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Analysis of the Prospect.3 conference "Thirty Years of Meaning and Influence - Flash of the Spirit: African & Afro-American Art & Philosophy by Robert Farris Thompson": An Internship Report

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Analysis of the Prospect.3 conference
“Thirty Years of Meaning and Influence - *Flash of the Spirit: African & Afro-American Art
& Philosophy* by Robert Farris Thompson”

An Internship Report

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
University of New Orleans
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts
In
Arts Administration

By

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B.F.A., University of Mississippi, 2011

December 2015

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Abstract

In 2008, Prospect New Orleans (Prospect) launched the first internationally contemporary art biennial in the United States with a goal to articulate new discoveries in the world of art with historical and culturally significant surroundings. In its fourth iteration in 2014 and with a new staff borne of past successes and failures, which included near-dissolution from financial difficulty, *Prospect.3: Notes for Now* (Prospect.3) ambitiously expanded with additional artists, venues, and programs. “Thirty Years of Meaning and Influence - *Flash of the Spirit: African & Afro-American Art & Philosophy* by Robert Farris Thompson” was an international conference that was one of 60 programs produced by Prospect.3 from October 25, 2014 – January 25, 2015.

The purpose of this report is to document my internship as Conference Coordinator for the two-day conference and to analyze its purpose in the greater context of the large biennial. For this review, the function of the conference and the institutional effectiveness of the organization are summarized through a SWOT analysis to compare the event results to other similar organizations to determine the best practices to successfully integrate concept, form, management, evaluation and conclusion. This thoughtful examination is used to make recommendations for future Prospect programming to be further strengthened through the research of Best Practices with suggested application.

Organizational Profile

Description of Prospect.3

“Prospect New Orleans was conceived in the tradition of the great international exhibitions, such as the Venice Biennale and the Bienal de São Paulo, to showcase new artistic practices from around the world in settings that are both historic and culturally exceptional, and contribute to the cultural economy of New Orleans and the Louisiana Gulf region” (PNO-History & Mission).

Prospect.3 was the fourth edition of the New Orleans International Contemporary Art Biennial, which ran from October 25, 2014 - January 25, 2015. Franklin Sirmans, the Terri and Michael Smooke Department Head and Curator of Contemporary Art at Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), was hired as the Artistic Director in November 2011. Sirmans’ theme for *Prospect.3: Notes for Now*, “Somewhere and Not Anywhere” was extrapolated from the book “The Moviegoer” by Walker Percy. This theme was divided into seven subcategories that were addressed by various exhibitions throughout the city of New Orleans in eighteen venues, and included titles such as: *The New Orleans Experience*, *Seeing Oneself in the Other*, *The South*, *Crime and Punishment*, *Movie Going*, *The Carnavalesque*, *Abstraction*, and *Visual Sound*. There were over fifty programs throughout the duration of Prospect.3 including panel discussions, gallery talks, tours, book clubs, community lunches, family days, music concerts, conferences, and a gala. The purpose of the programs was to engage a diverse audience to further explore the themes and artists featured in *Prospect.3: Notes for Now*.

“Thirty Years of Meaning and Influence - *Flash of the Spirit: African & Afro-American Art & Philosophy* by Robert Farris Thompson” was one of two conferences held during Prospect.3, and was the first conference that had been organized by Prospect. The second conference, Independent Curators International Curatorial Intensive: New Orleans, was held in January 2015, but was organized by an outside organization, Independent Curators International.

Conference Description

The purpose of the *Flash of the Spirit* conference was to celebrate the groundbreaking contributions of Robert Farris Thompson to art history in the fields of Africanism and Internationalism on the occasion of the installation at the Ogden Museum of *Basquiat and The Bayou*, one of the *Prospect.3: Notes for Now* exhibitions featuring nine paintings by the internationally-renowned artist Jean-Michel Basquiat.

Originally published in 1983, *Flash of the Spirit* has enjoyed a popularity and influence far beyond the academic arena, making it one of the most important texts of art historical scholarship in the African-Atlantic world (See Appendix A). African Diaspora scholars consider it an important text because it was the first book to study the connection of African art, religion, philosophy, and cultural traditions and how they have been influencing people of African descent in North and South America since the Atlantic slave trade (Dawson).

Throughout his career, Basquiat was friends with Robert Farris Thompson and was heavily influenced by *Flash of the Spirit*, which can be seen through his references to African culture, gods, music, warriors, and traditions depicted in his paintings. In the

exhibition catalog, “Basquiat and the Bayou,” Thompson writes about his friendship with Basquiat and the references from his book found in Basquiat’s paintings (Sirmans 31-37). This relationship provided a conceptual connection between the conference and the biennial.

Because the Jean-Michel Basquiat exhibition was at the Ogden Museum, the conference was also held at the museum to connect the two. The conference was held December 11 – 12, 2015 in the Museum’s Patrick F. Taylor Library, which is the largest space in the museum and has the capacity to hold 300 people. Their goal was to have total conference attendees reach 200 people.

Brooke Davis Anderson became executive director of Prospect New Orleans in October of 2012 and began planning the conference in March 2014. Her previous experience included positions at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) in Los Angeles, The American Folk Art Museum (AFAM) in New York, the Diggs Gallery in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, the Francesca Anderson Gallery in Boston, and many academic positions in New York, Winston-Salem, and Madrid, Spain. Anderson had known and worked with Robert Farris Thompson for many years. She named Charles Daniel Dawson, another long-term colleague, as the conference director in March 2014.

Anderson appointed Dawson as the conference director because of his expertise in the African Diaspora and its culture. He teaches at New York University in The Gallatin School and in the Institute for Research in African-American Studies at Columbia University. He has worked as the curator of photography, film and video at the Studio Museum in Harlem, director of special projects at the Caribbean Cultural Center

and curatorial consultant and director of education at the Museum for African Art (“Dan Dawson”). He is also a close colleague and friend of Robert Farris Thompson. Dawson, Thompson, and Anderson are well known in the field of African Diaspora and have many common connections, which attracted more people to participate in the conference.

Robert Farris Thompson was chosen as the keynote speaker for the conference not only because he authored *Flash of the Spirit: African & Afro-American Art & Philosophy*, he also was one of the most prominent scholars of African as well as an influential friend in Basquiat’s life. He has been a Professor in the Art History Department at Yale since 1965 and has many connections with Afro-Atlantic scholars across the world. His book *Flash of the Spirit* has remained in print for 30 years ("Robert Farris Thompson").

Anderson and Dawson determined that the conference would consist of four scholarly panels over two days, along with a keynote presentation by the author Thompson on the last evening of the conference. The four session topics were 1) the influence of *Flash of the Spirit* in the world of academia, scholarship, and art history; 2) the international impact of *Flash of the Spirit* with a focus on the art and culture from the geographic areas of Brazil, Cuba, Haiti, Mali and Nigeria; 3) the influence of *Flash of the Spirit* in reconstructing how we define art or redefine objects in a cultural context; and 4) the extra-academic influence of *Flash of the Spirit* in the areas of religion, dance, music, theater and the visual arts. These four broad themes allowed experts in visual art, art history, religion, theater, dance, and anthropology to represent how the book *Flash of*

the Spirit was influential across many disciplines and to honor Robert Farris Thompson's impact in all of these areas.

Anderson and Dawson assigned each panel session chair a theme that addresses a different way in which *Flash of the Spirit* made an important contribution to the understanding of contemporary cultural realities grounded in African and African-American art and philosophy. The session chairs each chose six presenters from the general call for papers to present during their panel for the conference.

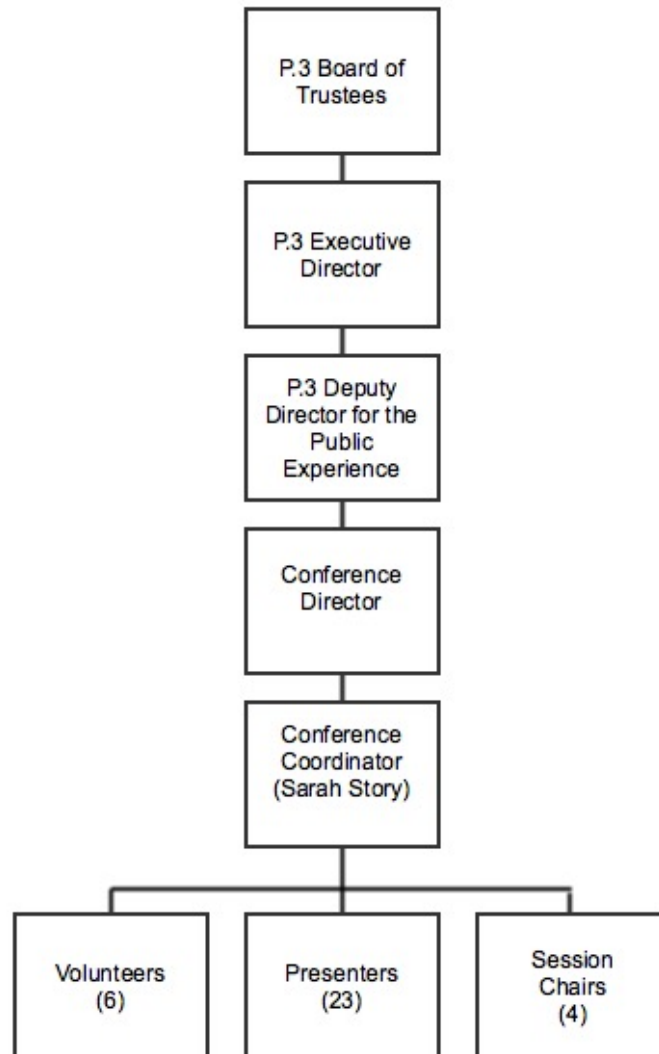
The session chairs also had careers in the field of African Diaspora and had established connections through their academic positions: Dr. Kellie Jones was a Professor in Art History and Archaeology at the Institute for Research in African American Studies at Columbia University, Dr. Barbaro Martinez-Ruiz was the founding Director for the History of Art & Discourse of Art at the University of Cape Town in South Africa, Grey Gundaker taught at the College of William & Mary, and Dr. Marta Moreno Vega was the founder and president of the Caribbean Cultural Center African Diaspora Institute in New York.

A call for papers was issued that allowed anyone to submit a paper that might contribute to the conference. It was also used as a marketing tool to let more people know about the conference. The session chairs chose six papers to be presented for each session according to their specific themes. The variety and number of presenters allowed the conference to have many different perspectives on the book *Flash of the Spirit*.

The target audience for the conference was academics interested in areas of study encapsulated in the book *Flash of the Spirit*. The conference was marketed to academic groups in universities that had programs related to the themes in the book *Flash of the Spirit*, such as African-American Studies, African Art, Critical Culture, History, and Art History.

There were 200 conference attendees the first day and 170 the second day. The conference was also live-streamed and 830 people watched the first day and 802 people watched the second day. The total amount of people that experienced the conference was 2,002, far exceeding the original goal of 200, which was largely attributed to the live streaming. There were over 90 zip codes and 8 different countries represented at the conference, which reflected the diversity of people that had been influenced by *Flash of the Spirit*.

Organizational Chart



Conference Management Structure

Danny Dawson was hired as an independent contractor by Prospect New Orleans to fulfill the role of conference director and as such was responsible for planning and implementing the conference. Dawson was initially my direct supervisor for the conference. Brooke Anderson and Prospect New Orleans hired Caroline Kerrigan in May 2015 to be the deputy director for the public experience. She became the liaison

between Prospect and the conference director. Over the course of my internship, Brooke Anderson became my contact and supervisor.

The job of each session chair was to create a cohesive theme for their session topic, which was decided in consultation with the conference director. They each selected 4-6 papers from a call for papers to be presented during their 2.5-hour session at the conference. They were to make a presentation at the beginning of their session, moderate the session conversation, and lead a Q&A at the end with the audience (see Appendix F: Session Chair Letter of Agreement).

There were six volunteers from Prospect New Orleans Staff that helped during the two days of the conference. They were responsible for checking in attendees, recording zip codes, passing out conference packets, and directing attendees to the library.

