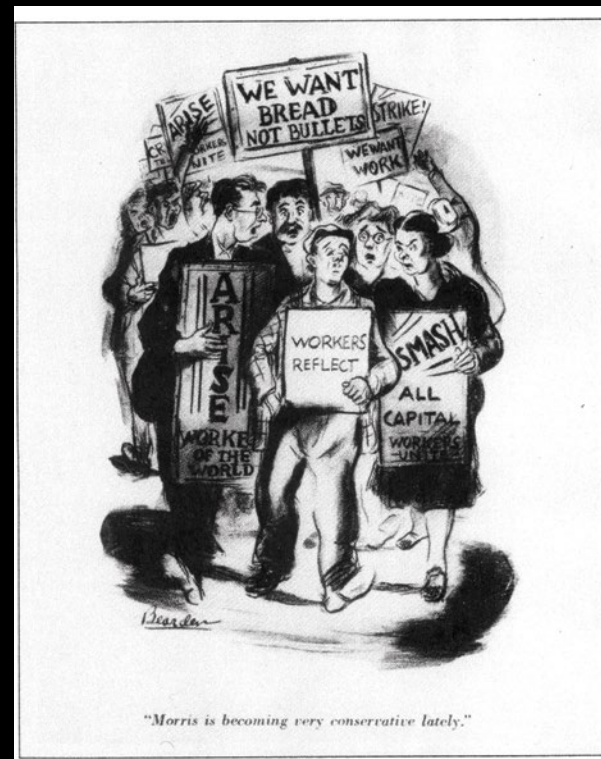
This exhibition is distinct in how it creates intergenerational conversations with the use of original objects from Bearden’s archive juxtaposed with recently created works that pay direct homage to Bearden compositions. The chosen works present storytelling through powerful topics such as history, historical figures, and protest, and display engagement with mass media to represent dialogues already in the public realm of newspapers, magazines, and the Internet. Most importantly, this exhibition shows off artists’ use of innovative techniques of photography, collage, and printmaking on vinyl, glass, and photo-reflective materials.

For over fifty years Romare Bearden depicted and celebrated the life that surrounded

him. In his words, “I want to see how life can triumph!” His evolution into a master artist began in the 1930s with cartoons for his college magazines—first at Lincoln, then Boston University, and later New York University—before eventually contributing hard-hitting editorial cartoons for national publications.



Romare Bearden, “Marching Along Together,” *The Crisis*, March 1935. Courtesy of the Romare Bearden Foundation.



Romare Bearden, “Morris is Becoming very Conservative Lately” (Picket Line), *The Medley*, March 1935. Courtesy of the Romare Bearden Foundation.

At both NYU and Boston University, Bearden drew humorist statements about workers and everyday people. After graduating he turned to single statement editorial cartoons with greater critiques of political issues of the time—fascism, racism, and capitalism. For two years he contributed to the *Baltimore Afro-American*, still one of the

longest-running Black newspapers in the country. At that time his art also graced the covers of national publications such as *Opportunity* and *Crisis*, the journal of the NAACP. Featured in this exhibition is the reproduction of the 1942 gouache painting *Factory Workers*, as it appeared in an issue of *Fortune* magazine. It ran opposite a story titled “The Negro’s War,” which examined the social and financial costs of racial discrimination during wartime and advocated for full integration of the American workplace.

The photographs at the beginning of the exhibition display two sides of Bearden: one working under the ever-present image of his past—his great grandparents—and the other in collaboration and conversation with contemporaries. One of these artists pictured, Robert Blackburn, was a central figure to artists in New York in the 1970s and 80s through his printmaking studio, now known as the Robert Blackburn Printmaking Workshop. The master printmaker was responsible for some of Bearden’s early and most experimental print editions. The original plates on exhibition were all made by Bearden under the guidance of Blackburn, his friend and collaborator. It is important to note that the photographs were taken by another friend and artist, photographer Frank Stewart.

The notes on view below the photographs represent yet another side of Bearden, an educator, espousing the “Various Mediums of Art” in reproductions of his hand-drawn explanations of paint, color mixing, and the processes of printmaking. As the author of seminal articles explaining art movements or the position of Black artists, and co-author of books on the structure of

Johanne Bryant-Beid,
Diedra Harris-Kelley,
Carin Kuoni,
Eriola Pira

painting, Bearden was often called upon to lecture, explain, or curate group shows of other Black artists.¹

Romare Bearden came from a civic minded family; his great grandfather was a prominent figure in segregated Charlotte, North Carolina, and owned a general store. Bearden and his parents left Charlotte around 1914 because of their own encounters with racial violence. His mother became a New York correspondent for the *Chicago Defender*, a national newspaper popular with the masses of African Americans moving to urban cities. She was also the first president of the Negro Women's Democratic Association and was elected to New York City's School Board 15, becoming the first Black woman to sit on a local board. Bearden was coming into his own as a writer and commentator when he penned his first article at the age of twenty six about steel workers striking in the South. He took on current debates about art with articles such as *The Negro Artist and Modern Art* (1934) and *The Negro Artist's Dilemma* (1946).²

The artist continued to involve himself in efforts for social change in his capacity as an artist. The Spiral Group, an artist collective that formed in 1963 in response to the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, first met in Bearden's studio. The group included Charles Alston, Emma Amos, Romare Bearden, Calvin Douglass, Perry Ferguson, Reginald Gammon, Felrath Hines, Alvin Hollingsworth, Norman Lewis, Earl Miller, William Majors, Richard Mayhew, Merton D. Simpson, Hale Woodruff, and James Yeagans. It was here that Black artists were voicing their concerns about social inequality as well as the lack of opportunities for exhibiting their art. There were critiques, too, about how or even if their art should reflect the issues of the time, whether abstraction was relevant or not, or if Black artists should participate in segregated exhibitions. Spiral was short lived, but the controversies continue to this day.³

Called to action by the energy of the civil rights movement, Bearden lent his highly developed artistic voice to communicate messages about the contemporary Black experience through platforms of mass media and promotional advertising. Examples can be seen on display here for the magazine covers of *Fortune* (1968), *Time* (1969), and *The New York Times Magazine* (1969). His method of collage had the ability to speak on multiple levels about race, class, and urban architecture. The mix of photographic materials and colored paper also worked well to convey

strong family icons like his popular compositions of women *Conjur*, *Obeah*, and *Madonna and Child* (here represented by *Crisis* magazine and *Come Sunday*), and reverberates in the works of contemporary artist Mickalene Thomas and Bearden's revisioning of classic stories like *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey* by Homer. On view is *The Fall of Troy*, a print from Bearden's *Odysseus* series of collages where the artist casts his characters for the epic poem as Black and Brown people, and in colorful surroundings that could be Greece, but could also be Africa, or the Caribbean. Another work from that series, *Battle with Cicones*, is referenced in Hank Willis Thomas's retroreflective homage to Bearden, shown on the opposite wall.

