



# 19TH ACASA TRIENNIAL SYMPOSIUM ON AFRICAN ART

AUGUST 7-11, 2024 | CHICAGO

hosted by

presented by



**SCHWEIZER**  
PREMODERN

Program Draft

7.2024

# Schedule of Events

Tuesday, August 6 - Sunday, August 11, 2024

## Wednesday, August 7

Registration, *DePaul Conference Center Lobby (8th Floor)*  
Panels (Session 1), *DePaul Conference Center (8th Floor)*  
Panels (session 2), *DePaul Conference Center (8th Floor)*  
ACASA Annual Business Meeting, *DePaul Conference Center (8005)*  
Panels (Session 3), *DePaul Conference Center (8th Floor)*  
Welcome Reception, *Mariane Ibrahim Gallery*

9:00 AM - 4:00 PM

9:00 AM - 4:00 PM  
9:00 AM - 11:00 AM  
11:15 AM - 12:45 PM  
1:00 PM - 1:45 PM  
2:00 PM - 4:00 PM  
5:00 PM - 7:00 PM

## Thursday, August 8

Registration, *DePaul Conference Center Lobby (8th Floor)*  
Panels (Session 4), *DePaul Conference Center (8th Floor)*  
*Special Access Tour\**, *Field Museum, African Collection Storage*  
*Special Access Tour\**, *ISAC Museum, Nubian & Egyptian Galleries*  
Panels (session 5), *DePaul Conference Center (8th Floor)*  
*Special Access Tour\**, *Field Museum, African Collection Storage*  
*Special Access Tour\**, *Northwestern University, Herskovits Library*  
Panels (Session 6), *DePaul Conference Center (8th Floor)*  
Keynote Address, *Rubloff Auditorium, Art Institute of Chicago*

9:00 AM - 7:00 PM

9:00 AM - 4:00 PM  
9:00 AM - 11:00 AM  
11:00 AM - 12:00 PM  
11:00 AM - 12:00 PM  
11:15 AM - 1:15 PM  
1:00 PM - 2:00 PM  
2:00 PM - 3:00 PM  
2:30 PM - 4:30 PM  
6:00 PM - 7:00 PM

## Friday, August 9

Registration, *DePaul Conference Center Lobby (8th Floor)*  
Panels (Session 7), *DePaul Conference Center (8th Floor)*  
*Special Access Tour\**, *Field Museum, African Collection Storage*  
*Special Access Tour\**, *ISAC Museum, Nubian & Egyptian Galleries*  
CCRB Panel (Open to the Public), *DePaul Conference Center (8005)*  
*Special Access Tour\**, *Field Museum, African Collection Storage* Panels  
Panels (Session 9), *DePaul Conference Center (8th Floor)*  
Awards Dinner\*, *Student Center, DePaul University Lincoln Park*

9:00 AM - 10:00 PM

9:00 AM - 4:00 PM  
9:00 AM - 11:00 AM  
11:00 AM - 12:00 PM  
11:00 AM - 12:00 PM  
11:15 AM - 1:15 PM  
1:00 PM - 2:00 PM  
2:30 PM - 4:30 PM  
6:00 PM - 10:00 PM

## Saturday, August 10

Registration, *DePaul Conference Center Lobby (8th Floor)*  
Panels (Session 10), *DePaul Conference Center (8th Floor)*  
Panels (session 11), *DePaul Conference Center (8th Floor)*  
*Special Preview Exhibition Tour: Screens\**, *Art Institute of Chicago*  
*Special Access Tour\**, *Northwestern University, Herskovits Library*

9:30 AM - 3:00 PM

9:30 AM - 1:45 PM  
9:30 AM - 11:30 AM  
11:45 AM - 1:45 PM  
2:00 PM - 2:45 PM  
2:30 PM - 3:30 PM

## Sunday, August 11

Museum Day\*

Rubloff Auditorium, Art Institute of Chicago

Registration, *Michigan Avenue Entrance, Art Institute of Chicago*  
Session 1: Ancient Northern African Art in Museums  
Session 2: Contributions from Conservators and Research Scientists  
*Special Preview Exhibition Tour: Screens\**, *Art Institute of Chicago*  
Session 3: Communicating Provenance by Centering Audiences'  
Reception and Understanding of Museum Collection Histories

9:30 AM - 6:00 PM

9:30 AM - 10:15 AM  
10:15 AM - 12:30 PM  
1:30 PM - 3:00 PM  
12:45 PM - 1:30 PM  
3:30 PM - 5:30 PM

\* denotes separate registration required

Wednesday, August 7, 2024

Session 1 | 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Room 8002

## Exploring Visual Culture: Pluralizing Knowledges, Expertise, and the Production of Knowledges and Expertise Part 1

Convener:

**Assako Assako Paul-Henri Souvenir**  
University of Yaoundé 1 Cameroon

Abstract:

The significant historical role of African art in the artistic reform of the 20th century in Europe exhibits the characteristics of internationalization in exchanges and imaginaries between Africa and the external world. The study of visual culture in Africa, considered from a transcultural perspective, provides valuable insights into the interactions, socio-cultural issues, and mechanisms of knowledge contained in African art, apprehended as a pluralistic expression interface with global features.

*Presenters:*

**Assako Assako Paul-Henri Souvenir**  
University of Yaoundé 1 Cameroon

The internationalization of contemporary Afro culture: the challenges of the Afro Fashion Milan Association since 2014

**Avi Sooful**

University of Pretoria  
Rewriting the Visual: Can We Imagine a Joint Textbook for Art from the Global South and the Global North?

**Ernst Wagner**

Ludwigs-Maximilian-University  
1001 ways of seeing

**Mary Clare Kidenda**

Technical University of Kenya  
Artistic Collaborations: Hawker Mali and Narratives of the Anthropocene

Room 8203

## Tangible and Intangible Knowledge: Seeking the African in African Art

Convener:

**Allen Roberts**  
UCLA

Abstract:

Important ideas and relationships are often intangible: they defy "touch," as the word suggests, and so are hard to grasp. Tangibly "touching" visual and performance arts instigate contemplation and praxis. Such expression is often audacious and disobedient by Eurocentric standards, as African arts inform unsettled senses of self, faction, and ethnicity; histories as inexorably negotiated processes; and problem-solving of personal and local-level-political scales.

*Presenters:*

**Allen Roberts**  
UCLA

A Congolese Furtum Sacrum: Mystical Trajectories of a Mission Madonna

**Oluwambe Akinmoye**

Mountain Top University  
EVALUATION OF THE ANCIENT DRESSES' PATTERNS FROM YORUBA TRADITIONAL SCULPTURE

**Marguerite Lenius**

Middlebury College  
Figurative Imagery and the Senses: Rethinking the Arts of Initiations in Northeastern Tanzania

**Peri Klemm**

California State University, Northridge  
Let the Staff Speak: Conflict Resolution in an Arsi Oromo community

Wednesday, August 7, 2024

Session 1 | 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Room 8204

## From Belief to Heritage: Rethinking the Museum

Conveners:

**Will Rea**

University of Leeds

**Iheanyichukwu Onwuegbucha**

Princeton University

Abstract:

The growth of a museum sector and the development of heritage organisations suggests that the notion of heritage is now an established and organisational interest within Africa. This panel asks for an examination of the grounds upon which this shift in interest is based – from the post-colonial denigration of cultures and the religious antipathy of world religions toward local cultural formations to an established understanding of what heritage means for local identity in the contemporary state.

*Presenters:*

**Will Rea**

University of Leeds

**John Picton**

SOAS University of London

**Iheanyichukwu Onwuegbucha**

Princeton University

**Titilope Onolaja**

University of British Columbia

Room 8206

## Ìyá: Our Mothers Who Art in Exile

Conveners:

**Moyo Okediji**

University of Texas, Austin

**Bolaji Campbell**

Rhode Island School of Design

Abstract:

Many Yoruba artists, cultural luminaries and scholars in Africa and its diasporas are dismayed to see or contemplate the mother images (ìyá) of their culture caged in Western holds. The panel brings some of them together to ask questions, complicate, and provide answers to the complexities created by the continuous retention of these ìyá figures in captivity out of their original homes in Yorubaland. Discussants will present formal papers and informal notes to sọ̀rọ̀ sókè on these matters, not so much to resolve the questions, but to provide a forum for generating further negotiations.

*Presenters:*

**Moyo Okediji**

University of Texas, Austin

Contemplating ìyá in Exile

**Freida High Tesfagiorgis**

University of Wisconsin, Madison

Ìyá in the Diaspora Art

**Peju Olowu Layiwola**

University of Lagos

Ìyá in Edo Art

**Adeola Olagunju**

University of Texas, Austin

Colonial Artifacts as Itinerants

Wednesday, August 7, 2024

Session 1 | 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Room 8207

## Stories Textiles Tell: Reinterpreting Worn Heritage for Global and Local Audiences

Convener:

**Elaine Sullivan**

University of Johannesburg

Abstract:

This panel explores the rich significance and (re)interpretations of African textiles as used by contemporary artists on the continent and in diaspora. Presenters will discuss examples from Ghana, the United States, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Africa, working with contemporary artists, local communities, and fashion designers. These studies investigate themes of feminism, consumerism, display, and Afrofuturism, highlighting how textile arts communicate messages of identity, resistance, and creativity.

*Presenters:*

**Elaine Sullivan**

University of Johannesburg

Drowning in Wax: Congolese feminist perspectives on and with wax print cloth

**Dexter Mahaffey**

Independent Scholar

"Insert Complicated Title Here": Virgil Abloh, Kente in the Louis Vuitton Men's Fall-Winter 2021 Show, African Internationalisms, and the Control of the Black Body.

**Xorlali Plange**

New York University

Women and the Symbolism of Ghanaian Wax Prints: An Interdisciplinary Storytelling Method.

**Kristen Laciste**

Fashion Institute of Technology

Room 8209

## Colonial Period Architecture on the African Continent

Convener:

**Courtney Micots**

Florida A&M University

Abstract:

Previously scholars have explored European architecture in Africa and the schemes behind the building of utopian cities for their colonizing dreams. However, budding interest in African arts during the colonial era may pave the way for studies in the African architecture indigenous patrons envisioned for their dreams of regaining independence. This panel hopes to explore the current state of architectural studies in colonial period architecture on the African continent.

*Presenters:*

**Salamatou**

University of Bayreuth; Africa Multiple Cluster for Excellence

The Principles of Conservation/Restoration. Rupture and transgression of a diktat in the context of decolonization of German architecture in Cameroon

**Yannick Etoundi,**

Brown University

Decolonizing Sudanese-style architecture: A Reflection on the Colonial Motives behind Architectural Style

**Joseph Godlewski**

Syracuse University

Missionary and Colonial Enclaves in the Biafran Region as Sites of Possibility

**Courtney Micots**

Florida A&M University

Subverting the British Empire through Mansion-Building on the Gold Coast

Wednesday, August 7, 2024

Session 1 | 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Room 8005

## **For what is Just: Social Practice Art, Solidarity and Civic Imagination in Africa**

Convener:

**Nomusa Makhubu**

University of Cape Town

Abstract:

The arts are notorious for elitism, bourgeois individualism and competition. In general, art practitioners and organizations compete for dwindling resources. In many African contexts, there is a marked difference between deficient public resources and affluent privately funded institutions on which artists depend. There's a general lack of the political appetite to develop progressive policy for the arts. In this context, solidarity – civic, social, cultural, or political – among organizations and practitioners has become vital in understanding social practice art, which encompasses itinerant, collaborative, participatory and activist art that is primarily geared towards social justice.

*Presenters:*

**Fadzai Muchemwa**

National Gallery of Zimbabwe.

Solidarity and Precarity: Art Collectives in Harare

**Fiona Siegenthaler**

Linden-Museum Stuttgart and University of Basel

"Socially Engaged Art" in African Cities: Engagement, Artistic Practice, and Life "under the radar" of the Global Art World

**Colleen Foran**

Boston University

At the Intersection of Ritual, Procession, and Performance

Art: Chale Wote Street Art Festival in Ga Mashie, Accra, Ghana

**Sunny Ezeagwu**

Theatre Art Practitioner/Textile Designer

Fashioned Bodies: Dress as Emblematic Symbol of Protest in Nigeria

**Marlene Rutzendorfer**

Vienna University of Technology

Not My Neighbourhood (D: Kurt Orderson, ZAF 2018)

Banana Split (D: Marie-Louise Richards, SWE 2020)

Wednesday, August 7, 2024

Session 2 | 11:15 AM - 12:45 PM

Room 8002

## Exploring Visual Culture: Pluralizing Knowledges, Expertise, and the Production of Knowledges and Expertise Part 2

Convener:

**Ruth Belinga**

Foumban Université de Dschang

Abstract:

The significant historical role of African art in the artistic reform of the 20th century in Europe exhibits the characteristics of internationalization in exchanges and imaginaries between Africa and the external world. The study of visual culture in Africa, considered from a transcultural perspective, provides valuable insights into the interactions, socio-cultural issues, and mechanisms of knowledge contained in African art, apprehended as a pluralistic expression interface with global features.