Funding and Financial Profile

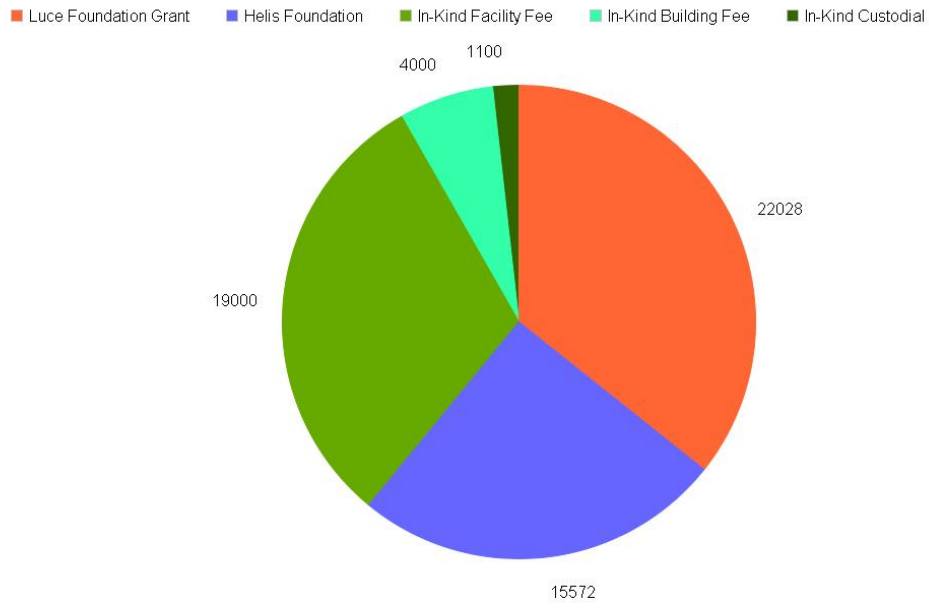
The exhibition *Basquiat & The Bayou* had a separate budget from the rest of *Prospect.3 Notes for Now* because the Basquiat paintings were so expensive to ship and insure due to their permanent locations all over the world. The conference budget was also an independent budget from the rest of the Prospect budget. Brooke Davis Anderson and the executive director of the Ogden Museum, William Pittman Andrews, had to fundraise specifically for the exhibition since it was not in the original planning budget for *Prospect.3*. They secured a sponsorship with The Helis Foundation for the Basquiat exhibition and all subsequent programming for \$570,000. The Helis Foundation allotted \$15,572 for the conference. *Prospect.3* received a grant from the

Henry Luce Foundation in the amount of \$22,028 to eliminate conference fees for attendees. Prospect New Orleans exhibited very tight controls on spending so that all expenses were approved by Brooke Anderson and signed by the Prospect New Orleans Board Chair, Susan Brennan.

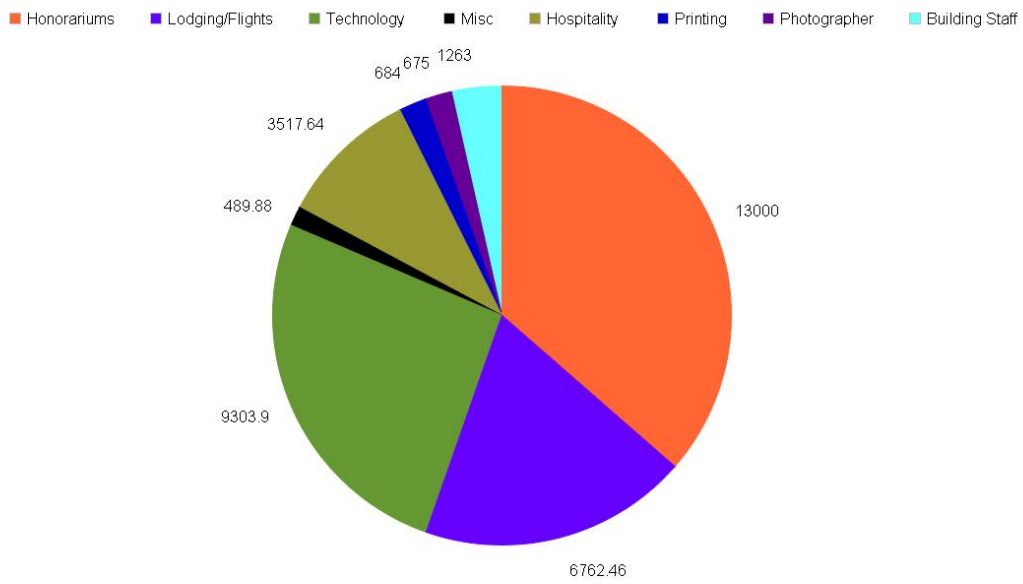
The goal was to maintain or reduce the budgeted expenses of \$37,600, which came directly from The Helis Foundation and the Henry Luce Foundation Grant. There were in-kind gifts from the Ogden Museum, such as staff time of the Deputy Director to manage finances, the Graphic Designer to create conference material, and the Events Coordinator to help coordinate production of the conference. The Ogden Museum also waived the \$19,000 Facility fee, the \$4,000 Building fee and the \$1,100 custodial fee of for use of the Patrick F. Taylor Library for two days, which helped reduce costs and allowed funds to remain to cover technology, stipends, and travel for conference speakers.

The highest expenses were for honoraria, followed by logistics (travel, and lodging) for the session chairs and conference director. Technology was the third highest expense because of the audiovisual production, filming, live streaming, and post event editing. The budget for expenses was \$36,500, and as shown in the chart below, the actual expenses totaled \$35,695.88.

Income



Actual Expenses



Internship Description

Introduction

I fulfilled my internship requirement for the Arts Administration program by serving as the Conference Coordinator for *Thirty Years of Meaning and Influence “Flash of the Spirit: African & Afro-American Art & Philosophy”* by Robert Farris Thompson.

The conference was a Prospect New Orleans program as part of the biennial *Prospect.3: Notes for Now*, and was held at the Ogden Museum of Southern Art in New Orleans in December 2014. Conference planning was a new experience for me; I had attended academic conferences, but had never been involved in the planning of one. My prior experience as Project Coordinator for the Ogden Museum of Southern Art helped inform some of the organizational skills needed to plan a conference with multiple components such as planning, coordinating, and implementing.

Internship Structure

My internship began in March 2014 and ended in January 2015. Because I worked full time, I fulfilled my internship duties in the evening and early morning out of a virtual office. It was an unpaid position. Because the conference was a new project for Prospect New Orleans, there were no systems in place for holding meetings or even planning the conference.

When I began my internship, Brooke Davis Anderson was in New York. She eventually moved to New Orleans in October 2014, coinciding with the run of Prospect and two months before the conference. We communicated mostly by phone and email, not in alignment with traditional office hours, which made communication flow-through

inconsistent. Caroline Kerrigan, the Prospect Deputy Director for the Public Experience, was the liaison between Prospect, Danny Dawson, and myself. Caroline was located in Germany when she started working for Prospect in May 2014, so our virtual meetings were infrequent. When she returned to New Orleans, she became focused on other projects for Prospect.³ and as a result, our communication regarding the conference was minimal.

Danny Dawson, Conference Director, was located in New York up until the day of the conference. As a contract employee of Prospect, he had other projects and teaching obligations that prevented reliable involvement -- he preferred to communicate by phone, so we had a few phone meetings in the beginning. Dawson suffered a stroke in mid-October, so he was unable to communicate during a critical time period leading up to the conference. Throughout the internship I communicated with Anderson more frequently than Kerrigan or Dawson.

Internship Duties

As Conference Coordinator I was responsible for all of the administrative aspects of the conference. I recruited speakers for the conference by issuing a call for papers. I managed communications between Prospect, the Ogden and the conference speakers to coordinate all aspects of conference production. I coordinated the public relations, and organized the technology components of the conference (See Appendix C: Internship Letter of Agreement).

Administrative

As the conference administrator, my administrative duties included creating a production schedule, inviting session chairs to participate in the conference, building conference material, and managing the registration for the conference. My first task was to create a production schedule for the planning of the conference with internal deadlines. In order to do so, I researched other conference material(s) such as *Kongo Across the Waters* held at the Harn Museum, *Boundaries, Barriers, and Bridges: An Initial Symposium of the Ogden Museum of Southern Art, University of New Orleans* held in 1998, *SITE Santa Fe's 2014 Biennial Unsettled Landscapes*, *Caribbean: Crossroads of the World Symposium: Transnational Histories* held at the Perez Art Museum in Miami, and *Culture in Context: Self-Taught Artists in the Twenty-First Century*, held at the American Folk Art Museum in 2007. This research helped me better understand all of the components needed to organize and develop a conference.

Anderson and Dawson chose four session chairs to be a part of the conference. I was responsible for writing letters of invitation, letters of agreement, and the contracts for the session chairs. I sent letters of invitation for session chairs to David Byrne, Kellie Jones, Barbaro Martinez-Ruiz, and Grey Gundaker. All accepted the invitation to be a session chair except David Byrne, so Marta Morena Vega was asked to replace David Byrne in June 2014. I arranged all of the conference details with the session chairs throughout the internship via telephone and email. I collected all of their biographies, CVs, and session descriptions. It was my responsibility to manage the internal

deadlines and communicate with Dawson, the session chairs, and the presenters so they knew what was expected from them and when it was needed.

I organized and managed registration for the conference. Registration was free but required reservation by email. To stay organized, I created an Excel file with all of the registrants' names and email addresses. There were over 320 people who registered prior to the conference, and more registered as they arrived. The majority of the registrants were from out of town and unfamiliar with the Ogden Museum, Prospect, and New Orleans. Therefore, I communicated frequently with participants and answered a wide variety of questions. Additionally, I acted as the liaison for the session chairs, conference director, and keynote speaker to secure rooms at the Hyatt and book all of their flights.

Brooke Anderson decided to offer bus tours of the Prospect exhibitions to all presenters, attendees, and session chairs on Saturday and Sunday. A Prospect staff member coordinated the tours, and I handled all of the registration, payments, and questions. From these communications, I realized that the conference attendees saw the conference as being very separate from the biennial, and therefore there was not a lot of interest on behalf of the conference attendees to see the biennial.

Call For Papers

Since this was an academic conference, I organized a call for papers by researching university programs that were related to themes in the book *Flash of the Spirit*. To facilitate the call, I created a database of 166 professors and university administrators to send the call for papers. Dawson and I wrote the text for the call for

papers and I worked with the Ogden Museum graphic designer to create an e-blast and flyer. The proposal specified that presenters would craft a 500-word essay describing a presentation in line with one of the themes four sessions relating to the book *Flash of the Spirit* (see Appendix A). Dawson, Anderson, and the session chairs also forwarded the e-blast to their own personal and academic contacts.

I administered all aspects of the call for papers, received submissions, answered all inquiries, and ultimately collected the sixty-three papers submitted. Once the call for papers closed on August 30, 2014, I organized all of the papers and sorted them by the sessions they were submitted for and sent the proposals to the appropriate session chairs. Each chair was scheduled to have one month to review the proposals and select six presenters for their session. However, the session chairs were late in choosing their selections, so I sent out an email letting all of the applicants know that the selections would be announced a week late.

Once the session chairs made their selections in October, I communicated individually with all twenty-four of the presenters and invited them to present at the conference. Then I wrote rejection letters to each of the forty-three people that were not selected. From each of the chosen presenters, I collected their biography, a title for their paper, and their presentation for the conference. From this information, I created a master document with all of the biographies for the conference director, session chairs and presenters (See Appendix B).

Many of the presenters needed specialized letters of support in order to request funding from their academic departments, since it was not in the budget to cover their

travel or provide a stipend. I wrote many letters of support, which allowed a few presenters to be able to travel to the conference who otherwise would not have been able to attend.

Marketing

I coordinated the marketing of the conference through the Ogden Museum and Prospect's social media platforms, e-blasts, and websites. All of the marketing for the call for papers began in June. I printed flyers and distributed them to Prospect venues. Danny Dawson provided a mailing list of contacts, so I printed and mailed one hundred call for papers material to his contact list. Prospect.3 hired Deveney Communications to handle PR and marketing for the biennial. Deveney included the conference in the first biennial announcement press release, in one media alert, and in a biennial program that was displayed at every Prospect venue for four months leading up to the conference. Additionally, there were advertisements about the conference coordinated by the Ogden Museum in Artforum and three online ads on Gambit.com.

Conference Production, Technology, and Programming

I was responsible for coordinating the production, technology, and programming of the conference. Five presenters backed out during the weeks leading up to the conference, so those presenters had to be replaced. The session chairs helped choose new presenters for their sessions from the pool of applicants. Brooke Anderson and I replaced two presenters the week of the conference.

The Ogden Museum Events Coordinator and I wrote the production schedule, coordinated with Ogden Museum admissions to let all conference attendees

into the museum for free, rented chairs, purchased food for the Thursday and Friday night receptions. We coordinated with Pyramid Audio to manage the technology, and with Live Motion to manage the live streaming of the conference.

Ogden Museum interns and I created 350 welcome packets for each attendee that included a *Flash of the Spirit* button, conference schedule, conference bios, a list of recommended lunch spots, information about the Ogden Museum, and an Ogden Museum pencil. Most conference attendees were not familiar with the Ogden Museum or New Orleans, so this was a helpful tool to make them feel welcomed.

Prospect hired Pyramid Audio to run the technical side of the conference, so I coordinated that aspect of production. Pyramid requested all of the presentations from the presenters and session chairs on a hard drive a few days in advance so they could stage a rehearsal and avoid any technical issues during the conference itself. The presentations were all of different digital formats and included videos, sound, photos and other elements that had to be programmed together.

On December 10, the day before the conference, Prospect hired the company Full Motion to manage the filming and live streaming, and since there was minimal time to promote the opportunity, I emailed all of the conference registers and asked them to share the link with their colleagues and friends.

