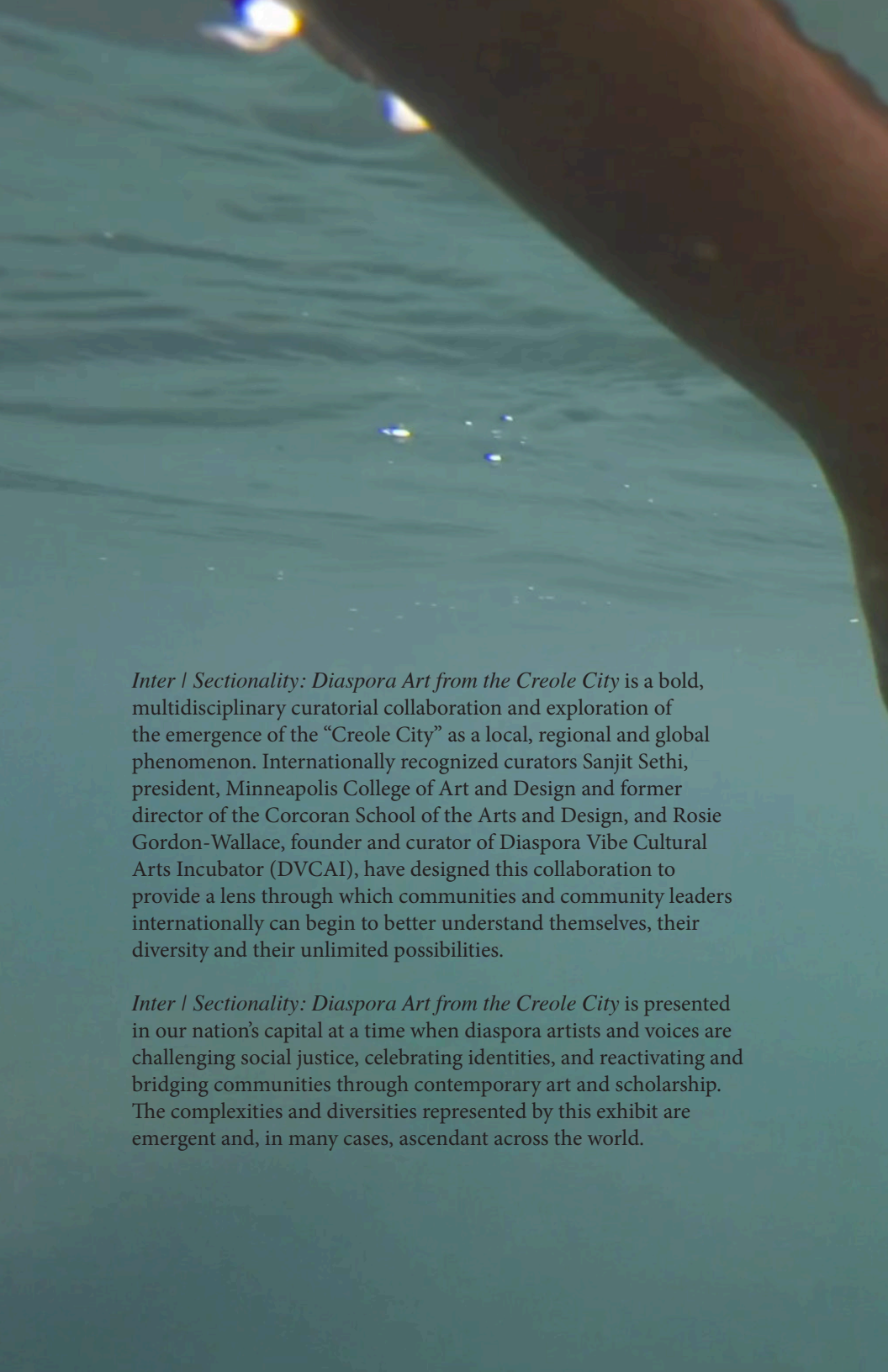




INTER | SECTIONALITY:
DIASPORA ART
FROM THE CREOLE CITY



Inter | Sectionality: Diaspora Art from the Creole City is a bold, multidisciplinary curatorial collaboration and exploration of the emergence of the “Creole City” as a local, regional and global phenomenon. Internationally recognized curators Sanjit Sethi, president, Minneapolis College of Art and Design and former director of the Corcoran School of the Arts and Design, and Rosie Gordon-Wallace, founder and curator of Diaspora Vibe Cultural Arts Incubator (DVCAI), have designed this collaboration to provide a lens through which communities and community leaders internationally can begin to better understand themselves, their diversity and their unlimited possibilities.