*Presenters:*

**Ruth Belinga**

Foumban Université de Dschang

Interaction culturelle et innovation picturale : Le Cas du Cameroun et de ses pays colonisateurs

**Cyrille Zeh**

University of Maroua, Cameroon

Ceramics, environment and contemporary society in the far north of Cameroon

**Tchandeu Narcisse Santores**

University of Yaoundé 1

Monuments coloniaux et biens culturels spoliés: transculturalité du patrimoine et mémoires partagés ou conflictuels au cameroun

**Ebala Ebala Serges Hervé**

Université Inter-Etats Congo-Cameroun

Iconophilie contemporaine et affichage publicitaire urbain au Cameroun

Room 8203

## Traditions and Practices of Profanation at Western Museums Part 1

Convener:

**Murielle Sandra Tiako Djomatchoua**

Princeton University

Abstract:

Profanation is generally connected to acts or behaviors that lack due respect and reverence towards the sacred. The performative characteristic of this definition reduces this concept to a superficial dimensions that fail to account for its infectious property when it is applied to African objects at Western museums. Examining profanation within the museum inevitably reveals the intricate networks of traditions to which African objects are subjected from the moment they enter the museum realm. What are the ways in which museums enact acts of profanation? how might this concept contribute to generating new insights into the new museum?

*Presenters:*

**Anna Seiderer**

University of Paris 8

The Migration of the Aura. Itinerance of a Colonial Film Archive

**Petr Valenta, Bc.**

Náprstek Museum

Large Collections - No Colonies - Big Problems

**Tila Likunzi**

Independent Art Curator and Researcher

"SPECTACLES OF HERITAGE IN CAPTIVITY", African cultural heritage exhibitions in museum environments

**Ogechukwu Elizabeth Okpalanozie**

Institution National Museum, Lagos, Nigeria

Community Engagement as a Way Forward in Decolonisation at Western Museums

Wednesday, August 7, 2024

Session 2 | 11:15 AM - 12:45 PM

Room 8204

### **Sharing Provenance Information: Edit-a-Thon, ACASA's Wiki of Collectors & Dealers of Historical African Art**

Convener:

**Kristen Windmuller-Luna**

Arts Council of the African Studies Association  
Cleveland Museum of Art

Abstract:

The wide dispersion and unpublished nature of information about collectors and dealers of historical African art is a major hurdle for provenance research that informs restitution and repatriation work, especially at institutions lacking specialists in African arts. ACASA aims to create a free, globally accessible, and community-contribution-based Wiki of Collectors & Dealers of Historical African Art to centralize this information. This online resource will provide significant support for provenance research on historical objects for scholars, communities, and institutions worldwide. A provenance-focused database, created by a network of global volunteers, and responsibly supervised by an organization committed to best practices, is essential in moving forward with the post-colonial needs of the field.

Following the successful creation of the wiki and round one of beta testing, we invite Triennial participants to contribute to the project, learn a new skill, and consider practical applications for provenance research in a conference Wiki Edit-a-Thon. No experience or technological skills required! Participants will receive training in how to make and edit a wiki entry using one or more case studies that they have brought to the conference. See this link for a [sample entry](#). Graduate students are especially encouraged to take part.

This project is supported by the Mellon Foundation with technical support from Matrix Center for Digital Humanities & Social Sciences at Michigan State University and from Fentron. Please bring a laptop computer if you have one.

Room 8206

### **Roundtable: THE CHALLENGES OF VISUAL ARTS ENTERPRISE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA**

Conveners:

**Bojor Enamhe**

University of Cross River

**Umana Nnochiri**

University of Cross River

Abstract:

Visual Arts ought to be seen as a key asset and major contributor to economic development in Nigeria. Artists are better positioned as Crusaders against poverty as the arts amongst other benefits create self-reliance. There is still low art enterprise even when most of the tertiary Institutions churn out art graduates. This research therefore views the reasons for the challenges, recommend that artists themselves explore avenues and rise to the challenges.

*Presenters:*

**Umana Nnochiri**

University of Cross River

**Sukanthy Egharevba**

University of Cross River

**Ngozi Agujobi**

The University of Nigeria Nsukka

**Emekpe Omon**

**Jeremiah Unimke**

**Charlotte Tam-George**

**Chinnah Charity**

Wednesday, August 7, 2024

Session 2 | 11:15 AM - 12:45 PM

Room 8207

## **Jamaican Textile and the Stories of Decolonization**

Convener:

**Alao Luqman**

Edna Manley College of Visual and Performing Arts

Abstract:

Jamaican textile culture deeply rooted in the island's history and tapestry from the indigenous Taino people to the arrival of African slaves, European colonizers, and waves of immigration from Asia and the Middle East. This panel opens a wide conversation that addresses Jamaican textile and the stories of decolonization, influence of African prints (ankara) in Jamaican fashion, thoughts on the challenges of textile production within a cottage industry in Jamaica, stereotypes on the madras/bandana fabric as a result of how it was utilized within the era of slavery and the influence of other fabric cultures in Jamaican history.

*Presenters:*

**Alao Luqman**

Edna Manley College of Visual and Performing Arts

**Johanna Castillo Marcelino**

Chavón School of Design // Parsons School of Design  
TREPILITO; CULTURE OF QUESTIONING

**Ngozi Atinuke Oni**

University of Lagos, Nigeria  
THE ROLE OF TEXTILES IN THE IDENTITY AND  
DECOLONIALIZATION OF THE CARIBBEAN

**Bimpe Kausara A**

Lannaman's Prep School  
Influence of African Printed Fabrics in Caribbean

Room 8209

## **Roundtable: Photography in the First-Person: The Interview as Source**

Conveners:

**Leslie Wilson**

The Art Institute of Chicago

**Antawan Byrd**

Northwestern University

**Phil Taylor**

George Eastman Museum

Abstract:

This roundtable examines the interview as source, method, performance, and practice. It considers the practical needs for conducting interviews, such as training, preparation, language proficiency, and formal and informal agreements. It endeavors to address issues of access, use, and a wide range of sensitivities that shape these dialogues. At the same time, it aims to historicize the role and evolution of the interview form within the field of African photography, recognizing that the foregoing dynamics continue to impact art historical and museological framings of photographic objects, as well as the marketing of African photography and the careers of its practitioners.

*Presenters:*

**John Pepper**

Ramapo College of New Jersey

**Sandrine Colard**

Rutgers University-Newark

**Leslie Wilson**

The Art Institute of Chicago

**Antawan Byrd**

Northwestern University

**Phil Taylor**

George Eastman Museum

**Jennifer Bajorek**

Hampshire College; University of Johannesburg

Wednesday, August 7, 2024

Session 2 | 11:15 AM - 12:45 PM

Room 8005

**Film Screening: For what is Just: Social Practice Art, Solidarity and Civic Imagination in Africa**

**Abstract:**

In light of colonial continuities with regards to gentrification, housing precarities, and spatial injustice, film and urban cinema have demonstrated a potential for sharing counter narratives and fabulating futures. Taking the panel *For what is Just: Social Practice Art, Solidarity and Civic Imagination in Africa* as inspiration, this film program reflects on historical entanglements and contested spaces in cities and urban environments. What role have strategies of segregation and displacement played historically, and which strategies of solidarity have people come up with in order to counter hegemonic spatial tactics? The program aims to take a look into urban and political structures and power relations as well as the role of civic space and housing as political tools in Cape Town, Sao Paolo, New York City, and Stockholm.

**Films:**

**Banana-Split: a (Black) Power Walk**

*SWE 2020, 12:24 min, OV with English subs., D: Marie-Louise Richards*

Starting from the Frihamnen port banana factory in Stockholm, the architect Marie-Louise Richards provides a (Black) Power Walk to reflect on the colonial heritage of Sweden and current issues of segregation and racism in housing and urban development.

Film link: [https://youtu.be/Rs-\\_1LTve90?list=PL8NZfwO4\\_B1EOksnP99wkQLFO1oeiojgh](https://youtu.be/Rs-_1LTve90?list=PL8NZfwO4_B1EOksnP99wkQLFO1oeiojgh)

**Not in My Neighbourhood**

*ZAF 2018, 86:00 min, OV with English subs., D: Kurt Orderson*

Capetown, New York, São Paulo: residents organise themselves against political measures and institutions that promote the advancement of spatial aggression and processes of repression. The film shows how closely connected colonialization and gentrification are.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dK8fKyB6i-o>

Wednesday, August 7, 2024

Session 3 | 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM

Room 8002

## Roundtable: Pivoting with African Art: Alt-Academic Careers

Convener:

**Kristine Juncker**

Smithsonian Institution

Abstract:

This roundtable features speakers who began careers in the traditional academic field of African art and have changed paths. Among professions, we include administrators, ethics professionals and museum leaders. We will look at how African art informed these new career paths and what we hope to accomplish in order to continue to help move the field forward. We welcome an audience of graduate students looking for new career opportunities and mentors seeking to present students with wider understanding of opportunities for African art studies.

*Presenters:*

**Kristine Juncker**

Smithsonian Institution

**Karen Milbourne**

Fralin Museum of Art, University of Virginia

**Erika Witt**

Southern University at New Orleans Museum of Art

**Gary Van Wyk**

Axis Gallery

**Lisa Brittan**

Axis Gallery

Room 8203

## Past/Predecessors: Modern and Contemporary African Art Between Generations

Conveners:

**Perrin Lathrop**

Princeton University Art Museum

**Gabriella Nugent**

University of East Anglia

Abstract:

This panel is interested in the relationship between modern and contemporary African artists and their predecessors. We take the idea of predecessors to loosely mean those who came before them. They include other artists, teachers, and artistic and cultural traditions, controlled and often silenced in colonial contexts. We invite papers that consider artists who recover and translate these traditions in their work, but also those who deliberately distance themselves from them. Beyond these instances of recovery and rejection, we are interested in artists who, despite operating in multiple geographic contexts, situate their work in an African artistic and institutional lineage.

*Presenters:*

**Gabriella Nugent**

University of East Anglia

Material Politics: Ibrahim Mahama and KNUST's

Department of Painting and Sculpture

**Ayo Adewunmi**

INT

EI Anatsui: Impact and Heritage

**Kate Cowcher**

University of St. Andrews

Defiant Remembrance: Gebre Kristos Desta and the Search for the Rising Sun

**Jessica Lindiwe Draper**

University of KwaZulu-Natal

Liminality and Cultural Continuity in Lady Skollie's Engagement with San Rock Art

**Tobenna Okwuosa**

Niger Delta University

Adire Aesthetics and the Progression of Artistic Ideas in the Works of Nike Davies-Okundaye and Peju Layiwola

Wednesday, August 7, 2024

Session 3 | 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM

Room 8204

## Reimagining Public Art: Community Engagement, Sustainability, and Urban Transformation

Convener:

**Olayemi Ajayi**

The Federal Polytechnic, Ilaro

Abstract:

In countless instances, collaborative efforts have converged to chart the course for the future of public art, positioning it as a dynamic catalyst for community engagement, sustainability, and the profound transformation of urban landscapes. This panel seeks to embark on a journey of exploration into cutting-edge methodologies, encompassing participatory initiatives nurturing community ownership and installations that serve as compelling advocates for environmental awareness. Through an array of diverse perspectives, our primary objective is to not only stimulate fresh insights but to cultivate a revitalized vision for the pivotal role of public art in sculpting dynamic, inclusive, and vibrant urban environments.

Presenters:

**Brittany Sheldon**

Cal Poly Humboldt

**Mahmoud Malik Saako**

Ghana Museums and Monuments Board

Tradition and Modernity: Ghanaian Artistry Today

**UFUOMA ONOBRAKPEYA**

YABA COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY

RE-DEFINING NIGERIAN URBAN SPACES THROUGH ART IN SELECTED LOCATIONS IN LAGOS METROPOLIS: CASE STUDIES OF ARTWORKS OF PROFESSORS YUSUF GRILLO, BRUCE ONOBRAKPEYA, DEMAS NWOKO

**Mabel Jimoah**

Ahmadu Bello University

An analysis of meaning and functions of roundabout sculptures in Benin City, Nigeria

**Olayemi Ajayi**

The Federal Polytechnic, Ilaro

Room 8206

## Towards a dynamic and distributed future: interdisciplinary methods of engaging with African Art & Cultural Heritage Materials

Conveners:

**Majula Swareh**

**Davison Chiwara**

National Museum of African Art

*affiliated at the time of research*

Abstract:

The NMAfA has been recently involved in methods of addressing its collections- specifically the documentation of cultural heritage materials through its African Museology project. Through a community oriented approach to understanding and properly documenting objects, NMAfA is in the process of revising both provenance and acquisition standards, as well as moving towards shared stewardship as a method of handling materials. This paper and panel will focus on the interdisciplinary methodologies used by the museum and one of its partner institutions in the NMAfA's African Museology project as a way to give a report and interpretation of our steps forward.

Presenters:

**Johanna Ndahekelelewa Nghishiko**

National Museum of Namibia

Indigenous Conservation Practices: Developing Sustainable Conservation Methods for Material Culture Amidst Colonial Legacy

**Mabafokeng Hoeane**

University of Pretoria

'Kamva Project: (Re) imagining African Cultural Heritage'

**Sidylamine Bagayoko**

University of Bamako

Mari and Faje as masculine and feminine monuments worshiped in Sagabala

**Tadele Solomon**

National Museum of Ethiopia

Handling Sacred Religious Collections in Museums: the Case of the National Museum of Ethiopia

**Majula Swareh**

**Davison Chiwara**

Advancing Inclusivity and Amplifying African Voices in the Stewardship of African Art and Cultural Heritage: The Case of the Smithsonian National Museum of African Art"

Wednesday, August 7, 2024

Session 3 | 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM

Room 8207

## Gender and Artistic Production from the Maghrib

Convener:

**Kimberly Cleveland**

Georgia State University

Abstract:

This panel features nineteenth- through twenty-first century production from the Maghrib with an emphasis on gender in the interests of diversifying knowledge of art from the African continent. It accommodates a broad range of examinations such as “traditionally” female artistic forms of expression, depictions of female subjects by male producers, and ways that both male and female artists call attention to gender-related social and cultural challenges in their work. How concepts of gender and art are understood within Amazigh, Arab, and European communities in the Maghrib, as well as have been represented in publications and exhibitions are also applicable.