Bearden's collage techniques also allowed for the mixing of texture and cultures and the collapsing of time and space. This can be seen in a portrait of Joseph Cinque, the enslaved African who led a mutiny aboard a slave ship, where simplified, overlapping graphic forms depict Cinque, Africa, and the ship all in one piece, called *Slave Ship* (1971). The composition is later reworked and simplified further to promote *Roots: The Saga of An American Family*, the television miniseries, on the cover of *TV Guide* (1977). Based on a novel by Alex Haley, *Roots* tells a story of enslaved African's experiences in the Americas. This multi episode dramatization is still used in classes to teach this history. More Afrofuturist collapsing of time and space can be seen in the works of the contemporary artists in the exhibition.

In speaking about the connection between images and advocating for political change, Bearden famously said:

... it is not my aim to paint about the Negro in America in terms of propaganda. It is precisely my awareness of the distortions required of the polemicist that has caused me to paint the life of my people as I know it as passionately and dispassionately as Brueghel painted the life of the Flemish people of his day.

Romare Bearden from *Rectangular Structure in My Montage Paintings* (1969)

Bearden's form of activism fits well into the Vera List Center's biennial 2022-2024 Focus Theme *Correction**, with an insistence on the inclusion of perspectives and voices otherwise invisible. It often showed up in simply depicting his people as he knew them to be as part of what he called the *Prevalence of Ritual* in baptism, in the garden, on the block, at an evening meal, or in a club

making the most iconic American music, jazz. Though his message was consistent, Bearden's medium changed often gouache paintings through the early 1940s in the style of social realism, watercolor abstractions carried explorations of Cubist figurations, nonobjective oil painting in the 1950s, and innovative collage using magazine and colored papers in the 1960s. Then he turned to printmaking, a multidimensional medium, that became a natural extension of his search for methods to carry his stories.

Throughout these periods, Bearden never stopped making the collage, and collage is what he is best known for. Printmaking was a simultaneous path of exploration but also led to other economic possibilities. With the success of the artist's exhibitions in the late 1960s, particularly his solo showing at the Museum of Modern Art in New York in 1971, came greater demand for his collages. Bearden understood that the prices of his work put ownership beyond the reach of all but a small group of collectors.

Printmaking has long been present at the forefront of political activism a way to spread messages widely and could be seen as a more democratic outlet. Some of the techniques of fine art editions were a lot like producing magazines and newspapers for larger distribution. This must have felt familiar to Bearden.

Making prints then, and still today, is a collaborative and community building effort. The space for big printing presses, inking stations, etching baths, and drying racks requires institutional support. For expertise with techniques and additional hands to pull large sheets of materials usually required a whole studio. Bearden worked with some of the best master printmakers in New York.⁴

Featured in this exhibition is the etching *The Train*, which demonstrates Bearden's use of the medium for creative possibilities. It was one of the key prints developed at the Blackburn Printmaking Workshop. The composition originally sprang from a 1964 collage then called *Mysteries*. It depicts a family of people crowded into an interior scene typical of his works based on childhood memories, and with the artist's characteristic shifting scale of faces and hands, and the iconic train seen through the window, elements that show up throughout his later collages. Iterations of this same composition can be seen through print trials with monochromatic color schemes, rainbow roll backgrounds, a hand colored series titled *12 Trains*, and deluxe borders, as in the one on display here. The manipulation of colors and textures from the same basic

plate allowed for the push and pull of the elements, and various foci of this layered experience for the artist. Also, on display in this exhibition is one of the original copper plates used in the etchings that were cut into pieces to allow for sections of the work to be inked separately, and then reassembled like a jigsaw puzzle, before running through the printing press.

Beyond the creative possibilities pushed in this work is an insistence on the core story of this family. Their penetrating stares hold the viewer's attention, perhaps daring you to look around them to their meager surroundings, the shack like walls, the can of beans, and the plate of watermelon. You are confronted with their eyes, their humanity, a protective arm that blocks access to a child. A seemingly straightforward picture of the life of his people as he knows it, yet not allowing for simple assumptions.

CONTEMPORARY ARTISTS

Building on that understanding of the political efficacy of printmaking as it relates to Bearden and observing contemporary applications and opportunities of print and image making, the six contemporary artists working through prints on paper, textiles, or other substrates, including installation and print based sculptural forms, extend this legacy into the future.

LORRAINE O'GRADY

Like Bearden, I'm trying to make the invisible visible, is how Lorraine O'Grady responded to our invitation.⁵ O'Grady has done so through an extraordinary body of work, literally framing in gold those who are usually omitted from the art historical cannon such as in *Art Is* (1983), celebrating womanhood in a performance in Central Park in *Rivers, First Draft, or Woman in Red* (1981), or equating the female body with tropes of historical heroes, such as the brave knight in *Family Portrait 1 (Formal, Composed)* 2020. For *In Common*, O'Grady selected four diptychs from her *Cutting Out the New York Times* series from 1977/2017. Before turning to art, O'Grady had worked as a contract analyst in the US State Department for several years, during the Cuban Missile Crisis and beyond. Working through ten newspapers and three radio programs every day, language just melted away, as she has said.⁶ In the initial series from 1977, entitled *Cutting Out the New York Times (CONYT)*, she set out to make the public language of the *New York Times* personal. When she reprised and expanded on that series forty years later, she reinforced the importance of

the structure of the diptych for her work, as a political position: “When you put two things that are related and yet totally dissimilar in a position of equality on the wall, for example, they set up a conversation that is never-ending. That ‘both/and’ lack of resolution—the acceptance and embrace of it, as opposed to the Western ‘either/or’ binary, which is always exclusive and hierarchical—needs to become the cultural goal.”⁷

CHARISSE PEARLINA WESTON

In 1990s New York, Mayor Rudy Giuliani had the windows of abandoned apartment buildings, primarily in the Bronx, covered with decal prints of cute flower pots. He was an ardent proponent of the so-called broken windows theory—since debunked⁸—that held that major crime can be averted by beautifying the neighborhood and targeting minor transgressions with excessive policing measures. The artist Charisse Pearlina Weston has commented that her pieces in this exhibition are related to the broken window theory and Black protest.⁹ In *(to be) between the beginning and the before climax of impending surge* (2021), she juxtaposes a photograph from *Life* magazine’s coverage of the 1965 Watts Uprising in Los Angeles with a photograph of the insurrection at the United States Capitol on January 6, 2021, to compare the ways media represent Black protest versus those in support of white supremacy. The sheet of glass bearing this juxtaposition is standing in a bed of toxic lead. Weston’s second work in *In Common, and rust flows down, glistening (...to neon, to rolled sleeves, to arms, to pause)* (2022), 10 features,¹⁰ features images of the Congress for Racial Equality (CORE) protests of the 1964 World’s Fair in Queens, New York, which included a call to refuse access to the fair. The precariousness and ambiguity of archival documents are emphasized by the fact that the media images are etched into fragile glass panes. Where Bearden used newsprint, Weston embraces glass. Both are pursued as symbolic as well as literal forms of dissemination, fragmentation, precarity, and transparency.

