I find great joy in every one of the more than fifteen exhibitions we create every year at The Studio Museum in Harlem. Each exhibition has a personality, based on both the works of art included and the singular perspective of its organizing curator. Each compels the viewer to have a unique and, we hope, valuable experience.

Alma Thomas is just one of the hundreds of exhibitions and projects during my tenure at the Studio Museum, but it compels me in a very specific way. Thomas has been an incredible inspiration and touchstone in my life and career. I first came to know her work in 1985 when, as an intern at the Studio Museum, I discovered the catalogue A Life in Art: Alma Thomas, 1891–1978, which accompanied a 1981–82 National Museum of American Art exhibition that traveled to the Studio Museum in 1983. At the time I was studying art history and was deeply invested in understanding the vast body of work by, and history of, artists of African descent and female artists. Thomas became an important part of my timeline of the history of art, which focused on the milestones and contributions of—in large part—women and people of color.

I feel honored and privileged that Thomas’s story has intersected with mine, but her story is truly America’s story. The arc of her life traces and intersects so many significant points in the history of this nation, including the changing landscape of opportunities and challenges for women and African Americans in the twentieth century—and the twenty-first. The Studio Museum is both a beneficiary and agent of these changes, so this summer it is especially exciting to present Thomas’s work alongside exhibitions of work by artists spanning three generations. Richard Hunt: Framed and Extended is the artist’s first solo exhibition at the Studio Museum since 1997, and a wonderful opportunity to celebrate his nearly sixty-year career. I’m always excited to see the new work created by the emerging powerhouses in our Artist-in-Residence program and the high school–age artists in our Expanding the Walls program. At the same time, we are excited to launch inHarlem, a set of new initiatives designed to engage multigenerational audiences, explore innovative ways to work in the community and take the Museum beyond our walls. The inHarlem initiatives will encompass a wide range of artistic and programmatic ventures, beginning with a partnership with the New York Public Library and inHarlem: Kevin Beasley, Simone Leigh, Kori Newkirk, Rudy Shepherd, a suite of public art projects in historic Harlem parks.

These are just a few of the many exciting new steps we will be taking as we look toward our fiftieth anniversary in 2018, and continue the thrilling work of planning for our new, purpose-built building. Thank you for taking these steps with us.

I’ll see you uptown!

Thelma Golden
Director and Chief Curator
Kevin Beasley
Simone Leigh
Kori Newkirk
Rudy Shepherd

Morningside Park, Marcus Garvey Park, St. Nicholas Park, Jackie Robinson Park

08.25.16—07.25.17

inHarlem: Kevin Beasley, Simone Leigh, Kori Newkirk, Rudy Shepherd is supported by the Marcus Garvey Park Alliance with funding provided by the Harlem Community Development Corporation.
Museum

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Exhibition Schedule

Summer 2016

On view July 14–October 30, 2016

Alma Thomas
Tenses: Artists in Residence 2015–16: Jordan Casteel, EJ Hill, Jibade-Khalil Huffman
Richard Hunt: Framed and Extended
Color in Shadow: Expanding the Walls 2016

On view August 2016–July 2017

inHarlem: Kevin Beasley
Morningside Park

inHarlem: Simone Leigh
Marcus Garvey Park

inHarlem: Kori Newkirk
St. Nicholas Park

inHarlem: Rudy Shepherd
Jackie Robinson Park

Always on View

Harlem Postcards
Glenn Ligon: Give Us a Poem
Adam Pendleton: Collected (Flamingo George)
Harlem Postcards

Marina Adams
Born in Orange, NJ
Lives and works in New York, NY, and Parma, Italy

Harlem Postcard 2, 2016
Gouache and crayon on Arches Aquarelle watercolor paper

Harlem Postcard 2 comes out of my many years working with pattern and color on paper and canvas. When I was asked by The Studio Museum in Harlem for an image for Harlem Postcards, I chose this piece because the strong contrasts of drawing and color reference sound and movement, and speak to me of the vitality, culture and streets of Harlem. It seems to have the right beat.

Spring 2016

Chester Higgins Jr.
Born 1946, Lexington, KY
Lives and works in Brooklyn, NY

Harlem Spirit, 2015
© Chester Higgins Jr./chesterhiggins.com

In my work I look for the signature of the Spirit. When I see leaves, I see the magic of being and the interconnectedness of all things. This leaf shared the space, elements and moods of the day, and gave respite from the Harlem sun.
It was a cold and crisp morning, with the light streaming along 125th Street, when I chose a simple path off the subway and turned to walk west. In Los Angeles the previous week I had shown my students the work of Roy DeCarava; his work was a touchstone during my early years as a street photographer. There is a moment when I look at things when they align for a composition that has the essence of narrative. That frozen moment is what photography does so well. A mixture of old with new, and evidence that Christmas has passed—this is my ode to DeCarava.

Trokon Nagbe
Born 1977, Bassa County, Liberia
Lives and works in Brooklyn, NY

The kora is a twenty-one-string harp instrument found in a number of African countries, including Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Senegal, Burkina Faso and the Gambia. Before I even knew the instrument’s name, I felt a deep connection to its sound. The numerous strings give the kora a complex, layered sound that matches its West African origins. My curiosity about the instrument led me to Salieu Suso, who was born in the Gambia and immigrated to Harlem in the mid-1980s. Suso comes from a long family tradition of kora players, including his renowned father, Musa Makang Suso, who began his training at age eight.

Catherine Opie
Born 1961, Sandusky, OH
Lives and works in Los Angeles, CA

Harlem Winter, 2016
© Catherine Opie, Courtesy Regen Projects, Los Angeles, and Lehmann Maupin, New York and Hong Kong
With this piece, I am thinking through the things folks say to me on the street as I move through the public spaces of Harlem; such phrases resist easy categorization and sometimes register as catcalls, sometimes as words of affirmation, sometimes as ambiguous, and sometimes as a conflation of different registers. I am interested in the way in which turning the aural into the visual can further open up new possibilities for meaning.

Miatta Kawinzi
Born 1987, Nashville, TN
Lives and works in Brooklyn, NY

Streetspeak, 2016

When I took this photo, I was thinking about something being “on deck.” The first thing—really the only thing—that caught my eye was the statue. I could have simply taken a picture of the statue itself, but that would not draw much attention, so I changed my position to behind the statue. One can see that he is running, but I wanted to depict exactly where he is running to: the Hotel Teresa. The picture came from my urge to answer to an unasked question: Where is he going in such a hurry?

Alannis Alba
Born 2000, New York, NY
Lives and works in New York, NY

Perspective, 2016
Time spent in Harlem continues to enrich my knowledge of the black solidarity movements that brought together communities fighting for civil rights and independence from colonial powers and oppressive systems of governance. Though the triumphs of the civil rights movement and African liberation are marked in history, it is ironic that in present conversations we must still insist on a truth we have always known, that #blacklivesmatter. Walking up and down 125th Street, I have often contemplated how BUY BLACK, BLACK POWER and BLACK IS BEAUTIFUL are still so potent today, as black communities continue to find their homes, lives and dignity under threat.
Alma Thomas

by Lauren Haynes, Associate Curator, Permanent Collection

A trailblazer in both her art and her career, the distinguished abstract painter Alma Thomas (1891–1978) is the subject of a major exhibition at The Studio Museum in Harlem, on view from July 14 to October 30, 2016. Featuring more than fifty paintings and works on paper created between the late 1950s and her death in 1978, the exhibition explores her early abstract works, her fascination with the natural world and space exploration, and the mesmerizing mosaic-like paintings she completed before her death. Read on to learn more about Alma Thomas’s work in the exhibition.

Move to Abstraction

During the late 1950s and early 1960s, Alma Thomas committed to abstraction. In *Yellow and Blue* (1959), the artist uses decisive brushstrokes to create nonrepresentational fields of color. Thomas applied this language of abstraction to the representational painting *March on Washington* (1964), which is a rare example of the artist’s formal exploration with narrative subject matter. In this painting, loosely rendered figures emerge from a background of protestors’ signs represented by large blocks of color against swaths of blacks, greens and blues.

Thomas drew inspiration from a variety of influences. In addition to the Washington Color School, Expressionist painter Wassily Kandinsky (1866–1944) and the educator and artist Lois Mailou Jones (1905–1998) were important to Thomas’s artistry. Jones, after returning to Washington from Paris, organized a “Little Paris Salon” for African-American artists in the late 1940s, of which Thomas was a frequent participant. Thomas’s teachers also played significant roles in shaping her career: both James V. Herring (1887–1969), the founder and chair of Howard University Department of Art, and Jacob Kainen (1909–2001), the Expressionist painter and professor at American University, remained important presences throughout her life. Despite the variety of influences, Thomas resists conventional categorization; instead, her work reveals an artist negotiating her own space amid the many mid-century artistic movements.
Alma Thomas

Earth

In an interview near the end of her life, Alma Thomas credits watching the shifting light through the holly tree outside her bay window as the moment when she realized she was an abstractionist. Her works’ source material was her daily experiences of the hues, patterns and movements of the natural world within the urban environment. In her art, Thomas pointedly rejected painting about struggle and crisis. She believed instead that the beauty she generated offset the world’s horrors and inhumanities. Her goal was to create brief respites from many of the difficulties suffered by those who lived in her segregated neighborhood; she attempted to teach her viewers to find the wonder of nature in their own front yards.

In *Iris, Tulips, Jonquils and Crocuses* (1969), the dense and highly organized composition demonstrates her skill at using color. The slightly off-center middle columns—the single strip of light blue bounded on either side by two strips of red—set a precedent for a pattern that breaks down, re-emerges and responds across the center. The effect is a shimmering rhythm that causes the eye to flit across the canvas as it takes in the colors, an experience not unlike seeing flowers in a garden.

Why the tree! The holly tree! I looked at the tree in the window, and that became my inspiration.

—Alma Thomas, 1978
Alma Thomas

I began to think about what I would see if I were in an airplane. You look down on things. You streak through the clouds so fast you don’t know whether the flower below is a violet or what. You see only streaks of color.

—Alma Thomas, 1978

Alma Thomas lived through both the Wright brothers’ first airplane flight and man’s first steps on the moon. Many of her paintings are speculations of what flowers, gardens or the Earth as a whole might look like from an airplane or spaceship. News and media sources expanded at almost the same rate as flight and space exploration, and Thomas primarily listened to reports of space travel on the radio. It gave her the freedom to sketch as she heard the stories unfold. Therefore, these imagined cosmic scenes are structurally similar to the rest of the artist’s oeuvre. In 1971, she wrote, “My space paintings are expressed in the same color patterns as my earth paintings with the canvas forming intriguing motifs around and through color composition.”

In *Snoopy Sees Earth Wrapped in Sunset* (1970), Thomas takes the colors and experience of a brilliant sunset to an imaginatively distant viewpoint, while also showing her increased use of the circle as an organizational tool in her compositions. However, *Starry Night and the Astronauts* (1972) gives Thomas the freedom to take her signature “Alma Stripe” out into the expanse of space, the glimpse of the warm yellow, red and orange horizontals disrupting the cool, dark verticality. Thomas believed in scientific progress and in many of her interviews she stated that since we no longer lived in the “horse-and-buggy” days, it was important to embrace and respond to new discoveries and technologies.
Alma Thomas

Mosaic

In the 1970s Alma Thomas continued to experiment with color and composition. Her earlier large-scale works on canvas moved from dense, tightly controlled stripes of color to paintings that were mosaic-like and much looser in structure. Works such as *Hydrangeas Spring Song* (1976) reveal the influence of the 1961 exhibition of Henri Matisse’s (1869–1954) cut-paper collages at the Museum of Modern Art, which Thomas visited. In addition to new shapes and airier compositions, Thomas moved towards a more subdued—and sometimes monochromatic—color palette. In these works, tensions emerge between the bright colors, her brushstrokes and the negative spaces, creating a continual but controlled sense of movement, an almost musical rhythm.