Inter | Sectionality: Diaspora Art from the Creole City is presented in our nation’s capital at a time when diaspora artists and voices are challenging social justice, celebrating identities, and reactivating and bridging communities through contemporary art and scholarship. The complexities and diversities represented by this exhibit are emergent and, in many cases, ascendant across the world.



Opening Night:

Thursday, November. 14, 2019, 6 p.m – 9 p.m.

On View:

November. 14, 2019 – March 20, 2020

Tuesday - Friday, 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Weekends, 1 p.m. – 6 p.m.

The Atrium Galleries at the Flagg Building

Corcoran School of the Arts and Design

500 17th. St. NW, Washington, D.C.

Image by Minia Biabiany

ABOUT



Diaspora Vibe Cultural Arts Incubator Inc. (DVCAI) is a Miami-based 501(c)(3) organization. The mission of DVCAI is to promote, nurture and cultivate the vision and diverse talent of emerging artists from the Caribbean and Latin diaspora through our exhibition, artist-in-residence, international exchange and outreach programs that celebrate Miami-Dade's rich cultural and social fabric.

www.dvcai.org



Co-curator

Rosie Gordon-Wallace, founder, director and lead curator for Diaspora Vibe Cultural Arts Incubator (DVCAI) is a recognized arts advocate and community leader with over 25 years of experience. She has created key relationships with a multitude of artists and art organizations worldwide such as Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts, the Joan Mitchell Foundation and ReadyTex Art Gallery, and has served on several prominent nonprofit boards. Her experiences with DVCAI are enhanced by her community work, which accelerates careers and advocates for arts funding. She is an active member of the Perez Art Museum Miami (PAMM) Fund for African-American Art and is a frequent panelist for funder Miami Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs, National Young Arts Foundation and Florida Department of Cultural Affairs. Her awards include The African Heritage Cultural Arts Center Third Annual Calabash Amadlozi Visual Arts Award, International Businesswoman of the Year, and being named one of South Florida's 50 Most Powerful Black Professionals of 2007. She is the current art consultant for the Greater Miami Convention and Visitors Bureau, Art of Black Miami initiative.

The Corcoran School of the Arts and Design bridges the George Washington University's academically robust programs in the arts with Corcoran's creative and inspired scholarship. Part of the GW Columbian College of the Arts and Sciences, the school functions as an incubator for artists and practitioners in arts-related fields and serves to enrich students who are taking classes in other areas of the university. At the very core of the Corcoran is a question: How can creativity become a catalyst for transformation and change?

www.corcoran.gwu.edu



Co-Curator

Sanjit Sethi, M.F.A., M.A., is an accomplished arts administrator skilled in facilitating partnerships and recognized for his commitment to interdisciplinary work. He has displayed a rare sensitivity to connecting with communities and promoting art for the greater good. Sethi served as director of the Corcoran School of the Arts and Design at George Washington University from 2015 to 2019. In his insightful description of the upcoming exhibit *Inter / Sectionality: Diaspora Art from the Creole City*, he states that “Artists have always been at the forefront of cultural and institutional critique and these artists are no exception to that. They produce work intended to make us think; it can sometimes make us feel uncomfortable, but it provides searing commentary on the way the world operates. Two of the Corcoran’s key goals are to exhibit work that deals with subjects and complex issues that are often hidden, unseen or overlooked, and to provide an opportunity for viewers to come away with a deeper understanding about their place within these complex systems.” Selected as incoming president of the Minneapolis College of Art and Design, Sethi will continue to engage students and community and support the next generation of artists.