MICKALENE THOMAS

In referring to Bearden as both her “influence and guide,”¹¹ Mickalene Thomas displays the same sense of simultaneously inhabiting and owning historical past, present, and future as Bearden himself. Best known for her elaborate rhinestone, acrylic, and enamel paintings, prints, and installations, Thomas references, blends, and transcends classical Western art genres—portraiture,

landscapes, still lives. She sources imagery from the great painters of twentieth century art, among them Henri Matisse, and just like Bearden adds references to pop culture and mass media such as *Jet* magazine calendars. *In Common* includes two new works. *Resist #11* is an soaring and painful account of Black life in America, including media images of a determined Shirley Chisholm, who in 1968 became the first Black woman elected to the US Congress,¹² news images of the civil rights protests in Birmingham, Alabama, in 1963, but also recent events, such as an image of Eleanor Bumpurs, fatally shot in her Bronx, NY, home by the police in 2016. The rough red drawing of a scene of violence—a figure threatening another with a rifle or long baton—holds the anachronistic scenes compositionally together. *NUS Exotiques #7* is the glorious representation of a naked woman. With the same image repeated once at a smaller scale, as if heading off into the future distance, the effect of the piece is one of collapsed time, echoed by the cadence of rhinestone lines, abstract bars, and architectural patterns. Thomas holds onto collage as both the actual medium and the conceptual reference, and applies a number of sophisticated technical processes ranging from laser cuts to appliqué, not unlike the experimental drive and perfectionist quest of Romare Bearden himself.

HANK WILLIS THOMAS

In Common also features a distinct conversation unfolding around the *Odyssey*, between Romare Bearden’s 1979 *The Fall of Troy* and Hank Willis Thomas’s *Battle with Cicones* from 2023. For both, these are pieces of larger bodies of work that refer to classic, literary narratives. And while each focuses on layering beauty, violence, and loss, Thomas’s rendition is hypercharged: Trained as a photographer, the artist has over the last ten years perfected the technique of retroflective printing, which allows for a dense layering of references whose depths only become visible as the viewer moves in changing light conditions or shines a flashlight in front of the prints. The tragic tale of mutual violence—first Odysseus takes the Cicones’ stronghold Ismara, slaying most and taking Ciconian women as slaves, followed by the revenge of other Cicones who kill so many of Odysseus’s men that he is forced to flee—is now augmented with news imagery from historical civil rights and present-day protests in response to the violence inflicted on Black bodies. Artificial and natural light changes throughout the day, and so does the message of the work. Thomas has

described himself as a “visual cultural archeologist”¹³ and commented on how Bearden’s collages “focus on the everyday images to tell new stories.”¹⁴ Behind the bold figurations, latent images in *Battle with Cicones* reveal new histories as well, though their repetition is haunting and timeless.

KAHLIL ROBERT IRVING

Created for *In Common*, Kahlil Robert Irving’s *Stop_Drop-reality (Yelling)* envelopes the visitor before they have even entered Kellen Gallery and firmly inscribes their exhibition experience in a digital universe of past, present, future as well as futurity. With the Internet providing the subtext for all of our moves, Irving lifts from this digital culture manifestations of Black life and death, and describes it as the “everlasting feedback loop of my experience.”¹⁵ Visually and in terms of content, the information sampled is fragmentary, pixelated, endlessly repeated, presenting an expanded notion of collage that is very much rooted in art history. “For me,” Irving has said, “collage is also a space in which slippages can exist. Like the way, say, if Romare Bearden’s collage portraits don’t align to form a true-to-life face, then can I collage conceptual interests, physical interests, material interests and just kind of exist in that slippage? Collage also relates to sampling, to music. It’s like deciphering a code: is it a code? Is it more just a series of sounds?”¹⁶ *WONDER Land of many men, ro-man, Black and Black* (2019) is part of Irving’s “street sculptures,” that were initially made as works on paper with a wink to trompe l’oeil traditions of the hyper-real. Here, they expand on Irving’s expertise as a ceramicist (which he studied in college) and captures the look of asphalt in clay. But what is fixed in the earthen matter is also the sky—stars, galaxies, and constellations. Together, these works allow the present and past to exist simultaneously, putting the street and the sky in relations with one another.

BLACK QUANTUM FUTURISM

For the collective Black Quantum Futurism, a multidisciplinary collaboration between Camae Ayewa (a musician also known as Moor Mother) and Rasheedah Phillips (artist and housing lawyer by day), the invitation to reflect and respond to Bearden’s work, particularly his collages and deft moves between art, mass media, and activism, has generated the concept of *Layer Time*, what they define as a “temporal dimension that is like collage layers, each representing a distinct temporal phase.”¹⁷ Bringing together collages on canvas,

clocks and watches, writing, and screen-based work from their 2018 project *Black Space Agency*, their installation serves as a temporal portal through which to reconnect to the past and create new liberatory Black futures within the exhibition space. Drawing on sources such as the space race, alternative futurities, Afro-diasporan temporalities, quantum physics, housing futures, and speculative fiction, the installation, as well as their performance *Layer Time: The Past is Already Rearranged by Our Gaze* (during the symposium on December 1 in the gallery) offers a layered understanding of time and space, with each layer, much like in a collage, standing in for a distinct temporal phase or possibility. “In this performative lecture,” they write, “we explore the confluence of Romare Bearden’s collage artistry, black spatial agency, temporal autonomy, and quantum physics within the exhibition. Ungluing Bearden’s layered and complex narrative of African American life and human existence, we draw parallels between collaging and quantum superposition, delving into how Bearden’s collages encapsulate a continuum of temporal experiences.”¹⁸

Building on that understanding of the political efficacy of collage and printmaking as it relates to Bearden and observing contemporary applications and opportunities of print and image-making, the six contemporary artists working through prints on paper, textiles, or other substrates, including installation and print-based sculptural forms, extend this legacy into the future.