Thomas enjoyed a great deal of success during this period. Her 1972 show at the Whitney Museum of American Art was especially significant because it came during a time when many African-American abstract artists were overlooked in favor of artists who were making more overtly political art. During the last years of her life, Thomas’s health declined as she suffered from a broken hip, arthritis and deteriorating eyesight. Thomas’s works did not reflect her poor health. Instead, she continued to work at large scale in a palette that, though pared down, was exuberant and joyful. As Thomas said in her 1972 interview with reporter David L. Shirey, “A world without color would seem dead. Color, for me, is life.”

Alma Thomas is organized by Lauren Haynes, Associate Curator, Permanent Collection, The Studio Museum in Harlem, and Ian Berry, Dayton Director of the Frances Young Tang Teaching Museum and Art Gallery at Skidmore College, where the exhibition debuted in February 2016. The exhibition is accompanied by a comprehensive catalogue by Berry and Haynes. Visit studiomuseum.org/shop to purchase your copy.

One of the things we couldn’t do was go into museums, let alone think of hanging our pictures there. My, times have changed. Just look at me now.

—Alma Thomas, 1972

Alma Thomas
*Hydrangeas Spring Song* (detail), 1976
Philadelphia Museum of Art, 125th Anniversary Acquisition; purchased with funds contributed by Mr. and Mrs. Julius Rosenwald II in honor of René and Sarah Carr d’Harnoncourt, The Judith Rothschild Foundation, and other funds raised in honor of the 125th Anniversary of the museum and in celebration of African-American art, 2002
Photo: Arthur Evans
This spring, Hallie Ringle, Assistant Curator, and Adeze Wilford, Curatorial Fellow, spoke with Chicago-based sculptor Richard Hunt. Hunt's welded sculptures, made of steel, aluminum, copper and bronze, can be found in public spaces across the country, among them Harlem Hybrid (1976) at Roosevelt Square on West 125th Street and Morningside Avenue. His smaller sculptures and prints will be on view at The Studio Museum in Harlem this summer in Richard Hunt: Framed and Extended.

Adeze Wilford: How do you determine the scale of your work?

Richard Hunt: It has to do with the purpose of the work. A fair amount of my output is work in public places. Often the particular place seems to call for a certain size, certain kind of configuration. There’s a relationship of civil work to either a general space or specific space that the thing is going to occupy. But then the work that’s self-determined, for example, just work in the studio, has to do with a whole host of things. How I’m feeling at the time. How one thing might come out of something else. In my work there’s a lot of what you might call theme and variations, one thing might lead to another. And there are things that are on a smaller scale that are not necessarily models for something, but explorations, putting things together and seeing what they look like. I might have an idea that I want to convey, but bringing it out in the material is a process that determines the scale as the work develops.

AW: When we were in your studio, you mentioned how you really are drawn to early music. Can you talk a little bit about how that plays out in the work you do?

RH: I am an early music enthusiast, particularly Baroque. I like all kinds of music, but have a particular affinity for that probably because, growing up, one of the highlights of the year was listening to church music, such as Handel’s “Messiah.” There’s been a kind of revival of interest in early music. And as a matter of fact some of the long-forgotten work of Handel has been revived in the last thirty years. It used to be he was kind of a one-masterpiece guy. Everybody sang “Messiah” every Christmas. But there are all these operas and other work. There are a lot of musical phrases that seem to fit the way I approach sculpture.
Hallie Ringle: Can you talk a little bit about how you source your material and what makes you decide to work with that material?

RH: I started working with sculpture at a time when most sculpture was either molded in clay, wax or plaster, or maybe made permanent through casting. Or carved. My interest early on was more in modeled things because I didn’t like chipping away at stone or wood. But then I saw work in metal, particular work of Julio Gonzalez, Picasso and David Smith, and that made me want to try to work in metal. So I did and one thing led to another. One of the things that made the transition easy was that there was metal to be had. There was the scrap yard or discarded metal anywhere, and having a welding torch to put it together made for an easy entrance into that medium. Over time, as I’ve worked on larger scales, I’ve used a lot of used metal and scrap metal, and at other times I special order from a rolling mill or a metal warehouse. There’s been an accumulation of stuff that doesn’t get used up right away, or the kind of things that drop off when you cut out shapes. That’s around as a secondary source of material, and I think about how to use all this material up.
AW: In a way, your pieces are variations on each other, since you are able to use in new work objects that have broken off of other pieces, or that you’ve cut off of other pieces. That’s a creation in itself.

RH: That’s true. One of the things about direct-welded metal as a medium is that you can weld something on and then say, “Well that doesn’t really do what I thought it would do in that position.” So you can take it off or reposition it, or you can take it off and put it aside, and then it might turn out that that’s either the beginning of something or the final touch on something else.

HR: How did you begin making prints?

RH: One of my first enthusiasms was drawing. In school I tried different print media: etchings, screenprint, lithography—and the thing I liked doing best was lithography. I didn’t really do any prints after school until I got a fellowship to work at the Tamarind Lithography Workshop. That was in the 1960s, and over the years I’ve worked in a number of workshops. I haven’t thought about having my own studio, but you know I draw. There have been these times that, for one reason or another, I concentrated on prints in a particular environment or a particular print workshop. More often they’ve been lithographs, but other times screenprints and, most recently, I did some carborundum prints. I haven’t done any for a number of years, just because I’m so busy with sculpture. But I enjoy lithography, screenprinting and this carborundum printing, and I hope to do more of it. It’s a matter of finding more hours in the day.

HR: Is there a relationship between the prints and your sculpture, or do you see them as distinct?

RH: Well, the language is the same and I think about a white piece of paper being a space that you sort of fill with lines and masses. To use a phrase that Julio Gonzalez used, “drawing in space” is a three-dimensional corollary to drawing on paper.

AW: I think we’re going to end this on a note related to our space and location. Can you talk about Harlem Hybrid, the work that you did for a local park here?

RH: Harlem Hybrid's ground plan is sort of triangular because it’s in this triangular space that’s called a square, which is interesting. You have crossroad out of a square, but that’s a triangular piece of land where three streets cross. The idea at the time was that you could walk under it or sit on it, and interact with it while you’re waiting for the bus or skating by or something like that. I called it Hybrid because I was calling everything I did some kind of hybrid at the time. It brought together forms out of nature and a built environment, and it created an environment in and of itself, so that was my motivation.
This year, I asked each of the artists in residence to choose one object from their respective studios—either something that they feel in some way informs their practices, or a thing that simply keeps them company, as a source of inspiration or comfort.

—Amanda Hunt, Assistant Curator

**Jordan Casteel**

I wear a small pendant of a butterfly around my neck every day. It is rare for me to be attached to an object. It is even more rare for that object to be something you would find in my studio. I always feel as though my studio functions as a space of transience—it is always in a constant wheel of motion. However, when posed with the opportunity to find an object in my studio to spend some time with, I couldn’t help but to return to the greatest constant in my art journey: my maternal grandmother—Grams, as I called her. She is the guardian angel who holds court around my neck, whose cardigan I wear everyday in the studio and who serves as my perpetual muse. There is evidence of her everywhere—each object functions as a little trinket of her everlasting belief in my creative nature. There is a particular sketch in my studio that has been following me since my first “official” studio at Yale. I did the drawing from a photograph of her holding me and my twin brother in the same embrace. This photo embodies much of my practice—the connected and separate nature of me and my twin, with the arms of our histories keeping us tightly together. It is a constant reminder of the love and strength that I am surrounded by. Even if not physically, I know Grams sees me, and oh how proud she is.

*Jordan Casteel’s sketch of her grandmother*  
*Courtesy the artist*

**Opposite:**  
*Jordan Casteel*  
*Jared, 2016*  
*Courtesy the artist*
I purchased the muse—or “Beauty Prize Winner”—at a thrift, or should I say vintage, store in upstate New York. Hidden among the many overpriced wares, unbeknownst to the tony owners of second homes and takers of weekend trips to bed and breakfasts, was a set of six or so pictures of contestants from the same (presumably African-American, given the era from which the pictures likely derive) pageant. The decision to choose this particular picture had less to do with the fact that contestant won and more to do with the fact that she did and still does remind me of my grandmother. While my grandmother, as a parent in 1950s Detroit, insisted that my mother pursue something practical in college, by the time I was born, in the era of The Cosby Show and A Different World, things were (indeed) different and she encouraged me, before she passed, during my sophomore year of college, to pursue writing and art. And so it is with melancholy, joy and a good deal of inspiration that the muse, as I like to call her, watches over each studio I have inhabited over the past five years.
Tenses

Artists in Residence
2015–16

Jibade-Khalil Huffman

Untitled (Landscape), 2016

Courtesy the artist

Opposite:
Jibade-Khalil Huffman’s “muse” hanging on the upper left side of his studio wall

Photo: Adam Reich
EJ Hill: Nonentity

Jordan ordered something from Amazon. Like a thing for her back or something? A foam roller, I think? Or a cushion of a sort? Whatever it is, its purpose is to relieve pain or discomfort, to aid in the healing of a body—her body. And the foam-roller-back-relief-or-maybe-cushion-pad-thing arrived in a bag. That bag. That oversized, pseudo-suede, royal blue bag with the satin-like, gold ribbon drawstring that cinches the whole thing closed, while also serving as the point of affixation, the point from which it all hangs, the whole thing reminiscent of an Amanda Ross-Ho knockoff.

The bag and I first encountered one another after Jordan had already removed her maybe-gel-filled-Dr.-Scholl’s-insole-for-your-back-thing from it, and it lay in a corner of her studio, rehearsing its lines for the role of “Forgotten Object #35” or “Invisible Nonentity #2.” Either way, the bag was sure to be cast as either, unless I had anything to say about it.

Me: What is that?

Jordan: I ordered a highly-specialized-scientifically-proven-to-provide-the-best-relief-pillow-thing for my back and it came in that bag.

Jordan: (Continues to talk but I wasn’t really listening—I was too busy falling in love with an object)

Me: (Picks up bag and puts drawstring over left shoulder and imagines walking down 125th Street with my new oversized tote)

Me: Are you . . . Can I . . .

Jordan: Yes, take it. It’s yours. I think you need it.

Forgotten Object #35 / Invisible Nonentity #2: :)

I took the bag to the other side of the wall, over to my studio, still wearing it as a tote, envisioning how completely impractical it would be while trying to find my Metrocard or attempting to pay for my Fatty Melt and Sweet Potato Fries at Harlem Shake. The other, more pragmatic, yet hardly logical, alternative was to pin it to the wall of my studio, and then look at it. Every day.