*Presenters:*

**Kimberly Cleveland**

Georgia State University

Uncovering That Which Should be Covered: Awrah in Contemporary Moroccan Female Art

**Ava Katarina Tabatabai Hess**

UCLA

Women in Vernacular Figural Images of the modern Maghrib

**Anne Marie Butler**

Kalamazoo College

Sex, Gender, Power: The Body in Contemporary Tunisian Art

**Yubai Shi**

UCLA

Safaa Erruas's Le Chemin (2015): Reclaiming White Mountain-scape

Room 8209

## Audacious Art Histories: Intimacies and Interventions

Conveners:

**Ruth Simbao**

Rhodes University

**Stephen Fóláránmí**

Rhodes University

Abstract:

How can we co-create audacious art histories? How can art histories function in trickster ways when institutions are policed, and research is quantified in limiting ways? Our book, *Audacious Art Histories*, brings together over eighty authors, the majority of whom are based on the African continent. By emphasizing the slippages, surprises, and intimacies of our stories, we consider ways of intervening and resisting – at times playfully and other times sternly. How might intimate ways of creating be forms of resistance? How might our diverse epistemologies enable art histories of Africa to strengthen broader discussions about art and global relevance?

*Presenters:*

**Ruth Simbao**

Rhodes University

*Audacious Art Histories: A Collaborative Publishing Model*

**Stephen Fóláránmí**

Rhodes University

*Artistic Protests in Africa: Shifting Roles in the Performances of Jelili Atiku*

**Angelo Kakande**

Makerere University; Rhodes University

*Art, the State and Hubris in Uganda's New Independence Monument Twenty-twende*

**Rachel Baasch**

Rhodes University

*Thinking Through Borders: Rising Souths and Geopolitical Connections in the Arts*

Wednesday, August 7, 2024

Session 3 | 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM

Room 8005

**Photographic Transversals: Mobility, Intermediality, and Temporality in African Photography**

Conveners:

**Michelle Fikrig**

City University of New York

**Kinaya Hassane**

New York University

Abstract:

This panel will bring together four papers exploring 20th and 21st century photography from across the African continent. Each paper explores the complexity of the photographic medium and its wide-reaching connections across time and space. Taking the conference's human-centric theme as a jumping off point, this panel investigates photography as part of a wider network constituted by the complex interplay between humans, photographic objects, and the (urban) environment. These explorations move away from predominant discussions in Africanist art history about the agency of photographic subjects, a concern that emerges from legacies of anthropological and anthropometric photography on the continent.

*Presenters:*

**Michelle Fikrig**

City University of New York

Authenticity in a Pan African Press Climate: Drum's Expansion into Nigeria

**Kinaya Hassane**

New York University

"Spaces of Nostalgia": Temporal Dislocations in Contemporary Indian Ocean Photography

**Juul Van Haver**

Columbia University

Jean Depara in the Bars of Kinshasa: Photography as as Place-Making Process

**Luise Mörke**

Harvard University

The Split as Form, or: A Challenge to Comparison

*Discussant:*

**Prita Meier**

New York University

Thursday, August 8, 2024

Session 4 | 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Room 8002

## **Making and Representing West African Textiles and Fashions**

Conveners:

**Adwoa Owusua Bobie**

Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology

**Victoire Mandirann Amegnonka**

University of Kara

**Malika Kraamer**

University of Bonn; National Museum of Ghana

Abstract:

The production and usage of textiles and fashions are central in West Africa, with their histories actively negotiated and embodied in contemporary debates. The reinterpretation of this past is shaped by various factors including the plural perspectives of makers, scholars and activists, gender dynamics, and the differences/similarities between francophone and anglophone countries. The panel invites exploration of these histories, emphasizing a decolonized understanding by deconstructing Eurocentric narratives, and promoting a more integral methodology. The aim is to foster collaboration among scholars and producers across West Africa and accommodate diverse epistemologies for a comprehensive discourse on the region's textiles and fashion.

*Presenters:*

**Victoire Mandirann Amegnonka**

University of Kara

Collaborative production of knowledge on hand-woven textile histories in Northern Ghana, Togo and Côte d'Ivoire

**Adwoa Owusua Bobie**

Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology

Beyond Cultural Symbolism: The Cosmopolitanism of Kente Cloth in Ghana

**Malika Kraamer**

University of Bonn; National Museum of Ghana

Collaborative production of knowledge on kente histories in southern Ghana, Togo and Côte d'Ivoire

**Max Diallo Jakobsen**

Princeton University

Folkloric Blueprints

**Chika Chudi-Duru**

Nnamdi Azikiwe University

Cultural Decolonization of Names

*Discussant:*

**Emma C. Wingfield**

University for the Arts London

Room 8203

## **(De)Constructing Authenticity: New Methods and Case Studies Part 1**

Convener:

**Carlee Forbes**

Fowler Museum at UCLA

Abstract:

Papers in this panel analyze methods for constructing notions of authenticity of African material and examine the ramifications of these definitions. This panel does not seek to re-define authenticity but rather to examine past methods used to assess and assert it, as well as artists' (and other actors') agency to work against it, or even disregard it. We welcome any range of proposals regarding the (de)construction of authenticity. Example topics may reference debates surrounding craft vs. art, production of fakes/replicas, market forces determining value, or modern/contemporary engagement with the subject.

*Presenters:*

**Deborah Dainese**

University of East Anglia

A Grey Area? A Case Study of Artistic Production by the Congolese Sculptor Mashitolo Mwata Zola (c. 1915 - c.1974)

**Chelsy Monie**

Emory University

Beyond Authenticity: Locating Personhood in the Sculptures of Thomas Ona

**Haley Jones**

Emory University; Fox Center for Humanistic Inquiry

Selling Authenticity: African Art in Auction Catalogues, 2000-2020

**Carlee Forbes**

Fowler Museum at UCLA

Looted Histories: Sensationalized and Invented Histories of Violence in London-based auctions 1898-1940

Thursday, August 8, 2024

Session 4 | 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Room 8204

## **Around the Object: New Directions in Museum and Curatorial Education in Africa**

Conveners:

**Rory Bester**

University of the Western Cape

**Ciraj Rassool**

University of the Western Cape

Abstract:

New and emerging curatorial programmes at universities on the African continent are questioning the nature of the 'curatorial', not only as a radically expanded practice, but also in reimagining the role of the curatorial within both museum practices and its constituted fields such as museum studies. New curatorial pluralities are challenging the discursive orientations and traditional specialisations of the 'museum' and its objects, and opening other possibilities for thinking around the object, in forms that are embodied, sensory, spatial, kinetic and choreographic. This panel is concerned with the methodological questions that underpin new ideas of the curatorial.

*Presenters:*

**Rory Bester**

University of the Western Cape

The Curatorial, Between Language and Practice

**Ana Machava**

University of the Western Cape

Infrastructures of the Imaginary

**Mona Hakimi**

University of the Western Cape

Towards a Habitable Museum

**Ciraj Rassool**

University of the Western Cape

Foundations of an African curatorial studies programme in Cape Town

*Discussant:*

**Rory Tsapayi**

University of the Western Cape

Room 8206

## **RE-ENGAGING THE GEARS OF CONSERVATION IN THE TRANSMISSION OF CULTURE IN MODERN BENIN**

Conveners:

**Ndubuisi Ezeloumba**

Virginia Museum of Fine Arts

**David Oshorenoya Esizimotor**

The Basic School International

Abstract:

Since colonial times, there has been a steady decline in the conservation of Benin cultural heritage. From storytelling to music, and from bronze-casting to architecture, whole generation of people in Benin are rapidly abandoning the 'old ways' for 'modern ways' where without private, collective or institutional conservation efforts future generations may totally lose touch with their cultural heritage. This panel seeks to highlight the tangible, intangible, and the moveable and immovable aspects of Benin cultural heritage that are most affected by poor conservation practices; it will appraise existing conservation practices and develop suitable methodologies and strategies for conservation in Benin.

*Presenters:*

**Edith Evbaguehikha Osakwe**

University of Benin

**Esther Esosa Esizimotor**

University of Benin

**Sunny Ezeagwu**

Theater Art Practitioner/Textile Designer, Asaba

Ekwa: bringing back the fun and exercise regime in traditional Benin children's games

**Esther Esosa Esizimotor**

University of Benin

Retelling the Omoosewa Folktale through the Radical Voices of Children

**David Oshorenoya Esizimotor**

The Basic School International

Conservation of Architectural Heritage in Postcolonial Benin City: The Missing Links

**Ndubuisi Ezeloumba**

Virginia Museum of Fine Arts

**David Oshorenoya Esizimotor**

The Basic School International

Challenges of Cultural Education in Nigeria and the Role of the Museums in Benin City

Thursday, August 8, 2024

Session 4 | 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Room 8207

## **African Art: Traditions, Transitions and Decolonisation**

Conveners:

**Oladoyin J. Labode**

Federal University of Agriculture

**Kehinde Adepengba**

Lagos State University of Science and Technology

Abstract :

African Art has continued to evolve. Its traditions are unique and are based on the people's economic, socio-cultural, political, and religious lifestyles. Since the late 19th century, the coming of the 'outsiders' has unsettled the sanctity and piety of the peoples' cosmos. The panel therefore aims at examining Decolonisation dynamics of African Art and efforts of African artists in contemporary times through adaptation of cultural idioms and materials, globalising local elements of our art, projecting the unity of verbal and visual art, and reinventing old forms, to mention a few.

*Presenters:*

**Oladoyin J. Labode**

Federal University of Agriculture

Traditional Symbols of Yoruba Pattern Designs As Insignia of Cultural Identity on Contemporary Textiles

**Nathaniel Olaolu Ogunyale**

Lagos State University of Science and Technology

From Mud to Mortar: Exploring Transitions in Yoruba Building Typology

**Oluwatimilehin Oluwagbenga Dada**

Mountain Top University

A Visual Representation of the Impact of Westernization among Yoruba Youths in Nigeria

**Kehinde Shobukola**

Mountain Top University

A Visual Representation of the Impact of Westernization among Yoruba Youths in Nigeria

**Afam Augustine Okwudili**

Lagos State University of Science and Technology

Igbo Ukwu Pottery Culture in the Nigerian Art

**Romeo Ovororie Asakpa**

Delta State College of Education

Igbo Ukwu Pottery Culture in the Nigerian Art

Room 8209

## **Interventions in the Colonial Photographic Archive**

Convener:

**Aimée Bessire**

Independent Scholar

Abstract:

What are the interpretive possibilities and interventions possible in the colonial photographic archive? This panel explores the active, discursive potential of photographs to create cross-cultural connections across time—empowering the images to be “undisciplined,” to borrow Christina Sharpe’s terminology. What stories are told by historic photographs? How does contemporary viewing rewrite the colonial narrative? This panel offers critical perspectives on artists and authors reenvisioning colonial photographs and dismantling dominant narratives, ascribing new meanings to historic visual records.

*Presenters:*

**Vera-Simone Schulz**

Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz

Challenging the Photographic Archive of Colonial Italian East Africa Contested Heritage, Counter-Narratives, and Artistic Practices

**IfeOluwa Nihinlola**

Emory University

Archival Affordances: [Re]Constructing History through the Visual Archive of Northcote Thomas

**Christa Clarke**

Center for Curatorial Leadership

Archiving Resistance: The Anti-Colonial Agenda of a Colonial Era Photographic Collection

**Livia Dubon**

Kingston University

Listening to Colonial Photographs: "Adwa", a Journey from Identity to a Reparative Curatorial Museum Interpretation

**Emmanuel Iduma**

Writer, Critic, and Independent Curator

Archival Affinities: On African Photographs

Thursday, August 8, 2024

Session 4 | 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Room 8005

**Roundtable: Knowledge Creation and Co-Curation in Museums and Public Spaces: Contestations and Advances**

Conveners:

**Bongani Ndhlovu**

Iziko Museums of South Africa

**Silvia Forni**

Fowler Museum at UCLA

Abstract:

Engaged criticism of conventional knowledge creation and circulation has broadened the public space as a multimodal sphere of critical engagements. In this round table discussion, we explore how “new” forms of expression have found articulation in exhibitions, publications and public programmes of public institutions and non-conventional institutions. Furthermore, we critically explore resistances and tensions in these spaces and the new set of tensions and issues that may be generated by these new approaches.

*Presenters:*

**Bongani Ndhlovu**

Iziko Museums of South Africa

**Mary Mbewe**

University of the Western Cape; Mulungushi University

**Jennifer Kyker**

University of Rochester

**Annissa Malvoisin**

Bard Graduate Center; Brooklyn Museum

**Victoria Phiri**

Livingstone Museum, Zambia

*Discussant:*

**Silvia Forni**

Fowler Museum at UCLA

Thursday, August 8, 2024

Session 5 | 11:15 AM - 1:15 PM

Room 8002

## **African continuities and change in the Caribbean, through contemporary Caribbean art**

Convener:

**Rebecca L. Skinner Green**

Bowling Green State University

Abstract:

Black Caribbean identity is grounded in the local space and place of the West Indies, a region that has experienced a tremendous influx of peoples, cultures, and influences. Post-slavery and post-colonial identities are multi-cultural, multi-lingual, and multi-ethnic. The region resonates with intellectual creativity and innovation as evidenced in historical, political, social, and artistic events. It is in this region's post-colonial environment—built from enslavement, indentureship, migration, and loss—that African continuities emerge and survive in contemporary Caribbean lives and artistic practices. In this panel, therefore, we explore contemporary artists' expressions, to understand their messages and their exploration of identity.