Bearden was a force in American art throughout his life, through his political engagement, his commitment to nurturing communities of like-minded artists, and major exhibitions at museums throughout the country. By the time of his death in 1988, his work was in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, MoMA, and the Detroit Institute of the Arts; he had exhibited in the Whitney Biennial, and numerous monographs had appeared. And he left behind the legacy of the Spiral Group, Cinque Gallery, and other artist associations. Then it grew quiet. Or so it seemed.

But as we emerge from the harshest effects of the pandemic, as the impact of the Black Lives Matter movement, especially since the summer of 2020, is still sinking in, and as we as a society are considering reparations and other attempts at correction, it turns out that Bearden has been a companion all along to contemporary artists working today.

Johanne Bryant-Reid is a writer, curator, and Co-Director of the Romare Bearden

IN COMMON ARTISTS

Foundation. Diedra Harris-Kelley is a writer, curator, and Co-Director of the Romare Bearden Foundation. Carin Kuoni is Senior Director/Chief Curator of the Vera List Center for Art and Politics. Eriola Pira is a writer and Curator and Director of Programs of the Vera List Center for Art and Politics.

- 1 *The Painter's Mind: A Study of the Relations of Structure and Space in Painting*, co-authored with painter Carl Holty (New York: Crown Publishers, 1969); *The History of African American Art & Artists from 1792 to the Present*, co-authored with Harry Henderson (New York: Abrams, 1993).
- 2 "The Negro in "Little Steel" (*Opportunity Journal of Negro Life*, 1937); "The Negro Artist and Modern Art" (*Opportunity Journal of Negro Life*, December 1934); And "The Negro Artist's Dilemma", (*Critique: A Review of Contemporary Art*, November 1946).
- 3 See, for instance, <https://www.artnews.com/art-news/retrospective/september-1966-norman-lewis-romare-bearden-5482/>.
- 4 For more information on this work and Bearden's printing processes, see essays and interviews by Mary Lee Corlett and others in *From Process to Print: Graphic Works by Romare Bearden* (New York and Portland: Romare Bearden Foundation and Pomegranate, 2009).
- 5 Zoom conversation with *In Common* curators, March 7, 2023.
- 6 Lauren O'Neill-Butler, "Lorraine O'Grady on creating a counter-confessional poetry," *Artforum* November 19, 2018, <https://www.artforum.com/columns/lorraine-ogrady-on-creating-a-counter-confessional-poetry-241349/>.
- 7 Ibid.
- 8 David Thacher. "Order Maintenance Reconsidered: Moving beyond Strong Causal Reasoning," *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology*, Vol 94, No 2, 2004. <https://scholarlycommons.law.northwestern.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=&httpsredir=1&article=7152&context=jclc>.
- 9 Charisse Pearlina Weston in an email to *In Common* curators, March 27, 2023.
- 10 First shown in *Charisse Pearlina Weston: of [a] tomorrow: lighter than air, stronger than whiskey, cheaper than dust*, Queens Museum, New York, 2022-2023, curated by Lindsey Berfond.
- 11 Mickalene Thomas in a Zoom call with *In Common* curators, April 7, 2023.
- 12 Chisholm delivered the lecture "Do Women Dare" in 1969 at The New School's Human Relations Center, the precursor to the Vera List Center for Art and Politics. https://digital.archives.newschool.edu/index.php/Detail/objects/NS070210_000007.
- 13 Hank Willis Thomas in the video, *Explore "I've Known Rivers" with Hank Willis Thomas*, 2023. <https://www.pacegallery.com/journal/explore-ive-known-rivers-with-hank-willis-thomas/>.
- 14 In conversation with *In Common* curators, artist studio, April 5, 2023.
- 15 Irving in *Thelma Golden and Legacy Russell*, "Something Beautiful Waiting There for You: A Conversation with Kahlil Robert Irving." *MoMA Magazine*, April 26, 2022. <https://www.moma.org/magazine/articles/724>.
- 16 Irving in Chris Fite-Wassilak, "Kahlil Robert Irving: Excavating the Recent Past." *ArtReview*, May 22, 2023. <https://artreview.com/kahlil-robert-irving-excavating-the-recent-past-walker-art-center-bold-tendencies/>.
- 17 *Black Quantum Futurism* in an email to *In Common* curators, October 29, 2023.
- 18 *Black Quantum Futurism* in an email to *In Common* curators, October 27, 2023.

ON BEARDEN



Romare Bearden, *Train Whistle Blues no. 2*, 1964, gelatin silver print (Photostat), 39 × 29 1/4 inches. Courtesy of DC Moore Gallery.

BLACK QUANTUM FUTURISM

“Romare Bearden’s work provides us with a sense of “Layer Time,” a temporal dimension that is like collage layers, each representing a distinct temporal phase. Unlike linear time perception, Layer Time embodies a fluid structure, allowing simultaneous interaction of multiple temporal layers. Layer Time expands chronological progress perception into a nuanced, layered understanding of temporal reality, enriching the discourse on time, memory, identity, and the quantum realm, providing a fertile ground for exploring the interplay between these domains, thereby continuing the dialogue between art, science, and social consciousness.

Bearden’s fluid navigation between media, art, and political activism reflects the interdisciplinary core of our Black Space Agency project. His legacy motivates us to transcend conventional

artistic domains, weaving narratives that echo through time and space, paralleling our own journey to unveil and uproot obscured narratives surrounding Black spatial agency and temporal autonomy.

Our *Black Space Agency* collage series draws from the 1960s’ socio-political landscapes in North Philadelphia, by spotlighting Rev. Leon H. Sullivan’s establishment of Progress Aerospace Enterprises, one of the first Black-owned aerospace companies, just days after Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s murder. This endeavor, deeply entwined with Civil Rights and Black Liberation movements, alongside affordable housing and the space race, mirrors Bearden’s corrective impulse to enrich historical narratives, fostering deeper communal understanding.

The exhibition’s printmaking focus aligns with our ethos of democratizing art, promoting a broader narrative dialogue. Our project extends

from the larger Community Futures Lab project, offering a collaborative platform for communal engagement. Like traditional printmaking, it embraces innovative practices fostering cultural and economic inclusivity. Collage, akin to poetic narrative, melds meaning and life, bridging generations and expressing a community’s aspirations, feelings, and envisioned futures. It represents a rhythmic heartbeat of community, narrating stories through a fabric of human interaction and connectivity.

Through the Black Space Agency project and the *In Common* initiative, we traverse a continuum where past narratives and future visions intertwine, resonating with Romare Bearden’s enduring legacy, navigating through historical events, contemporary challenges, and envisioned pathways towards liberatory Black futures.”