FEATURED ARTISTS



Moisés Aragón is a self-taught interdisciplinary artist from Cuba whose work interprets personal mythology with his reality. Moisés' interest in the arts started when he was introduced at a young age to the act of "artistic recognition," having had his self-portrait drawing assignment exhibited in the school's cafeteria. During his formative years after the 9/11 incident, he began to question his relation to the "American empire" as it stood as a beacon of expansion during those initial years of war and occupation in the Middle East. Intrepid curiosity led to the acknowledgment that he had been born in exile and would like to return home.



Aisha Tandiwe Bell is a first-generation Jamaican and ninth-generation traceable Black American. Her parents met at City College. Conceived in Tanzania and born in Manhattan, she was raised in Bobo Shanti Rasta, spending her early childhood on Bobo Hill in Bull Bay, Jamaica. Inspired by the fragmentation of our multiple identities, Bell's practice is committed to creating myth and ritual through sculpture, performance, video, sound, drawing and installation. Bell holds a B.F.A., an M.S. from Pratt Institute and an M.F.A. from Hunter College. Bell received a New York Foundation for the Arts grant in Performance Art and Multidisciplinary Work.



Minia Biabiany works and lives between Mexico City and Guadeloupe. In her practice, Biabiany uses the deconstruction of narratives in installations, videos and drawings by building up ephemeral poetics of forms in relation with colonial presence, past or present. Her work proceeds from an investigation of the perception of space to the use of the paradigms of weaving and opacity on language. She initiated the artistic and pedagogical collective project Semillero Caribe in 2016 in Mexico City and continues to explore the deconstruction of narratives with the body and concepts from Caribbean authors with the experimental platform Doukou.



Christopher Carter was born in Albuquerque, N.M., and raised in Boston. Carter infuses a blend of ethnic and urban influences in all of his artistic work. His bold and decisively organic sculptures strongly reflect his African American, Native American and European heritage. His assemblages embody power and energy accentuated by the source materials he selects for his creations. Rarely using anything "new," Carter fashions a chorus of images composed of recycled woods, metals, glass shards, ropes, resins and a variety of discarded objects that, when united, seek to depict traditional concepts in an innovative and creative way.



Katrina Coombs was born in St. Andrew, Jamaica. She has an M.F.A. in creative practice from Transart Institute via The University of Plymouth. Coombs has a passion for fiber and an understanding of the sensitivity of threads and fabric, which has grown beyond design and into sculptural forms. Her practice focuses on the impact of the Other on the “I” and the quintessence of gender politics of the Other. She weaves and stitches fibers and textiles into tactile and sometimes large-scale sculptural forms, exploring the sometimes ambivalent and stigmatizing ways society engages the female persona. Coombs’ current works are an exploration of the notion of the woman’s body as a form of carriage, and how the womb becomes an unspoken voice of another for women’s existence and identity.



Esperanza Cortés is a Colombian-born contemporary, multidisciplinary artist based in New York City. Cortés has exhibited in the United States and internationally. Esperanza (hope) is a guiding force in the making of the work, which is a call and response to people, culture, place and history. Cortés’ installations are organic and improvisational constructions, infused with hope and renewal. Her artwork is poetically and intricately crafted. It encourages viewers to reconsider their learned social and historical narratives, especially when dealing with colonialism, and raises critical questions about the politics of erasure and exclusion.



Michael Elliott’s artistic journey has taken him into a socio-political realm over the years, mainly focusing on painting as his medium but also photography at times. It is fair to say that photography has indeed influenced his style of painting, i.e., photorealism. Attending the Edna Manley College of The Visual and Performing Arts in Jamaica in 1998, Michael honed his skill as a painter, developing different techniques in varying mediums while developing an awareness of social issues in Jamaica and throughout the world. Michael’s work can be said to feature a wide use of symbolism to represent his themes, especially in the intimately tuned still life pieces.



Guy Gabon is a visual artist, eco-designer and filmmaker from Guadeloupe. How can we act today to stimulate dialogue to instill political, social and ecological action in our societies? This vital question animates the reflection and works of this sensitive artist who is committed to transforming the way we look at things. A landscape poetess, she draws inspiration from generous nature to question the links that man has with his natural and urban environment. Her art implements multidisciplinary and protean artistic and environmental experiments. She creates works based on land art, eco-design, cinema, vegetable graffiti and reverse graffiti. She questions and warns about the imbalances generated by our consumer society.