During the week of the conference, Robert Farris Thompson let us know that he was too ill to travel due to his triple bypass surgery in October, and would not be able to give the keynote speech on Friday night. It was decided not to advertise his absence until Friday, December 12, the day of the keynote speech. Thompson was able to Skype

into the conference on Friday afternoon, which was a great surprise to everyone that was at the conference but presented an unfortunate situation for everyone that had wanted to hear him speak but was unaware of the unscheduled, online lecture and were not able to be there.

The night before the conference, the Ogden Museum Events Coordinator and I met with Pyramid Audio for load-in of the screen, projectors, cameras, microphones, podium, tables, and chairs. We tested Skype for a presenter that was not able to attend because of bad weather in New York. The result of working with the staff of Pyramid and Full Motion was very successful. Because we were all able to work together and be prepared ahead of time, the conference ran smoothly from a technical standpoint.

Each morning before the conference, I wrote the run of show and met with Pyramid Audio and Full Motion staff to review the daily schedule. The presentations were set up on a stage, so I prepared for each day by printing nameplates for each session chair and presenter and providing water for the stage. I reviewed the schedule with each session chair and presenter as they arrived to prepare everyone for the day.

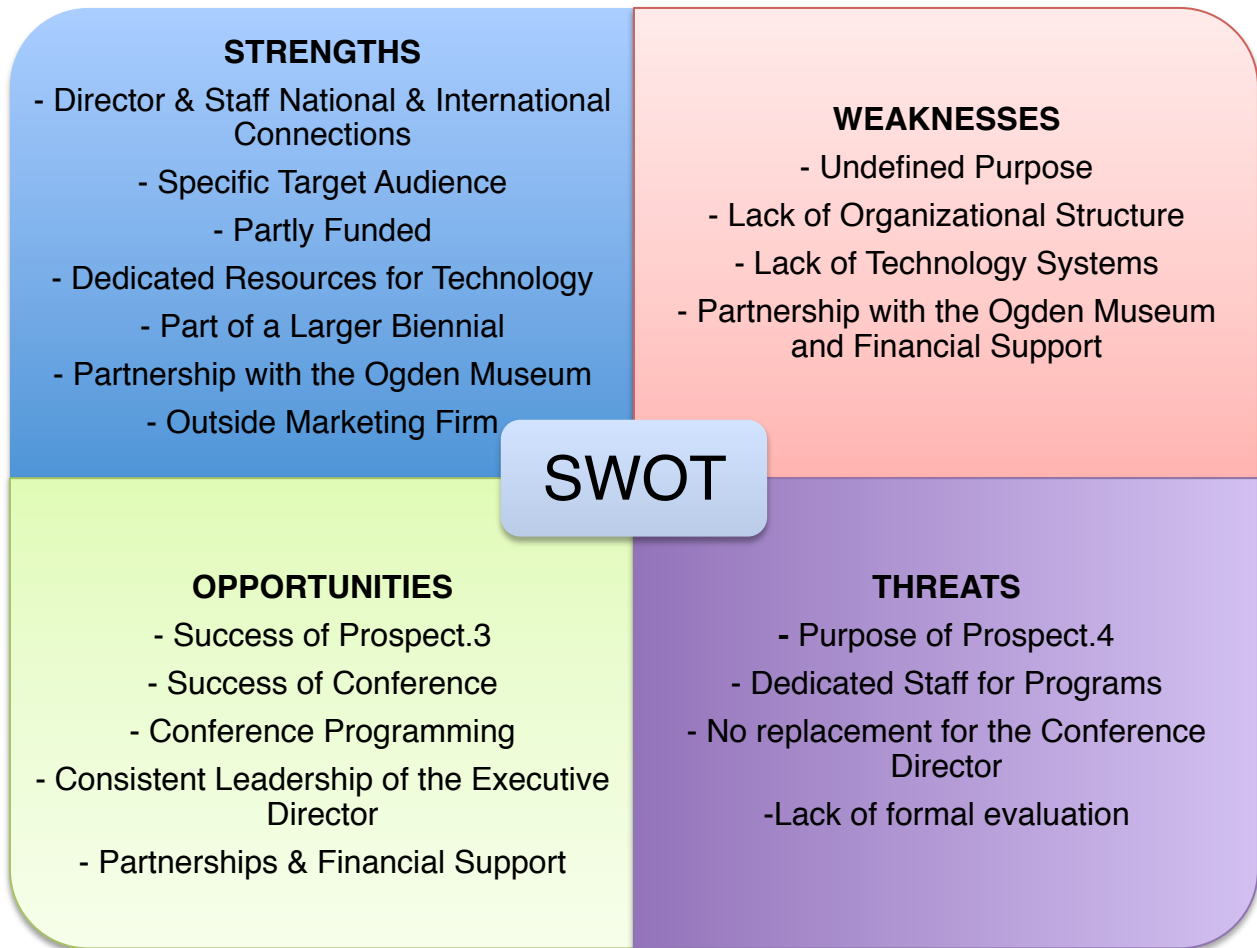
Check-in for the conference began on Thursday, December 10, at 8:30am. Prospect staff and volunteers helped run the check-in table. Each morning the attendees socialized and networked over coffee from 9am – 10am. Since this was an academic group, many attendees knew each other from other conferences and academic events. Upon arrival, each person that attended was asked his or her zip code at check-in so we could track where the audience was from.

A few days before the conference, Big Class, a local non-profit organization, asked if they could make a presentation of their students' artwork, so I coordinated a time for them to present during the conference, and we showed their video about their organization during the 9am-10am coffee socializing times. During the conference there were a few surprise poets and singers who held impromptu performances. Everything ran very smoothly, and everyone present was very pleased and excited to be a part of the conference honoring Robert Farris Thompson.

Since live streaming was such a last minute decision, I had to ask everyone after the conference for permission to make the video available online. We also had to find someone that could take the footage and edit it for streaming on the Internet since some presenters did not want their presentation to be included. This was an additional \$600 cost for editing but helped the conference reach an expanded audience that is still growing.

My largest contribution to the conference was implementing and managing all aspects of the conference in the absence of the conference director. There were many challenges with the sudden illnesses of the keynote speaker and conference director, the bad weather in New York the day before the conference, and the last minute additions of programming. A benefit of the small amount of Prospect staff was that I learned everything about planning a conference through managing it from start to finish. I was able to help with crisis management and solve critical problems since I was the only consistent conference worker. My work for the conference created efficiencies and

established protocol that Prospect will be able to use to strong advantage for future conference planning.



STRENGTHS

Director and Staff National and International Connections

Brooke Anderson, Danny Dawson, Robert Farris Thompson and the session chairs have many connections in the academic world of African Diaspora. Because of these connections, there were 63 academic papers submitted for the call for papers, which allowed the session chairs to select from quality papers, which created appropriate content for the conference presentations.

Specific Target Audience

Since the conference was centered around the themes in *Flash of the Spirit: Afro & Afro-American Art & Philosophy*, there was a specific academic group of people who be interested in the conference. The call for papers database was created by searching for universities and institutes that had programs related to the conference themes. Since the conference director and all of the session chairs are actively teaching in the field of African Diaspora, they were able to send out the call for papers to their contact lists of students and colleagues. Having a specific audience helped draw focused attention to the conference and attracted a large group of people in the field of African Diaspora.

Partly Funded

A Henry Luce Foundation grant and funding from The Helis Foundation paid for a stipend, travel expenses, and lodging for the conference director, the keynote speaker, and the four session chairs. Because there was money to subsidize these costs, the conference was able to have experts in the field of African Diaspora as session chairs. The grant allowed the conference to be free for attendees, which helped exceed the attendance goals.

Dedicated Resources for Technology

The funding also paid for a professional audio company to run the conference, which helped the conference presentations run on schedule and allowed for high quality presentations, including both video and audio elements. There was a winter storm in New York during the conference and one presenter that lived in New York, Cheryl Finley, was not able to attend because the weather shut down the airport, but because

of the technological setup available, she was able to Skype in and present her paper. Additionally, the Keynote Speaker, Robert Farris Thompson, suffered a heart attack a few weeks prior to the conference, and a few days before the conference his doctor said he could not travel, but was able to Skype and deliver his speech. The staff of the Ogden Museum and Prospect could not have handled the technology needed to produce the high quality presentations.

The conference was streamed live on the Internet, which expanded the audience exponentially. On Thursday, December 11, 830 people from 14 countries and 23 states watched the conference. On Friday, 802 people watched the conference over 25 states and 14 countries. The conference is available to stream online (at the time of this paper's writing), which will allow more exposure for the conference and allow students and academics in the field free access to the content for future research.

Part of a larger biennial

The conference was just one program that was part of *Prospect.3: Notes for Now*, an international art biennial held officially in eighteen different locations throughout New Orleans, and unofficially in an additional seventy locations as part of a Prospect.3 satellite program called P.3 +. Because the conference was connected to a larger project, there was an established channel to market and promote the conference with all of the biennial promotional material.

Partnership with the Ogden Museum

Prospect.3 had partner institutions hosting their exhibitions, so the Ogden Museum waived the fee to use the Patrick F. Taylor Library for the conference in

exchange for recognition as the presenting conference host. The Ogden Museum also provided in-kind support of staff time to the conference planning and production.

Outside Marketing Firm

Prospect.3 contracted a local PR firm, Deveney Communications, to manage PR and Marketing for the conference. Deveney included the conference in the marketing plan, so all biennial brochures, which were available at eighteen venues plus the seventy P.3 + satellite venues across the city of New Orleans, included information about the conference. Deveney included the conference in the Prospect.3 press announcement (see Appendix D). Additionally, they wrote a specific press release and a media alert about the conference. The Ogden Museum had planned an ad campaign for the P.3 exhibition *Basquiat and The Bayou* in which they included ads about the conference. The Ogden Museum included the conference in its weekly emails, which reach an average of 4,000 people and in its social media, which had over 20,000 followers. Prospect has a dedicated social media team, so they were able to promote the conference through their social media channels. Prospect and the Ogden Museum had a dedicated page on each of their websites for the conference.

The strengths of the larger biennial, the partnership with the Ogden Museum, and the national and international connections were all crucial building blocks to creating a specific audience for the conference. Having a specific audience and channels to market the conference attracted a large group of people, which created successful attendance. The funding enabled academics at the top of their field to lead as session

chairs. Funding also allowed for the conference to be live-streamed, which allows for a broader audience to continue exploring the topics covered in the conference.

WEAKNESSES

Undefined Purpose

The purpose of the conference and how it fit into the biennial was not communicated very clearly. At a meeting of Prospect partners after the biennial was over, a director of a local institution said that he/she was not sure why the conference was a part of the biennial, and that he/she didn't feel like their organization was adequately informed about it. Many of the other local leaders agreed (*Meeting to Evaluate Prospect.3*). It would have been beneficial for Prospect to state a purpose for their conference and tie it in more closely with the purpose of their organization and this iteration of the biennial.

Lack of Organizational Structure

Because Prospect was a biennial there were only a few full-time staff members at the beginning stages of planning the conference located outside of New Orleans. More staff members were hired as the biennial drew closer, but they were focused on other critical projects. As described in the internship description, my communication with Prospect staff and the conference director was unstructured and unreliable.

Additionally, the session chairs were located all over the world. Kellie Jones was on sabbatical leave from Columbia so she was traveling and not able to communicate frequently. Barbaro Martinez-Ruiz moved to Cape Town, South Africa during the conference planning, and was also not able to communicate on a reliable basis. Grey

Gundaker was located in Richmond Virginia and Marta Moreno Vega was located in New York. Because of their varied locations and other demands, communication with the session chairs was infrequent and unreliable, which made the conference planning very difficult.

Due to the location of staff, the lack of staff, my irregular schedule, and the loss of a conference director, there was a lack of structure in planning and implementing the conference. It was a challenge to make decisions and handle all of the communications without a reliable supervisor.

Lack of Technology Systems

As Conference Coordinator, the lack of technology was an obstacle for me because the primary communication was over email with no software to manage the Call for Papers, registration, travel arrangements, presentations, and other requests. One of the hardest aspects of producing a conference – people and resource management – would have been much easier with the proper software to manage a conference that involved over 360 people. I established and utilized a dedicated email for the conference through which over 1,400 emails were exchanged. This level of communication was difficult to manage on my own without additional technological tools.

Partnership with the Ogden Museum and Financial Support

Although the partnership with the Ogden Museum was advantageous for Prospect.3, it was often unclear what the Ogden was responsible for, which left a lot of unexpected work to be handled by the Ogden staff. The Ogden Museum Events

Coordinator was asked to help produce the conference only a few weeks before the conference took place because Prospect did not have enough staff dedicated to the project.

Although there was a grant to cover the basic costs of the conference, there was no extra money to help with travel costs or lodging for the twenty-four presenters. It was difficult for them to travel to New Orleans since most were in the academic world and did not have very much discretionary spending. There was neither money to hire extra help nor a contingency plan for when the conference director fell ill.

Conference planning was very challenging because of the overall lack of clarity of the planning responsibilities. The fact that everyone working on the conference had other jobs outside of the conference created a lack of structure because there was never one person dedicated to the project. These weaknesses could easily be remedied in the future by having staff specifically assigned to the conference.