Some visitors to my studio will ask me about the bag—whether it’s a piece or not—and I never really know how to answer the question. So I usually just say:


Artist-in-Residence is supported by The Robert Lehman Foundation, Jerome Foundation, Milton and Sally Avery Arts Foundation, and by endowments established by the Jacob and Gwendolyn Lawrence Trust and Andrea Frank Foundation.
E.J. Hill
A Monumental Offering of
Potential Energy (study), 2016
Courtesy the artist
Photo: Adam Reich
Beyond

**Elsewhere**

by Thelma Golden, Director and Chief Curator

_Nick Cave: Until_  
October 16, 2016–September 2018  
MASS MoCA  
North Adams, Massachusetts  
massmoca.org

I am eagerly awaiting the opening of Nick Cave’s large-scale interactive installation, which highlights his practice beyond his iconic _Soundsuits_. _Until_—a double play on the phrase “innocent until proven guilty” or, perhaps, “guilty until proven innocent”—addresses themes of gun violence and police brutality by juxtaposing dazzling found objects with provocative imagery. The kinetic, football field-sized space of _Until_ serves both as a sculpture and a theater set, and provides an engaging community forum for public debate and commentary on the state of contemporary society.

_Nick Cave_  
_Dead Tongue, 2009_  
_Photograph: James Prinz_

**Completely Biased, Entirely Opinionated Hot Picks**

I am thrilled that on September 24, 2016, the National Museum of African-American History and Culture (NMAAHC) will open to the public! The opening will kick off a weeklong celebration dedicated to African-American heritage, art and popular culture. Joining other historic sites on the National Mall, such as the Washington Monument, the NMAAHC will invite visitors to reflect on and commemorate the histories of migration, resistance and achievement that form the African-American story.
CAM St. Louis presents the museum debut of Mark Bradford’s *Receive Calls on Your Cell Phone From Jail* (2013), a grid of thirty-eight paintings that convey the challenges surrounding receiving collect calls from prison on one’s cell phone. Boldly displayed on CAM’s sixty-foot-long Project Wall, the work encourages visitors to “read” from left to right and decipher the installation’s text, which has been built up and torn away by Bradford. The repetitive and stripped surface asks viewers to consider how incarcerated people might feel overwhelmingly consumed, abandoned and discarded by the criminal justice system.
The Newark Museum’s Modern Heroics: 75 Years of African-American Expressionism features many modern and contemporary artists beloved by Studio Museum audiences. With more than thirty rarely exhibited works on view, Modern Heroics invites visitors to appreciate the richness of African-American art through a selection of highlights from the museum’s permanent collection. The works featured present a variety of approaches to heroic themes, and draw on vibrant imagery, colors and materials to tell their compelling stories. Modern Heroics features work by Emma Amos, Chakaia Booker (1995–96 artist in residence), Sam Gilliam, Norman Lewis, Mickalene Thomas (2002–03 artist in residence), Bob Thompson and many more.

Mickalene Thomas
Landscape with Camouflage, 2012
Newark Museum; purchase with 2012 Helen McMahon Brady Cutting Fund © Mickalene Thomas and the Artist Rights Society (ARS), New York
Elsewhere

Completely Biased, Entirely Opinionated Hot Picks

Disguise: Masks and Global African Art
April 29–September 18, 2016
Brooklyn Museum
Brooklyn, NY
brooklynmuseum.org

Traveling from the West Coast to the East Coast, Disguise: Masks and Global African Art investigates the role of masks in both contemporary art and traditional African societies. Placing historical work from the Brooklyn Museum and the Seattle Art Museum in conversation with work created by twenty-five contemporary artists such as Willie Cole (1988–89 artist in residence), Toyin Ojih Odutola, Sondra R. Perry, Jacolby Satterwhite, William Villalongo (2003–04 artist in residence) and Saya Woolfalk (2007–08 artist in residence), Disguise explores the power of masks to define and transform social relations. Viewers are invited to consider the role of masquerade in their own lives, as well as its relationship to issues such as gender, class and culture.

Top:
Brendan Fernandes
Courtesy the artist
© Brendan Fernandes
Photo: Courtesy the artist

Bottom:
William Villalongo
Muses (Artifact 1), 2012–14
Courtesy the artist and
Susan Inglett Gallery, New York
© William Villalongo
Photo: Courtesy the artist and
Susan Inglett Gallery, New York
Mona Hatoum
May 4–August 21, 2016
Tate Modern
London, England
tate.org.uk

This summer Tate Modern presents the first U.K. survey of Beirut-born artist Mona Hatoum’s thirty-five year career. Hatoum is known for her exploration of the body and for questioning of the formal languages of Minimalism and Surrealism. This exhibition—organized by the Centre Pompidou, Musée National d’Art Moderne, Paris, in collaboration with Tate Modern and the Finnish National Gallery / the Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma, Helsinki—presents more than one hundred site-specific and thought-provoking works, including assemblage, installations, video, performance and more.

Made in L.A. 2016: a, the, though, only
June 12–August 28, 2016
Hammer Museum
Los Angeles, California
hammer.ucla.edu

Curated by Ayam Moshayedi and Hamza Walker, Made in L.A. 2016: a, the, though, only provides a vibrant overview of contemporary artists—including Studio Museum friends Arthur Jafa and Martine Syms—working in the Los Angeles area, who move fluidly between contexts and responding to their local conditions. The exhibition features in-depth explorations of work from both established and emerging artists from various disciplines, including dance, music, film and performance.
Nollywood, the Nigerian film industry, is the second-largest film industry in the world after India’s Bollywood, and produces thousands of movies each year. With an ever-expanding global reach, Nigerian film has emerged through African adaptation of electronics, and has mainly been accessible through videos sold by street vendors. Nollywood DVDs pepper 125th Street in Harlem, as well as stores in Brooklyn and the Bronx. Here are a few “video films” that are readily available.

**Nollywood Babylon (2008)**  
**Directors: Ben Addelman, Samir Mallal**

*Nollywood Babylon* is a documentary that takes on bustling Lagos, the birthplace of Nollywood, and the introduction of movies, from the period of colonialism to the modern syncretic films that meld traditional beliefs with today’s African experiences. This documentary profiles some of the leading players at the forefront of the Nigerian film industry, including directors Lancelot Oduwa Imasuen and Bob-Manuel Udokwu, and stars Aki and Paw-Paw.

**B for Boy (2013)**  
**Director: Chika Anadu**

Director Chika Anadu examines the imbalances and subtle oppression women face around expectations of gender roles. The lead character Amaka, a career woman and expectant mother, faces intense pressure to provide a male heir for her in-laws. When she miscarries, she resorts to desperate measures to purchase a child to pass off as her son.
Living in Bondage (1992)  
Director: Chris Obi Rapu

Living in Bondage is considered the film that pioneered Nollywood. Shot on a shoestring budget, Rapu’s film introduced many of the themes now common in Nigerian cinema. The lead character, Andy Okeke, feels trapped in a miserable existence and wants to be “rich at all costs.” He sacrifices his wife as part of a “money-making ritual” and attains wealth and privilege, but his new life is haunted.

October 1 (2014)  
Director: Kunle Afolayan

On the eve of Nigeria’s independence from Britain on October 1, 1960, Inspector Dan Waziri tracks a serial killer attacking village women in the town of Akote. Filmed in both the city and villages, October 1 ends with a beginning; the transition to freedom from the end of colonialism.

Confusion Na Wa (2013)  
Director: Kenneth Gyang

When two petty criminals with a fixation on The Lion King use a stolen cell phone for blackmail, one of them ends up the dead narrator of this story. Confusion Na Wa depicts a vibrant Nigeria and the melodrama of everyday life, while reflecting upon the undermining influence of widespread corruption.
Fred Holland (1951–2016) was born in Columbus, Ohio, and trained as a painter at the Columbus College of Art and Design (1973) before going on to work in theater as a dancer and, later, in the visual arts as a sculptor. In the 1970s, Holland's dance career brought him to companies in Berlin and Philadelphia and, by 1983, to New York. He was a collaborator of Meredith Monk, Ishmael Houston-Jones, Butch Morrie and Robbie McCauley, in addition to choreographing and performing in his own work. After he spent decades establishing himself as a performer, a 1992 injury ended Holland's dance career and prompted his return to the visual arts.

Holland's artwork addresses various themes and topics, but two are always present: narrative and memory. Holland created works that tell stories and bring viewers from the past, through the present and into the future. His works often incorporate organic materials, which came from the artist's desire to infuse his works with real life, including the potential for decay. Holland's work has been exhibited at institutions such as the Albany Art Museum, the Newark Museum, MoMA PS1, the Drawing Center and, this year, the Studio Museum in Palatable: Food and Contemporary Art.

Holland once wrote in an artist statement that, “I like the work to be proponents that will outlive me—that has a sense of being a kind of collective history of man and mankind, but definitely something that's very positive and that's very much bigger than I am and that has to do with being creative.” His works accomplish the feat of passing on that collective narrative. We remember and appreciate Fred Holland's artistic contributions to the world and, closer to home, The Studio Museum in Harlem.
Where in the World?

by Gina Guddemi,
Registrar

Name: Silence Is Golden (1986)

Artist: Kerry James Marshall

Starting Location: The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York

Current Location: Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago

Distance Traveled: 790 miles (with a quick layover in Brooklyn)

Tucked inside a cozy Greenpoint, Brooklyn, frame workshop, I held my breath as my colleague John slowly removed the simple, original wooden frame from Kerry James Marshall’s Silence Is Golden (1986), a cherished painting in The Studio Museum in Harlem’s permanent collection. The frame had been attached to the work since it was donated to the Museum in 1987 by the artist. It was an exciting moment; Marshall, a former artist in residence at the Studio Museum, was being honored with a major museum survey. Weeks prior, we had received the exhibition description and a loan request, and we were thrilled to lend this masterful work.

Before Silence Is Golden departed, we prepared a to-do list: inspect the work’s condition, photograph it and give it a new frame. What a privilege it was to spend time with the piece. The artwork consists of six connected panels. A larger panel is at the left, and five smaller panels are stacked vertically on the right side. Taking a digital image was important, both for publication and registration. A few weeks later, in the new frame, the work floated beautifully, subtly enclosed by an elegant border.

In early March, I released the work for professional packing and crating in Brooklyn. It then traveled via truck to Illinois. It had arrived in the Windy City for its five-month stay! After Chicago, our work and the exhibition will travel back to New York, where the show will be on view at the Met’s new Breuer building. Then the exhibition will traverse the country, with its final stop in Los Angeles.

It is important to note that the original frame pieces remain in Harlem, properly inventoried, wrapped and stored. They are important, original elements of the artwork that speak to its history and origins. A registrar never discards anything.
If You Like . . .

*by Hallie Ringle, Assistant Curator*

If you like . . .

**Jacob Lawrence**
(born 1917, Atlantic City, NJ; died 2000)

*The Architect*, 1959
The Studio Museum in Harlem; gift of Mr. and Mrs. James Hathinas 1982.1
© 2016 The Jacob and Gwendolyn Lawrence Foundation, Seattle / Artist Rights Society (ARS), New York

Harlem Renaissance artist Jacob Lawrence is known for his prints, paintings and drawings that drew inspiration from African-American life and history. Many of Lawrence’s narrative series, including “Migration Series,” “Harriet Tubman” and “The Life of Toussaint L’Ouverture” chronicle black historical subject matter that was overlooked in classrooms and mainstream education. In addition to portraying events, Lawrence often uses the titles of the works to tell the stories of the subjects and immortalize their experiences.

Like Lawrence, Congolese painter Tshibumba Kanda-Matulu adopted a narrative subject, the history of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, including colonialism, independence and subsequent struggles for power among different political factions.

**Tshibumba Kanda-Matulu**
(born 1947, Élisabethville, Zaire; died 1981)

*Le 30 juin 1960, Zaïre indépendant*, 1971–73
Courtesy Etienne Bol

Kanda-Matulu tells this story with more than one hundred panels painted with acrylic or oil on flour sacks, which depict significant speeches or events from Congolese history. Like Lawrence, Kanda-Matulu uses the titles of his works, sometimes incorporated into the compositions, to help communicate the complex events pictured.