*Presenters:*

**Rebecca L. Skinner Green**

Bowling Green State University

Ronald Williams: Making the Connections

**Bamidele Agbasebge Demerson**

African American Museum and Library at Oakland, California

Makandal-- Artists and Inspiring Visual Narratives of Revolutionary Zeal from Saint-Domingue

**Ewart C. Skinner**

Bowling Green State University

Situating the Art of Calypso in the American Cultural Landscape from the 1930s

Room 8203

## **(De)Constructing Authenticity: New Methods and Case Studies Part 2**

Convener:

**Sarah Van Beurden**

Ohio State University

Abstract:

Papers in this panel analyze methods for constructing notions of authenticity of African material and examine the ramifications of these definitions. This panel does not seek to re-define authenticity but rather to examine past methods used to assess and assert it, as well as artists' (and other actors') agency to work against it, or even disregard it. We welcome any range of proposals regarding the (de)construction of authenticity. Example topics may reference debates surrounding craft vs. art, production of fakes/replicas, market forces determining value, or modern/contemporary engagement with the subject.

*Presenters:*

**Michael Baird**

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

A Portrait of the Ugandan Artist as a Colonial Subject: Subaltern Subjectivities and Art Education at Margaret Trowell's Makerere University

**Shirabe Ogata**

Tokyo University of Foreign Studies

Authenticity as a Flexible Entity: A Consideration of Artistic Practice in Southwest Nigeria

**Emma C. Wingfield**

University for the Arts London

Unraveling the Authentic: Socio-Cultural Critiques of Contemporary West African Handwoven Textiles

**Rachel Kabukala**

Indiana University

Treasure or Tourist Art? Contemporary Kuba Textiles and Notions of Authenticity

**Sarah Van Beurden**

Ohio State University

The Origins of Ivory Carving in Bolobo, Congo

Thursday, August 8, 2024

Session 5 | 11:15 AM - 1:15 PM

Room 8204

## Raising Voices: Climate Change and Environmental Degradation

Convener:

**Lynne Larsen**

University of Arkansas at Little Rock

Abstract:

This panel explores how African artists, architects, film makers, and designers have expressed frustration with, exposed the consequences of, raised awareness about, and/or proposed solutions to environmental and climate crises through their work. Papers in this panel may consider the relationship between climate injustice and Africa's colonial history, how global warming and other environmental devastation constitute a contemporary colonization for Africa, and how the lives lost in environmental disasters reflect Achille Mbembe's discussion of necropolitics. Authors may also consider how art, architecture, fashion, or film have made apparent the interconnection of racial inequality and climate change.

Presenters:

**Lynne Larsen**

University of Arkansas at Little Rock

Allegory and Collaboration in the art of Wangetchi Mutu and Fabrice Monteiro

**Olushola Olajobi**

Independent Art History Scholar

The Waste Museum: A Catalyst for Raising Voices on Climate Change and Environmental Degradation

**Allison K. Young**

Louisiana State University and A&M College

Ochre and Ore: Indigenous Eco-poetics in Contemporary South African Art

**Khaulah Abdulkadir**

Lamu World Heritage Site Conservation Office

Sailing Solutions: Transforming Pollution into Heritage Preservation with the World's First Plastic Sailing Dhow

Room 8206

## Ghana 1957: Collaborative Curation

Convener:

**Ashley Miller**

University of Michigan Museum of Art

Abstract:

Curators of the forthcoming exhibition, Ghana 1957: African Art After Independence, discuss the opportunities and challenges entailed in collaborative research and exhibition-making. The project represents a genuine partnership among institutions in Accra, Kumasi, and Michigan. Contributors reflect on their unique experiences with and approaches to curatorial collaboration, their specific strategies for pursuing such work in relation to the different institutions in which they are situated, and their expectations for how Ghana 1957 will serve as a platform for pursuing a more equitable and ethically informed approach to research and public scholarship in and about Africa.

Presenters:

**Kwaku B. Kissiedu**

KNUST

**Ashley Miller**

University of Michigan Museum of Art

Laying the Groundwork: Engaging Histories

**Ray Silverman**

University of Michigan

Ghana 1957 as Collaborative Exhibition-Making

**Bernard Akoi-Jackson**

KNUST

**Kwasi Ohene-Ayeh**

KNUST

"Nam dodoo nnsɛi nkwan": Lessons from complex strategies embedded within collective curating.

**Elizabeth Asafo-Adjei**

National Museum of Ghana

**Laura De Becker**

University of Michigan Museum of Art

Curating across Continents

Thursday, August 8, 2024

Session 5 | 11:15 AM - 1:15 PM

Room 8207

**NAME TBD**

Convener:

**Aindrea Emelife**

Museum of West African Art

Abstract:

To be updated

*Presenters:*

**Jean Borgatti**

Fitchburg Art Museum

**Prince Kennedy Eweka**

University of Benin

Potter, Priestess, and Olokun – the continued significance and problems of historic practices in today's world, Benin City, Nigeria

**Danson Kahyana**

Makerere University/Harvard Kennedy School

Drawing from Somali Oral Traditions for Greater Impact: The Use of Somali Orature in Jimale Ali Ahmed's Poetry

**James Oche Paul**

University of Maiduguri, Borno State, Nigeria.

Sculptural Representations of the Traditional Hair Styling Comb in Contemporary Nigerian Art: Exploring Socio-Political and Cultural Dynamics

**Ikemegula Irokanulo**

PhD

The Influences of Phenomenological Inquiry in Grillo's Paintings: The Yoruba Aesthetic Objects as Subject of Discourse

**Aindrea Emelife**

Museum of West African Art

Room 8209

**Power: remaking selves, archives, environments**

Convener:

**Patricia Hayes**

University of the Western Cape

**Emma Minkley**

University of the Western Cape

Abstract:

This panel addresses an apparent blur or ambivalence between object- and human-centred approaches in the field of African art. It looks to the role that photographic studies might play in imagining collective futures and afterlives on our planet. The focus is on southern African projects that engage the marine, animal and geological domains ("natural history"), but which cannot escape older questions of the still unfinished politics of freedom in the subcontinent. It offers a reminder to be cautious how we decenter the human, for the project of ending the dehumanisation of those called human is yet to be accomplished.

*Presenters:*

**Rory Kahiya Tsapiya**

University of the Western Cape

**Candice Jansen**

University of the Western Cape

**Rui Assubuji**

University of Toronto

**Emma Minkley**

University of the Western Cape

**Ciao Simões de Araújo**

University of the Western Cape

Thursday, August 8, 2024

Session 5 | 11:15 AM - 1:15 PM

Room 8005

## **Roundtable: Artist-Centered Approaches to African Restitution**

Conveners:

**Jennifer Bajorek**

Hampshire College; University of Johannesburg

**Abigail Celis**

University of Montreal

Abstract:

Our open roundtable invites contributions from scholars, artists, and activists critically exploring artist-centered approaches to the restitution, repatriation, and return of African art. Artists' interventions in the arena of African restitutions are garnering increasing interest and constitute a significant new area of contemporary artistic practice worthy of serious historical and theoretical analysis. This roundtable will explore how the material, aesthetic, and relational inquiry at the heart of artist-centered approaches to restitution contributes to ways of meaning-making. We also seek to discuss how such approaches might shift restitution discourse and practice towards sustainable and ethical institutional, community, and interpersonal relationships.

*Presenters:*

**Abigail Celis**

University of Montreal

**Marian Nur Goni**

Université Paris 8

**Sam Hopkins**

Artist

**IfeOluwa Nihinlola**

Emory University

**Janine Sytsma**

University of Arkansas, Fayetteville

**Cosmo Whyte**

Artist

**Murielle Sandra Tiako Djomatchoua**

Princeton University

Thursday, August 8, 2024

Session 6 | 2:30 PM - 4:30 PM

Room 8002

## Questions of Objecthood and Value

Convener:

**Peter J. Bloom**

University of California, Santa Barbara

**Delinda Collier**

School of the Art Institute of Chicago

Abstract:

We address the important shift towards a multi-centered approach to African Art through a panel focused on questions of value as yet another context to consider as part of the ACASA conference theme, Radical Listening. The emphasis on human-centeredness is at the heart of the contributions we are soliciting from our five prospective speakers (Bloom, Collier, Jimga, Nwagbogu, Strother). We are interested in how questions of value have shifted in relation to critical, aesthetic, and popular understanding.

*Presenters:*

**Peter J. Bloom**

University of California, Santa Barbara

Considerations of restitution and reenactment: A return to African nail sculpture as fetish, stereotype and contract

**Delinda Collier**

School of the Art Institute of Chicago

The (African) Art Object in the Age of Ubiquitous Media

**Jigma Ganiyu Jimoh**

University of Virginia

Pixelated Rituals: Exploring the Sacred in Digital Art

Room 8203

## Gender and Human Centeredness in Southern African art

Convener:

**Karen von Veh**

University of Johannesburg

**Brenda Schmahmann**

University of Johannesburg

Abstract:

In this panel, presenters explore how representations made by women are informed by lived experiences of poverty, sexual violence, lack of infrastructure or decimation of natural resources. Including a focus on makers within and outside of mainstream contexts, the five presenters suggest that the analysis of images through a feminist lens can provide powerful insights into the ways in which women navigate and negotiate inequalities grounded in not only gender but also often race and class.

*Presenters:*

**Shonisani Netsha**

University of Johannesburg

Display cabinets as creative agents in Stephané Conradie's work

**Landi Raubenheimer**

University of Johannesburg

Gendering the lens on the Jukskei River

**Karen von Veh**

University of Johannesburg

Diane Victor's engagement with the myths of female agency

**Brenda Schmahmann**

University of Johannesburg

Navigating Adversity by the Mapula Embroidery Project

**Everjoy Magwegwe**

University of Johannesburg

Gender dynamics in mining communities: contested imaginaries and socio-environmental transformations

Thursday, August 8, 2024

Session 6 | 2:30 PM - 4:30 PM

Room 8204

## New Directions in Provenance Research

Convener:

**Allison Martino**

Eskenazi Museum of Art, Indiana University

Abstract:

This panel will address current and recent work among scholars and curators who are exploring new ways of pursuing provenance research on historical African arts. It is especially interested in strategies that consider the potential of research methodology to include collaboration and radical listening to strengthen understandings of ownership among communities of origin, which is often undocumented in available collections records. This panel invites proposals for presentations that could address the role of collaboration, knowledge production, transparency and ethics, listening, or mentorship in provenance research on African artworks.

*Presenters:*

**Adepeju Layiwola**

University of Iowa

In Search of Provenance for a Shango Shrine Post

**Talia Lieber**

UCLA

A "Lost" and "Found" Quiver: Locating an Object from Rwanda's Royal Collection through Provenance Research

**Benamina Efua Dadzie**

University of East Anglia

The Material Legacy of the Missionary Encounter in 19th Century Abeokuta

**Allison Martino**

Eskenazi Museum of Art, Indiana University

**Cory Gundlach**

Stanley Museum of Art, University of Iowa

Africa in the Midwest: Collaborative Provenance Research in Indiana and Iowa

*Discussant:*

**Carlee Forbes**

Fowler Museum at UCLA

Room 8206

## Collaborating Across Continents: Developing a Contemporary Masquerade Exhibition for North American and African Audiences

Convener:

**Lisa Homann**

University of North Carolina at Charlotte

**Jordan Fenton**

Miami University (Ohio)

Abstract:

This panel examines a major international traveling exhibition opening in spring 2025 that focuses on the creations of living masquerade artists in order to make clear that masquerade is fundamentally contemporary. To mitigate economic and logistical challenges, the team opted to create two iterations of the same exhibition concept: one in North America and one in Africa. Presentations explore just some of the partnerships and collaborations between North American and African researchers, artists, and institutions required to bring the exhibition to its varied audiences.

*Presenters:*

**Lisa Homann**

University of North Carolina at Charlotte

Introduction to "Collaborating Across Continents: Developing a Contemporary Masquerade Exhibition for North American and African Audiences"

**Jordan Fenton**

Miami University (Ohio)

Ethical Commissioning Practices for Masquerade Ensembles from Contemporary Artists for African and Western Museum Collections

**Amanda Maples**

New Orleans Museum of Art

"Meet Where They're At"?: Cross-Continental Collaborations in Curatorial Practice

**Aimé Kantoussan**

Museum of Black Civilizations, Dakar

"Meet Where They're At"?: Cross-Continental Collaborations in Curatorial Practice

**Hervé Youmbi**

Contemporary Artist based in Cameroon

From Ejumba mask to Ejumba ku'ngang mask

Thursday, August 8, 2024

Session 6 | 2:30 PM - 4:30 PM

Room 8207

## Roundtable: A Ghanaian-United States Nexus in Art Pedagogy and Practice

Conveners:

**Rebecca Nagy**

Harn Museum of Art, University of Florida

**Eugene Agyei**

Alfred University

Abstract:

Numerous graduates from Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) study in MFA programs in the US, opening channels for exchange of artistic theory and practice between art academies in the two countries. This roundtable brings together five KNUST graduates who are current or recent MFA students to discuss ways that the innovative curriculum and pedagogy of KNUST have shaped each artist's practice and teaching in the US; how the pedagogy of US institutions differs from that of KNUST; suggestions for strengthening exchanges between KNUST and US academic institutions, and other issues.