Opportunities

Success of Prospect.3

Because Prospect.3 was so successful and had more national attention than the prior Prospect iterations, there are opportunities to build on its success and organize quality programming and conferences for Prospect.4. More organizations in New Orleans are familiar with Prospect.3 because of its success; therefore it would be a good opportunity to engage existing and new community partners years in advance to plan programming for Prospect.4. The impact of Prospect.4 has the opportunity to be

much greater than its prior iterations because of the successful Prospect.3 and the time to plan and market the programs and concepts years in advance.

Success of Conference

The Flash of the Spirit conference turned out to be a success with about 370 people in attendance and 1,632 people watching the live stream on the internet.

Because there was such a wide reach and enthusiasm for the first conference, there is an opportunity to build upon that interest to raise more awareness if Prospect should hold a conference during P.4. They have a database of contact information for all of the attendees and Prospect can plan ahead to provide more staff for conference production during Prospect.4.

Conference Programming

Prospect is now a triennial, which means there will be more time in between projects to plan their exhibitions and related programming. If they choose to plan another conference, it will allow Prospect staff more time to plan the purpose of the conference, the topics, to identify session chairs, and select presenters. The increase in planning time will allow the conference session chairs and presenters to engage more with Prospect staff and the host partner in New Orleans, and to allow for strategic planning.

Consistent Leadership of the Executive Director

Brooke Davis Anderson will serve as Executive Director for Prospect.4. This consistency in leadership will help improve the structure of the organization since she has already accomplished one successful biennial. She will live in New Orleans one

week out of every month leading up to Prospect.4 to maintain a presence and create interest and energy for the next triennial. Prospect has already named Trevor Schoonmaker, Chief Curator at Duke University, the Artistic Director for Prospect.4 so he will have more time to plan the exhibitions and visit the venues in New Orleans, which will allow for all subsequent programming to be planned and coordinated on a more manageable timeline.

Partnerships and Financial Support

Since each triennial will have a different theme and artists, there will be many opportunities for new conferences each iteration. There is a good opportunity to work with a partner institution such as to conceptualize how a conference could fit into a theme or idea already in the triennial. This provides new and different programming for each conference, which helps the institutions and Prospect evaluate past themes and build from the past successes to create future themes and programs.

Because Prospect.4 is a triennial, the Executive Director will have more time to fundraise and use the successful data from Prospect.3 and the *Flash of the Spirit* conference to apply for grants. Having hard data from her previous successes will help funders see the potential impact they can have if they get involved with the next biennial. If Prospect involved local organizations earlier on, they could use the partnerships to strengthen their grant applications. Partnerships allow many more financial opportunities because host venues will offer in-kind use of the facilities, equipment, and technology, and their staff. Partner organizations could help promote

awareness and raise money for the conferences or other Prospect programs through their existing audience.

Threats

Purpose of Prospect.4

Examination of purpose, successful identification of funding, and institutional prioritization will determine whether or not it is a good idea to incorporate a conference in the future. If Prospect.4 maintains focus on the exhibitions and artists, it might be stretching organizational resources too thin again to try and add an entire conference to a production schedule already at full capacity. If Prospect.4 were to be unable to secure grants for a conference, they would have to charge a conference fee, which could reduce attendance.

Dedicated Staff for Programs

If Prospect.4 does not hire dedicated staff to originate and coordinate large projects like conferences, then the same problems with communication and lack of structure will continue, causing unnecessary stress for interns and partner organizations, and threatening the success of their programming. As conference coordinator, having full time job responsibilities and internship hours coupled with the lack of Prospect New Orleans staff support, was a threat to the overall planning and execution of the conference.

No Replacement for the Conference Director

Danny Dawson suffered a serious stroke and was not able to communicate for most of the fall. Because of the lack of Prospect staff, all of the responsibilities of

organizing the conference fell on me as conference coordinator. I communicated with Brooke Anderson by email, but she had many other responsibilities as executive director of the biennial. It was a threat to the success of the conference to not have a replacement conference director and to not have an alternate contingency in place.

Lack of Formal Evaluation

There was no plan for an evaluation to assess either the conference itself or the organizational effectiveness of Prospect in producing an international conference. A clear set of goals for the event, for the organizing institution, and for the presenting venue, would set the trend toward greater effectiveness for future conferences. Since Prospect is a recurring biennial, consistent evaluation would help improve each future program.

Conference Planning Best Practices

To learn about Conference Planning best practices, I read The Holden Leadership Center (HLC) guide for planning a conference. This guide was created for the use of any student organization on campus at the University of Oregon that wished to plan a conference. I also read the University of London School of Advanced Study Postgraduate Online Research Center (PORT), which provided an in-depth outline of how to plan a conference for PhD students. I chose these two resources because they were focused on the planning of academic conferences, which was the intended audience for the *Flash of the Spirit Conference*.

To learn more about best practices for a conference from a specific organization, I interviewed Mimi Zarsky, the Senior Program Specialist at the National Performance Network/Visual Artists Network (NPN/VAN). The NPN/VAN is a non-profit organization that supports the creation and presentation of new work in a context of community engagement, and is therefore somewhat related to the mission of Prospect New Orleans. NPN/VAN has a variety of programs, residencies and funds to help support visual and performing artists and their work all over the United States (npnweb.org 2015). With an average attendance of 350 people at their annual meeting, NPN/VAN provides a comparable size conference as the *Thirty Years of Meaning and Influence* “*Flash of the Spirit: African & Afro-American Art and Philosophy*.”

Defining Purpose

The HLC and PORT both state that a best practice for planning a conference is to first determine the purpose and the audience of the conference. Conferences can be

used to bring various groups of people together to share information, educate the public, work with partners, train employees, or learn from outside organizations or entities (Organizing A Conference PORT). In accordance, the conference director should define what types of issues or topics will drive the conference.

Each year the NPN/VAN holds an annual conference serving as its annual meeting so that all of their constituents can convene. The purpose of the conference is for board members, artists, supporters, colleagues, and sister organizations to gather for a few days to learn about new and existing efforts and policies of the organization, for artists to share new ideas, for colleagues to discuss cultural policy issues affecting broader concepts in the art world, to showcase new artists to their potential partners providing opportunities to network, and a chance to engage with a new city and its expanded art community each year (Zarsky). The purpose of the NPN/VAN conference is stated on their website, so the intention of the conference is very clearly articulated and hopefully accessible to a broad audience.

Determining the audience is also crucial because a conference cannot be effectively formed or promoted without understanding the intended audience. The HLC asks students to decide if they will have a campus wide conference, a regional conference, invite members only, members and guests, officers only, advisors, or the entire student body ("Planning A Conference"). PORT describes conferences as an opportunity for students to have an exchange on a particular research issue, make contact with colleagues in the field, the chance to verbalize and discuss an idea, and to

find out what other students and academics have explored in related areas (Organizing A Conference PORT).

NPN/VAN's audience is defined by the purpose of their conference, which is to bring all of their constituents together. This includes board members, artists, supporters, colleagues, and sister organizations. Because NPN/VAN has an annual conference, it is beneficial that there is an existing audience to engage each year from all of the previous conferences.

Structure and Timeline

PORT encourages students to recognize that they cannot plan a conference alone and to ensure organization throughout the process by creating a planning timeline. Students can look to institutions on campus, colleagues, or offer internship opportunities to undergraduate students (Organizing A Conference PORT). The HLC offers their services to any student planning a conference on the university campus. They believe that conferences are a great way to engage students and bring outside professionals to campus, which gives students another opportunity to learn ("Planning A Conference").

NPN/VAN's national office is located in New Orleans, Louisiana. They have a dedicated full time staff member, Mimi Zarsky, to plan, coordinate, implement, manage, and evaluate the conference each year. Similar to Prospect's method, she hires part-time staff in the conference's host city each year, yet the structure and permanent nature of her position helps create distinct and successful conferences each year.

Additionally, another full time staff member, Anna Henschel, has a percent of dedicated time towards convenings.

Seven months before the conference, Zarsky hires two paid local conference coordinators in the conference city location: a visual arts coordinator and a performing arts coordinator. The coordinators are able to engage the local artists to participate in the conference and to hold performances or studio visits for the conference attendees. They make it a point not to hire people that are already in the Network because they do not want the disparate positions to become in conflict, so they take suggestions from partners regarding who would be a good coordinator (Zarsky).

According to HLC and PORT, ideally a conference should be planned 12-18 months ahead of time for a 1-day conference and 18 months plus for a 2-day or longer conference. Since students and teachers typically plan by semesters, it is important to identify a time when the audience will most likely be able to attend. PORT suggests that academic holidays are an ideal time if the event is planned far enough in advance. They also note that conferences during academic semesters are difficult for students and professors because of other obligations (Organizing A Conference PORT). Conversely, HLC suggests that during the semester is the best time for conference as long as sporting events, other departmental events, and midterms and finals do not conflict ("Planning A Conference"). Therefore, an organization must determine what time will work best for their ideal attendees.

Zarsky begins planning the conference two years in advance since each conference is about 4 days. She ensures that there is plenty of time to select a city, a

local partner institution, and a local partner hotel. Because the conference meets annually, it is generally held in November or December, depending on the schedules of local partners and availability of hotels.

Creating a timeline for all publicity is important so that all opportunities to participate or to attend the conference are covered. The timeline should include time for design, layout, edits, printing, and distribution for all digital and mailed invitations and conference programs (Planning a Conference).

NPN/VAN begins advertising to their constituents about the conference location and dates at least a year in advance to ensure the highest amount of people will be able to attend. Since the conference is intended for their constituents, they do not publicly advertise the event.

Partnerships and Financial Support

It is important to establish a budget in the early planning stages to determine the income needed to offset the expenses. Expenses to determine include the keynote speaker's travel and accommodations expenses, session chairs' travel and accommodation expenses, conference packs, advertizing, staff time, security staff, rental fees for the venue, costs of technical equipment, meals and refreshments, office costs such as photocopying and postage, and administrative charges. These expenses can be funded through grants, participants' registration fees, in-kind gifts of materials and services, and fees from collateral events (Organizing A Conference PORT).

NPN/VAN structures their budget so that travel and lodging is subsidized for artists, board members, conference presenters, and partners. They charge sister

organizations a fee to attend the conference, which provides support for the groups they subsidize (Zarsky). They also apply for grants and secure sponsors to help support the conference expenses.

An important partner can be the conference venue. When choosing a venue, it is important to consider the location to ensure that people can find it easily and will be able to park nearby with special note that accessibility is important. It might reduce expenses to use a building on a university campus or to partner with a hotel. It would also help if the venue has tables, chairs, overheads, screens, and other physical conference needs built into the cost and on site. They must be able to host the amount of people that is expected at the conference. Conference organizers should consider if there are food services available or if outside catering can be brought in. Additionally, telecommunications and power requirements for computers and other equipment should be considered (Organizing A Conference PORT).

Zarsky begins conference planning and partnerships two years in advance. For example, the 2015 conference will be in Portland, OR, and the Portland Institute for Contemporary Art will be the main partner. A strong, local partner organization is an important component for success because such an organization knows the artists and art community in the host city more intimately, and therefore has established the necessary connections needed to produce a successful event. Further, the partner organization's staff and board also help fundraise and market the conference, adding value to the creation of infrastructure and early promotion. In this case, having the main conference coordinator, Zarsky, live in a different city than the conference location

poses no issues because she is highly involved with hosts in the city two years in advance to ensure that everything will run smoothly and she is a frequent communicator. To ensure clarity, NPN creates a memorandum of understanding with the local partner organization to ensure that all the duties are clear for each organization (Zarsky).

Zarsky also chooses a partner hotel in the host city. On advance site visits, she stays in a few different hotels to see what their amenities are for hosting a large group of people, if they have rooms to hold conferences and if they are willing to give group discounts. The group discounts and space for meetings help reduce costs and allow for greater hospitality since the attendees will be staying and convening in the same location.

Hospitality includes many large items such as housing, transportation, providing directions, and welcoming attendees at the conference. At least a few strategically placed people should be accessible at the venue for questions from all attendees. Each session will need room set up, paper, markers, nametags, the schedule, etc. Having water ready for facilitators is important since they will be speaking for long periods of time. Many conferences have morning or evening receptions with food and beverages. The capacity for this will be influenced by the conference budget (Organizing A Conference PORT).

Hotels will often provide a discounted rate to a large group of people coming for a conference. Ideally, arrangements with a hotel partner should be negotiated a year in advance so that attendees can plan ahead. Often the rooms and travel will be covered

for session chairs, keynote speakers, and presenters. It is important to be honest and accurate about what the budget will cover up front (Planning a Conference).

It is helpful for people coming in from out of town to have a map or address provided to them before they travel. Sometimes it is appropriate to make arrangements for someone to meet them at the airport or train station. Information on the location of the conference in relation to hotels and the airport should be shared in an email to all participants or available on the conference website.