KAHLIL ROBERT IRVING

“To be honest, Romare Bearden was one of the first Black artists I learned about. It was not just his work but his personness. He looks like my great grandfather. They both were fair skinned. It told me that where I was and who I am is valuable and I, too, have something to say. Blackness is a range and a field that allows many to be present and participate. I am thankful to Mr. Bearden for all that he did and continues to do through the Foundation. I am also thankful to my great grandfather, Haywood Irving, who survived through Jim Crow and segregation for my family to be born from him. I am now here with my voice and my practice.”



Romare Bearden, *The Train*, 1975, etching and aquatint, 28 × 33 inches. Courtesy of Nanette Bearden Trust.

LORRAINE O'GRADY

"Before I became an artist, when I was living in Chicago, I remember coming to visit my sister-in-law, the actress and director Billie Allen, in New York. When I entered her duplex on 57th Street facing Central Park, the entire space looked like one big mural, every square inch was filled with Romare Bearden works, it was all one thing. That left an impression! I remember beautiful figure drawings, landscapes of the body. Later, when I had barely begun making art, I became convinced that Futurism, Dada, and Surrealism were the

most important movements in twentieth century art, even more than Cubism, because it was not so directly tied to the unconscious. The collage aesthetic was key. I use collage as a methodology even in my writing. The newspaper poems in this show are just one example. Bearden used collage as well. And that was a very courageous move at the time he began. There was not very much support within the Black community for Surrealism and collage, and I always felt connected to him for that, for our shared embrace of the collage impulse."



Romare Bearden, *The Fall of Troy (Odysseus series)*, 1979, screen print, 2 6 3/4 x 32 1/4 inches. Courtesy of Nanette Bearden Trust.

EXHIBITION



Romare Bearden, *Untitled (Urban Crisis cover, Fortune magazine)*, 1968, archival periodical, 7 3/8 x 5 inches. Courtesy of Romare Bearden Foundation.

E-14

HANK WILLIS THOMAS

"Romare Bearden was a local artist with a global audience and global discourse. What I love about his work is that he could speak intimately to the human condition and create a context through his collage that expands space and time and references multiple cultural influences all at once. And he never seemed to stop challenging the status

quo by taking images and stories that might be discarded and putting them in a central element of his work. And so I take a lot away from that because I am often thinking about ways in which the past is present and how, through my practice, I can bring stories together that might seem disparate in a way that future generations can connect the dots."

EXHIBITION

E-15



Romare Bearden, *Slave Ship*, 1971, screen print, 41 × 31 inches. Courtesy of Nanette Bearden Trust.

MICKALENE THOMAS

“Although I often recall various figures from art history in my work, Romare Bearden has been a particularly significant source of inspiration for me throughout my career. His innovative use of color and composition continues to influence my practice, particularly in how I approach abstraction and reinterpretation. He was also heavily influenced by artists like Manet and Matisse, from whom I have drawn inspiration as well. When I think about Bearden, I start to see a certain lineage of artists in conversation with one another and consider how I fit into this narrative.

Beyond his formal artistic techniques, the ways in which he used collage, as means of storytelling and conveying emotion, have been a guiding influence in my art as well. His work honors and celebrates the lived experience of Black people in America, bridging the past and the present without doing a disservice to the complex narratives that he constructs. Moreover, he does so while maintaining a multidisciplinary approach, considering fields of influence outside the art world, such as music and politics, which I strive to emulate as well.”

CHARISSE PEARLINA WESTON

“Romare Bearden was a pioneering artist and writer whose work fuses political and social commentary with poetic dimensions of Black life in ways that counter various modes of anti-Black representation. I often think of him as an artist deeply concerned with a rearticulation of language and meaning. His experimentation with materials and creative processes that sustain Black life within the aftermath of slavery mined the capacity for artistic endeavors to bend and shift societal perspectives that appear ever rigid and impermeable. I am deeply inspired by Bearden’s disruption of the ideological apparatuses that fuel anti-Blackness. I am thinking alongside his acts of culling

fragments from newspapers, magazines, and other materials to then be remixed into works that not only demand a revision of history and its historiographic methods, but also articulate the possibility for an otherwise, another world, for Black people.

I am interested in the methods used to create the globalized infrastructures we often take as given. I am also interested, like Bearden, in what undergirds the social structures of visual and written language and how we as artists can disrupt the symbolic order that reifies violence and oppression. I am thankful to have the innovative work of artists like Romare Bearden as a creative guide that centers the improvisational impulses of resistance that are constitutive of Black culture.”



Romare Bearden, *Baptism*, 1975, serigraph on paper, 40 1/2 × 53 1/2 inches. Courtesy of DC Moore Gallery.

GALLERY MAP

AND CHECKLIST

EXHIBITION

- 1 KAHLIL ROBERT IRVING
Stop_Drop-reality (Yelling), 2023
Digitally sourced and constructed vinyl collage on brick wall
150 × 79 inches
Courtesy the artist
- 2 FRANK STEWART
Romare Bearden working in the studio, 1980
Photo reproduction on vinyl
16 × 24 inches
Courtesy the artist and Romare Bearden Foundation
- Romare Bearden, Jeanne Moutoussamy, and Robert Blackburn, 1975
Photo reproduction on vinyl
16 × 24 inches
Courtesy the artist and Romare Bearden Foundation
- ROMARE BEARDEN
Notes on various mediums #1, 1970s
Handwritten illustration
16 × 14 inches
Courtesy Romare Bearden Foundation
- Notes on various mediums #2, 1970s
Handwritten illustration
16 × 14 inches
Courtesy Romare Bearden Foundation
- 3 ROMARE BEARDEN
Train Whistle Blues no. 2, 1964
Gelatin silver print (Photostat) mounted
- on fiberboard
39 × 29 1/4 inches
Courtesy DC Moore Gallery
- Untitled (*Jazz*), c. 1975
Monoprint on paper
31 × 39 × 1 1/2 inches
Courtesy DC Moore Gallery
- Small's Paradise (Brass Section)*, 1979
Oil on paper monotype
37 1/2 × 49 1/8 inches
Courtesy Nanette Bearden Trust
- Jamming at the Savoy*, 1975
Etching and aquatint
25 × 32 inches
Courtesy Nanette Bearden Trust
- Roots (Odyssey)*, 1977
Screen print
33 × 27 inches
Courtesy Nanette Bearden Trust
- Martin Luther King Memorial*, 1968
Screen print
34 × 23 3/4 inches
Gift of Vera G. List
Courtesy The New School Art Collection
- Slave Ship*, 1971
Screen print
41 × 31 inches
Courtesy Nanette Bearden Trust
- 4 ROMARE BEARDEN
The Baptism (plate), c. 1970s
Collagraph plate: card-