Presenters:

**Beatrice Opokua Atencah**

Indiana University

**Michael Dela Dika**

Temple University

**Glover Marfo**

Miami University (Ohio)

**Joy M. Okokon**

Missouri State University

**Emmanuel Opoku**

Assumption University

Room 8209

## The Modern in an Expanded Field?

Convener:

**Joshua I. Cohen**

CCNY/CUNY

Abstract:

Areas of African art studies focusing on photography, modernism, and popular culture have all been concerned with exploring creative expressions of modernity, roughly from the late 19th century onward. Yet as these areas have grown, they have largely done so separately, each in deference to their own relevant mediums, practitioners, and contexts. Is "modernism" a capacious enough term to bring together photography, painting, sculpture, architecture, and other expressive forms under a comparative—although not necessarily unitary—theoretical framework? Alternatively, are there other concepts, historical conditions, or methodological interventions that stand to better situate modern Africa in an expanded visual field?

Presenters:

**Joshua I. Cohen**

CCNY/CUNY

The Modern in an Expanded Field?

**Imani Roach**

Philadelphia Museum of Art

Who is Mr. Drum?: Race, patronage and fraught collectivity in a 1950s workshop

**Álvaro Luís Lima**

University of Florida

Outdated Gadgets: Influence and Pseudomorphism in Malangatana Ngwenya's Most Laborious Work

**Leslie Wilson**

Art Institute of Chicago  
Going Where the Photos Go:  
Displaying 'not all realisms'

Discussant:

**Sarah Van Beurden**

Ohio State University

Thursday, August 8, 2024

Session 6 | 2:30 PM - 4:30 PM

Room 8005

## **What is a Map? A Question Investigated through African and African Diasporic Arts and Architecture**

Conveners:

**Matthew Francis Rarey**

Oberlin College

**Susan Elizabeth Gagliardi**

Emory University

Abstract:

In a sweeping transhistorical study, Matthew H. Edney provocatively argues that “there is no such thing as cartography.” Edney situates “cartography” not as the project of map-making, but rather as an idealized practice of knowledge production that scaffolds the myth of Western rationality and modernity. Through this panel, we reflect on Edney’s challenge, bringing together inter- and multi-disciplinary scholars whose study of African and African diasporic arts and architecture past and present urge us to consider how to engage with and analyze maps writ large as well as how to re-define what a map is and could be.

*Presenters:*

**Juliet Wiersema**

University of Texas at San Antonio

African Autonomy on Maps: Black Mine Owners and Entrepreneurs in Colombia's Chocó, late eighteenth century

**Tobias Wofford**

Virginia Commonwealth University

Legible Geographies and Illegible Identities in the Californian Frontier

**Susan Elizabeth Gagliardi**

Emory University

Cartographic Limits and Possibilities in the Projects of Gerhard Marx

**Matthew Francis Rarey**

Oberlin College

Umbanda Guides, Racial Democracy, and the Melancholic Work of Jaime Lauriano’s Maps

*Discussant:*

**Steven Nelson**

National Gallery of Art

Thursday, August 8, 2024

Rubloff Auditorium, Art Institute of Chicago | 6:00 - 7:00 PM

## Keynote Address: Adenike Cosgrove on Collecting African Art Today



Join Adenike Cosgrove, founder of ÌMỌ DÁRA, for a talk on how she uses her digital platform to empower enthusiasts, scholars, and collectors of African art.

*This lecture is presented in partnership with the Art Institute of Chicago.*

Adenike Cosgrove is the founder of ÌMỌ DÁRA, a digital platform that facilitates connections between collectors of African art and leading dealers and scholars worldwide. She holds a master of research in telecommunications degree from University College London and a bachelor of science degree in computer engineering from the University of Hull. Having grown up in Japan, Hong Kong, and Nigeria, she currently resides in London. Her multicultural upbringing informs her work, fostering an understanding of the interconnectedness of cultures and the universal language of art.

Friday, August 9, 2024

Session 7 | 9:00 AM -11:00 AM

Room 8002

## Unveiling African Arts: Reclaiming Narratives, Fostering Dialogue, and Embracing Healing

Conveners:

**Pamela Cyril-Egware & Ashley Stewart**

University of Port Harcourt

Abstract:

African arts are underrepresented and misunderstood in the global art world, but they are rich and diverse, reflecting the continent's vast cultural heritage. A more human-centered approach is needed to listen to the voices of African artists and communities. Textile design and printmaking are important art forms in Africa and sequential art has the potential to diversify African representations and shatter stereotypes. The use of ideograms by Bruce Onobrakpeya and Nelson Edewor is an important example of how African artists are using traditional visual codes to create contemporary art. Art can also be a relevant tool for healing and wellbeing.

Presenters:

**Osi Onekpe**

University of Port Harcourt

Correlative Personhood and People-centered approaches in Onobrakpeya's Ibiebe and Edewor's Ibie-ka ideographs from the Niger Delta region of Nigeria

**Pamela Cyril-Egware**

University of Port Harcourt

Textile Design as Diversification of African Arts in the Niger Delta for Sustainable Development

**Ashley Stewart**

University of Port Harcourt

Enhancing Wellness across Museums and Communities through Listening

**Onyemachi Nwabueze**

University of Port Harcourt

Studio Art Practice in the Production of Knowledge: Sericut Experience

**Primrose Ochuba**

University of Port Harcourt

The Character of Art in Health and Wellness: A Practical Example

**Comfort Anyia**

University of Port Harcourt

Fostering the next generation of artists, scholars and communities

**Imohesien Bare**

University of Port Harcourt

Diversifying the Field of African Arts through Sequential Art Character Design

Room 8203

## OBJECTS REFUSE TO BE CANCELLED (#babybathwater)

### Part 1

Convener:

**Kathy Curnow**

Cleveland State University

Abstract:

Reports of the African object's death or abandonment are premature. In a visually-dominant era, objects—more than ever—have the power to generate public interest and curiosity, whether physical, in print, or digital. This panel's speakers will begin with a single, precolonial object, and explore it within a matrix of concepts, other objects, oral history, religion, community, and additional factors. Some objects are well-known but can yield new possibilities and information, others are more obscure. The panelists consider objects far more than mere illustrations, but see them as jumping-off points for exploring possibilities.

Presenters:

**Kathy Curnow**

Cleveland State University

Testify: Can Objects Clarify the Relationship between the Benin and Idah Kingdoms in the Early 16th Century?

**Suzanne Blier**

Harvard University

Igbo-Ukwu or How Objects Speak: A Geo-Historical Approach to Medieval Nigerian Art

**Janet Marion Purdy**

Art Institute of Chicago

Neither Fish, Flesh, Nor Fowl: A Ubiquitous and Enigmatic Motif on Carved Zanzibar Doors

**David Doris**

University of Michigan

Crawling with Worms: A Few Thoughts about Ògbóni Metalworks and Time

Friday, August 9, 2024

Session 7 | 9:00 AM -11:00 AM

Room 8204

## **The Promise and the Peril of Placing African Artists in Global Narratives**

Convener:

**Monica Blackmun Visonà**

University of Kentucky

Abstract:

Today Americans are encountering works by African artists on Instagram and in international art fairs, and African sculpture stands beside European art in art museums. These encounters are often unmediated by frameworks that would situate the works in their places of origin. Some critics argue that African artists are thereby liberated from the bonds of cultural heritage. However, global narratives also overwrite the work of Africa's artists with values that are not their own. Papers will examine scholarly projects incorporating artworks by Africans as well as non-Africans, and will explore both the potential benefits and the limitations of global approaches.

*Presenters:*

**Pfunzo Sidogi**

Tshwane University of Technology, South Africa  
The Black Artist as Scientific Observer: Early twentieth-century black-on-black graphic anthropology

**Karina Simonson**

Vilnius University  
Long-Distance Friendships: Exploring Black Narratives in Eastern European Art Exhibitions

**Przemysław Strożek**

Institute of Art of the Polish Academy of Sciences  
Not only Ahmed Cherkaoui. Students from Morocco, Sudan and Ethiopia at the Fine Arts Academy in Warsaw, 1960s-1980s

**Monica Blackmun Visonà**

University of Kentucky

Room 8206

## **Roundtable: #JustAndEquitableNow: Reimagining Arts and Humanities in Our Universities Public Art**

Convener:

**Brett Pyper**

University of the Witwatersrand

**Susan Elizabeth Gagliardi**

Emory University

Abstract:

For nearly two years, the #JustAndEquitableNow team has brought together seven people who come from different subject positions and who occupy different roles at the University of Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, South Africa, and Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia, USA. Our team has reflected on what it means to make, teach, and research the arts when communities have been and still are protesting against longstanding injustices and demanding better futures. During this virtual roundtable, #JustAndEquitableNow team members will share individual and collective observations and assessments.

*Presenters:*

**Blanche Barnett**

Emory University

**Brett Pyper**

University of the Witwatersrand

**Chelsy Monie**

Emory University

**Kgomotso Moshugi**

University of the Witwatersrand

**Susan Elizabeth Gagliardi**

Associate Professor, Emory University

Friday, August 9, 2024

Session 7 | 9:00 AM -11:00 AM

Room 8207

## **Decolonization of African Art in Museums, Covid-19, and Curating Art in Digital Space**

Convener:

**Sule James**

Wake Forest University

Abstract:

The field of museum representation of African art have encountered challenges with curating certain African forms since Africanists began the campaign for the repatriation of African art that were looted from different countries on the continent. That the move is aimed at decolonizing African art in Western museums is important in addressing the wrongs of colonialists. This panel is interested in research and papers that provide insights on the use of digital spaces in curating and disseminating African art or their digital images in museums, gallery exhibitions and other institutions.

*Presenters:*

**Anela Lupuwana**

Rhodes University

Decolonising Museum Spaces: How can anthropology be used as a tool to decolonize museums?

**Stephan Köhler**

Hamburg University of Fine Arts

On-line Presentations of Georges Adéagbo's exhibitions at the Smithsonian Museum of African Arts, President Lincoln's Cottage, KINDL Berlin and Ernst-Barlach Haus Hamburg

**Sydney Herrick**

UNC-Chapel Hill

Breaking Chains, Forging Beauty: Redefining African Jewelry Design Through the Artistry of Emefa Cole, Ami Doshi Shah, and Adele Dejak

**Martin Elouga**

University of Yaoundé I

Decoloniality and decolonial approaches to the art of Africa

**Andisiwe Diko**

University of South Africa

THE MARGIN AS AN AMBIVALENT SPACE: UKUYALA AS A METHOD OF READING AND CURATING XHOSA CULTURAL ARTIFACTS.

Room 8209

## **Women & Non-Binary African Artists: Revisioning Histories**

Conveners:

**Christopher Richards**

Brooklyn College

**Elizabeth Perrill**

University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Abstract:

Women and non-binary artists have played an instrumental role in the creation and continued innovation of South Africa's visual culture, yet their contributions are often overlooked or understated. The aim of this panel is twofold: to amend the established, often limiting narratives of women and non-binary artists in South Africa and to reconceptualize how women and non-binary artists have impacted specific art forms or artistic movements. A range of media and time periods will be explored, in the hopes of contributing to the active revision of South Africa's existing art histories.

*Presenters:*

**Christopher Richards**

Brooklyn College

Politicized Parables: A Reassessment of Bonnie Ntshalintshali's Early Ceramic Sculptures

**Elizabeth Perrill**

University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Against Anonymity: Historically Women's Art Forms in Pedagogical Practice

**Aisha M. Muhammad**

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Structural Decay in the Photography of Rachel Malaika

**Leana van der Merwe**

University of South Africa

Playful gestures in remaking self and urban space: Performances by Anthea Moys and Donna Kukama



Friday, August 9, 2024

Session 7 | 9:00 AM -11:00 AM

Room 8005

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**Public Art, African Histories: Asserting and Subverting Colonial Power**

Convener:

**Victoria Rovine**

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Abstract:

This panel explores the histories, forms, and afterlives of colonial-era public art, in Africa and in European centers of imperial power in Africa. We also invite papers on postcolonial African public art that reassesses or subverts imperial histories. Our aim is to address public art in all media that commemorates, supports, invents, or resists the exercise of colonial power and, in contemporary contexts, seeks to decolonize the past. We aim to deepen appreciation for the roles of public art in the construction of popular conceptions of histories and heritage, and its employment as an instrument of resistance to these constructions.

*Presenters:*

**Victoria Rovine**

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Public Fountains: Masks, Crocodiles, and Hydrocolonialism in Bamako and Paris

**Joseph L. Underwood**

Kent State University

Mansudae Monuments: Afro-Asian Politics and New Solidarities

**Riad Kherdeen**

University of California Berkeley

Without Museums: The 1969 Marrakesh "Présence Plastique" Exhibition

**David Riep**

Colorado State University

Monumental Tasks: Redressing Cultural Authority in South African's Central Interior

Friday, August 9, 2024

Session 8 | 11:15 AM - 1:15 PM

Room 8005

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## **Collaboration, Collections, and Restitution Best Practices for United States Museums Holding African Objects**

Abstract:

Leaders of the ACASA's CCRBP Working Group will explain how a group of over seventy ACASA members on three continents drafted a new document on best practices for Collaboration, Collections, and Restitution for United States Museums Holding African Objects. The panel will conclude with a presentation on proposed next steps to support the guidance. CCRBP members envision a central digital resource that aggregates information about African art in United States museum collections. Panel chairs will moderate a discussion with the audience about the best practices document and the proposed web-based project.