Check out . . .

[Image of Jacob Lawrence's work]

[Image of Tshibumba Kanda-Matulu's work]
If You Like . . .

In many of Yinka Shonibare MBE’s sculptures and installations, he recreates traditional nineteenth-century European clothing using Dutch wax fabric. Dutch wax fabric is commonly believed to be produced in West Africa, though in reality it is usually produced in Europe. Using this fabric as a symbol of the complex ties between the United States, Europe and Africa, Shonibare creates large installations that evoke the long history of colonialism and the slave trade, and their ties to contemporary racial and economic issues.

Nigerian artist Peju Alatise uses textiles molded in the shape of female bodies to discuss contemporary experiences of femininity. Like Shonibare, Alatise uses Dutch wax fabric that is popular among Nigerian women, and shapes the fabric into clothing without cutting or sewing. Unlike Shonibare, Alatise’s fabric sculptures form an empty shell in the shape of girls and women, and reference the symbolic role of fabric wraps in Nigeria. Alatise is particularly interested in fabric’s ability to act as a symbol of female identities and to communicate class, heritage and values.

Yinka Shonibare MBE  
(born 1962, London, United Kingdom)

*Ballet God (Zeus)*, 2015  
Courtesy James Cohan, New York  
© Yinka Shonibare MBE  
Photo: Stephen White

Peju Alatise  
(born 1975, Lagos, Nigeria)

*9 Year Old Bride*, 2010  
Courtesy the artist
In Memoriam

Photographer Malick Sidibé (1935/36–2016), who came to be known as “the eye of Bamako,” passed away at eighty, but leaves behind an unparalleled career and body of work that vibrantly captures the lives and culture of his native Mali from the 1950s to today. His iconic black-and-white photographs, often of Malian youth, chronicle the joys of life during a critical moment as Mali embraced freedom and new prosperities, and transitioned to a modern, postcolonial nation after gaining independence from France.

Born in 1935 or 1936 (he never could quite remember) in Solaba, Mali, Sidibé began taking photographs in 1956 as an apprentice of French photographer Gerard Guillat-Guignard. Though blind in one eye from a childhood accident, Sidibé learned the fundamentals of photography and began his career as a commercial photographer. In 1958, Sidibé opened his own studio, Studio Malick, where he shot formal portraits for clients. He also ventured out on his own to capture youth culture around Bamako. His works from the 1950s through the 1970s evoke pure joy and celebration. Sidibé captured partygoers, friends and couples all sharply dressed, reveling to traditional and Western popular music. He was a master of balancing movement, expression, gesture and environment in each of his photographs. Sidibé consciously worked to capture these moments in response to how Mali had been depicted and seen through colonial perspectives; his dynamic compositions return agency, dignity and happiness to his subjects.

In his formal studio practice, Sidibé arranged patterned textiles and laminate to create energetic sets for his subjects. He collected props and clothing, and encouraged his subjects to fashion how they wanted to be depicted. Often, his subjects brought their own prized possessions, from James Brown records to jewelry to motorcycles, to showcase their personalities and individuality. Sidibé worked closely with his subjects, and allowed them to pose naturally and comfortably. His portraits, as a result, are joyous compositions that are vibrant, lively and glamorous, as evidenced in Untitled (1974).

The Studio Museum in Harlem is honored to have more than a dozen of Sidibé’s photographs in our permanent collection. Among these treasured works is a photograph from his most recent series, “Vues de Dos,” in which women, often with bare backs or shoulders, are photographed from the back. These posed portraits explore femininity, sensuality, power and beauty. In wanting to explore the politics of representation and the classical female nude, Sidibé composed these photographs as challenges to the colonial gaze by obscuring identity while preserving confidence, energy and pride.

In addition to being in the Studio Museum’s collection, Sidibé’s work is represented in numerous public and private collections, including those of the Museum of Modern Art, Metropolitan Museum of Art, J. Paul Getty Museum, Brooklyn Museum and San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. Sidibé was the first African artist to receive the Hasselblad Award (2003), and the first African and first photographer to receive the Golden Lion Award at the Venice Biennale (2007).

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Malick Sidibé
Untitled, 1974
The Studio Museum in Harlem; gift of Jack Shainman Gallery, New York 2002.1.3
©Malick Sidibé
Courtesy the artist and Jack Shainman Gallery, New York

Opposite:
Malick Sidibé
Vues de Dos, 2002
The Studio Museum in Harlem; gift of Martin and Rebecca Eisenberg 2011.12.3
©Malick Sidibé
Courtesy the artist and Jack Shainman Gallery, New York
The Studio Museum in Harlem and WNYC are thrilled to announce the second annual collaboration between the station’s performance venue—The Jerome L. Greene Performance Space—and the Museum’s Artist-in-Residence program. Exploring the dynamic intersection of the visual arts and public radio, this partnership amplifies the distinct voices of our resident artists, connects them to alumni of the program and broadcasts discussions of their work to a broader public. WNYC 93.9 FM and 820 AM are New York’s flagship public radio stations, and deliver a diverse suite of award-winning local and international programming to audiences worldwide.

by Nico Wheadon,
Director, Public Programs & Community Engagement

Each year, this partnership kicks off with an artist talk at The Greene Space featuring the current artists in residence in conversation with the alumni of the program who have inspired them most. Moderated by a host from WNYC radio, the live conversation unearths shared connections to Harlem as a site of inspiration and experimentation, and provides unique insight into the Museum’s nearly fifty-year history through the personal accounts of those who comprise its lifeblood. For the inaugural radio program last year, 2014–15 artists in residence Sadie Barnette, Lauren Halsey and Eric Mack were joined by alumni Xenobia Bailey (1998–99), Sanford Biggers (1999–2000) and Leslie Hewitt (2007–08) to discuss the role of the residency, the Museum and the city in their evolution as artists.

This summer, 2015–16 artists in residence Jordan Casteel, EJ Hill and Jibade-Khalil Huffman will celebrate the launch of their Museum exhibition Tenses by concurrently activating The Greene Space through a satellite installation and related public programming. Held on July 26, the program will feature the artists in conversation with program alumni Kevin Beasley, Kerry James Marshall and Dave McKenzie. It will also debut new day-in-the-life videos, shot on location in the Museum studios. Produced by WNYC, the videos further illustrate the creativity and passion driving each artists’ work, and provide a very
crucial space for them to discuss their practices in their own voices. “I’m most excited about being able to interface with an entirely different audience and mode of communication,” says EJ Hill of the initiative. “I’ve grown used to having conversations in and around the visual art context so I’m eager to see what types of happy accidents or challenges arise when working through channels that don’t necessarily rely on the visual.”

Through this yearly collaboration, the Museum deepens its commitment to supporting emerging artists and diversifying the platforms through which the public is invited to engage with their work and process. Moreover, the collaboration invites the public to gain greater insight into the seminal program that, in part, gives the Studio Museum its name. Jordan Casteel sums up the excitement around what is to come when she says, “I see the collaboration with WNYC as a wonderful opportunity to share our experiences as artist in residence at The Studio Museum in Harlem with a broader New York audience. We are taken out of our studio ‘nests’ and given space and resources to continue to push practices into a new arena. I am looking forward to seeing how our stories expand, change and/or grow through new conversations and relationships.”

Stay tuned for more details, at studiomuseum.org, as this year’s programming continues to evolve.
This spring, The Studio Museum in Harlem was proud to partner with the Barnard Center for Research on Women (BCRW) for the Harlem Semester, a bold public humanities initiative fostering dynamic exchange between Barnard and Columbia students, and the local community. Siting faculty instruction within some of Harlem’s most celebrated cultural organizations, the coursework deeply engaged the host institutions, and provided students with site-specific curricula and access to key staff, archives and resources. Tracing the genesis of the venture, Tina Campt—BCRW Director, Chair of Africana Studies and faculty coordinator of the Harlem Semester—recalls, “We are proximate to Harlem, and Harlem is one of the cultural capitals of the African diaspora. What would happen if we were to actually offer a coherent cluster of courses that was not teaching about Harlem, but was instead teaching Harlem through the institutions and the people who have made it such an amazing place?”

To unpack the radical potential of this ideology to shift how Harlem is explored through contemporary art practices, Leslie Hewitt—artist, Barnard faculty member and 2007–08 alumna of the Museum’s Artist-in-Residence program—designed a course entitled “Freestyle and Displacement in Contemporary Art Practices.” The visual arts seminar mines the wealth of critical thought, writing and practice emanating from the Museum’s seminal 2001 exhibition Freestyle, which featured the work of twenty-eight then-emerging artists, including Sanford Biggers, Trenton Doyle Hancock, Kira Lynn Harris, Jennie C. Jones, Dave McKenzie and Julie Mehretu, to name a few. In the course syllabus, Hewitt explains, “Freestyle helped usher a generation of artists into public discourse and scrutiny, highlighting a cacophony of influences, histories, and art tendencies. The wide array of artworks and approaches to art making that it put on display challenged the art world and questioned conventional thinking about art made by artists of color in the twenty-first century.”

For many in the field, and particularly young artists of color seeking to enter it, Freestyle marked the birth of an expanded canon that confronts the many barriers between contemporary black art and mainstream discourse. Aside from the physical space the exhibition claimed, it also forged a new conceptual space for “post-black” thought and practice, in which emerging artists were able to build
complex identities, independent from the dominant, categorical language of the time, which subsumed them within the shadows of established artists of color. “This exhibition is neither a definitive survey nor a comprehensive exhibition, in the scope of its subject, but rather an attempt to look at this exciting moment with eyes wide open for what’s to come,” Thelma Golden writes in the introduction to the exhibition catalogue. “Freestyle is part of the long-term strategy at The Studio Museum in Harlem to seek out, support, and present the work of emerging artists in the African Diaspora and beyond. Freestyle allows this generation of artists to add their voices to the prevailing dialogue and debates while expanding the platform of contemporary art.”

Drawing from the continuum of artistic license ignited by this exhibition, and building upon Barnard’s prompt to engage the Museum’s history in scholarship surrounding Harlem’s cultural legacy, the Museum invited Hewitt’s students to participate in a month-long residency, alongside Artist-in-Residence program alumni and Museum staff. During the month of April, four seminars were sited at the Museum, and featured lectures by Thelma Golden, Irene V. Small, Courtney J. Martin and Rashida Bumbray. The semi-
nars covered a vast array of topics that surfaced in Freestyle, including temporality, simultaneity, subjectivity, displacement, forced migration, diaspora and community. “Studio Lab: Freestyle and Displacement in Contemporary Art Practices” served as a testing ground for interdisciplinary practice, in which participants explored the impact of these issues on the complex ways contemporary art is produced, exhibited and discussed.

Marc Andre Robinson—artist, 2004–05 artist in residence and Studio Lab participant—reflected on the cosmic shift Freestyle set into motion, “I saw Freestyle when I was in graduate school at MICA [Maryland Institute College of Art] and it had a huge impact on me. Seeing that exhibition put some momentum behind my general desire to move to New York after graduation, and gave me something real to focus on outside of a vague notion of what it meant to enter the art world. With Freestyle came the sense of breaking down barriers, of movement, and the freedom to pull from as many different influences as I liked. I feel like Studio Lab resonates with an experience like that and, by design, creates new possibility—a space rich with conversation and dialogue, much like Freestyle did.” In addition to Robinson, six alumni of the Artist-in-Residence program participated in Studio Lab with their distinct voices, as they reflected on their own formative Museum moments. Representing a seventeen-year span of the Artist-in-Residence program, Elia Alba (1998–99), Sanford Biggers (1999–2000), Saya Woolfalk (2007–08), Valerie Piraino (2009–10), Lauren Kelley (2009–10), Sadie Barnette (20014–15), EJ Hill (2015–16) and Jordan Casteel (2015–16) narrated the collective history of the Museum through their deeply personal experiences with it.