Rosa Naday Garmendia is from La Habana, Cuba, and lives and works in Miami, Fla. She is a socially engaged, multidisciplinary artist who produces work at the nexus of contemporary art and activism. Her work is rooted in social issues, particularly the intersectionality of her identity as a woman, immigrant and industrial worker. The driving impulse is her desire to use art as a tool for self-reflection, create discourse, challenge traditional views and build understanding among people. She reflects on and analyzes norms and values in contemporary society. She focuses on projects that critically view the role of police, acts of racism, poverty and military intervention abroad. Her artistic practice is a daily act of resistance.



GeoVanna Gonzalez is a Miami/Berlin-based artist. GeoVanna was born and raised in Los Angeles, Calif., where she received her B.F.A. at Otis College of Art and Design. GeoVanna experiments with materials to understand the notion of tactility by transforming one material to look like another. The desire to transform materials is influenced by both organic and technological environments and their relationship to our shifting notions of gender and identity. She constructs and combines sculptures and installations, and uses video and photography to recontextualize, obscure and interfere with how digital platforms curate and dictate the way we experience various and multiplying realities.



Juan Erman Gonzalez is a Cuban-born artist living and working in Miami, Fla. As an exile, he addresses migration, uprootedness and displacement by using manipulated, repurposed and post-production recycled goods to create narratives of imagined worlds and their inhabitants. He often reflects on “el camino,” the metaphorical and actual path he has traveled since first working with DVCAI in 2002. With a background in fiber arts and couture, he utilizes his practical experiences of sewing, pattern-making and drawing. He considers his materials gifts precious elements to be honored, reused and recontextualized.



Izia Lee Lindsay is a mixed media artist who explores with both digital and traditional media. His artwork addresses symbolism in Caribbean iconography that is rooted in tradition but interpreted with contemporary ideas. Lindsay uses bold, geometric shapes that juxtapose and intersperse to form his multilayered artistic pieces. The thematic whole is a cultural narrative reproducing the dualities of his turbulent, cosmopolitan, Caribbean life. His research examines material culture, indigenous societies and the ever-changing landscape of the Caribbean while his subject matter tackles issues of identity and class in a post-colonial society. Lindsay is currently a lecturer in Miami, Fla.



Kearra Amaya Gopee is a multidisciplinary visual artist from Carapichaima, Trinidad and Tobago, and is based in Los Angeles. Their research-based practice focuses on the nature of violence and erasure, and the particularities of those that are inflicted on the Caribbean and its diasporas by the global north. While complicating the viewer's understanding of economic and social marginalization in the region, Gopee's practice also desires to test the mettle of these frameworks. Through interventions, Gopee aims to temper what we have known to be true with the potential of intuitive knowledge that has been historically cast aside in favor of Western assimilation. Gopee holds a B.F.A. in photography and imaging from New York University and is an alumni of the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture. Currently, they are an M.F.A. candidate at the University of California, Los Angeles.



Grettel Arrate Hechavaría is a painter, mural painter, illustrator and graphic designer from Santiago de Cuba. She graduated in painting and drawing from the Provincial Academy of Plastic Arts José Joaquín Tejada of Santiago de Cuba, and she holds a Bachelor of Art History from the Universidad de Oriente. She is a member of the Union of Writers and Artists of Cuba and a member of the Association of Publicists of Cuba. Hechavaría has had 14 solo exhibitions in important museums and galleries in Cuba and around the world.



Caroline Holder was born in England to a Jamaican mother and Barbadian father. When she was 4 years old, the family returned to the Caribbean, settling in Barbados, where she completed her formative education. Holder left the island after high school to study design and painting at York University in Toronto, and art education at McGill in Montreal. She relocated to New York City in the early '90s, where, except for a sojourn at NSCAD University, Nova Scotia, to complete an M.F.A. in ceramics, she has maintained a continuous studio practice, while teaching art at the Professional Children's School. Holder's primary medium is clay, from which she crafts object-sculptures combined with drawings and text. Her influences include a background in printmaking, a love of pen and ink drawing, experiences of intersectional identity as a Caribbean immigrant in North America, and the life-altering experience of late motherhood.