*Presenters:*

**Erica P. Jones**

Co-Chair of Steering Committee

**Amanda Gilvin**

Co-Chair of Steering Committee

**Nichole Bridges**

Co-Chair of Interlocutor Identification Subcommittee

**Shannen Hill**

Co-Chair of Interlocutor Identification Subcommittee

**Jennifer Bajorek**

Co-Chair of Comparative Models Subcommittee

**Mary Jo Arnoldi**

Co-Chair of Comparative Models Subcommittee

**Karen E. Melbourne**

Co-Chair of Criteria and Parameters for Objects Subject to Potential Collaboration, Restitution, and Repatriation Subcommittee

**Yelle Biro**

Co-Chair of Criteria and Parameters for Objects Subject to Potential Collaboration, Restitution, and Repatriation Subcommittee

**Marla Berns**

Chair of Fundraising

**Christa Clarke**

Chair of Outreach

**Candace Keller**

Chair of Making United States African Art Collections Visible and Accessible

**Kathleen Bickford Berzok**

Chair of Making United States African Art Collections Visible and Accessible

Friday, August 9, 2024

Session 9 | 2:30 PM - 4:30 PM

Room 8002

## **Art-Making as Rituals and Rites: Exploring the Transformative Power of Creative Expression**

Convener:

**May Okafor**

University of Nigeria, Nsukka

Abstract:

This panel aims to examine the connection between art-making and rituals and rites of passage, highlighting the transformative potential of creative expressions in personal growth, healing, cultural development, and communal bonding. It will explore how the processes of creating tangible artworks serve as powerful vehicles for self-discovery, identity formation, and the navigation of life transitions. The presentations may involve historical, contemporary, and theoretical perspectives. By recognizing the diverse ways in which art-making and rituals and rites intersect, we gain valuable insights into the enrichment of human experiences and the evolution of artistic practices.

*Presenters:*

**May Okafor**

University of Nigeria, Nsukka

Ceramic-making as Rite of Passage: Using Art as An Agency in Navigating Life Transitions

**Sophia Kitlinski**

Yale University

To Draw is to Transform: Afro-Cuban Ritual Drawing and the 1812 Aponte Conspiracy

**Susan J Curtis**

Independent Art Historian

Mourning in Metal: Sculpting Loss and Grief into Activism

**Alice R. Burmeister**

Winthrop University

Visual Art as Medicine: The Painted Koranic Boards of Malam Zabeyrou

**Degenhart Brown**

UCLA

Dividuating Medicines: Kpé Oloughoun Use in South-Eastern Bénin

Room 8203

## **OBJECTS REFUSE TO BE CANCELLED (#babybathwater)**

### **Part 2**

Convener:

**Kathy Curnow**

Cleveland State University

Abstract:

Reports of the African object's death or abandonment are premature. In a visually-dominant era, objects—more than ever—have the power to generate public interest and curiosity, whether physical, in print, or digital. This panel's speakers will begin with a single, precolonial object, and explore it within a matrix of concepts, other objects, oral history, religion, community, and additional factors. Some objects are well-known but can yield new possibilities and information, others are more obscure. The panelists consider objects far more than mere illustrations, but see them as jumping-off points for exploring possibilities.

*Presenters:*

**Anisa Tavangar**

Princeton University

Scaling Primitivism Through Interpretations of the Ngil Mask

**Neelima Jeychandran**

VCUarts Qatar

Disordered Spaces and Objects in Flux: Mapping the Black Indian Ocean

**Kathryn Gunsch**

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Eye-witness Artists: The Benin Plaques in Dating Regional Bell Traditions

**Mark Dike DeLancey**

DePaul University

Legitimizing a Usurper: The Tomb of Askia Muhammad

**Constantine Petridis**

Art Institute of Chicago

Revisiting Chibinda Ilunga: New Light on an Iconic Masterpiece of Chokwe Court Art

Friday, August 9, 2024

Session 9 | 2:30 PM - 4:30 PM

Room 8204

## **No Comment! Explorations along the borderline of seeing, talking, and thought.**

Convener:

**Till Förster**

University of Basel

Abstract:

Not all artists love to talk about their work. The silence of artists raises two issues: first, a tension between the artists and their work on one side, and on the other the expectations of scholars, critics, and the art world. Second, the epistemological problems of ekphrasis, namely the contradicting specificities of seeing and talking. Furthermore, some artworks become discursive nodal points and attract comments and criticisms. Others are seen by many, but their discursive presence is negligible. This panel invites scholars and artists to reflect on their experience with the intangible borderline between seeing and talking.

*Presenters:*

**Bennetta Jules-Rosette**

University of California-San Diego

**J.R. Osborn**

Georgetown University

Transforming and Reframing African Art Through Dialogues and Museum Encounters

**Carol Magee**

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

"I broke up with my girlfriend": Orientations in Listening and Seeing

**Antonia de Thuin**

UFABC/FAPESP

Silences and Words: The Square as Visual Metaphor when Words Fail

**Yann Petit**

Columbia University

Speaking Acts: The Instrumentality of Speech in Dan Gué Performances

Room 8206

## **Queer Hybrids in Contemporary African Art**

Conveners:

**Abigail Celis**

University of Monreal

**Ivy Mills**

University of California Berkeley

Abstract:

This panel examines the role that hybrid human-plant-animal-machine-alien bodies play in contemporary visual arts of Africa and the African diaspora. The cultural contexts and political concerns that inform artists' engagements with hybrid bodies are plural, but an association of these bodies with queerness is a common thread. This panel asks when, where and why do hybrid bodies appear in African and Afro-diasporic art, and what is their relationship to queerness? How do contemporary imaginaries of mutating, shape-shifting or anthropomorphized bodies draw on previous figures of hybrid bodies? What do these bodies revisit, resuscitate and resist? What is their queer potential?

*Presenters:*

**Abigail Celis**

University of Monreal

Human-Body Fruit-Body in Soñ Gweha's Safou Stories

**Ivy Mills**

University of California Berkeley

Mamady Seydi's Hyena-Women

**Bimbola Akinbola**

Northwestern University

Queer Diasporic Girlhood in ruby onyinyechi amanze's The Adventures of Ada the Alien series

**Adejoke Aderonke Tugbiyele**

Visual Artist; Architectural Designer; Advocate  
Queer Hybridity in Yoruba Art and Architecture

Friday, August 9, 2024

Session 9 | 2:30 PM - 4:30 PM

Room 8207

**Africa & Byzantium at the Cleveland Museum of Art: an exhibition through the lenses of cultural heritage, community, and conservation**

Convener:

**Kristen Windmuller-Luna**  
Cleveland Museum of Art

Abstract:

Presenting dynamic, multi-vocal, and relevant exhibitions of historical African arts is a major concern of museums today. The 2023–2024 exhibition Africa & Byzantium considered the complex artistic relationships between northern and eastern African Christian kingdoms and the Byzantine Empire from the fourth century and beyond. Here, members of the CMA's curatorial, conservation, and public and academic engagement departments will discuss how many voices and ways of knowing informed CMA's presentation of this exhibition. It offers a case study of how a human-centered approach offers museumgoers a more equitable story of the global place of historical African arts.

*Presenters:*

*Curatorial Perspective:*

**Kristen Windmuller-Luna**  
Cleveland Museum of Art  
Centering Africa in CMA's Presentation of Africa & Byzantium

**Helina Gebremedhen**

Institute of Fine Arts  
Centering Local Faith & Heritage Communities in CMA's Presentation of Africa & Byzantium

*Conservation Perspective:*

**Dean Yoder**

Cleveland Museum of Art  
A technical study of the Diptych with Twelve Apostles & St. Paul, c. 1700, Workshop or Circle of Wäldä Maryam, recently acquired by the Cleveland Museum of Art.

*Interpretation Perspective:*

**Rachel Arzuaga**

Cleveland Museum of Art

**Stephanie Foster**

Cleveland Museum of Art  
Centering Our Communities: Community Voices in Africa & Byzantium

Room 8209

**Digitalization, Youth Economy, and the Future of Popular Arts in Africa**

Conveners:

**Rowland Chukwuemeka Amaefula**

Alex Ekwueme Federal University Ndufu-Alike

**Alexander von Humboldt**

Johannes Gutenberg University, Mainz

Abstract:

Digitalization has suffered multiple disruptions in Africa. Despite this, a growing number of youths continue to project and commodify their talents through digital channels. This panel examines the future of popular arts in these checkered spaces creating a new youth economy.

*Presenters:*

**Edeyan H (Maya) Omoweh**

University of Calgary

Embracing Shifting Paradigms: The Role of African Art, Mental Health, and Internal Bias in Fostering New Generation of African Creatives

**Lynda Chinenye Ambrose**

Western Delta University

Emojis, Provocative Stance and Government

Regulations of Free Speech in Nigeria: A Pragmatic Analysis

**Laura Lee Jones**

Edna Manley College of the Visual & Performing Arts

...The Next Generation of Artists: Shifting

Conversations, New Tools

Friday, August 9, 2024

Session 9 | 2:30 PM - 4:30 PM

Room 8005

**Roundtable: The Art that Guides Our Students: Southern University at New Orleans and the Traditional African Art Collections**

Conveners:

**Erika Witt**

Southern University at New Orleans Museum of Art

**Haitham Eid**

Southern University at New Orleans Museum of Art

Abstract:

This panel explores the dynamic intersection of undergraduate studies, graduate museum studies program, cultural preservation, and community engagement at Southern University at New Orleans (SUNO). As a historically black university, SUNO has distinguished itself in fostering the next generation of artists, scholars, and community leaders through its innovative Graduate Museum Studies Program. This panel aims to examine the unique approaches employed by SUNO in integrating traditional African art collections into its curriculum and the broader impact on cultural awareness and community development.

*Presenters:*

**Sara Hollis**

Southern University at New Orleans

**Haitham Eid**

Southern University at New Orleans Museum of Art

**Cynthia Ramirez**

Southern University at New Orleans

**Clyde Robertson**

Southern University at New Orleans

**Erika Witt**

Southern University at New Orleans Museum of Art

Saturday, August 10, 2024

Session 10 | 9:30 AM - 11:30 AM

Room 8002

## Online Visual Imaginations of the Nation

Convener:

**Okechukwu Nwafor**

Wesleyan University

Abstract:

Online platforms have become new sites of radical visual culture that allow ordinary citizens to emerge as revolutionary champions of everyday lives. Citizens have become visual activists mapping new terrains to envision new social, political, religious, geographic, and cultural identities. This panel calls for contributions that will reflect on how new nations are being constituted through citizens' radical reimagining of online visual culture. We invite submissions that will rethink how the interface between art history, visual culture and technology can provoke new imaginations of the nation and its complex identities.

Presenters:

**Osinachi Immaculeta Okafor**

Rice University

The Cultural Production of African Diaspora Identities  
Across Social Spaces

**Samuel Mark Anderson**

NYU Abu Dhabi

Online Imaginations of National Crisis: Graphic Social Media  
during Sierra Leonean Elections

**Okechukwu Nwafor**

Wesleyan University

New Online Histories from Memorial Portrait Photographs of  
Nigerian Nationalists Posted on Social Media

**George Emeka Agbo**

University of Edinburgh

Social Media as Visual Archive of Nigerian Post-  
independence Condition

Room 8203

## Sea Matters: New (Art) Histories from Africa's Islands and Archipelagos

Convener:

**Prita Meier**

New York University

Abstract:

Africa's archipelagos and islands are vanguard spaces of transcultural connectivity. Their marine environments are not only key resources sustaining local livelihoods, but they also function as multisensorial matter, used by artists, performers and builders in myriad ways. This panel calls for contributions that centers the material significance of archipelagos in the making of the arts and built cultures of Africa. How do the arts and material cultures of littorals, islands, and port cities exceed prevailing definitions of Africanness? What does archipelagic thinking offer to the study of the arts and built spaces of Africa?

Presenters:

**Irene Bronner**

University of Johannesburg

Attuning to the Ocean: Salt Water Imaginaries in Lens-  
based Works by Two South African Artists

**Tasha Rijke-Epstein**

Vanderbilt University

Ecological Archiving: Archipelagic Knowledges in  
Madagascar's Amulet Record

**Graham Stopa**

New York University

Trading Between Empires: Ecotonal Exchanges and  
Image Creation in Benin River

**Adedoyin Teriba**

Dartmouth College

Eko Atlantic: Land Reclamation, Community  
Displacement and "Corporate Afrofuturism" in 21st  
Century Lagos

**Herman von Hesse**

University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

"A Dilapidated House is Better than a Bush":  
Castellated Houses and Landscapes of Security on  
the Urban Gold Coast in the Eighteenth and  
Nineteenth Centuries

Saturday, August 10, 2024

Session 10 | 9:30 AM - 11:30 AM

Room 8204

## Critical Inquiry in Design, Media and Material Culture of Sub-Saharan Africa

Conveners:

**Richard Acquaye**

Takoradi Technical University

**Rikki Wemega-Kwawu**

El Anatsui Experimental Studios, Takoradi - Ghana

Abstract:

This study aims to synthesize diverse information, philosophical perspectives, concepts and assumptions across various vantage points. And endeavours to cultivate a well-founded comprehension, consequently fostering novel insights, practical applications, and a critical examination of design, media, and material culture in the sub-Saharan African context. This inquiry will extend its purview to encompass critical facets such as decolonization, authenticity, ownership, accessibility and contemporary applicability. It further seeks to establish forums and resources conducive to dialogues among stakeholders and interest groups. It is anticipated that these engagements will stimulate transformative modifications, rendering design, media and material culture more inclusive and engaging.