NPN/VAN has staff in New Orleans that arranges hotel rooms and roommates for everyone that attends the conference. Pairing attendees in rooms helps reduce costs for NPN/VAN.

An interesting practice is for NPN to host a board meeting in the city a few months before the conference, to measure the effectiveness of the hotel as a setting and for the board members can become familiar with the city. Another positive practice is that Zarsky creates a local host committee a year in advance of the conference, which consists of people that are interested in being local ambassadors for the conference. The NPN/VAN board members are then able to engage with the local host committee and partner organization. Zarsky also plans a site visit for the planning team and attends the mid-year regional meeting in the city where the conference will be held. This allows different groups to see the city and location of the conference in advance and to assist in conference planning. A benefit of the mid-year meeting is that the planning team is able to share advance knowledge at the conference with other potential attendees, and they become very familiar with the conference location. Board members

and staff's familiarity with the location boost the hospitality at the event so they can offer assistance and give directions.

Conference Programming

Choosing specific topics for sessions or workshops is important to set the conference up for successful interest and attendance. The topics will determine what type of schedule should be created and how many sessions are needed, usually no more than three sessions in a day. Each speaker will want 15-20 minutes to present and there should be a restroom break scheduled every few hours. A time for questions at the end of each presentation or at the end of each session is important. Keynote speeches usually last up to an hour (Planning a Conference).

NPN/VAN staff decides the conference theme each year and takes suggestions for session topics. Since the organization has performing and visual artists in attendance, there are many performances and presentations throughout the day in the host city. NPN/VAN takes the opportunity to have breakout sessions by region so that partners in proximity to one another can share ideas and upcoming programs. The NPN/VAN partners will have a special meeting to discuss internal business. They also arrange for artists to share ideas with other artists in a session called "Peer-2-Peer Artist Exchange Workshops."

Once a conference schedule is established, the next step is to identify session chairs to lead each session. It is important to have all the conference information and session descriptions ready when asking someone to be a Session Chair so that they will know what they are agreeing to do. Confirming their participation in writing is important

so that they are committed by contract to the conference because they play an important role in shaping the makeup of their sessions. Their connections can be useful in attracting participation (Organizing A Conference PORT).

NPN/VAN artists, partners, and staff make presentations or lead sessions with a variety of groups present at the conference. They sometimes bring outside professionals in to present on a certain topic. For example, for NPN/VAN's 2014 Annual Meeting, Mel Chin served as the Keynote Speaker in Tulsa, Oklahoma. The local conference coordinators help identify local artists and performers to lead sessions or to present their craft to the group. The NPN/VAN staff secures contracts for all of the presenters and performers.

There are two ways to select speakers for a conference, by issuing a call for papers or by personal invitation. A call for papers allows a wider reach of students and researchers to submit their ideas to specific sessions. The call for papers should indicate the aim and format of the conference, issues to be covered, date and venue, length of papers, deadline for provisional titles and abstracts, address for submission, fees, and potential scholarships. The call for papers should be sent to academic departments and centers that are related to the conference subject and to any specialized mailing lists and newsgroups. The benefit of personal invitation is to ensure that familiar professionals are selected to speak. It is necessary to have a contingency plan in case a speaker cancels (Organizing A Conference PORT).

Since NPN/VAN's conference is an annual meeting with an existing audience, they invite artist and speakers to present during the conference. They take suggestions

from constituents in the Network and also use prior evaluations to conceptualize new interesting sessions and programs.

Registration & Technology

Creating a plan for registration is considered a best practice in order to maintain clear and concise communication with potential attendees. There are many options for managing the registration of a conference. Onsite registration is an option if the amount of attendees is not limited, while pre-registration is preferred if space is limited. If there is a conference fee, it could require a deposit or the full amount at the time of registration. There should be a system to confirm the registered participants. If conferences have multiple sessions, there might have to be a system for participants to indicate which sessions they wish to attend.

Technology is a crucial component for the success of conferences. Most presenters need at least a computer, projector, screen and a microphone. It is critical to make sure that all of the presentations are working correctly and have the correct technological support before the day of the conference. If the conference is to be broadcast or streamed, it will require extra technological assistance (Organizing A Conference PORT).

NPN/VAN relies heavily on technology in organizing a conference for a national audience. Zarsky negotiates the use of technology and conference rooms with the host hotel. While Zarsky communicates in person, by email, and over the phone with NPN/VAN staff, NPN/VAN tracks registration for the conference on a program called Salesforce. This program allows people to register and tracks who attends, and it can

create reports of the breakdown on the number of partners, artists, colleagues, and all other attendees. It tracks requests and emails to and from all constituents to help streamline and track communication, and allows them to prepare for and anticipate the number of attendees (Zarsky).

Evaluation of the conference

Conference attendees and presenters should evaluate their experience so that the information can be used to form future conferences. Evaluations from attendees are useful feedback for presenters so they can understand if their presentations were effective. The conference planning team should also perform an evaluation of the strong and weak aspects of the program as a whole to use for future planning. This should include final budget figures, completed evaluations, thoughts on what worked and did not work. It is helpful for future successors if timelines, sample correspondences, and the evaluations are all filed together for easy access. Often a sponsor or a granting agency will want a report of the conference to understand the results of their investment (Planning a Conference).

NPN/VAN engages a complete system of evaluation metrics to determine success, during which Zarsky evaluates and collects data about the conference in a few different ways. First, an evaluation form is available for attendees to fill out after each session to check in on each session. Second, as attendees register online, they are asked questions about their demographics to assure NPN/VAN is engaging a diverse audience. Third, they send out an evaluation via email after the conference to respond to the conference comprehensively. Fourth, Zarsky uses all of the information from the

evaluations to conduct a full audit after every conference, which is compiled in a report called the Annual Meeting Data Report. This report evaluates and compares data from the year before and is broken down into: Objectives, Participants, Scheduling, Local Support, Economic Impact, Opportunities to See Local Work and Performances, Content of the Conference, Networking, Evaluation, Promotion, Materials, Additional Activities, Primary Venues, Logistics, and Selected Participant Responses. Zarsky and other NPN/VAN staff use the data from the report to fundraise for future conferences, as data for grants, and to help plan for the future conferences (Zarsky).

Recommendations

The following recommendations are based on my work planning and executing the *Thirty Years of Meaning and Influence “Flash of the Spirit: African & Afro-American Art & Philosophy”* by Robert Farris Thompson, studying the best practices for planning a conference, and from evaluating my experiences through the SWOT analysis. These recommendations are meant to help Prospect as they begin to plan programming for their next iteration, Prospect.4, which is scheduled to open in the fall of 2017.

Defining Purpose

Based on research of the National Performance Network/Visual Artists Network and analysis of conference planning Best Practices, I would recommend that future Prospect conferences have a clearly defined purpose. The conceptual basis by which the *Flash of the Spirit* conference was produced as part of the *Prospect.3: Notes for Now* international biennial was not made very clear. As explained in the SWOT, the purpose of the conference was classified as a weakness and potentially, unintentionally, excluded a potential group of supporters. Because of a variety of challenges, this conference might have been more successful as a separate effort with qualified, dedicated staff with critical knowledge of the work and influences of the *Flash of the Spirit* book. I would recommend that if Prospect does decide to organize another conference, the purpose is stated and has a clearly articulated role in the biennial. A clear purpose will set up the organization of the conference for success, help secure a good venue partner, and will be more attractive to funders. If the purpose is clear, the

marketing efforts will be more effective and have the potential to reach a larger audience.

Structure and Timeline

Based on the observations in the SWOT and the importance of structure and a timeline for planning a conference in Best Practices, I would recommend that Prospect hire a dedicated staff member to plan future conferences and to coordinate with all of the contract staff each iteration. At NPN/VAN, Mimi Zarsky works full-time on planning the Annual Meetings. Although Prospect is a different iteration of art and programming every three years, having a dedicated staff member will help with institutional memory, which will keep the organization from repeating mistakes.

If there were a dedicated staff member, there would be more opportunities for interns and volunteers to help with the work of the conference. I would recommend that the staff member either be in New Orleans or have contract coordinators fully dedicated to producing the conference in New Orleans. A dedicated staff member could start planning the conference two years in advance, which is the recommended time line in Best Practices. This would allow more time for conceptualizing, planning, partnering, and implementing a successful conference.

NPN/VAN hires two local conference coordinators for each conference. They have a policy of hiring outside of their network to avoid the coordinators having two jobs and two bosses related to the same project. This would be a valuable policy for Prospect to implement to avoid the type of struggle I encountered with balancing an

internship and a full-time job where the conference was hosted as I coordinated the conference for Prospect.

Partnerships and Financial Support

Although Prospect did identify a strong partner in the Ogden Museum, there was never a clear description about what the Ogden would be responsible for and what Prospect staff would be responsible for. The absence of such a document generated an ongoing atmosphere of confusion and frustration that would have been obviated by a clearly drafted memorandum of understanding between partners.

Similar to NPN/VAN's midyear meetings in the host city prior to their conference, it would be very helpful practice for Prospect to gather Session Chairs and Conference Director in New Orleans to meet with the local Conference Coordinator in advance of the conference. This would allow everyone involved to see where the conference will be so they are familiar with the surroundings during the conference. Such a meeting would also help Prospect's local partners to learn more about a proposed conference if they were able to meet with people involved in advance of the conference. If local partners understood the purpose of the conference, they could market it through their channels to gain a broader audience. The increase in time for planning and implementation and marketing will result in a greater chance for success.

NPN/VAN charges sister organizations to attend the conference to help subsidize travel for artists, conference presenters, board members, and partners. I would recommend that Prospect either make it a goal to raise money or begin charging a conference fee so that the presenters travel and lodging will be covered. It is also

important to note the in-kind support from the Ogden Museum and to include it as a potential cost when budgeting future conference fees.

Conference Programming

I recommend that in the future Prospect determine all conference programming in advance. There was a lot of last minute programming such as the Big Class presentation, the live streaming, and the bus tour of *Prospect.3: Notes for Now* for conference attendees. There was minimal time to advertise these opportunities, which reduced the ability of these aspects to have the greatest impact as possible.

Registration & Technology

As Conference Coordinator, the lack of technology was an obstacle for me because the primary communication was over email with no software to manage the Call for Papers, registration, travel arrangements, presentations, and other requests. I recommend that Prospect purchases a system such as Salesforce to effectively organize communications and track registrations, travel arrangements, itineraries, schedules, and to be able to collect data for evaluation. This will also help with institutional memory.

Evaluation of the conference

According to Best Practices, evaluation is a critical component to conference coordinating because the data can be used to understand the attendees' experience. The data can be beneficial to presenters and to the organization to determine what was successful and what was unsuccessful. At the end of each session, Prospect should have a short evaluation on hand to capture the audience's immediate impressions. At

the end of the conference, I suggest that Prospect sends out an evaluation by email to each attendee to receive feedback and the conference process, program, and content. Presenters and session chairs should also evaluate their experiences so that the organization can understand how effective they were with that aspect of conference organization and communication. It would be valuable for Prospect to evaluate the conference to determine whether or not it would be beneficial to hold another one for Prospect.4.

Conclusion

This conference began with inspired ideas and general goals. It is easier to gain support for ideas than to identify specific individuals responsible for successfully matching opportunities with objective measurements; however, the indicators of success should be decided during the planning stages, long before the conference is initiated, with plans and contingencies to ensure the best experience for the conference organizers, conference attendees, partner institutions, and collaborating funders. When these disparate concerns are united with a work plan that is implemented and evaluated according to a predetermined set of goals to generate the proper amount of support, the goals of the conference can be reached easier in order to create a lasting impression of great programmatic and scholarly impact.

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Appendix A

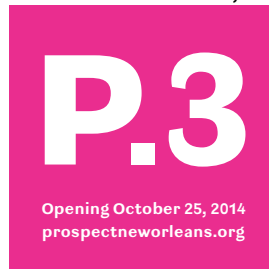
Thirty Years of Meaning and Influence – “*Flash of the Spirit: African & Afro-American Art & Philosophy*”

by Robert Farris Thompson

Published in 1983

Ogden Museum of Southern Art, New Orleans, LA

December 11-12, 2014



Organized by Prospect New Orleans

and



the Ogden Museum of Southern Art

C. Daniel Dawson, Conference Director

Columbia University – IRAAS; New York University – The Gallatin School

Generously funded by The Helis Foundation
with additional funding from the Henry Luce Foundation

CALL FOR PAPERS

In coordination with the Ogden Museum of Southern Art, Prospect New Orleans is organizing a conference celebrating the 30th anniversary of the publishing of *Flash of the Spirit: African & Afro-American Art & Philosophy* by Robert Farris Thompson, the celebrated art historian. Originally published in 1983, *Flash of the Spirit* has enjoyed a popularity and influence far beyond the academic arena,

making it one of the most important texts in the African-Atlantic world, as well as art historical scholarship. The conference will take place December 11 - 12, 2014 at the Ogden Museum of Southern Art in New Orleans, Louisiana. It will accompany *Basquiat and the Bayou*, an exhibit of paintings at the museum by Jean-Michel Basquiat, who was greatly influenced by the Thompson text.