Elia Alba and students
Photo: © Argenis Apolinario 2016
It was the profound candor of the Studio Lab platform that resonated most with Yadira Capaz, a junior at Barnard majoring in urban studies with an interest in how the arts make cities thrive. “Having this deeper engagement with administrators and the community of resident artists made me realize how vitally impactful the Museum’s legacy is. As an artist sharing this heritage, the conversations and histories I heard made me feel supported in a space where I didn’t have to justify my existence, and my context was understood,” Capaz says. Most participants reflecting on this experience similarly articulated a profound respect for the Harlem Semester’s goal to build sustainable community through engaged scholarship and increased access.

From a museological perspective, this elastic model for multidirectional and intergenerational learning explodes the tradition of how art history is taught, and demands the field reexamine the role of the artist and the responsibility of institutions in relation to our own canonization. While Studio Lab inspired contemporary readings of historic events and texts, it also pioneered an altogether new language through which the Museum could reimagine its work, impact and mission. Activating a matrix of Museum stakeholders, the initiative dared us to take stock and rearticulate a shared set of values for all those making, learning and dreaming uptown. As the Museum approaches its fiftieth anniversary in Harlem, it is my sincere hope that this type of “dynamic exchange of ideas about art and society” will continue to define the future of our work, and that collaborations such as the Harlem Semester will enable us to more fluidly respond to our neighborhood, neighbors and needs.


Yadira Capaz
Photo © Argenis Apolinario 2016
inHARLEM with Rudy Shepherd

by Amanda Hunt, Assistant Curator

Rudy Shepherd, an inaugural participant in our inHarlem initiative, will present Black Rock Negative Energy Absorber in Jackie Robinson Park, from August 2016 to July 2017. Assistant Curator Amanda Hunt met Shepherd in the park to discuss art, Harlem, Prince and more.

Amanda Hunt: Rudy, we have both lived in the famed Paul Dunbar Apartment Complex, which is a stone’s throw from Jackie Robinson Park, where we’re sitting this morning. What is your relationship to this neighborhood?

Rudy Shepherd: I lived in Harlem for over ten years. I lived over on 142nd and Hamilton for eight or nine years, and then I lived in the Dunbar. Now, I live a little farther north, up in Washington Heights. But coming down to this area is always really loaded. A lot of my life happened here at a seminal time in my career as an artist and myself as a person. I was talking to somebody recently about how, as a black person, I grew up in the suburbs for most of my life. I was always the only black kid in my class. I was very aware of my own unfamiliarity. Early in my career I made work about how I absorbed all this racism and fear about black people. Moving to Harlem slowly wore that away.

Amanda Hunt: You sort of let things go?

Rudy Shepherd: Yes, and those walls just sort of fell down. Black identity, things like the Afropunk Festival, I love seeing that. I brought my kids to that festival and they were blown away. They don’t have the baggage that I do, but I could still see their eyes lighting up just listening to black punk bands. My daughter in particular was like, “I’m not dressed weird enough!” There’s something really big there. It’s not something that gets talked about a lot, but for me it’s huge.

Amanda Hunt: It’s liberating.

Rudy Shepherd: Yes. Why do I have to conform to all these expectations and rules? I know we wanted to talk about Prince—I’ve made portraits of him since my first show. He was always somebody that I would see on television, and just think, “Whoa, that guy.” He’s black, but he’s doing whatever he wants. That was big, even before I knew I was an artist. It was like, “Oh, okay, there are other people doing other things.” In my little world, I hadn’t seen anything quite like that. I’d seen rock bands, people of other races, doing whatever they wanted. But for me he was the example that black people can do whatever they want.

Amanda Hunt: I was thinking about that in terms of liberation, this full circle in terms of identity and your relationship to blackness. I also identify with that. I grew up in Philadelphia and South Philadelphia, and it was more Italian than black. Same kind of trajectory—moving out from the city and doing the private school thing and just having that cultural distance. And then coming to the Studio Museum, which is so meaningful for political and personal reasons, which I’m sure you can relate to, being an artist who has shown here.

Rudy Shepherd: Definitely.
AH: But I really appreciate you touching on that in terms of the culture of this neighborhood. I’m thinking about Prince—the day after his death and what he represented for so many people. But I’m also thinking about your relationship to music, because part of what we’re going to do here in the park, and hopefully in the bandshell that we’re sitting in, is performing and improvising.

RS: Which is another full circle for me because it’s always been a dream. I sort of backed into making art, but I’ve always loved music and wanted to perform. I’m always playing instruments at home, going to shows and sort of projecting myself on that stage, and just appreciating the power of the way that music connects with people so directly. It’s familiar, we all grew up on it, we understand it. And even though it’s so abstract, people get it right away. They feel it, you know? Whether it’s rock or jazz or whatever, people are basically absorbing this abstract art and understanding it on a fully emotional level.

AH: It’s powerful. So let’s talk a bit about the static object we want to build here on this site. We’re going to be activating four historic Harlem parks as part of this public art initiative that I want to bring to Harlem. You were one of the first names to come to mind after a studio visit, after seeing the Black Rock Negative Energy Absorber. Can talk just a bit about that?

RS: It’s been an ongoing series of sculptures. I did the first one at the Socrates Sculpture Park in Long Island City. I’ve always worked politically, talked about issues and tried in some way to affect change in the world. So this project actually started with me wrestling with that idea: Does art change anything? So almost as a joke, but somewhat speaking to my desire, I decided to make a sculpture that doesn’t talk about change but actually changes things, a magical sculpture that is going to make people behave, treat each other more nicely. No matter whether they’re racist or sexist or whatever their problem is, it’s going to cut across all these things, and not get tangled up in the specifics of what’s the problem.

So the series started with this idea, addressing the criticism that art doesn’t do anything, it doesn’t change anything. At first, it was sort of an inside joke. I didn’t know if anybody was going to get it, if it was going to resonate with anybody. I remember when I was working on it, a group of guys that were working in the park came over, and this black guy was like, “Hey, what are you working on there?”
I told him the name, I say “It’s the Black Rock Negative Energy Absorber.” And he was like, “Oh, yeah, I used to have one of those in my bedroom back in the 70s.” He just came right back at me with this joke and I thought, "Oh, wow, he gets it.” I mean, if you can joke about it, you understand it.

It’s just continued like that. People just seem to get it. They get the sentiment and they relate to that and they appreciate it. I always worry that people might take it the wrong way, they are gonna think I’m joking . . .

AH: That it would be read as ironic . . .

RS: And that’s never been the issue. People kind of cut through that. It’s almost like, if you believe it, it exists. And people seem to jump right on board, you know?

AH: That’s incredible.

RS: And it’s interesting, because I think we all are sort of overwhelmed by trying to parse out what’s going on in the world and how to fix it. You just get bogged down. The more information you pull in, the more you feel disempowered and sort of stuck. So I think this project is like the spark: What about art? What about magic? What about this other way of thinking about things? You know what I mean?

AH: Absolutely. We’ve talked in the past about the idea of translating what happens in the studio to what happens in the public space, the richness of the interaction with public work and public engagement. Do you have any hopes for, or are you excited to see, that in this project?

RS: I’m coming into this pretty confident. I’m sure there’ll be a variety of reactions, but I think that in the past, I might have been nervous and felt like I can’t just come in and do the full weirdo contemporary art, that I should kind of dumb it down or do something a little more, you know, straightforward. Now I’m realizing, from doing the last two projects, and just talking to people about my work, that people get it. I don’t need to do that. And there’s precedent for this, you know.

AH: Yes.

RS: Whether it be jazz or, I can’t help but think of Sun Ra, playing in Philly or here in Harlem, that’s got to be the most intellectual sort of art, but people understand it. And even if they don’t, it gives them an opportunity to reckon with it and come to understand it. If this is someone’s first experience with contemporary art, that’s a good thing.

I’m really excited to bring this project back home, right here in Harlem. There’s something really magical about that.
Winning Arts & Minds

by Carolyn Halpin-Healy, Co-founder and Executive Director, Arts & Minds, and Shanta Lawson, Education Director, The Studio Museum in Harlem, Secretary, Board of Directors, Arts & Minds
Each Tuesday afternoon, security personnel roll out the red carpet for a special group of guests for *Arts & Minds*. Facilities team members carefully arrange seating for each group of people with dementia and their caregivers, including family members, friends, and professionals, who come to the Studio Museum for a program from the very heart of the museum’s mission: “the dynamic exchange of ideas about art and society.” Each person is warmly welcomed as we gather in the atrium, under the reassuring beacon of Glenn Ligon’s *Give Us a Poem*, the emblem of our solidarity since the program began in March 2010.

People with Alzheimer’s disease and related dementias (ADRD) live with problems of communication, reasoning, judgment, attention and visual and spatial perception, in addition to short- and long-term memory loss. Their caregivers suffer from higher rates of stress-related illnesses, such as diminished immune response, heart disease, depression and anxiety. *Arts & Minds* was founded by Columbia University neurologist James M. Noble and museum educator Carolyn Halpin-Healy, with a grant from Friends of Harlem Hospital, to improve quality of life for people with ADRD and their caregivers. At a time when museums are increasingly recognized as spaces of social inclusion, and when many ADRD caregivers seek meaningful activities, *Arts & Minds* offers an opportunity to push back against the fear and stigma of this disease, which affects more than five million people in the United States, with cognitive, physical and social stimulation through connection with art.

In each Tuesday session, we spend half an hour in dialogue about a single work of art, with focus and attention, to uncover many layers of meaning and associations. Titus Kaphar’s *Jerome Project* (2014–15) particularly welcomed the quiet looking with which we begin each program. Through a process of collective looking, it revealed subtle nuances:

Muzzled black men silenced  
Death row  
It looks like an institution. What institution?  
I see sorrow, sadness.  
Gold is symbolic of what could have been.  
In some of them I see “I’m innocent.” In others, “I did it. I’m sorry.”  
It could have been golden.  
In a way the artist is giving forgiveness.

Interpretation, the search for meaning, goes hand in hand with close looking. Within the safe space of the Museum, people with memory impairment can tap into emotion, memory and imagination.

Next, the group transitions to the workshop. Studio Museum teaching artists, who have completed the twenty-one-hour *Arts & Minds* training course, challenge and guide participants through an exploration of materials in a supportive environment where no preordained outcomes are imposed. The goal is to frame art making as an open-ended activity, analogous to the open-ended dialogue in the galleries. Artist-quality materials appeal to the senses and provide the means of expression. In one special workshop, artist Kira Lynn Harris, whose site-specific *The Block | Bellona* (2011–12) was on view, led the session. She invited participants to explore chalk on black paper, similar to her own work. Close connection to contemporary artists often sparks meaningful interactions, but *Arts & Minds* participants have also experienced profound interactions with earlier artists. The work of Romare Bearden, Jacob Lawrence and Elizabeth Catlett inspire energetic responses and exploration in the studio.
Recently, research has begun to measure the impact of museum programs on the cognitive and emotional health of people with ADRD and those who care for them. Columbia medical student Hannah J. Roberts and her mentor Dr. Noble show that program attendance is associated with improved mood and reduced apathy in individuals with ADRD. Caregivers also exhibit improved mood, as well as a reduction in isolation and stress. Studies of similar museum programs around the United States and in the United Kingdom show improved cognitive function.