Anja Marais is a multidisciplinary artist who was born and raised in the countryside of South Africa. She graduated from the University of South Africa with a B.F.A. She currently works and lives in Miami, Fla, and exhibits her work in the national and international arena. Marais' interest in the nature of inanimate objects comes from African animistic religions. Uninterested in the boundary between the human and the nonhuman worlds, she focuses on inviolable memories left in landscapes. Her sculptures are both traditional and contemporary — totemic installations of found objects infused with a given history, resonating with the lives of those who lived with them before.



Jared McGriff is a Los Angeles-born, Oakland-based artist. His abstract, figurative and portrait watercolor and acrylic paintings are inspired by visual distortions, memory fragments and ephemera. Capturing the expressions, cultural cues and transitory familiarity of his surroundings, Jared's work is at once accessible and universal in its depiction of the human condition. His approach to the collective conscious is informed by both his international travels and his time in the American West. His voyages are distilled in his paintings, with their simple line, color and composition. "I'm interested in the spaces that exist between our vision and cognition. Our memory only registers a fraction of what we see on any given day. What gets lost in the mechanics of vision — this visual waste or unstructured data - informs my work and how I approach my practice."



Petrona Morrison is a Jamaican artist who lives in Kingston, Jamaica. For the past 30 years, her work has engaged deeply personal as well as sociopolitical concerns through assemblages and installations. Her totemic assemblages made from discarded objects culled from the streets of Kingston, and installations that evoke ritual spaces, serve as metaphors for transformation, renewal and healing, and themes of fragility, survival and resilience reoccur in her practice. She incorporates digital photographs, text and video into her installations, a process she describes by saying, "I use fragments — conversations, photographs, recorded images appropriated from the internet — to create narratives which explore ideas." Her recent work has become less autobiographical and more overtly political. Her video installation "Selfie," a collaboration with theater artist Rachael Allen, signals a new direction in her practice. The work, which explores the construction of identity through social media, has opened new possibilities through its performance and collaborative process. Morrison holds a B.A. in Fine Arts from McMaster University, Canada, and an M.F.A. from Howard University, United States.



Kurt Nahar, from Paramaribo, Suriname, started his art education at the Nola Hatterman Art Academy in Suriname and continued his studies at the Edna Manley College for the Visual and Performing Arts in Jamaica. Nahar uses his art to express his thoughts and emotions on various subjects related to questionable social and political circumstances in Suriname and other countries worldwide. He believes that artists have a responsibility to expose their viewers to the social reality. He does so in a bold and often confrontational manner and thus hopes to increase awareness and stimulate discussion about the sensitive subjects that he brings to light. Political injustices, social inequality and the widespread abuse of power are among his main themes. His technique is inspired by the methods of his predecessors from the era of Dadaism. The use of collage techniques and simple objects is characteristic of his art.



Charo Oquet is a Dominican-born and Miami-based artist. In 2004 she founded Edge Zones, a nonprofit, artist-run space in Miami. Her work “Entering a Rara Garden” is inspired by memories of her grandmother’s garden in Santo Domingo. Oquet explores themes of “uncertainty” within a context of mobility, exile and migration around the world. It emerges from her own life, from the constant challenge of uprooting and relocating, and is inspired by deliberations on the meanings of permanence and place.



Devora Perez is originally from Nicaragua and now lives and works in Miami. She received her bachelor’s degree from New World School of the Arts and is currently an M.F.A. candidate at Florida International University. Perez is interested in the domestic setting and its influence on gender, race and class in society. In her work she challenges domesticity through the use of everyday materials such as caulk, cement, plastic and wood, and uses them in unconventional ways. Through formal and minimal design, Perez emphasizes color, texture and even the industrial material itself. While some pieces may seem fragile and light, others are heavy and dense both visually and physically. These discrepancies in weight between the works and the use of shadows are meant to construct divisions and separate spaces. Her work “Man-Made Environment (here, there, everywhere)” challenges issues of gentrification in Miami.



Evelyn Politzer, originally from Uruguay, now lives and works in Miami, Fla. After attending law school in Montevideo, Uruguay, and moving to the United States, she pursued her passion for art. Her beginnings were in tapestry and knitting. Creating with wool was only natural in her native country of Uruguay, where the number of sheep far exceeds the number of human inhabitants. Even though she creates through traditional methods like knitting, crochet and embroidery, the objects she makes are unconventional and seek to spark a conversation on subjects such as place, motherhood, breast cancer and the fragility of the natural environment. These fiber works give her a sense of comfort and belonging while she strives “to knit the impossible, and give voice to the voiceless.”