The conference is free and open to the public, but registration is required.

The conference will consist of four scholarly panels over two days, along with a keynote presentation by the author Robert Farris Thompson on Friday night, December 12th. C. Daniel Dawson, the Conference Director, is the Master of Ceremonies. Each panel session will have a chairperson and will address the different ways in which *Flash of the Spirit* has made an important contribution in the understanding of contemporary cultural realities grounded in African and African-American art and philosophy. Each panel will focus on a specific topic for discussion. The four chairpersons and session topics are:

- Dr. Kellie Jones, Columbia University - the influence of *Flash of the Spirit* in the world of academia, scholarship and art history;
- Dr. Barbaro Martinez-Ruiz, University of Cape Town - the international impact of *Flash...* with a focus on the geographic areas discussed in the text, e.g., Brazil, Cuba, Haiti, Mali, Nigeria, etc;
- Dr. Grey Gundaker, College of William and Mary - the influence of *Flash...* in reconstructing how we define art or redefine objects in a cultural context;
- Dr. Marta Moreno Vega, New York University & Caribbean Cultural Center -the extra-academic influence of *Flash...* in the areas of religion, dance, music, theater and the visual arts.

If you are interested in participating in this conference, please submit an abstract, of no more than 500 words, describing your presentation. The abstract theme must adhere to one or more of the four session topics outlined above.

Abstracts are to be submitted by e-mail to Sarah Story, Symposium Coordinator: conference@ogdenmuseum.org.

The submission deadline is August 30, 2014.

Presenters will be selected by the panel chairs and notified of their participation by September 30, 2014.

Appendix B

Thirty Years of Meaning and Influence - *Flash of the Spirit: African & Afro-American Art & Philosophy* by Robert Farris Thompson

Organized by Prospect New Orleans and the Ogden Museum of Southern Art
December 11 & 12, 2014

Conference bios

Robert Farris Thompson

Keynote Speaker

(Born 1932 in El Paso, Texas)

Dr. Thompson is one of the foremost scholars of African art, religion, and philosophy and their influence in the Americas. His numerous books include: *Black Gods and Kings: Yoruba Art at UCLA* (1971), *African Art in Motion: Icon and Act in the Collection of Katharine Coryton White* (1974), *African Art and Motion: Art Illustrated Guide to the Exhibition* (1974), *The Four Moments of the Sun: Kongo Art in Two Worlds* (1981), *Flash of the Spirit: African and Afro-American Art and Philosophy* (1984), *Pygmées?: Peintures sur Écorce Battue des Mbuti (HautZaire)* (1991), *Face of the Gods: Art and Altars of Africa and the African Americas* (1993), and *Tango: The Art History of Love* (2005). He is currently the Colonel John Trumbull Professor of the History of Art at Yale University. Having served as Master of Timothy Dwight College since 1978, he was the longest serving master of a residential college at Yale. Thompson is America's most prominent scholar of African art, and has presided over numerous exhibitions of African art and culture.

In 1966, Robert Farris Thompson was initiated to the Orisha *Erinle* in the *Egbado Yoruba* tradition by priestess and master sculptress Abatan Odefunke Ayinke Ija in Oke-Odan, Nigeria. In 1972 in the village of Defang in Banyang Territory, Cameroon he was initiated into *Ekpe* (Leopard Society) by Defang elders, and initiated to the highest level of *Basinjom*, an anti-witchcraft society, by Chief Defang. And, in 1988, he was initiated to the *prenda/nkisi Sarabanda* in the tradition of *Palo Monte-Corta Lima* by Padre Nganga Alberto in Vedado, Havana, Cuba.

Charles Daniel Dawson

Conference Director

Columbia University - IRAAS; New York University - The Gallatin School

A multi-talented artist, Prof. Dawson has worked as a photographer, filmmaker, curator, arts administrator, consultant and scholar. He has served as Curator of Photography, Film and Video at the Studio Museum in Harlem (NYC), Director of Special Projects at the Caribbean Cultural Center (NYC), Program Manager at the American Museum of Natural History and Curatorial Consultant and Director of Education at the Museum for African Art (NYC). As a photographer, he has shown in over 40 exhibitions. In addition he has curated more than 70 exhibitions including *Harlem Heyday: The Photographs of James Van Der Zee* and *The Sound I Saw: The Jazz Photographs of Roy DeCarava* and is currently a curator with the Jazz at Lincoln Center's curatorial team. Prof. Dawson has also been associated with many prize-winning films including *Head and Heart* by James Mannas and *Capoeiras of Brazil* by Warrington Hudlin. He has worked as a consultant for the Cooper Hewitt Museum,

International Center for Photography, Lincoln Center, Ralph Appelbaum Associates and three different divisions of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, DC. As a scholar, he has lectured at the House of World Cultures-Berlin, the Kit Tropenmuseum-Amsterdam, the University of California-Berkeley, University of Texas-Austin, University of Wisconsin-Madison, New School for Social Research, Stanford University, Columbia University, Princeton University and the Federal University of Bahia and Rio de Janeiro-Brazil. Prof. Dawson has also taught seminars on *African Spirituality in the Americas* at Columbia University, University of Iowa, New York University and Yale University. He is currently a curatorial consultant for La Casita, a division of Lincoln Center Out-of-Doors specializing in presenting international oral traditions, and an exhibition curatorial consultant for Jazz at Lincoln Center. Prof. Dawson is presently teaching in the Institute for Research in African American Studies at Columbia University and in the Gallatin School of Individualized Study at New York University.

Sarah Story

Conference Coordinator

Ogden Museum of Southern Art - Project Coordinator

Sarah Story received a BFA in painting from the University of Mississippi in 2011, and worked as Curator of Education at the University of Mississippi Museum and Historic Houses for three years where she initiated an internship program with the College of Education, Nutrition and Hospitality Management and Department of Art to serve the Museum's K-12 educational programs. Additionally, Story was an elementary school art teacher in Trujillo, Peru, and assisted with academic research in 14th century manuscripts in Dresden, Germany.

Currently, Story is Project Coordinator at the Ogden Museum of Southern Art and is pursuing a Masters in Arts Administration at the University of New Orleans. For Prospect New Orleans, Story is coordinating the conference *Thirty Years of Meaning and Influence: The Flash of the Spirit: African and Afro-American Art and Philosophy* based on the pioneering text by Robert Farris Thompson.

Brooke Davis Anderson

Executive Director of Prospect New Orleans

Conference conceived by Brooke Davis Anderson

Brooke Davis Anderson is Executive Director of Prospect New Orleans/U.S. Biennial. From 2010 to 2012 Anderson was Deputy Director of Curatorial Planning at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA). In this role, Anderson oversaw the Watts Towers Conservation and Community Collaboration, and the "Curatorial Diversity Initiative," a Mellon-funded pilot program aiming to change the demographics of professionals in museums across the nation. From 1999 to 2010, Anderson was Founding Director and Curator of The Contemporary Center at the American Folk Art Museum in New York, where she curated countless exhibitions (most notably projects on Martin Ramirez, Henry Darger, and other contemporary self-taught artists), authored several books and numerous articles, and led the \$1 million acquisition of the Henry Darger Study Center. She has been an Assistant Professor at the following institutions - Columbia University, City College of New York, and Winston-Salem State University. From 1992-1999 Anderson was director of the Diggs Gallery at Winston-Salem State University, where she tripled the budget, audience,

programming, and publicity. During her tenure in North Carolina she was recognized by the Chronicle Newspaper as "Curator of African American Art," and was honored by an endowment established in her name to ensure the museum's future.

Session 1: The Influence of Flash of the Spirit in the world of academia, scholarship and art history.

Dr. Kellie Jones, Session Chair

Dr. Kellie Jones is Associate Professor in Art History and Archaeology and the Institute for Research in African American Studies (IRAAS) at Columbia University. Her research interests include African American and African Diaspora artists, Latino/a and Latin American Artists, and issues in contemporary art and museum theory.

Dr. Jones has received numerous awards for her work including a Creative Capital | Warhol Foundation Arts Writers Grant and a term as Scholar-in-Residence at the Terra Foundation for American Art in Giverny, France, both in 2013.

Dr. Jones's writings have appeared in exhibition catalogues and such journals as *NKA*, *Artforum*, *Flash Art*, *Atlantica*, and *Third Text*. Her book *EyeMinded: Living and Writing Contemporary Art* (Duke University Press 2011) was named one of the top art books of 2011 by *Publishers Weekly*. Her project *Taming the Freeway and Other Acts of Urban HIP-notism: African American Artists in Los Angeles in the 1960s and 1970s* is forthcoming from The MIT Press.

Dr. Jones has also worked as a curator for over three decades and has numerous major national and international exhibitions to her credit. She has organized shows for the Johannesburg Biennale (1997) and São Paulo Bienal (1989), the latter of which, featuring the work of Martin Puryear, won the grand prize for best individual exhibition. Her exhibition "Now Dig This! Art and Black Los Angeles, 1960-1980," at the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, was named one of the best exhibitions of 2011 and 2012 by *Artforum*, and best thematic show nationally by the International Association of Art Critics (AICA). She is the co-curator of "Witness: Art and Civil Rights in the 1960s." Opening at the Brooklyn Museum in March 2014 the show celebrates the fiftieth anniversary of the Civil Rights Act.

Jessica N. Bell

Paper: "Ed Clark, Abstraction, and Afro-Diasporic Optics, 1966-1978"

Panel: Dr. Kellie Jones

Jessica N. Bell is a doctoral student focusing on modern and contemporary art in the department of Art & Archaeology at Princeton University. Her research explores the relationship between aesthetics of blackness and notions of diaspora in 20th century African American abstraction. Jessica holds a B.A. in Art History from Northwestern University. She is a Teach for America alumni, and has worked as a programming fellow at Creative Time, and as a curatorial assistant for BAMart. Jessica also co-curated the 2012 exhibition *loop*, the first survey of new media and video works of art at the Museum of the Contemporary African Diasporan Arts in Brooklyn, NY.

Tobias Wofford

Paper: “The Enduring Flash: Robert Farris Thompson and Contemporary African American Art”

Panel: Dr. Kellie Jones

Tobias Wofford is assistant professor at Santa Clara University. His research focuses on issues of race, identity, and globalization in contemporary art of the African diaspora. He is currently working on a book manuscript that builds on his dissertation “Africa as Muse: The Visualization of Diaspora in African American Art, 1950-1980.”

Charles Ian Wright

Paper: “Archive - Charles White”

Panel: Dr. Kellie Jones

C. Ian White is a Los Angeles-based artist, art professor, and curator who has exhibited his work throughout the United States. Besides his mixed media, video, and sculptural work, White is also a well-recognized muralist in Los Angeles, having designed and executed several mural commissions throughout the city over the past 25 years. Although White’s work is conceptually based, it is also deeply concerned with social and political issues. White is the son of Charles White, an artist recognized as an American master of figurative painting, printmaking, and drawing who chose as subjects; love, hope, courage, freedom, and the dignity of the African American experience. White is curator of the Charles White Gallery at the CEJES Institute in Pomona, New York, and is director of the Charles White Estate and Archive.

Alinta Sarah

Paper: “The Afro-Brazilian Architectural Heritage in Nigeria and the Republic of Benin”

Panel: Dr. Kellie Jones

I am currently working as teacher and a freelance art educator with various organisations and gallery in London such as the October Gallery, Lon-Art. She studied History and Art History at the University Toulouse Le Mirail in France. I also obtained Master in African studies with a major in Art at SOAS (School of Oriental and African Studies) and I am working as an independent researcher. From both Martiniquean and Guinean heritage I have been interested in the cultural links between Africa and the Diaspora. Her current research focuses on the Afro-Brazilian cultural heritage in West Africa .I gave a talk on Afro-Brazilian architecture at the **Nigeria Research Day** at SOAS and **London to Lagos** event at the Richmix. I also co curated an event **AfroKarib: the Haitian chapter** as part of the Bokantaj project.

Cheryl Finley

Paper: “Flash of the Spirit’s Legacy for Teaching Contemporary African Diaspora Art”

Panel: Dr. Kellie Jones

Trained in the History of Art and African American Studies at Yale University, Cheryl Finley is Associate Professor and Director of Visual Studies in the Department of the History of Art at Cornell University. Her prolific critical attention to photography has produced the coauthored publications *Teenie Harris, Photographer: An American Story* (Carnegie Museum of Art, 2011), winner, Outstanding Citation Publication Award, Black Caucus of the Library Association of America, 2012, *Harlem: A Century in Images* (Skira Rizzoli, 2010), and *Diaspora, Memory, Place: David Hammons, Maria Magdalena Campos-Pons, Pamela Z* (Prestel, 2008) as well as numerous catalog essays and journal articles on artists such as

Lorna Simpson, Hank Willis Thomas, Walker Evans, Joy Gregory, Carrie Mae Weems, and Berenice Abbott. Dr. Finley's research has been supported by an Alphonse Fletcher Sr. Fellowship, the Ford Foundation, the Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts, and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. Her current interdisciplinary project, *Re-Imagining the Grand Tour: Routes of Contemporary African Diaspora Art*, examines the current global art economy, focusing on the relationship among artists, museums, biennials and tourism.