- board, glue, gesso, ink
12 3/8 × 16 1/2 inches
Courtesy Nanette Bearden Trust
- Conversation* (plate), c. 1974
Collagraph plate: cardboard, glue, gesso, ink
12 × 14 inches
Courtesy Nanette Bearden Trust
- Factory Workers* (*Fortune* magazine), 1942
Archival periodical
14 1/2 × 11 inches
Courtesy Diedra Harris-Kelley
- Homage to Roots* (*TV Guide* magazine), 1977
Archival periodical
7 3/8 × 5 inches
Courtesy Romare Bearden Foundation
- Untitled (*Crisis* magazine), 1970
Archival periodical
10 5/8 × 7 5/8 inches
Courtesy Romare Bearden Foundation
- 5 MICKALENE THOMAS
Resist #11: A Price to Pay, 2023
Rhinestones, acrylic, and oil stick on canvas mounted on wood panel
84 × 108 inches
Private collection
- NUS Exotiques #7*, 2023
Acrylic paint, color photograph, mixed media paper, glitter and rhinestones on museum paper mounted on Dibond with

- gold leaf mahogany frame
93 3/8 × 71 5/8 inches
Courtesy the artist
- 6 CHARISSE PEARLINA WESTON
(to be) between the beginning and the before climax of impending surge, 2021
Sculpture, photographic decals on black glass, lead
37 × 25 × 9 1/2 inches
Courtesy the artist
- and rust flows down, glistening (...to neon, to rolled sleeves, to arms, to pause)*, 2022
Sculpture, glass, photographic decal, etched text, high fire enamel, concrete, and steel
43 × 28 × 20 inches
Courtesy the artist
- 7 ROMARE BEARDEN
Iliad Collagraph (plate), c. 1970
Collagraph plate: cardboard, glue, gesso, ink
14 3/8 × 17 3/8 inches
Courtesy Nanette Bearden Trust
- 8 ROMARE BEARDEN
Olympics (poster maquette), 1975
Collage on fiberboard
26 × 22 × 1 inches
Courtesy Romare Bearden Foundation
- 9 KAHLIL ROBERT IRVING
WONDER Land of many men, ro-man, Black and Black, 2019
Unglazed stoneware and

- white clay on wood pedestal
6 × 55 × 55 inches
Collection Dennis Freedman
- 10 ROMARE BEARDEN
Come Sunday, 1975
Lithograph
36 × 30 1/2 inches
Courtesy Nanette Bearden Trust
- Salome* (*Prevalence of Ritual* series), 1974
Screen print
40 × 49 inches
Courtesy Nanette Bearden Trust
- The Train*, 1975
Etching and aquatint
28 × 33 inches
Courtesy Nanette Bearden Trust
- The Train* (plate), c. 1970s
Copperplate in Plexiglass box frame
18 1/2 × 23 inches
Courtesy Romare Bearden Foundation
- Baptism*, 1975
Serigraph on paper
40 1/2 × 53 1/2 × 2 inches
Courtesy DC Moore Gallery
- Evening Meal of Prophet Peterson*, 1964
Gelatin silver print (Photostat) mounted on fiberboard
31 × 37 × 3 inches
Courtesy DC Moore Gallery

- 11 BLACK QUANTUM FUTURISM
Layer Time: The Past is Already Rearranged by Our Gaze, 2023
Mixed media collages from *Black Space Agency Series* (2018) and watches from *Temporal Disruptor Watch Series* (2019)
Dimensions variable
Courtesy the artist
- Black Space Agency Training*, 2018
Single-channel digital video
4"09' min
Courtesy the artist
- Black Time Belt Textile*, 2022
Printed digital collages on fabric
52 × 70 inches
Courtesy the artist
- As Above, So Below: Space and Race in the Space Race*, 2018
Text, reproduced from *The Routledge Handbook of Social Studies of Outer Space*
4 pages
Courtesy the artist
- Layer Time: The Past is Already Rearranged by Our Gaze*, 2023
Performance
Approx. 40 min
Courtesy the artist
- 12 HANK WILLIS THOMAS
The Block, 2011
Mixed media
9 × 40 × 2 inches

EXHIBITION

E-18

E-19

Courtesy the artist and
Jack Shainman Gallery
(New York)

18 1/2 × 15 1/8 inches
Courtesy Romare
Bearden Foundation

Battle with Cicones, 2023
Screen-printed and
UV-printed retroreflective
vinyl
97 7/8 × 110 × 2 1/2
inches
Courtesy the artist and
Jack Shainman Gallery
(New York)

14

LORRAINE O'GRADY
Cutting Out CONYT 07,
1977/2017
Letterpress printing on
Japanese paper, cut-out,
collage on laid paper
45 1/4 × 63 1/8 × 2 inches
Courtesy the artist and
Mariane Ibrahim
(Chicago, Paris, and
Mexico City)

13 ROMARE BEARDEN
The Fall of Troy
(*Odysseus* series), 1979
Screen print
26 3/4 × 32 1/4 inches
Courtesy Nanette
Bearden Trust

Cutting Out CONYT 08,
1977/2017
Letterpress printing on
Japanese paper, cut-out,
collage on laid paper
45 1/4 × 63 1/8 × 2 inches
Courtesy the artist and
Mariane Ibrahim
(Chicago, Paris, and
Mexico City)

Macbeth, 1977
Maquette for poster,
screen print on board
24 × 15 inches
Courtesy Romare
Bearden Foundation

Cutting Out CONYT 14,
1977/2017
Letterpress printing on
Japanese paper, cut-out,
collage on laid paper
45 1/4 × 63 1/8 × 2 inches
Courtesy the artist and
Mariane Ibrahim
(Chicago, Paris, and
Mexico City)