Wanda Raimundi-Ortiz is a nationally and internationally recognized, award-winning interdisciplinary visual and performance artist. Through personal narratives and experiences, her work dissects cultural and social constructs designed to isolate, “herd” and manage Otherness. Needing the immediacy of a live audience, she developed “Las Reinas (The Queens),” a suite of allegorical self-portrait performances in which she becomes imagined royal archetypes anchored in personal trauma. Most recently she debuted “Exodus|Pilgrimage,” an endurance performance addressing the forced migration of thousands of Puerto Ricans to the United States as a result of the current humanitarian crisis post-hurricane Maria, the artist dressed in attire made completely from debris recovered from the island.



Juan Ernesto Requena is a Venezuelan-born artist with his studio practice in Mumbai and Miami. Through textile, powder, film, sound and digital works, he provides a visual narrative of his life on themes that revolve around memory, nature and the human condition. He was part of the artist collective that exhibited at the inaugural Kochi-Muziris Biennale at Mattancherry Palace, Kochi, India, in 2012, and recently exhibited at the Tout Monde Festival 2019 in Miami, presented by the Cultural Services of the French Embassy in the United States. Juan considers himself an archivist whose goal is to preserve human history.



Asser Saint-Val, originally from Haiti, moved to South Florida, where he earned B.F.A.s in painting and graphic design from the New World School of the Arts. His art has been exhibited in Florida and New York and throughout the Caribbean and is represented in numerous private collections. Saint-Val is a painter, sculptor and installation artist. His quasi-figurative images, by turns humorous and grotesque, bring together ideas, people and incidents central to modern debates about the definition and valence of neuromelanin. Rendered in a blend of traditional art mediums and a wide range of unconventional, organic materials — coffee, chocolate, ginger and, tea among them - his pictures, objects and environments are a surreal fantasia on such loosely linked themes as under-recognized African American inventors, the politics of sexual desire, and the complex aesthetics, narratives and metaphors that attach to the organic compound neuromelanin.



Tyler Mitchell is a photographer and filmmaker based in Brooklyn, N.Y. He was born and raised in Atlanta, Ga., where he got his start making skate videos and taking pictures of music, fashion and youth culture. He received his B.F.A. in film and television from New York University's Tisch School of the Arts. His work has been featured in *American Vogue*, *British Vogue*, *Teen Vogue*, *M Le Monde*, *i-D Magazine*, *AnOther Magazine*, *Dazed Magazine*, *Document Journal*, *The Guardian* and *The FADER*. Selected clients include Calvin Klein, Prada, Mercedes-Benz, Simone Rocha x Moncler, Marc Jacobs, Givenchy, Converse, Nike and Ray-Ban.



Deborah Willis, Ph.D. is university professor and chair of the Department of Photography and Imaging at the Tisch School of the Arts at New York University, and has an affiliated appointment with the College of Arts and Sciences, Department of Social and Cultural Analysis, Africana Studies, where she teaches courses on photography & imaging, iconicity, and cultural histories visualizing the black body, women, and gender. She is the director of the NYU Institute of African American Affairs and the founder of the Center for Black Visual Culture. Her research examines photography's multifaceted histories, visual culture, the photographic history of slavery and emancipation, contemporary women photographers, and beauty. She received the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Fellowship and a John Simon Guggenheim Fellowship. Willis is the author of *Posing Beauty: African American Images from the 1890s to the Present*, and co-author of *The Black Female Body, A Photographic History*; *Envisioning Emancipation: Black Americans and the End of Slavery*, and *Michelle Obama: The First Lady in Photographs* (titles were NAACP Image Award Winner). Professor Willis curated exhibitions include: *In Pursuit of Beauty* at Express Newark, *Let Your Motto Be Resistance: African American Portraits* at the International Center of Photography and *Reframing Beauty: Intimate Moments* at Indiana University.

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Design

Izia Lindsay, M.F.A.

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