Henry John Drewal

Paper: "Yoruba Arts and the Senses: A Sensiotics Approach"

Panel: Dr. Kellie Jones

Born and raised in Brooklyn, NY, Henry John Drewal received his BA from Hamilton College. After graduation he taught French and English and organized arts camps in Nigeria. During two years in Nigeria he apprenticed himself to a Yoruba sculptor – a transformative experience. He went on to interdisciplinary studies at Columbia University in African art history and culture, receiving two Masters' degrees and a PhD. He has taught at Cleveland State University, UC-Santa Barbara, and SUNY-Purchase, and served as Curator of African Art at The Cleveland Museum of Art and the Neuberger Museum. Since 1991 he has been the Evjue-Bascom Professor of Art History and Afro-American Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and Adjunct Curator of African Art at the Chazen Museum of Art, UW-Madison. He has published several books, edited volumes, exhibition catalogues, and many articles on African/African Diaspora arts and curated several major exhibitions, among them: *Introspectives: Contemporary Art by Americans and Brazilians of African Descent*; *Yoruba: Nine Centuries of African Art and Thought*; *Beads, Body, and Soul: Art and Light in the Yoruba Universe*; *Mami Wata: Arts for Water Spirits in Africa and Its Diasporas*; *Sacred Waters: Arts for Mami Wata and other Divinities in Africa and the Diaspora*, and *Dynasty and Divinity: Ife Art in Ancient Nigeria*. Among his numerous awards are several NEH grants, two Fulbright Research Awards (Brazil and Benin), a Metropolitan Museum of Art Fellowship, and a Guggenheim Fellowship.

Session 2: The international impact of Flash... with a focus on the geographic areas discussed in the text, e.g., Brazil, Cuba, Haiti, Mali, Nigeria, etc;

Dr. Barbaro Martinez-Ruiz, Session Chair

Dr. Martinez-Ruiz earned his B.A. from Havana University in 1994 and his Ph.D. from Yale in 2004. He is an Art Historian with expertise in African and Caribbean artistic, visual, and religious practices. After holding positions at Havana's High Institute of Art from 1993-1997, the Rhode Island School of Design from 2002-2004 and in Stanford University's Department of Art and Art History from 2004-2013, Dr. Martinez-Ruiz came to the University Of Cape Town in 2014. His books include Kongo Graphic Writing and Other Narratives of the Sign, Temple University Press, 2013 (English) and El Colegio de México, 2012 (Spanish); Faisal Abdu'Allah: On the Art of Dislocation, Centro Atlántico de Art Moderno Press, 2012 and Art and Emancipation in Jamaica: Isaac Mendes Belisario and his Worlds, Yale University Press, 2007, which was awarded the Alfred H. Barr Prize by the College Art Association.

Other recent publications include "Ma kisi Nsi: L'art de habitants de region de Mbanza Kongo", in *Angola Figures de Pouvoir* (Paris: Dapper Museum Press, 2010), "Writing Bodies

in the Bakongo Atlantic Experience", in *Performances: Challenges for Art and Anthropology* (Quai Branly Museum Press, 2010), "Funerary Pots of the Kongo in Central Africa", in *African Terra Cotta: A Millenary Heritage* (Geneva: Musee Barbier Mueller Press, 2008) and "The Impossible Reflection: A New Approach to African Themes in Wifredo Lam's Art", in *Wifredo Lam* (Miami: Perez Art Museum Press, 2008).

Dr. Martinez-Ruiz curated Things that Cannot Be Seen Any Other Way: The Art of Manuel Mendive at the California African American Museum, Los Angeles and The Frost Museum, Miami (2012-2013), On the Art of Dislocation at the Centro Atlántico de Art Moderno, Spain (2012), Call and Response: Journeys in African Art at the Yale University Art Gallery (2001), and Marks of the Soul: Poetics, Philosophies, and Religions –Eight Caribbean Artists at the University Galleries, Florida Atlantic University (2001). Current curatorial projects and publications include Digital Objects: A Retrospective of Chuck Close, Centro Atlántico de Arte Moderno, Spain 2015, Spirituality in the Art of the Caribbean, Museum of Latin American Art, Los Angeles 2017 and Unwrapping the Universe: Kongo Art and Cosmology in Central Africa, The Ethnographic Museum, Geneva, The Tropenmuseum, Holland and The Royal Museum for Central Africa, Tervuren, Belgium, 2018.

D. Martinez-Ruiz also serves as editor for the Cuban Studies Magazine and for Harvard University's Transition magazine and is a Pacific Standard Time LA/LA research fellow from 2014-2017 at The Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles California.

Cynthia Becker

Paper: "Black Morocco: The Afro-Islamic Aesthetics of Gnawa Possession-Trance"

Panel: Dr. Barbaro Martinez-Ruiz

Cynthia Becker is originally from New Orleans and received her BA from the University of New Orleans and her MA and PhD from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She is Associate Professor of African and African Diaspora Art at Boston University. Dr. Becker specializes in visual and performing arts from northwestern Africa. Her book *Amazigh Arts in Morocco: Women Shaping Berber Identity* was published by the University of Texas Press in 2006. Her current research looks at the history of the trans-Saharan slave trade and its impact on arts in Morocco as well as religious rituals and cultural identities in Niger. She recently co-edited a special edition of the journal *African Arts*, "Performing Africa in New Orleans," where she published an article on the New Orleans Mardi Gras Indians.

Donald Cosentino

Paper: "God and Bob at Yale"

Panel: Dr. Barbaro Martinez-Ruiz

Donald Cosentino is Professor Emeritus of World Arts and Cultures at the University of California-Los Angeles. He served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Nigeria (1964-66), and a community organizer in Orangeburg, South Carolina (1968-69). He received his Ph.D. in African Languages and Literatures from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1976. Cosentino's research interests include Black Atlantic art, myth, rituals, and pop cultures. He has done extensive fieldwork on oral traditions in Sierra Leone (1972-3; 1983) and Vodou art and mythology in Haiti (1986-present). He is the author of Defiant Maids and Stubborn Farmers: Tradition and Invention in Mende Story Performance (Cambridge UP, 1982, 2008) and Vodou Things: The Art of Pierrot Barra and Marie Cassaise (University of Mississippi Press, 1998). He was curator, editor and chief writer for the award-winning project, The

Sacred Arts of Haitian Vodou (1995-99), and for Divine Revolution: the Art of Edouard Duval-Carrie (2004). As a Guggenheim Fellow (2006), Cosentino completed fieldwork for Chasing the Dead, a book he is writing about his travels with an L.A. santero and his Kongo spirit guide. Cosentino is chief writer and co-curator for In Extremis: Death and Life in 21st Century Haitian Art which opened at UCLA's Fowler Museum in September, 2012, and travelled to the Musée de la Civilisation in Quebec City.

Duane Deterville

Paper: "Thomson's Flash of the Spirit and the Afriscape Ghost Dance on Film"

Panel: Dr. Barbaro Martinez-Ruiz

Duane Deterville is a visual artist, writer and scholar of visual culture. His area of expertise is African and Afri-diasporic visual culture. As the co-founder of Sankofa Cultural Institute he was the creative director of three symposiums on jazz history and has lectured widely on the topic of jazz and visual culture at galleries, museums, universities and colleges. Deterville is an alumni columnist for the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art's "Open Space" blog. He is the co-author of "Black Artists in Oakland" a visual history published by Arcadia Publishing. Most recently he co-founded the Oakland Maroons Art Collective and is currently one of several cultural theorists working in the Future of Soul Think Tank at the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts. He holds a Masters Degree in Visual and Critical Studies from the California College of the Arts in San Francisco.

Michelle Eistrup

Paper: "Untitled"

Panel: Dr. Barbaro Martinez-Ruiz

Michelle Eistrup was born in Copenhagen and has a Jamaican mother and a Danish father. She graduated from Haverford College and the Royal Danish Academy of Arts, and presently lives in Denmark. Her work as a visual artist focuses on mapping identities and understanding the route of decolonisation of her own past in the Caribbean, and reinvestigating newer routes and ideologies that one can trace through visuals and history. Eistrup has also curated BAT, Bridging Art and Text together with Coordinator Annemari B. Clausen, Naturama and the Karen Blixen Museum in Denmark. Eistrup has exhibited in art institutions, festivals and galleries in Europe, the Caribbean, Asia and Africa. Charlottenborg (Copenhagen), Galleri Image (Aarhus), Haugar Vestfold Museum (Norway), Arnolfini (London), Momentum Nordic Festival for Modern Art (Moss), Sparwasser (Berlin), PIP, Photo festival, (Pingyao, China) The Taitu Art Center (Ethiopia) and The National Art Gallery (Kingston, Jamaica.)

Phyllis Galembo

Paper: "Traveling with the Spirit"

Panel: Dr. Barbaro Martinez-Ruiz

Phyllis Galembo photographically documents cultural, religious traditions and the transformative power of ritual dress in Africa and the Americas. Galembo's interest in these traditions began in 1985, with her first visit to Nigeria. Since then, she has travelled widely in west and central Africa, and regularly to Haiti, making portraits.

Galembo's books include *Mask*, 2012, *Divine Inspiration: From Benin to Bahia* (1993), (which includes an essay by Robert Farris Thompson) *Vodou: Visions and Voices of Haiti* (1998) and *Dressed for Thrills: 100 Years of Halloween Costumes and Masquerade* (2002).

Ms. Galembo has had one-person exhibitions at the International Center for Photography, The George Eastman House International Museum of Photography, the American Museum of Natural History New York, Fashion Institute of Technology New York, San Francisco Airport Museum, and Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture New York, Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History, The Tang Teaching Museum, Skidmore College, Steven Kasher Gallery, NYC and Reflex Gallery, Amsterdam. Her work from Fancy Dress, Ghana was included in the Venice Biennale, 2013 in the exhibition the "Encyclopedic Palace."

Her work has been collected by institutions including the Library of Congress Washington DC, the Metropolitan Museum of Art New York, the Museum of Fine Arts Houston, The Albany Institute of History and Art, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Rockefeller Foundation New York.

Galembo received a Guggenheim Foundation grant 2014, a Senior Fulbright Research Award to photograph 'Kings, Chiefs and Women of Power, Nigeria'. and Artists' Fellowships from the New York Foundation for the Arts.

Yuko Miki

Paper: "Pemba: Kongo Spirituality and Healing and the Challenge to Slavery in Late-Nineteenth-Century Brazil"

Panel: Dr. Barbaro Martinez-Ruiz

Yuko Miki is Assistant Professor of Iberian Atlantic History at Fordham University. Her work explores how slavery and freedom bound together the lives of women and men in nineteenth-century Brazil with various corners of the Atlantic, from the Americas to Europe and Africa. Her publications include "Fleeing into Slavery: The Insurgent Geographies of Brazilian *Quilombolas* (Maroons), 1880-1881" (2012), which received the Best Article Prize from the Latin American Studies Association (LASA) Brazil Section and the Nupur Chaudhuri Best First Article Prize from the Coordinating Council for Women in History (CCWH); and "Slave and Citizen in Black and Red: Reconsidering the Intersection of African and Indigenous Slavery in Postcolonial Brazil," in *Slavery and Abolition* (2014). She is currently completing a book manuscript entitled *Insurgent Geographies: Blacks, Indians, and the Making of Postcolonial Brazil* and working on a new project, *Brazilian Atlantic: Slavery and Freedom in the Age of Abolition*.

Session 3 will focus on the influence of Flash...in reconstructing how we define art or redefine objects in a cultural context.

Grey Gundaker, Session Chair

Grey Gundaker's first encounter with *Flash of the Spirit* came soon after its publication. A friend told her it was very important and that its author was a spectacular person. Not very enthusiastically, she said she hoped to read it someday. Two years later in her first semester in anthropology at Yale, she was kicked out of a course because she could not use a computer. Her adviser told her it was too late to get into anything except a seminar he was teaching with Robert Farris Thompson. That course changed her outlook on everything. She wrote her dissertation on transatlantic African and African American literacies, published as *Signs of Diaspora / Diaspora of Signs*, edited *Keep Your Head to the Sky: Interpreting African*

American Home Ground, and co-wrote with Judith McWillie, *No Space Hidden: the Spirit of African American Yards*. She teaches at the College of William & Mary.