Presenters:

**Genevieve Adjei-Appoh**

Kkwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology  
THE GHANAIAN AVANT-GARDE: INTERACTIVE  
MANNEQUINS

**Elijah Sofu**

Takoradi Technical University  
AFRO TRANSCENDENTAL SYMBOLOGY: A FOCUS ON THE  
SEKONDI-TAKORADI CIRCLE OF ARTISTS

**Richard Acquaye**

Takoradi Technical University  
FESTIVALS IN GHANA: PHOTO STORIES

**Rikki Wemega-Kwawu**

El Anatsui Experimental Studios, Takoradi - Ghana  
THE SACRED STOOLS OF GHANA

**Emi Koide**

Federal University of Recôncavo da Bahia  
Adire - On textile art and artists in Yorubaland in the  
contemporary context

Room 8206

## Museums in Africa and their Search for Relevance as Source and Agent of Social Wellness

Conveners:

**Rosalie Hans**

Vrije University Amsterdam

**David Mbutia**

Heroes Square Museums Sites and Monuments at  
the National Heroes Council, Kenya

Abstract:

Most museums in Africa trace their origins to the colonial period as 'cabinets-of-curiosity' based on western canons of heritage. It is only from the 1990s that new-generation African museum professionals started working with local communities to tell their stories and provide solutions for the continent. While most of the museums continue to grapple with the colonial legacy after six decades of independence, there is a glimmer of hope. This panel will illustrate how some museums in the continent are seeking local relevance through recognition and inclusion of different voices and 'knowledges' as part of decolonizing and fostering human-centered approaches.

Presenters:

**Rosalie Hans**

Vrije University Amsterdam  
The Provenance of African Collections: necessity and  
relevance of object histories

**Nelson Abiti**

National Museum of Uganda

**David Mbutia**

Heroes Square Museums Sites and Monuments at the  
National Heroes Council, Kenya  
The Enduring Search for Relevance as Agent of Social  
Wellness: A Case Study of the National Museums of  
Kenya

**Odun Orimolade**

Yaba Art Museum; Yaba College of Technology  
Gelede Comes: Art and Indigenous Knowledge  
Systems in the Museum Experience

**Mohamadou Moustapa DIEYE**

Cheikh Anta Diop University of Dakar  
The creation and development of museums in  
Senegal: origin, evolution and perspectives

Saturday, August 10, 2024

Session 10 | 9:30 AM - 11:30 AM

Room 8207

## Reimagining Creative Ways of Speaking Truth to Power in a Time of Heightened Repression

Convener:

**Danson Kahyana**

Makerere University; Harvard Kennedy School

Abstract:

The panel explores new ways of doing political activism in order to reinvigorate the fight for human rights observance and good governance in Uganda, where there is heightened repression every year that passes even when activists speak in different modes (demonstrations, publications and exhibitions). The panel answers four questions: The different forms of speech we need to devise to ensure that the people we are addressing hear us; how to translate our radical speeches into concrete policy changes; how to mentor the next generation of activists; and how to cultivate collaborations between and among activists within and outside the country.

*Presenters:*

**Stella Nyanzi**

Writers-in-Exile, Pen Germany

The Costs of Writing Truth to Power at the Tail End of Museveni's Regime

**Kakwenza Rukirabashaija**

Europa Universität

Radical Rudeness as a tool against oppression

**Tushabe wa Tushabe**

Widener University

Will to Live: Stories, Gestures, Ways of Being

**John Solomon Nabuyanda**

Human Rights Defender

**Anna Asaba**

The Malkia Initiative

Far From Home: How to establish new forms of organizing in exile

Room 8209

## Roundtable: VISUAL LITERACY AGAINST OPPRESSION

Convener:

**Djribil Drame**

Independent Scholar and Visual Artist

**Khadiatou A. Camara**

Writer and Sociologist

Abstract:

In order to decrease systematic racism or oppression, decolonization must be. Literacy first, then through visual literature. In other words, African needs to validate his visual artists, filmmakers, architects...

*Presenters:*

**Cheikh Sene**

Rapper

**Hady Ba**

Philosopher

**Serigne Mansour Fall**

Graffiti Artist

**Djribil Drame**

Independent Scholar and Visual Artist

**Khadiatou A. Camara**

Writer and Sociologist

Saturday, August 10, 2024

Session 11 | 11:45 AM - 1:45 PM

Room 8002

## Restitutions and Feedback

Conveners:

**Didier Houénoude**

Université d'Abomey-Calavi; Technical University of Dresden

**Gaëlle Beaujean**

Musée du Quai Branly - Jacques Chirac

Abstract:

The panel will explore the restitution of African cultural heritage since the request of the Republic of Benin. It will examine the different experiences of countries that have seen the restitution of their heritage become a reality, and understand the cooperation models put in place.

*Presenters:*

**Didier Houénoude**

Université d'Abomey-Calavi; Technical University of Dresden

The Beninese heritage restitution process and how it is reappropriated by the people of Benin

**Gaëlle Beaujean**

Musée du Quai Branly - Jacques Chirac

The royal art of Abomey (Benin) in French national collections: from academic research to official restitution

**Adéwolé Faladé**

Central European University, Vienna

Repossessing the Repatriated Artefacts in the Republic of Benin

**Daouda Keïta**

National Museum of Mali

Return of Archaeological Pieces to Mali

**Osaisonor Godfrey Ekhaton-Obogie**

University of Benin-City

Digital Benin, Benin City a Living Museum

**Abdourahmane Seck**

Université Gaston Berger

Returning a sword: protocol ceremony and discursive controversy

Room 8203

## Roundtable: New Dimensions of Contemporary Art Studies and Practice in Nigeria and Ghana Since 2020

Conveners:

**Deborah Dike**

Bayreuth International Graduate School of African Studies

**Elijah Sofu**

Takoradi Technical University

Abstract:

We seem to be inhabiting a constantly changing and evolving world since 2020, which has led to different critical (research) reflections on its implications on cultural, social, political, economic and other societal contexts across the globe. We find a possibility of this within the contemporary art space in Nigeria and Ghana, and through our proposed round table, we seek to answer the question, "to what extent are post 2020 societal changes affecting Art practice and Art research in Nigeria and Ghana?"

*Presenters:*

**Deborah Dike**

Bayreuth International Graduate School of African Studies

**Elijah Sofu**

Takoradi Technical University

**Ikemefula Emmanuel Irokanulo**

PhD

**Naomi Dika**

University Maiduguri

**Evans Kwadwo Donkor**

Takoradi Technical University

Saturday, August 10, 2024

Session 11 | 11:45 AM - 1:45 PM

Room 8204

## Diversifying the Field of African Arts

Convener:

**Andrew Mulenga**

Open Window University

*Presenters:*

**Andrew Mulenga**

Open Window University

Revisiting the indigenized Christian art of Zambian painter Emmanuel Nsama (1941-2011)

**Kehinde Christopher Adewumi**

Durban University of Technology

Rereading Art Workshops as an Interaction Ritual for Knowledge Formation and Artists' Development

**Emmanuel Oyetunji Alemede**

Federal College of Education, Eha-Amufu, Enugu.

PEDAGOGY AND MUSIC EDUCATION: A CURSORY INVESTIGATION OF MUSIC CURRICULUM IN SELECTED FEDERAL COLLEGES OF EDUCATION IN SOUTH EASTERN NIGERIA.

**Meghan Kirkwood**

Washington University in St. Louis

The Ernest Cole Award as Lens and Source: Assessing South African generational approaches and views on documentary photography in the 21st Century

**Olusegun Stephen Titus**

Obafemi Awolowo University

Musicking and Visualising Extractivism and Environmental Degradation in Nigeria, Zambia and South Africa

Room 8206

## Traditions and Practices of Profanation at Western Museums Part 2

Convener:

**Murielle Sandra Tiako Djomatchoua**

Princeton University

Abstract:

Profanation is generally connected to acts or behaviors that lack due respect and reverence towards the sacred. The performative characteristic of this definition reduces this concept to a superficial dimensions that fail to account for its infectious property when it is applied to African objects at Western museums. Examining profanation within the museum inevitably reveals the intricate networks of traditions to which African objects are subjected from the moment they enter the museum realm. What are the ways in which museums enact acts of profanation? how might this concept contribute to generating new insights into the new museum?

*Presenters:*

**Murielle Sandra Tiako Djomatchoua**

Princeton University

Cataloging as profanation: the exile of African heritage cultures in museum discourses and traditions

**Bansoa Sigau**

Université de Genève & TU Berlin

*Say her name!* Re-membering 'Sheritage' within the museumscape

**Clement Akpang**

George Washington University

Repatriation Politics and the Question of Museum Decolonization

Saturday, August 10, 2024

Session 11 | 11:45 AM - 1:45 PM

Room 8207

## **Nigerian Contemporary Ceramic in Retrospective View**

Conveners:

**Afam Augustine Okwudili**

Vision in Clay; Lagos State University of Science and Technology

**Chukwuebuka Jude Okwuba**

Vision in Clay; Auchi Polytechnic

Abstract:

This Topic is based on discussing in details of the Transformation and Development of Pottery to Ceramics in Nigeria, from its primitive period to the modern time difference times in perspective will be examined different Pottery culture such as Nok, Ife, and Igbo Ukwu just mention few the influence of the Local pottery, Colonial, post-Colonial era and the present trend in Contemporary Ceramics. The resultant result as it effect the development of Contemporary Ceramics in relation to the practice of Ceramic and the different people involve with the Industrialization and Economic Contribution of ceramics to the Nation of Nigeria.

*Presenters:*

**Afam Augustine Okwudili**

Vision in Clay; Lagos State University of Science and Technology

Nigerian Contemporary Ceramic in Retrospective View

**Chukwuebuka Jude Okwuba**

Vision in Clay; Auchi Polytechnic

The Potential of Ceramics Towards Economic Sustainability and Development in Nigeria

**Ofilie Emmanuel**

Vision in Clay; Delta State University of Science and Technology

Room 8209

## **Spiritual Repair: Post-Secular Black Atlantic Arts**

Convener:

**Ferdinand de Jong**

New Europe College

Abstract:

This panel explores how the spiritual has been transmitted in popular and modern Black art in a context defined by secularism. This panel invites papers that address the spiritual in African and Black arts across the world, situating spirituality in a post-secular Black Atlantic. Recognizing the important work of the Indian art historian Partha Mitter, to what extent should spirituality be understood as an orientation developed and circulated in the context of empire? Positing that coloniality was founded on secularism, to what extent can we understand the embrace of the spiritual in Black visual and material arts as spiritual repair?

*Presenters:*

**Zainabu Jallo**

University of Basel

O Sagrado: Sacral Musealisation and Curatorial

Intention at Museu Afro Brasil Emanuel Araujo

**Donato Loia**

School of the Art Institute of Chicago

Spirits and Spirituality in Theater Gates:

Considerations on the Persistence of African Arts in the Work of an International Art Star

**Luisa Karman**

SOAS

Rubem Valentim (1922-1991): Geometric Abstraction as Bahian Counterculture

**Ferdinand de Jong**

New Europe College

Spirited Modernism in Remy Jungerman's Behind the Forest



Sunday, August 11, 2024

Art Institute of Chicago | 10:00 AM - 6:00 PM

## Museum Day 2024

Creating future-looking museums requires having future-looking conversations. Over the past decade, Museum Day has been the site of many important and ongoing conversations on topics ranging from museums in Africa and at universities; display and didactics; provenance and patrimony; collaboration and re-centering; and the roles of contemporary and historical artworks. Yet—much remains unsaid, and much remains untread.

In the spirit of Tri-19's theme "Radical Listening: Human-Centered Approaches to African Arts," Museum Day 2024 presents three multi-vocal sessions on topics not considered at this event in recent years. Each presentation will resonate with attendees across disciplines, whether museum professionals, academics, or artists. This panel brings together museum professionals from specializations we have rarely heard from at this conference, yet whose work and expertise are integral to how the twenty-first-century museum presents the arts of Africa. In dialogue with other art historians and curators, we welcome Egyptologists, archaeologists, Nubiologists, conservators, research scientists, and audience evaluation specialists to bring their perspectives to the table. Addressing these topics for the first time at this conference, we aim to create expansive dialogues for future conversation and action.

Sunday, August 11, 2024

Session 1 | Ancient Northern African Art in Museums

## **Egypt on the Nile: Centering the Natural World in Museum Experiences Focused on Ancient Egypt**

**Lisa Saladino Haney**

Assistant Curator, Carnegie Museum of Natural History

Abstract:

At Carnegie Museum of Natural History (CMNH), our mission is to deepen wonder and advance understanding of our natural world—past and present—in order to embrace responsibility for our collective future. For ancient Egypt, this means centering the Nile River and the surrounding ecosystems. The significance of the river to life in the Nile Valley has important local connections here in Pittsburgh, a city that exists at the confluence of three rivers: the Allegheny, Monongahela, and Ohio. This talk will discuss Egypt on the Nile (EOTN), a new long-term exhibition that will replace the museum's former hall of ancient Egypt. It will provide a brief overview of the exhibition's goals, content, and layout along with collaborative strategies the team is using to ground this new content in the natural world of northeastern Africa while meeting the needs of local stakeholder communities. One of the overarching goals of EOTN is to weave together ancient Egyptian material culture, natural science specimens, and information from our team of in-house scientists, researchers, and educators to counter the traditional, hyperreal representation of ancient Egypt often encountered in a museum setting. Through innovative and immersive museum displays and community collaboration, this exhibition will invite us all to consider the ways—familiar and surprising—that our relationships with nature affect our everyday lives.