Little is known, however, about how such programs affect their museum communities, so we commissioned a study to explore how the weekly programs have affected Studio Museum staff. Twenty staff members competed the Dementia Attitude Survey (DAS), and seven met for interviews with researchers Ruth Finkelstein and Eileen Newcomer from the Columbia Aging Center in the Mailman School of Public Health at Columbia University. According to several employees, the program challenges stereotypes of those living with ADRD. One said, “There is the stereotype of people with Alzheimer’s . . . but they look regular—doesn’t have to be someone in a wheelchair staring into space.” Several staff members stated that the program helps give the Museum value and shows a serious commitment to the community. These results indicate a high potential for museums in creating a world more friendly to people with dementia.

With rates of ADRD increasing worldwide—and disproportionately affecting minority populations—medical schools are working to encourage more physicians-in-training to go into neurology and gerontology. That can be a hard sell for students, who are often not well equipped to deal with dementia and may encounter patients with ADRD only in the last stages of the disease. Roberts and Noble studied preclinical medical students’ perceptions of dementia relative to *Arts & Minds* and similar programs at The Metropolitan Museum of Art. The DAS was administered before and after the students attended a ninety-minute program. Their scores increased favorably, indicating improved level of comfort around people with ADRD and their caregivers. The study was published in the August 2015 issue of the journal *Neurology*, and in an editorial in the same issue, University of Virginia scholars Marcia D. Childress and Donna T. Chen write, “Putting the arts to work amid our aging nation’s silver tsunami and a rising tide of dementia has payoffs that help all of us to address a state of being that frustrates and frightens us deeply.” Museum-based activities in medical education have the potential to influence the next generation of physicians to see the full humanity of persons with ADRD and to understand the challenges of caregiving.

Anchoring *Arts & Minds* at the Studio Museum contributes to making the world a more dementia-friendly place at a time when people living with ADRD need meaningful activities to remain connected to their capabilities, medical practitioners need treatment tools and museum professionals strive toward greater social inclusion. The Studio Museum is once again at the forefront, with an extraordinary exhibition program and a commitment to the exchange of ideas about art and society that inspire all visitors, including adults with cognitive impairment and their care partners.

*Arts & Minds* is made possible in part by the Manhattan Borough President’s Office with the support of Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer.
Creating Fellowship

by Adeze Wilford | Alex Gonzalez | Henry Murphy | Dessane Cassell

In late 2015 The Studio Museum in Harlem and the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) designed a collaborative two-year fellowship program that spans institutions and departments. During this first year of the fellowship, Adeze Wilford and Alex Gonzalez have been working at the Studio Museum in the Curatorial and Public Programs departments, while their counterparts Henry Murphy and Dessane Cassell work at MoMA. For the second year of the program, the pairs will switch institutions. The fellowship provides opportunities for research, travel and direct work with artists and programming in the field, and is a dynamic way to begin a career in the arts. Recently, all four fellows met at the Studio Museum to talk about their experiences in the program and learn more from one another.

Alex Gonzalez: How did it feel to be a part of the inaugural class of fellows? What parts were intimidating and what parts were exciting?

Dessane Cassell: I am excited about the idea of being part of the inaugural class. I like the idea of being able to have more flexibility and play a role in the shape of the fellowship as it continues to grow and progress. And I think in a lot of ways, that has been my experience. I work in the Department of Film at MoMA, and being in that department allows me to understand the intricacies of working with film as a medium and how that curatorial department functions, and I’ve also been given a lot of flexibility to pick and choose projects that I want to work on that extend outside of film or curatorial projects.

Henry Murphy: I think one thing that’s special for me is the level of access that not having a predefined structure allows. So the sense is, at MoMA particularly, if you tell someone you’re this fellow, a lot of times people have heard of it and they’re interested—like, okay, cool. This is an opportunity for you to do this thing. Or if you want to get involved with this thing, you can get involved. You can operate outside of your department in certain ways. You have a level of access to the institution that, once you figure it out and navigate it, provides some really great opportunities to get involved with different things.
Adeze Wilford: Building off that, it’s been really fun to see the response of people when you tell them that you’re doing this fellowship because, overall, everyone has been super-excited and has definitely heard about the fellowship. They’re congratulatory and excited for the work that you’re going to be able to do, which I’ve found validating.

AG: How have your recent internships, experiences and backgrounds in the arts formed the work you’re currently doing?

AW: Before this fellowship started, I worked at the Studio Museum in a different capacity, and it’s been interesting to see how one department works versus another. I started off interning here and then I was a departmental assistant in Public Programs. So it’s been nice to see how my curatorial practice is developing through this fellowship. The previous work that I’ve done wasn’t necessarily related directly to curatorial, but because of the way that our departments collaborate, I was seeing a lot of what curators were doing and thinking about, which has helped me with the work that I’m doing now.

HM: I think in the same sense my work in the past has indirectly and directly affected what I’m doing now. Adeze and I were interns together at the Studio Museum back in the day. I was in the Communications Department then, and I also interned at MoMA in Digital Marketing. So, in a sense, that’s a certain type of public engagement. Working in Public Programs specifically is a different thing. But I still think that mindset, of thinking about a public and addressing a public and how to frame the mission of the museum and art for the public, is very much in the vein of what I’m doing now. There’s a dialogue, and part of the reason I was able to get this fellowship, or to be here now, is definitely that I worked with the public in another sense in the past.

DC: I’ve spent a lot of time working or interning in the arts over the past couple of years. And those experiences have been very formative in terms of helping me understand how to engage critically and theoretically with art, and also understand the impact of programming. But what’s been most formative was the experience I had just before this, which was a lot less related—at least on the surface—where I was working in a high
school in South Africa. And the idea of creating a space, in that context, for my students to tap into certain ideas or feel comfortable engaging with something that felt very intimidating to them is very much tied to a lot of my curatorial aims and ideas for how to get the public to engage with art, how to create a space where art is not intimidating. And I think that those things are really not so different at all.

**AG:** I fell into the arts administration/museum industry recently, about six months ago. It’s been really interesting to see the different roles that I’ve played. I had a digital apprenticeship with the Hammer Museum, and looked at how digital sculptures and environments can provide accessibility. From there, I worked with Judy Baca, an original Chicana artist. She had fundamental templates for community programming, such as giving ex-gang members paintbrushes and letting them tell their stories that way. So I’ve had a variety of experiences on the technical side, in the field and in the streets, working with people, sharing their stories, asking them questions. It’s been really interesting to see how those different roles have informed how I’m doing things now.

**AG:** We’ve talked a little bit about the past and our present situations at each institution, but I’m interested to know what we’re most excited about as 2017 and our transition comes. Any ideas?

**AW:** I love the opportunity to see how another institution functions. And it’s just going to be completely new and different because the Studio Museum is a differently sized organization compared to MoMA. Our Curatorial Department is structured in a very different way. So it’ll be nice to have the opportunity to push and develop the way that I’m thinking about curating in an environment that I have not been in before.

**DC:** In the past, I’ve worked mainly at smaller museums with much smaller numbers of staff. And I think that that creates a very special environment, but working in a larger institution has taught me certain skills that I never really had to use in a smaller institution. I’m excited to go from working in a larger institution to a smaller one, and to see how my skills and ideas have changed after working in an environment that is much larger.

**HM:** I think—especially after talking to Thelma Golden—something core about the fellowship is this idea of a difference, yes, but also the fact that there’s something to be had in the exchange and the in-between spaces. So I’m excited about that part. I’m excited about bringing the knowledge set of one institution to the next and asking what can be generative from having that different knowledge set and how we can collaborate, not only within an institution, but across departments across institutions, to do something special.

**AG:** I’m really interested in seeing how I can take the work that I’m doing here and the values I’ve picked up from a museum that is mission-specific and focuses on a core audience, and bring that into an institution that reaches more people, in a different sense. I’m also excited for the professional development opportunities, about getting those ideas off the ground and brainstorming ways that we can benefit from them across the board.

**AW:** What I’m looking forward to from this fellowship and the trajectory of my career is solidifying that this is what I want to do. I’ve always wanted to be a curator, but now I’m gaining the practical and tangible skills that I know I will be able to use at other institutions. This is just a jumping-off point for me to go to graduate school and focus on how I’m hopefully going to make a mark in the art world.

**DC:** I’ve been engaged in the curatorial field for several years now and that has taken a different shape at every institution. I think what I enjoy about that is the fluidity with which I’ve been able to apply my skills in different ways. I’m looking forward to continuing to build on my experiences creating spaces for others and creating opportunities for engagement.

**AG:** I’ve liked working with creatives before, so this role has allowed me to look at artists specifically. Moving forward I don’t know if I’ll continue in the museum sector, but it’s definitely informed my way of engaging and approaching different kinds of creatives in different fields.

This discussion has been edited and condensed for clarity.
As The Studio Museum in Harlem’s inaugural Archive Fellow, my job is to dive into the institution’s almost fifty years of history. What began as an attempt to organize various streams of data has morphed into a completely interactive experience. With every day I spend in the archive, I discover more reasons to love the Museum. Here are a few of my favorite items and experiences from the archive so far.

One of the things I love about working in the archives is that I am able to experience the histories of both the institution and Harlem itself in new ways. As a native Harlemite from a long line of Harlem-born people, my connection to the neighborhood runs deep. The Studio Museum shares that same connection and has always made an effort to be part of the community.

The image above comes from the 1971 Studio in the Streets mural project. The initiative, developed by Edward Spriggs, former Director of the Museum, was designed to bring art into the everyday lives of Harlem residents. The bright colors of the mural are instantly engaging. The mural ran on 125th Street and Lenox Avenue, and I can only imagine how great it would have been to walk by this beautiful work each day.

Being in the archives also gives me a serious case of exhibition envy! The Studio Museum has presented so many amazing exhibitions in its storied history and I wish I could have attended every single one. Luckily, I get to experience these exhibitions in my own way through Studio Museum’s one-of-a-kind exhibition catalogue collection. Here are excerpts from two of my favorite exhibitions, Jacob Lawrence’s 1969 exhibit The Toussaint L’Ouverture Series and the invite from Alma Thomas’s solo exhibition A Life in Art (1983).
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FROM THE STUDIO:
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and
ALMA THOMAS: A Life in Art

Two inaugural year exhibitions from
April 8—June 5, 1983

Reception
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Cash Bar

The Studio Museum in Harlem
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The Artists-in-Residence exhibition is made possible in part with public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts.
Operation of this facility is supported in part by funds provided through the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs.
Ask a Museum Guard
Lisa Richardson

by Elizabeth Gwinn, Communications Director

Elizabeth Gwinn: Can tell me how long you have been working at The Studio Museum in Harlem and how you came to work here?

Lisa Richardson: I started working here August 8, 2007. I got a phone call from [Visitor Services Director] Shannon Ali. I was like . . . okay, because I didn’t remember having applied! She said “Harlem” and I said “Harlem? Where is Harlem?” I was kind of shocked.

EG: You really don’t remember applying for this job?

LR: No. I’d applied so many places. I didn’t even know where Harlem was. I didn’t know about Harlem—I’d only seen it in Wesley Snipes movies! So I came for my first interview, all dressed up in my suit. Afterwards Ms. Ali told me she was going to call me back, but I called her. And after the second interview, I called her again and asked when I was going to start.