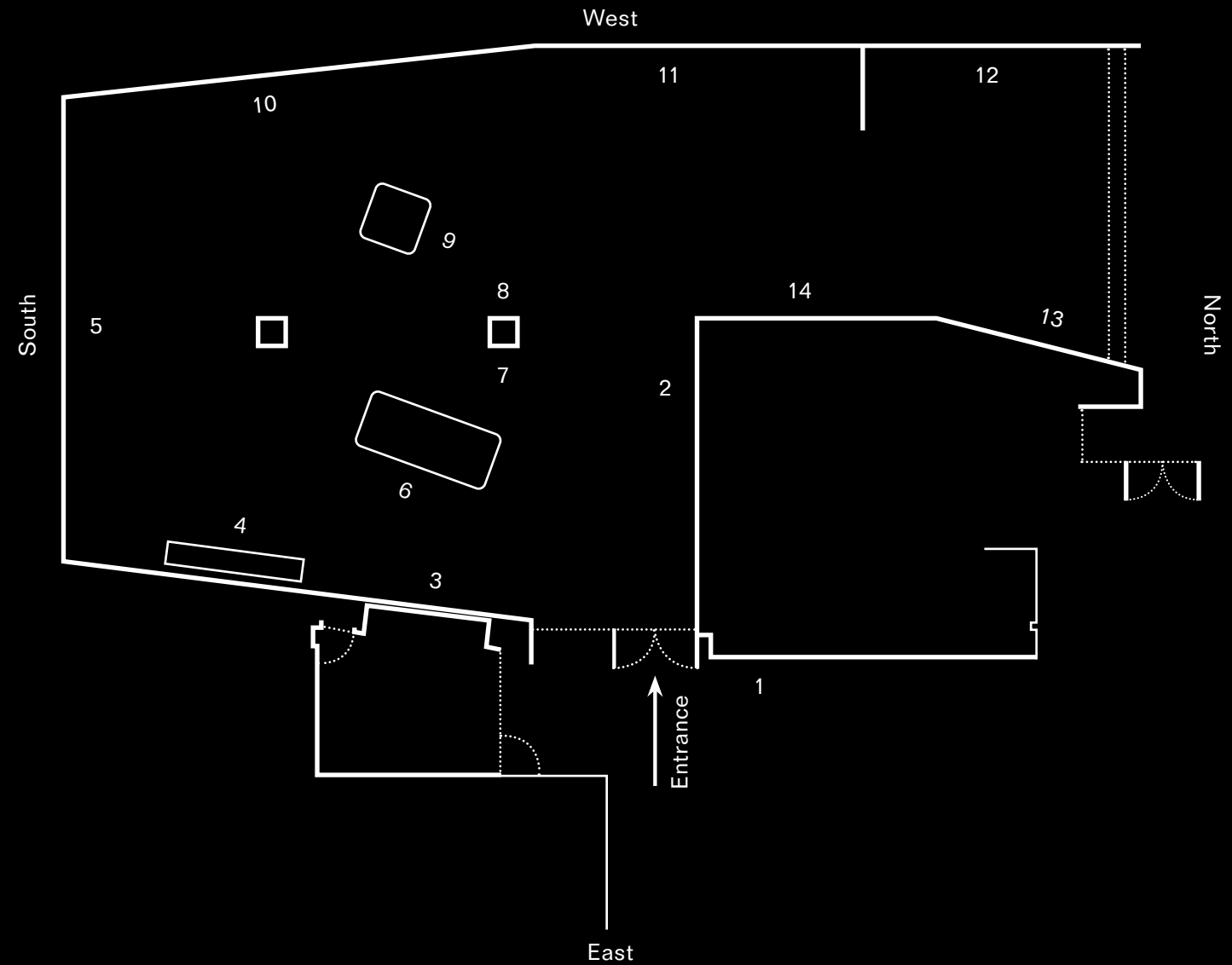
Untitled (Urban Crisis
cover, *Fortune* magazine),
1968
Archival periodical
7 3/8 × 5 inches
Courtesy Romare
Bearden Foundation

Untitled (*Harvard
Advocate* magazine), 1972
Archival periodical
14 7/8 × 11 5/8 inches
Courtesy Romare
Bearden Foundation

Cutting Out CONYT 23,
1977/2017
Letterpress printing on
Japanese paper, cut-out,
collage on laid paper
45 1/4 × 63 1/8 × 2 inches
Courtesy the artist
and Mariane Ibrahim
(Chicago, Paris, and
Mexico City)

John Lindsay (*Time*
magazine), 1969
Archival periodical
17 × 14 inches
Courtesy Romare
Bearden Foundation

Soul History (*The New
York Times Magazine*),
1968
Archival periodical



ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

BLACK QUANTUM FUTURISM

(BQF) is an interdisciplinary creative practice between Camae Ayewa and Rasheedah Phillips that weaves together quantum physics and Afrodiasporic concepts of time, space, ritual, text, and sound. Black Quantum Futurism has created a number of community-based projects, performances, music projects, installations, workshops, books, short films, and zines, including the award-winning Community Futures Lab and the Black Women Temporal Portal. BQF Collective are 2022 Creative Capital awardees, 2021 Arts at CERN Residents, 2021 Knight Art + Tech Fellows, 2018 Velocity Fund Grantee, 2017 Center for Emerging Visual Artists Fellow, 2017 Pew Fellow, and 2016 A Blade of Grass Fellows. BQF has presented, exhibited, and performed at *documenta fifteen*, Kassel, Germany; *Counterpublic*, St. Louis, MO; Red Bull Arts NY; Chicago Architecture Biennial; *Manifesta 13* Biennial, Marseille; ApexArt NYC; Philadelphia Museum of Art; ICA London; Serpentine Gallery, London; Monument Lab, and the Vera List Center for Art and Politics, The New School, where Phillips was a 2020–2022 VLC Fellow.

KAHLIL ROBERT IRVING

is an artist born in San Diego, California, in 1992, currently living and working in the US. He attended the Sam Fox School of Design and Visual Art, Washington University, in St. Louis (MFA Fellow, 2017) and the Kansas City Art Institute (BFA, Art History and Ceramics, 2015). In 2021, he had his first museum solo exhibition, *Projects: Kahlil Robert Irving*, at the Museum of Modern Art, New York. Irving recently participated in *Social Works II* at Gagosian Gallery in London. He has also participated in the Singapore Biennale, Singapore; *Soft Water Hard Stone*, The New Museum Triennial; and *Making Knowing* at the Whitney Museum of Art, New York. Works by Irving have been included in group exhibitions at the Abrons Art Center, New York; The Anderson Collection at Stanford University, San Francisco; and Mass MOCA, North Adams. He was an Artist in Residence at Art Omi in summer 2018, was awarded a Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation Biennial Award in 2019, and a Joan Mitchell Foundation Grant in 2020. Irving's work is in the collections of the Ken Ferguson Teaching Collection at the Kansas City Art Institute, Kansas City, MO; J.P Morgan Chase Art Collection, New York; the

Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, Overland Park, Kansas, MO; the Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, PA; the RISD Museum, Providence, RI; the Riga Porcelain Museum, Latvia; the Foundation for Contemporary Ceramic Art, Kecskemet, Hungary; and the Whitney Museum of American Art. In 2018, Irving's first institutional solo exhibition took place at Wesleyan University's Center for the Arts, CT. In 2024, Irving will present concurrent solo exhibitions in his home state of Missouri: at the Kemper Art Museum in St. Louis and the Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art in Overland Park, Kansas.