## **Displaying Ancient Material Culture as Technological Innovation in Museum Exhibits: Reframing the Representation of Aksumite and Medieval Ethiopian Material Culture through Inclusive Narratives**

**Helina Woldekiros**

Associate Professor, Washington University in St. Louis

Abstract:

The ancient societies of Northern and Northeastern Africa have left a rich legacy of material culture, architecture, and writing systems that deserve greater recognition within the broader context of representation in museums. This presentation explores innovative approaches to displaying and interpreting these underrepresented objects, emphasizing their significance as both cultural expressions and technological developments while challenging the prevailing narrative that often focuses solely on elite and exotic artifacts. It is crucial to recognize that the creation and dissemination of these material cultures and innovations involved a wide range of participants beyond the elite class. As exemplified by my work on the Ancient Afar Caravan Trail and Aksumite trade of Ethiopia and Eritrea, the contributions of non-elite stakeholders played a significant role in shaping the artistic and technological landscape of these societies. Through a holistic approach combining material culture analysis, archaeological context, insights into production processes, and the acknowledgment of multiple stakeholders, this presentation elevates the material culture of Aksumite and Medieval Ethiopia as a case study for the broader region, ensuring their rightful place within the diverse tapestry of ancient material culture and history while promoting a more inclusive understanding of their cultural and technological achievements.



# Sunday, August 11, 2024

Session 1 | Ancient Northern African Art in Museums

## Kemet: an exhibition on ancient Egypt in Hip-hop, Jazz, Soul and Funk

### **Daniel Soliman**

Curator Egyptian and Nubian Collection, Dutch National Museum of Antiquities

#### Abstract:

To this day, ancient Egyptian culture holds specific significance for people around the globe. Museums with ancient Egyptian collections occasionally discuss the various ways in which ancient Egypt has been re-imagined in European art, Western cinema, contemporary Egyptian popular culture, and more. Until recently, few museum spaces were dedicated to the meaning of ancient Egypt in cultural productions by Black artists with African roots.

To address this, the Dutch National Museum of Antiquities organized a large exhibition in 2023 dedicated to the meaning of ancient Egypt in the Black musical tradition across genres like hip-hop, reggae, electronic music, funk, soul and jazz. By juxtaposing audio-visual representations of the music with ancient objects from the Egyptian collection, the exhibition explored how artists celebrate Egypt within a wider African context. It examined how ancient Egyptian royalty plays a role in the empowerment of Black diasporic people and how ancient Egypt inspires calls for spiritual healing and securing safe futures for Black communities.

In addition, the exhibition was a way to highlight the connection between ancient Egypt and other parts of Northeast Africa, and to make ancient Egypt more accessible to younger museum audiences.

## The Maghrib in Museums: Displaying and Interpreting North African Art in United States Cultural Institutions

### **Hiba Abid**

Curator for Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies at The New York Public Library

#### Abstract:

This paper aims to provide an overview of how the Maghrib is represented in museums and libraries across the United States, examining the display and interpretation of artifacts from the North African region. The study of the Maghrib has historically been a peripheral field in North American academic institutions, which has influenced its portrayal in domestic cultural institutions. While recent years have seen a subtle rise in scholarly interest, this progression is not consistently reflected in museum practices.

The presentation will analyze past exhibitions, curatorial strategies, and educational programs that include North African artifacts. It will also explore the complexities and challenges of interpreting medieval and premodern North African art and manuscripts in a museum context, with a particular focus on religious and devotional art.



# Sunday, August 11, 2024

Session 1 | Ancient Northern African Art in Museums

## Exhibiting Nubia at the University of Michigan

### **Geoff Emberling**

Associate Research Scientist, Kelsey Museum of Archaeology, University of Michigan

### **Bailey Franzoi**

PhD Candidate, University of Michigan

### **Shannon Ness**

University Programs Coordinator, Kelsey Museum of Archaeology, University of Michigan

### **Anawar Mahagoub Ali Mohamed**

Graduate Student, University of Michigan

#### Abstract:

The exhibition Narrating Nubia: The Social Lives of Heritage presented to the public the results of a collaborative three-year research project of the same name. Narrating Nubia comprised four separate faculty-led projects, each intersecting with the past, present and future of Nubian lives in very different ways: displacement and nostalgia of Old Nubia; the 2019 Sudanese Revolution; and Nubia's ancient civilizations. In designing the exhibition, curators not only had the challenge of balancing these different interests within a single space. But more challenging was deciding how to present these complicated and authentic heritage narratives to an American audience with little to no previous knowledge of 'Nubia'. Through trial and error, the final result was a multi-sensory exhibition filled with the sights, sounds, and smells of Egypt and Sudan that anchored Nubia in the tangible present.

Sunday, August 11, 2024

Session 2 | Contributions from Conservators and Research Scientists

### **Making Conservation Inclusive: Next Steps**

**Ellen Pearlstein**

Professor, University of California- Los Angeles

Abstract:

The UCLA/Getty graduate conservation program began accepting students in 2005. The Mellon Opportunity invited students to its first workshop in 2018. These programs and others have contributed by adding voices to ongoing dialogues about what and who conservation is for. This talk will explore some of the changes necessary within academic conservation programs, and perhaps others, to support inclusivity.

### **Collaboration in the Conservation and Display of Zulu Beadwork at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts**

**Kate Brugioni Gabrielli**

formerly Andrew W. Mellon Fellow, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts

**Hlengiwe Dube**

Independent Curator for Zulu Beadwork, Formerly Special Consultant to Virginia Museum of Fine Arts

Abstract:

Within the context of the three-year, Mellon-funded Conservation Initiative in African Art at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts (VMFA), two beaded ensembles belonging to a married Zulu man and woman were documented, studied, and treated in collaboration with Zulu beadwork expert, historian, and artist, Hlengiwe Dube. Collected by the VMFA in 2013, each ensemble is comprised of approximately fifteen pieces, all requiring both a cultural examination and technical analysis to ensure accurate documentation, preservation, and presentation. This presentation will describe the ways collaboration between museum conservators and community experts increased understanding of these costumes and facilitated a bilateral exchange of knowledge.

Sunday, August 11, 2024

Session 2 | Contributions from Conservators and Research Scientists

## Unveiling the Painting Technique of an Ethiopian Triptych and Manuscript

### **Clara Granzotto**

Associate Conservation Scientist, The Art Institute of Chicago (presenter)

### **Giovanni Verri**

Conservation Scientist, The Art Institute of Chicago (contributor)

### **Ken Sutherland**

Director of Scientific Research, The Art Institute of Chicago (contributor)

#### Abstract:

This study focuses on the materials and painting techniques of an Ethiopian triptych icon and a bound manuscript, both dating from the late 17th century, in the Art Institute of Chicago's collection. The triptych, with a central panel featuring the Virgin Mary and child Jesus flanked by archangels Gabriel and Michael, consists of a linen support mounted on wood, painted with bright colors including yellow, blue, green and red. The manuscript, which includes 32 scenes narrating the miracles performed by the Virgin Mary, is painted on parchment and shows a color palette visually similar to the triptych. Due to a dearth of literature on the nature of painting materials in Ethiopian artworks of this period, a range of analytical techniques were applied to better understand the nature of the pigments and paint binders. The results showed similarity in the painting technique of the two works, both in terms of the artists' selection of pigments and in the use of an egg binding medium. In the case of the triptych, a now-brown color featuring prominently in the Virgin's robe, was determined to be the alteration product of paint containing a red organic colorant in a protein-based medium. The insights obtained into the artists' materials provide a critical basis for comparison with similar Ethiopian artworks, and an improved understanding of how the painting might originally have appeared.



# Sunday, August 11, 2024

Session 2 | Contributions from Conservators and Research Scientists

## The Voice of an Ethiopian Art Conservator

### **Naomi Meulemans**

Director / Painting Conservator, Ethiopian Art Conservation Program

### **Belay Haileselassie Girmay**

Creative Director, Ethiopian Art Conservation Program

### **Abebe Dires**

Director, Bahir Dar University Museum

#### Abstract:

This presentation highlights the Ethiopian Art Conservation Program (EACP) and its mission to preserve and conserve Ethiopian art and culture by empowering Ethiopian art conservators. Established as an official NGO in Ethiopia and Belgium in August 2021, EACP works towards building capacity and creating sustainable opportunities for art conservators in Ethiopia. The organization aims to raise awareness about the rapid degradation of heritage sites in Ethiopia and facilitate collaboration between Ethiopian and international art conservation communities. EACP specializes in working with historical Ethiopian objects, cultural heritage sites, and modern and contemporary art. It serves as a platform for professionals in the field to address ethical concerns related to the conservation of Ethiopian artifacts. A key objective of EACP is to amplify the Ethiopian voice in discussions, workshops, and conservation campaigns. This presentation will showcase successful examples of how the organization has prioritized involving the Ethiopian perspective in decision-making processes concerning Ethiopian heritage and artifacts.

## Conserving and preserving Ethiopian cultural heritage

### **Judith Van Helden**

Trustee, Ethiopian Heritage Fund

#### Abstract:

The Ethiopian Heritage Fund (EHF) is instrumental in preserving and promoting Ethiopia's rich cultural heritage through effective collaboration with local government entities. This talk will explore the multifaceted partnership between the EHF and local government, highlighting key areas of cooperation such as joint restoration and conservation projects, capacity-building initiatives, and policy advocacy. By providing technical support and expertise, the EHF enhances local efforts to safeguard historical artifacts and sites. Additionally, the Fund's commitment to community engagement and resource sharing ensures a holistic approach to heritage preservation. This presentation will underscore the importance of these collaborative efforts in sustaining Ethiopia's cultural legacy for future generations.

Sunday, August 11, 2024

Session 3 | Communicating Provenance by Centering Audiences' Reception and Understanding of Museum Collection Histories

### Particular Histories: Experiments in Narrating Provenance at the Fowler Museum

#### **Carlee S. Forbes**

Mellon Curatorial Fellow and Research Associate, Fowler Museum at UCLA

#### Abstract:

From 2019–2022, a Mellon-funded initiative at the Fowler Museum at UCLA supported multi-disciplinary research into the provenance, materiality, and archival evidence of historical African arts. This research provided a wealth of examples of how researching provenance can enhance, confirm, or juxtapose other “known” facts about the objects in question. Institutional enthusiasm for the project, as well as a rapid increased demand for digital material with the onslaught of the COVID-19 pandemic, provided ample opportunity for several experimentations with how to communicate provenance and collection histories to several museum audiences. This discussion will provide short anecdotal reflections of our efforts to communicate provenance in social media (#WellcomeWednesdays) and web-based formats (StoryMaps), with a more focused discussion on our exhibition (Particular Histories: Provenance Research in African Arts).

### Thinking Out Loud

#### **Laura De Becker**

Chief Curator and Helmut and Candis Stern Curator of African Art, University of Michigan Museum of Art (UMMA)

#### Abstract:

Reflection back on the successes and failures of the Wish You Were Here project -- an exhibition where UMMA investigated in real-time, in-public, questions around restitution and provenance of 11 works from the permanent collection -- I will reflect further on the benefits of doing this work "out loud" and what other applications this model may have to move the needle on problems facing the museum field.

### Anibue: Information Silos and the Liberation of Knowledge for African Communities

#### **Rebecca Oluwatoyin Thompson**

Researcher and Creative Strategist, ANO Institute of Arts and Knowledge, Accra

#### Abstract:

Using the 2023 research process for ANO's 3DAN project—in which three African youth attempted to reorient understandings of stolen Ghanaian heritage items toward an Afro-Indigenous perspective and came up against 'information silos'—as a case study, this talk goes into the behind-the-scenes struggles that African youth face in their efforts to decolonize their relationship to knowledge production, learning, and their past.



# Sunday, August 11, 2024

Session 3 | Communicating Provenance by Centering Audiences' Reception and Understanding of Museum Collection Histories

## Unveiling Stories: Provenance Research at the Museum Rietberg

**Sarah Csernay**

Research Associate, Museum Rietberg, Zurich

Abstract:

The Museum Rietberg is one of the foremost Swiss institutions for non-European traditional and contemporary arts and cultures. The majority of the artifacts were donated to the museum by private individuals, while a few had been purchased. Provenance research was established at the museum in 2008; since then, the archives and the provenance of the collections have been reevaluated. The results of provenance research were incorporated into several exhibitions at the museum. In 2022, the first major temporary exhibition on the subject of provenance histories and research had opened: Pathways of Art – How Objects Get to the Museum contextualized the various collections of the Museum Rietberg on a tour through the entire museum building. The paper discusses the challenges and opportunities of provenance research at the Museum Rietberg within the context of that exhibition and associated initiatives.

## Communicating Provenance After Restitution

**Erica P. Jones**

Senior Curator of African Arts and Manager of Curatorial Affairs, Fowler Museum at UCLA

Abstract:

More often than not, museums present an object's provenance as a list of previous owners, noting dates and places where transfers of ownership occurred, and sharing little of the circumstance of those transitions. But what does a full provenance mean when that data becomes a closed loop, returning to its starting point (or what is frequently the earliest known owner) through restitution or repatriation? This presentation will trace the path of the provenance data associated with seven objects recently returned by the Fowler Museum at UCLA to the Asante Kingdom in Ghana. Looking first at how confirmed and suppositional provenance was conveyed to palace officials, then examining how the same data is displayed in the Palace Museum, and finally thinking through how the Fowler will maintain and present the information in the future, this presentation will question how our approach to provenance changes based on circumstances.