Lisa Richardson
Photo: Katherine McMahon for ARTNews
LR: Caribbean: Crossroads of the World was one of my favorites because of the way it showed different cultures. I’m Jamaican, so I loved seeing Jamaican art, but I also saw art from all different cultures and all different years at the three museums. When I started in 2007 we had David Adjaye: Making Public Buildings—I really like seeing his buildings portrayed. Kori Newkirk was a very good one, too. I like a lot of the work by our artists in residence. Njideka Akunyili Crosby—she is fabulous. I like Demetrius Oliver.

My favorite show right now is Ebony G. Patterson: . . . when they grow up . . . A lot of people come downstairs when I’m working and see the pink carpet and all the kid’s stuff, and it looks so cheerful. People look at it like, “Okay, it’s beautiful.” But when they read what it is all about, dealing with killings that are going on with kids—their expressions change. They realize it’s not just all about the colors. Some work brings out different ways for people to understand what art is, what it is all about.

EG: How has your view of Harlem changed, from not knowing anything about it to being here all the time?

LR: It has changed from seeing all the different people of different cultures coming into the Museum. It’s different every day, and it’s changing as the Museum is bringing in more people to show them what we do and our quality work.

EG: What do you like best about the Studio Museum?

LR: I like the people I work with, the staff, the interesting people who come in all the time. And the parties! I love the Uptown Fridays!, seeing people dancing and having fun. I love seeing the different artists’ work each time the exhibitions change.

EG: Has working here changed how you think about art?

LR: To be honest, I had never worked in an art museum before. I really did not know what art was about until I came here. Now, I’m impressed with how hard the artists work to get their work into the Museum. Every time you see something different.

EG: What exhibitions or artworks have you especially liked?

LR: Caribbeang: Crossroads of the World was one of my favorites because of the way it showed different cultures. I’m Jamaican, so I loved seeing Jamaican art, but I also saw art from all different cultures and all different years at the three museums. When I started in 2007 we had David Adjaye: Making Public Buildings—I really like seeing his buildings portrayed. Kori Newkirk was a very good one, too. I like a lot of the work by our artists in residence. Njideka Akunyili Crosby—she is fabulous. I like Demetrius Oliver.

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EG: What’s your biggest challenge working here at the Museum?

LR: I don’t think I have that many challenges because I’m used to dealing with challenges. I got used to it. You can’t have challenges on your mind, you just have to think better and focus better on how to deal with them.

EG: When you’re in Harlem but you’re not at work, what are you doing?

LR: Shopping! I go all over, walk this way, walk that way . . .
When asked to brainstorm about the purpose of art, at the start of their program in early January 2016, the energetic Expanding the Walls: Making Connections Between Photography, History and Community participants offered insightful feedback. Their conversation ranged from the idea that “art is about observation” to the much more specific, “art is about finding beauty in everyday objects.” There was an emphasis on the belief that art is about bringing attention to things that are often overlooked, and that it is the responsibility of the artist to seek out these forgotten moments. In consideration of all of the different ways in which art can take form, the participants felt strongly that art is truly about individual expression.

While the students of Expanding the Walls entered the photography-based program with varying levels of experience in art making, each has a strong sense of individual expression. They express so much through their work, personalities, insights and even fashions. Expanding the Walls participants are encouraged to communicate their thoughts, reflect on the thinking of their peers and engage with the workshops provided for them. As they work toward their summer exhibition, Color in Shadow (on view July 14–October 30, 2016), they refine their collective ability to capture images that express their intentions, and simultaneously benefit by learning from and influencing each other.

Expanding the Walls is made possible with support from The Keith Haring Foundation, Conscious Kids, Susan and Thomas Dunn, Colgate-Palmolive, and Joy of Giving Something.
Remembering Claudine Brown

by Sandra Jackson-Dumont, Frederick P. and Sandra P. Rose Chairman of Education, Metropolitan Museum of Art

On March 17, 2016, I felt a seismic shift when Claudine Brown, noted museum educator, administrator and friend, passed away after a long battle with cancer. From 1995 to 2010, she was the Director of the Nathan Cummings Foundation’s Arts and Culture Program, and was instrumental in granting The Studio Museum in Harlem funding for Expanding the Walls: Making Connections Between Photography, History and Community in 2001. This signature program would not exist without Claudine and the Nathan Cummings Foundation’s support.

When asked to write this memorial for such an iconic figure, who played a seminal role in my life personally and professionally, my mind immediately went to the last time I laid eyes on her. On February 25, 2016, at the invitation of Claudine, I boarded a train to Washington, D.C., to deliver a keynote address at the Smithsonian’s Youth Access Grants Forum. She was the Assistant Secretary for Education and Access for the Smithsonian Institution. Her office was in an 1855 building called “The Castle.” I have visited Claudine in her other places of work but this location was metaphorically appropriate for the queen of museum education. I chuckled as I climbed the stairs with excitement to see one of my longtime mentors.

Upon arrival, I learned that Claudine would not be able to attend the meeting due to a doctor appointment. She still wanted to address her staff/colleagues and her solution was to send a brief video welcoming the group. The program started with the usual introductions and, in this case, the screening of the video. I was standing in the back of the hall when Claudine’s image appeared on the large screen. She was seated in a room alone—no table in front of her, just her. Her head was adorned by a beautifully patterned knit hat, her signature almond eyes were wide with knowledge and her sweeping smile took the room as she sat erect, still and full of intent. The group quieted as Claudine began speaking about the importance of their roles and their work in the world as museum educators, youth workers and creative advocates. She encouraged, applauded and thanked them.

Over the years, I have had the benefit of Claudine’s counsel and insight, but nothing compares to what I witnessed as I stood in the back of that room. This was classic Claudine: prepared, deeply thoughtful, intrinsically kind and well equipped with a clear and concise message.

In her acceptance speech for Bank Street College Alumni Association Awards, where she was the Distinguished Honoree in 2010, she said “I owe a debt of gratitude to my grandparents, Revered and Mrs. M.C. Philips, who taught me, through their example, the principals of servant leadership, the importance of institution building and the power of communities when they act on one accord.” I am personally grateful to her for sharing those lessons with me. Claudine and I often spoke about the idea that “to whom much is given, much is required,” and she would add, “and don’t you ever forget that.” Because of her, my reply remains, “I will not.”

Photo: Amanda Lucidon for the Smithsonian
The Studio Museum in Harlem is excited to celebrate over five years of partnership with P79 Horan School in Harlem, a school designed for students with special needs. The collaboration facilitates experiences with students at P79 to gain hands-on time with new techniques, make observations about themselves and their environments, and develop improved motor skills and hand-eye coordination. Working with the Blueprints for Teaching and Learning in the Arts, students gain social competence and confidence through individual and collaborative art making.

In studying a range of curricular topics, including “Mapping the Neighborhood,” “Signifiers of Self and Home” and “Who Am I,” students have worked with various artistic processes, including drawing, painting, sculpture and photography. More than fifty students from across the school have participated in the program. Michelle Alvarez, Bilingual Special Education Teacher, and Minna Cohen, Individualized Education Program (IEP) Coordinator, reflect on their participation in the partnership.

**Erin K. Hylton:** How did the partnership with The Studio Museum in Harlem begin?

**Minna Cohen:** My relationship with the Studio Museum began approximately five years ago when we did not have an active art program. I had very creative students but no knowledge of how to create the art projects that would engage and interest them. When my students were involved in a Community Summer work site on 125th Street, we frequently walked by the Museum. They were curious about the structure with all the windows, and when we returned to school we did research on the Studio Museum.

The class wanted to visit so I emailed the Education Director, Shanta Lawson. She was able to find a Museum Educator to provide a tour with only two classes in residence. Because the physical structure of the Museum is inviting and not imposing, my students were able to appreciate The Bearden Project exhibition and Harlem Postcards. I contacted Ms. Lawson to arrange another visit and she suggested a Multi-Session School Collaboration. This collaboration became the highlight of the school year for everyone involved.

**EH:** What does the Museum offer to your curriculum?

**MC:** The integration of the art into the community and beyond provided my students with an opportunity for increased self-esteem and pride in themselves and their accomplishments. Somewhere in the course of the year the students became confident artists.

We were able to use the information and skills learned for cross-curriculum projects in reading, literacy and social studies. **The Harlem Post**
cards became a collage that was annotated with paragraphs from the students. This collaboration provided an ongoing ability to view art in a new way and to appreciate the art they were able to produce.

**Michelle Alvarez:** I have started thinking more about how art can play a bigger role in fostering collaboration and active engagement, and improve ownership in student learning. Since my collaboration with the Museum, I have started using some of the methods I learned, such as having my students explore mixed media to add to their pieces.

**EH:** How important is this collaboration?

**MC:** The collaboration was a powerful affirmation that community art resources can and do impact the way students view themselves and the world. With the free passes provided by the Museum, families of students were able to visit the same exhibits that their children had learned about, and have conversations about the art techniques and visions of the artists. Without the welcoming forum of the Studio Museum, our curriculum would not have been enriched and cross-curriculum work in school would not have been possible.

**MA:** This collaboration is essential in helping me add to my pedagogy because it helped me further my critical thinking into the how to better teach my students. Using visual arts has, in turn, helped students with their own critical thinking skills and ability to make observations and interpretations of artwork.

**EH:** What would you like people to know about this collaboration?

**MA:** When schools collaborate with museums, they are being proactive in helping students enjoy going to such institutions. The trips are essential for the ability to see artwork as something that is celebrated and an integral part of the culture of this community, and help with language development, communication, team-building skills and overall active engagement.

**MC:** The outreach into the community and the pride of the students and families continue to this day.
The core of The Studio Museum in Harlem’s School Programs is visual art–based experiences tailored to meet the needs and interests of students, staff and administrators. Many of these experiences take place in classrooms, but the Museum’s work with young people extends to a variety of other settings, including workshops and studio spaces within community-based organizations. Our partnership with Hetrick-Martin Institute (HMI), a leading provider of social support and programming for at-risk LGBTQ youth, located in Lower Manhattan, is now in its second year. This collaboration exemplifies some of the most inspiring and transformative experiences that allow artists and young people to connect with each other outside of traditional classroom spaces.

Throughout the collaboration with HMI, Studio Museum artist in residence alum Eric Mack (2014–15), current artist in residence EJ Hill and teaching artist Miatta Kawinzi have engaged HMI members in conversation and art making. These dynamic interactions have taken place during HMI’s Open Art Studios program, within the Studio Museum’s galleries and in the artist-in-residence studios. The main goals are to engage young people with the artistic processes of contemporary artists of African descent and to inspire them to create in their own lives.

Photo: Erin K. Hylton
“HMI’s partnership with The Studio Museum in Harlem has been an integral part of highlighting the visibility and voices of our young artists in our Open Art Studio. With visits from artist in residence alum Eric Mack and teaching artist Miatta Kawinzi, the presence of creative leaders of color has exemplified the potential for reaching broader audiences by producing, analyzing, critiquing and observing the art-making process.”

—Leesa Tabrizi, Art Educator, HMI

“Unique and different artwork than I had ever seen before . . . the three-dimensional paper pieces in Rashaad Newsome’s elaborate frames and the beaded outlines in Ebony G. Patterson’s work specifically.”

—Jacklene Porter-Taylor

“There was pure emotion. The works inspired me to use digital animation software like Maya and After Effects in my art. After seeing Rashaad Newsome’s collages I felt like I should do more and revisit the Museum.”