LORRAINE O'GRADY

is a conceptual artist and cultural critic whose work over four decades has employed the diptych, or at least the diptych idea, as its primary form. While she has consistently addressed issues of diaspora, hybridity, and Black female subjectivity and has emphasized the formative roles these have played in the history of modernism, O'Grady also uses the diptych's "both/and" approach to frame her themes as symptoms of a larger problematic, that of the divisive and hierarchical either/or categories underpinning Western philosophy. In O'Grady's works across various genres including text,

photo-installation, video and performance, multiple emotions and ideas coexist. Personal and aesthetic attitudes often considered contradictory are not distinguished. The goal of her diptychs is not to bring about a mythic "reconciliation of opposites," but rather to enable or even force a conversation between dissimilars long enough to induce familiarity. For O'Grady, the diptych helps to imagine the kind of "both/and" or "miscegenated" thinking that may be needed to counter and destabilize the West's either/or binary of "winners or losers," one that is continuously birthing supremacies, from the intimate to the political, of which white supremacy may be only the most all-inclusive. O'Grady's art works have been featured at many leading institution, among them the Art Institute of Chicago; the Museum of Modern Art, New York; Tate Modern, London; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. O'Grady has received numerous honors and awards and is a 1997–1998 VLC Fellow.

HANK WILLIS THOMAS

(b. 1976 Plainfield, New Jersey) lives and works in Brooklyn, New York, as a conceptual artist working primarily with themes related to perspective, identity, commodity, media, and popular culture. His work has been exhibited throughout the United States and abroad including the International Center of Photography, Guggenheim Museum Bilbao, Musée du Quai Branly, Hong Kong Arts Centre and the Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art. He also participated in *OURS: Democracy in the Age of Branding*, presented by the Vera

List Center for Art and Politics at The New School in 2008–09. Hank Willis Thomas earned a BFA in photography and Africana studies at New York University's Tisch School of the Arts (1998) and an MFA in photography, along with an MA in visual criticism, from the California College of the Arts, San Francisco (2004). Additionally, he has received honorary doctorates from the Maryland Institute of Art, Baltimore and the Institute for Doctoral Studies in the Visual Arts, Portland, Maine, both in 2017.

MICKALENE THOMAS

was born and raised in New Jersey and lives and works in Brooklyn, NY. One of the most influential artists in the world today, her innovative practice has yielded instantly recognizable and widely celebrated aesthetic languages within contemporary visual culture. She is known for her elaborate paintings composed of rhinestones, acrylic, and enamel. Not only do her masterful mixed-media paintings, photographs, films and installations command space, they occupy eloquently while dissecting the intersecting complexities of Black and female identity within the Western canon. Outside of her core practice, Thomas is a Tony Award-nominated co-producer, curator, educator, and mentor to many emerging artists. Apart from her own monumental solo shows, she simultaneously curates exhibitions at galleries and museums and collaborates with corporations and luxury brands. She has been honored with multiple awards and grants including an Honorary Doctorate in Fine Arts from the New York Academy of Art (2018) and a

United States Artists Francie Bishop Good and David Horvitz Fellowship (2015). Thomas is also the Co-Founder of SOULAS House, a cultural hub and retreat for Black women, the Co-Founder of Pratt>FORWARD and founder of Art>FORWARD Artist in the Market incubator for post-graduate students.

CHARISSE PEARLINA WESTON

(b. Houston, TX; based in Brooklyn, New York) is a conceptual artist and writer whose work emerges from deep material investigations of the symbolic and literal curls, layerings, and collapses of space, poetics, and the autobiographical. She contends with the dynamic interplay of violence and intimacy through repetition, enfoldment, and concealment. She received her MFA from the University of California-Irvine. She is an alumna of the Whitney Museum of American Art's Independent Study Program. Recent and forthcoming venues that have presented her work include the Queens Museum, the Hessel Museum of Art at Bard College, Museum of Folkwang, and MoMA PS1. Notable awards include the Museum of Art and Design's 2021 Burke Prize, as well as grants from the Dallas Museum of Art, Artadia, the Graham Foundation, among others. She is a 2023 artist-in-residence at the Studio Museum in Harlem, a 2023 Jerome Hill Fellow (Jerome Foundation), and a 2024 Hodder Fellow at Princeton University.

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THE NEW SCHOOL



CREDIT

This publication accompanies the multi-tier initiative *In Common: Romare Bearden and New Approaches to Art, Race and Economy*. It consists of an exhibition (*In Common: New Approaches with Romare Bearden*, November 9, 2023–Jan. 15, 2024), a national symposium (*In Common: Romare Bearden and New Approaches to Art, Race and Economy*, November 20–December 2, 2023), and a forthcoming symposium publication.

In Common: Romare Bearden and New Approaches to Art, Race and Economy has been organized by the Institute on Race, Power and Political Economy at The New School in collaboration with the Romare Bearden Foundation, the Vera List Center for Art and Politics at The New School, and the Institute of Jazz Studies at Rutgers University Newark. The exhibition has been curated by the Romare Bearden Foundation and the Vera List Center for Art and Politics at The New School.

Symposium Curators: Henry A. J. Ramos, Johanne Bryant-Reid, Diedra Harris-Kelley, Eriola Pira, Wayne Winborne
Exhibition Curators: Johanne Bryant-Reid, Diedra Harris-Kelley, Carin Kuoni, Eriola Pira
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IN COMMON NEW APPROACHES WITH ROMARE BEARDEN

NOV 9, 2023 – JAN 15, 2024

Black Quantum Futurism
Kahlil Robert Irving
Lorraine O'Grady
Hank Willis Thomas
Mickalene Thomas
Charisse Pearlina Weston

"All art is a kind of looking across the"
Romare Bearden

The perspective after the passing of American artist Romare Bearden in 1998, many of the challenges and solutions he brought to the world of Black art in America were not being addressed in a timely and sufficient way.

For this major presentation, The New York Public Library, in partnership with the Romare Bearden Foundation, has organized a series of exhibitions and programs that explore Bearden's legacy and the work of contemporary artists who have been inspired by his vision.

The exhibition is part of a larger program that includes a series of lectures, panels, and performances that explore the work of Bearden and the work of contemporary artists who have been inspired by his vision.

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Installation view of *In Common: New Approaches with Romare Bearden*, Sheila C. Johnson Design Center, New York, November 9, 2023–January 15, 2024. Foreground: Charisse Pearlina Weston. Left to right: Frank Stewart and Romare Bearden. Please refer to Gallery Map and Checklist on page E-18 for work titles and Acknowledgments on page E-24 for credit.



Foreground: Kahil Robert Irving. Left to right: Romare Bearden, Mickalene Thomas.