—Miguel Vega

“Ebony G. Patterson’s work made me think of the Jay-Z lyric, ‘We used to fight for building blocks, now we fight for blocks with buildings,’ in reference to the childlike building blocks reflecting actual fighting and building blocks in the neighborhood.”

—Justin Diaz

“What stood out most to me were the bright colors, and the way she [Ebony G. Patterson] brought themes together in one room.”

—Edwin Desmoine

“Every topic we explored was very thought-provoking. It was nice to have our thoughts triggered while looking at something beautiful.”

—Aaron Alexander
DIY Mini Mosaics

by Chloe Hayward, Family Programs Coordinator

Alma Thomas’s paintings are colorful experiments in abstraction, line and pattern. Find out below how to use color to inform your composition!

Key Words

• **Hue:**
  color or shade

• **Mosaic:**
  the art of creating an image using small colored pieces of glass, stone or other materials

• **Composition:**
  the way in which something is put together or arranged

Materials

• Cardboard
• Scissors
• Glue
• White acrylic paint
• Red acrylic paint
• Orange acrylic paint
• Small paintbrush
DIY Mini Mosaics

Step 1
From a piece of cardboard, cut a small rectangular base, approximately 5 × 7 inches, and set aside.

Step 2
Cut a separate piece of cardboard into small shapes. Squares and rectangles are the easiest.

Step 3
Using white, red and orange paint, experiment with mixing different hues. Paint your shapes in the hues you have developed.

Step 4
After the paint on your shapes has dried, glue the shapes down to your base to create a colorful miniature mosaic composition!
HARLEM
The Art of Jazz

In 2006, Newport Jazz Festival founder George Wein established the Joyce Alexander Wein Artist Prize, one of the most significant awards given to individual artists in the United States today. The prize honors George’s late wife, Joyce Alexander Wein (1928–2005), a longtime Trustee of The Studio Museum in Harlem and a woman whose life embodies a commitment to the power and possibilities of art and culture. Given each year at the Studio Museum’s fall Gala, the $50,000 award recognizes and honors the artistic achievements of an African-American artist who demonstrates great innovation, promise and creativity.

Artists of all cultures have long been inspired by jazz, and the links between the visual and the musical are well documented throughout recent art history. For this year’s Newport Jazz program, the Studio Museum organized a special portfolio that contributes to this ongoing dialogue. This portfolio features the work of past Joyce Alexander Wein Artist Prize winners Njideka Akunyili Crosby (2015), Leonardo Drew (2011), Trenton Doyle Hancock (2007), Jennie C. Jones (2012), Samuel Levi Jones (2014), Glenn Ligon (2009) and Lorna Simpson (2006). Each artist contributed a work of art inspired by their love of jazz and created in their unique and individual styles. The artists’ influences range from specific artists and recordings to a broad appreciation of the rigor, diversity and inventiveness present throughout the history of jazz.

Top:
Njideka Akunyili Crosby
5 Umezebi Street, New Haven, Enugu, 2012
Craig Robbins Collection, Miami, FL

Bottom Left:
Trenton Doyle Hancock
Finally!, 2016
Courtesy the artist and James Cohan, New York
© Trenton Doyle Hancock

Bottom Right:
Leonardo Drew
Number 134 (installation view), 2009
Courtesy the artist
This portfolio represents the possibility and power of art to speak to our human experiences of aspiration, innovation, progress and joy. These values deeply connect to the founding and ongoing mission of the Studio Museum, and they also speak to the life and spirit of Joyce Alexander Wein. Joyce was a great lover of art and a champion of African-American artists. She believed in the power of art and artists to act as a profound force for change. It has been our great honor to present the Joyce Alexander Wein Artist Prize to artists whose lives truly have been transformed by its generosity and recognition, and it is our great pleasure to share their work with you here.
On Friday, April 29, 2016, The Studio Museum in Harlem hosted more than three hundred guests at Spring Luncheon 2016 at the Mandarin Oriental, New York. The afternoon was dedicated to exploring education, engagement and expression, and celebrating trailblazing women artists. Director and Chief Curator Thelma Golden was delighted to salute visionary artists Emma Amos, Lorraine O’Grady and Faith Ringgold for their incredible legacies and contributions to the field.

The afternoon also included remarks from current Expanding the Walls student Joyel McDaniels-Payne on her experience during the eight-month teen photography program at the Museum. All proceeds from Spring Luncheon 2016 are critical to sustaining the Museum’s arts education initiatives. The Studio Museum would like to acknowledge the following organizations and individuals for their generous support and efforts that raised over $300,000.

All photos by Julie Skarratt except as noted:
*Photo by Scott Rudd
Luncheon 2016

Amelia Ogunlesi, Judith Byrd, Somers Farkas*
Sarah J. Irby, Tiffany M. Hall
Nico Wheadon, Torkwase Dyson, Mendi Obadike

Debra L. Lee, Harriette Cole
Laura Day Baker
Joeonna Bellorado-Samuels, Merele Williams Adkins, Susan Fales-Hill, Sandra Jackson-Dumont, Saya Woolfalk

Jordan Casteel, EJ Hill, Courtney Willis Blair
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Can you tell me about the first time you visited The Studio Museum in Harlem?

It was under the leadership of Mary Schmidt Campbell, around 1987. In 1985 I visited an art gallery for the first time, Tony Shafrazi Gallery. It was the Jean Michel Basquiat and Andy Warhol collaborative show in SoHo and through that process I got interested in art, especially art made by black artists. I later discovered that the Studio Museum was the place to learn about and view art made by African Americans.

What made you want to become more involved in the Studio Museum?

In the last few years, I realized I want to become more involved with the Museum due to my professional involvement with STEAM education, since the Museum has wonderful education programs. I have told the students in my program to visit the Studio Museum and get involved in the programs there, and felt I should do so as well. You have to walk the walk, and I should practice what I preach. I feel there is more I can do for the Museum as a member as the Museum grows, since membership is important.

What has been your favorite experience or exhibition at the Museum so far?

I am glad you asked this question, as two exhibitions come to mind. The first was in 1996: Explorations in the City of Light: African-American Artists in Paris, 1945–1965. That was the very first exhibition catalogue I purchased, and was the first experience I had appreciating and understanding the importance of purchasing and reading catalogues. I enjoy doing so, even today.

I also enjoyed Thelma Golden's show Freestyle (2001). It was great to see so many young African-American artists under one roof. A change was taking place, not just at the Studio Museum, but in the art world as well. You knew then that something was on the horizon. I knew that Mark Bradford would be a major artist, and there was beautiful and exciting work by Julie Mehretu and Nadine Robinson, as well as Jerald Ieans. This show really made an impact, and it is wonderful that so many of these artists are still creating amazing work.

What does it mean to you to contribute to the Studio Museum and to participate in our Membership program?

I get to contribute to and support art that matters and is important to me. Art by artists of African descent is important, and it is critical that they receive support locally, nationally and internationally. Being able to see the work of artists who look like you in museums is important as well. I also like that my support allows children to visit the Museum, learn about art and discover new artists. I especially enjoy seeing the students in the Expanding the Walls program and viewing their work in the summer.
Global Council in Los Angeles

In January 2016, The Studio Museum in Harlem’s Global Council traveled to Los Angeles to visit many of the artists living and working in the city, as well as spectacular collections featuring work by artists of African descent and incredible Los Angeles arts institutions such as artist Mark Bradford’s space, Art + Practice.

During our three-day trip, we spent time in the studio with Charles Gaines, Njideka Akunyili Crosby and Mark Bradford; visited the collections of our incredibly generous Global Council members Arthur Lewis and Hau Nguyen, as well as the wonderful collectors Paul and Linda Gotskind; talked with artists Kori Newkirk at Roberts & Tilton and Brenna Youngblood at Honor Fraser, where they had exhibitions on view; enjoyed a private moment at The Broad; celebrated the Museum through many lunches, dinners and receptions; and did so much more.

Donor trips like our excursion to Los Angeles play an important role in building the Studio Museum’s reputation in the United States and beyond. Travel opportunities are open to those at the Global Council level and above. Council members, who gather a few times each year for events with Studio Museum leadership, demonstrate their commitment to the Museum by making gifts of unrestricted support at the level of $5,000 or above annually.

For more information about Global Council, please contact Hallie S. Hobson, Director of Institutional Advancement, at 212.864.4500 x272 or hhobson@studiomuseum.org.

Global Council Members with Thelma Golden, Director and Chief Curator, The Studio Museum in Harlem, and Studio Museum staff at the Montage
Global Council in Los Angeles

Top Left: Thelma Golden in conversation with Charles Gaines in his Los Angeles studio

Right: Global Council Members
Arthur Lewis and Hau Nguyen

Top Left: Global Council Members, Thelma Golden and Studio Museum staff at Art + Practice Foundation in Leimert Park, Los Angeles

Bottom Left: Thelma Golden in conversation with Charles Gaines in his Los Angeles studio
The Board of Trustees and Director of The Studio Museum in Harlem extend deep gratitude to the donors who supported the Museum between July 1, 2015, and June 1, 2016. We look forward to sharing the complete 2016 fiscal year donor roll in the next issue of Studio magazine.

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The Studio Museum in Harlem makes every effort to ensure the accuracy of its list of members. If your name is not listed as you prefer or if you believe that your name has been omitted, please let us know by contacting the Development Office at (212) 864-4500 x221 or membership@studiomuseum.org.
Join today!
Becoming a Member has never been easier.

Membership Info

Individual $50 ($25 for Student/Senior)
(Fully tax-deductible)
— Free admission to the Studio Museum for one
— Personalized membership card
— One-year subscription to Studio
— E-vite to exhibition opening receptions
— 20% discount on exhibition catalogues published by the Studio Museum
— 15% discount on all Museum Store purchases
— Invitations to Member Shopping Days with additional discount offers throughout the year
— Free admission or discounted tickets to all Studio Museum educational and public programs
— Special discounts at select local Harlem businesses
— Annual recognition in Studio
— Members-only Wednesday evenings from 5–7 PM

Family/Partner $75
(Fully tax-deductible)
— All the preceding benefits, plus:
— Free admission to the Studio Museum for two adults (at the same address) and children under eighteen years of age
— Personalized membership cards for two

Supporter $125
(Fully tax-deductible)
— All the preceding benefits, plus:
— Member privileges of the North American Reciprocal Museum Program, allowing free or member admission and discounts at over 760 museums across the United States
— Free admission for one guest

Associate $250
($220 tax-deductible)
— All the preceding benefits plus:
— One complimentary Studio Museum exhibition catalogue

Donor $500
($450 tax-deductible)
— All the preceding benefits, plus:
— Invitations to behind-the-scenes tours and talks with art connoisseurs and curators
— Two complimentary guest passes for family and friends

Photo: Scott Rudd
Yes! I want to be a Member of The Studio Museum in Harlem.

Name of membership holder__________________________________________

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Visitor Information

**Address**
144 W. 125th St. New York, NY 10027 (between Malcolm X and Adam C. Powell Jr. boulevards)

**Admission**
Suggested donation: $7 (adults), $3 (seniors and students).
Free for Members and children (12 and under).

**Follow us on social media!**
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**General Info**
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pr@studiomuseum.org

**Public Programs Info**
212.864.4500 x282
programs@studiomuseum.org

**Membership Info**
212.864.4500 x221
membership@studiomuseum.org

**Museum Hours**
Thursday and Friday, noon–9 pm;
Saturday, 10 am–6 pm;
Sunday, noon–6 pm.

The Museum is closed to the public on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday but available for school and group tours by appointment on these days.
For more information on scheduling a tour, visit studiomuseum.org