Willie Birch

Paper: "Stories from the Kitchen"

Panel: Dr. Grey Gundaker

A native of New Orleans, Willie Birch creates politically incisive yet emotionally sensitive work that addresses issues related to African-American culture and survival. Always probing in his work the artist has addressed New Orleans musical heritage and also the multi-layered experience of African-American males. Willie Birch's work has powerful political, sociological and spiritual meaning but is wonderfully anchored in the daily life and celebratory rituals and recently even the fauna of the artist's 7th Ward New Orleans neighborhood. - See more at: <http://arthurrogergallery.com/artists/willie-birch/#sthash.oilgF3MX.dpuf>

David Doris

Paper: "Two Exercises (for RFT)"

Panel: Dr. Grey Gundaker

David T. Doris is Associate Professor of African Art and Visual Culture at the University of Michigan, in the Department of the History of Art, the Center for Afroamerican and African Studies, and the Stamps School of Art & Design. He gained his PhD from Yale University in 2002; his PhD dissertation, written under the mentorship of Robert Farris Thompson, received the 2004 Roy Sieber Memorial Award for Outstanding Dissertation in African Art History, from the Arts Council of the African Studies Association (ACASA). He has been a Fulbright Scholar in Nigeria, an Ittleson Fellow at the Center for Advanced Study of the Visual Arts, a Smithsonian Post-Doctoral Fellow at the National Museum of African Art, and a Residential Fellow at the Getty Research Institute. His book, *Vigilant Things: On Thieves, Yoruba Anti-Aesthetics, and the Strange Fates of Ordinary Objects in Nigeria* (University of Washington Press, 2011), addresses the moral, ethical, and aesthetic roles of assemblages of useless and discarded objects in contemporary Yoruba culture. In 2012, *Vigilant Things* received the African Studies Association's Melville J. Herskovits Award, presented for "the most important scholarly work in African studies published in English during the preceding year." Which is pretty cool, if you think about it.

Freddi Williams Evans

Paper: "From New Orleans' Congo Square to Contemporary Cultural Practices: Finding Meaning Through Flash of the Spirit"

Panel: Dr. Grey Gundaker

Freddi Williams Evans is the author of *Congo Square: African Roots in New Orleans*, the first comprehensive study of the historic site. Her research and advocacy for Congo Square influenced the 2011 city council ordinance that made the popular name, "Congo Square," the official name of the landmark.

Evans's book received the 2012 Louisiana Humanities Book of the Year Award and is also published in French. Her essays on Congo Square appear in exhibition guides, encyclopedias, and anthologies including *Ancestors of Congo Square: African Art in the New*

Orleans Museum of Art. Her numerous engagements include presentations in France (Paris, Aulnay and Bordeaux) and Senegal (Dakar and St. Louis.)

She is also an award-winning author of three historically based children's books and a recipient of the New Orleans Arts Council Community Arts Award. Evans is the Associate Director of Education and Public Programs for the Contemporary Arts Center New Orleans.

Leslie King Hammond

Paper: "Morality and Meaning: Resistance and Resilience in Contemporary Art"

Panel: Dr. Grey Gundaker

Leslie King Hammond, PhD - Senior Fellow, Robert W. Deutsch Foundation; Chair of the Board, Reginald F. Lewis Museum of Maryland African American History and Culture, Graduate Dean Emerita, Founding Director, Center for Race and Culture, Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA). She is a past President of the College Art Association. Recent exhibitions and publications include "Brides of Anansi - Contemporary Fiber Art" (2014), Spelman Art Museum; "Ashe to Amen - African Americans and Biblical Imagery" (2012) Museum of Biblical Art; "The Global Africa Project" (2010), Museum of Arts and Design. King Hammond is currently on a terminal sabbatical at MICA as she continues to work on forthcoming exhibitions and research on women artists, artists of the African Diaspora and arts initiatives in Miami, NOLA, Baltimore and Charleston, SC.

Judith McWillie

Paper: "Art as Sacred Medicine"

Panel: Dr. Grey Gundaker

Judith McWillie is professor emerita of drawing and painting of the University of Georgia's Lamar Dodd School of Art. Her paintings and photographs have been exhibited throughout the United States and Europe. She has authored numerous essays for arts and culture publications since 1988 including *Artforum*, *Metropolis*, and *Visions Art Quarterly* and for anthologies such as *Testimony: Vernacular Art from the African American South*, *Keep Your Head to the Sky: Interpreting African American Homeground*, *The Art of William Edmondson*, and *Dixie Debates: Perspectives on Southern Cultures*. She is co-author with Grey Gundaker of *No Space Hidden: the Spirit of African American Yard Work*, winner of the 2007 James Mooney Award of the Southern Anthropological Society.

Lyneise Williams

Paper: "The Glamorous One-Two Punch: Gesture, Celebrity and Boxer, Alfonso Teofilo Brown in Early Twentieth-Century Paris"

Panel: Dr. Grey Gundaker

Lyneise Williams is an Associate Professor of Art History at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (PhD Yale 2004). Her publications include articles on the paintings of Uruguayan artist Pedro Figari, and the depictions of Panamanian boxer Alfonso Teofilo Brown, as well as African art and hip-hop jewelry. Her research interests lie at the intersection of sports, fashion, performances of race, and early twentieth-century Latin American culture in Latin America and globally. Her first book (forthcoming in Fall 2015), *Black AND Latin: Representations of Black Latin Americans in Paris, 1855-1933* focuses on

the visual imagery of Latin Americans featuring three case studies of circus entertainer, Chocolat, Panamanian World Bantamweight Champion Alfonso Teofilo Brown, and the depictions of Black Uruguayans by Uruguayan painter, Pedro Figari in early twentieth-century Paris. Her current project follows up on her first book, to explore black male beauty and the relationship between celebrity culture, masculinity, race, modernism, and boxing through the images and performances of Alfonso Brown in 1920s and 30s Paris. She has curated exhibitions on African Art. Williams is the member of the team selected from an international competition to design the North Carolina Freedom Monument Project in Raleigh, North Carolina.

Session 4 will focus on the extra-academic influence of Flash... in the areas of religion, dance, music, theater and the visual arts.

Dr. Marta Moreno Vega, Session Chair

The cultural arts activism of Dr. Marta Moreno Vega stemming from the Civil Rights Movement has lead to the creation of community-based organizations that include Amigos del Museo del Barrio, Inc., Roundtable of Organizations of Color, Association of Hispanic Arts, Touring Network of People of Color, Global Afro Latina and Caribbean Initiative, Caribbean Cultural Center African Diaspora Institute, Cultural Equity Group and scholarship culturally grounded in cultural equity and cultural rights movements. Dr. Moreno Vega is also the creator of the international conferences entitled Cultural Diversity Based on Cultural Grounding that were the basis for the publication *Voices from the Battlefield Achieving Cultural Equity*. Dr. Moreno Vega is founder and president of the Caribbean Cultural Center African Diaspora Institute. As president Dr. Moreno Vega through the CCCADI founded and organized three international conferences entitled World Conferences on Orisha Tradition and Culture in Ile Ife Nigeria, Salvador Bahia Brazil and New York City. Exhibitions, panels, public performances and conferences focused on African belief systems continue to be important programming developed by Dr. Moreno Vega in New York City and Puerto Rico. Dr. Moreno Vega is the author of the books *The Altar of My Soul*, *When the Spirits Dance Mambo* among other publications.

Dr. Vega was awarded a grant from the Ford Foundation, which partially supported the filming of the documentary “When the Spirits Dance Mambo” premiered at the Havana International Latino Film Festival in Cuba December 2002. The documentary, shot in Cuba, focuses on the impact of Santeria on the Civil Society of the island. She has received research fellowships from El Centro de Estudios Puertorriqueños at Hunter College for developing a documentary on African based Spiritual Practices in Puerto Rico.

Johanna Almiron

Paper: “Open the Way, Close the Way: Reading Social Statements in the Art of Basquiat”

Panel: Dr. Marta Moreno Vega

Johanna F. Almiron is an Assistant Professor at the University of Wisconsin at Madison in the Department of Afro-American Studies and current Nellie Y. McKay Fellow. She received her PhD in American Studies at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa with specialties in visual culture and black cultural studies. She is completing a book manuscript on the social statements and cultural relevance in the art of Jean-Michel Basquiat. Her work has been supported by various awards including most notably the pre-doctoral fellowship at the

Frederick Douglass Institute for African and African American Studies the University of Rochester. She also received an MA in Performance Studies at Tisch School of the Arts-New York University and BA in African-American Studies at Oberlin College. In 2013, she was a visiting scholar at the University of Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, South Africa.

Scott Barton

Paper: “O que são suas quizilas? Food Taboos in Afro-Brazilian Sacred and Profane Foodways”

Panel: Dr. Marta Moreno Vega

Zeco Ligiero

Paper: “Afro-Brazilian Performance: drumming-dancing-singing-storytelling”

Panel: Dr. Marta Moreno Vega

Robert O’Meally

Paper: “King of the Zulu: Basquiat, Bearden, Armstrong”

Panel: Dr. Marta Moreno Vega

B.A., Stanford (1970); Ph.D., Harvard (1975). Professor O’Meally is Zora Neale Hurston Professor of English and Comparative Literature, and founder and former director of the Center for Jazz Studies. His major interests are American literature, music, and painting. He has written extensively on Ralph Ellison, including *The Craft of Ralph Ellison* (Harvard, 1980), and a collection of papers for which he served as editor, *New Essays on Invisible Man* (Cambridge, 1989). Professor O’Meally has written a biography of Billie Holiday entitled *Lady Day: The Many Faces of Billie Holiday* (Little, Brown, 1989) and a documentary on Holiday (which has been shown on public TV). He also is the author of *The Jazz Singers* (Smithsonian, 1997) and principal writer of the monograph, *Seeing Jazz* (Smithsonian, 1997). He edited *Tales of the Congaree* (University of North Carolina, 1990), and *The Jazz Cadence of American Culture* (Columbia, 1998); and co-edited *History and Memory in African American Culture* (Oxford, 1994), the *Norton Anthology of African American Literature*, and *Uptown Conversation: The New Jazz Studies* (Columbia, 2003). His production of the recording *The Jazz Singers* was nominated for a Grammy Award. His Holiday book and his liner notes for Louis Armstrong and Duke Ellington collections won Ralph Gleason Awards. O’Meally’s new book is *Romare Bearden: Black Odyssey--A Search for Home*, catalogue for a show opening this fall at D.C. Moore Gallery on Fifth Avenue. His new project is a full study of Bearden’s uses of literary subjects.

Adam Rudolph

Paper: “Transference of Creative Energies”

Panel: Dr. Marta Moreno Vega

For the past four decades composer, improviser and percussionist Adam Rudolph has performed extensively in concert throughout North & South America, Europe, Africa, and Asia. He has released 25 recordings under his own name, featuring his compositions and percussion work. Rudolph composes for his Moving Pictures Octet and Go: Organic Orchestra, for which he has developed an original music notation and conducting system, which he has taught and conducted to hundreds of musicians worldwide. Rudolph has performed with Don Cherry, Jon Hassell, Sam Rivers, Fred Anderson, Pharaoh Sanders, L. Shankar, Wadada Leo Smith, Muhal Richard Abrams. Philip Glass and Omar Sosa Since 1988 he performed with Yusef Lateef including duets and their large ensemble compositional

collaborations. Rudolph is known as one of the early innovators of what is now called “World Music”. In 1978 he and Gambian Kora player Foday Musa Suso co-founded The Mandingo Griot Society, and in 1988, he recorded the first fusion of American and Gnawa music with Sintir player and singer Hassan Hakmoun. More info @metarecords.com/adam.html

Appendix C

PROSPECT NEW ORLEANS

March 17, 2014

Sarah Story
816 Arabella Street Apt. B
New Orleans, LA 70115

U.S. Biennial, Inc.

401 Broadway, Suite 2313
New York, NY 10013

T +1 212 680 5305
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Brooke Davis Anderson

Dear Sarah Story,

Prospect New Orleans/U.S. Biennial is pleased to invite you to be the Symposium Coordinator for our upcoming conference “Thirty Years of Meaning and Influence – *Flash of the Spirit: African & Afro-American Art & Philosophy* by Robert Farris Thompson” as the fulfillment of your internship requirement for a Master of Arts in Arts Administration at the University of New Orleans.

The conference will explore the myriad influences of Robert Farris Thompson’s book *Flash of the Spirit: African & Afro-American Art & Philosophy* on the 30th anniversary of its premiere publication.

The conference will be held at the Ogden Museum of Southern Art in New Orleans, LA on Thursday, December 11 and Friday, December 12, 2014, and will culminate with a keynote lecture by Robert Farris Thompson on Friday evening.

As the Symposium Coordinator, you will be responsible for:

Letters of Invitation to session leaders and keynote speaker

Letters of Agreement to Session Chairs and the Keynote Speaker

Creating a database of contacts to receive the Call for Papers

Issuing a Call for Papers

Collecting papers and distributing to the appropriate Session Chairs

Acting as point person for inquiries from the website

Plan travel and lodging for Keynote Speaker, Conference Director, and Session Chairs

Promote and market conference.

Coordinating the logistics of the production of the conference at the Ogden

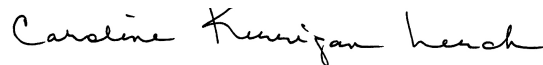
Contacting and coordinating all panelists (possible 20-30 speakers)

Assisting the Conference Director as needed

Sincerely,



Brooke Davis Anderson
Executive Director
Prospect New Orleans/US Biennial



Caroline Kerrigan Lerch
Deputy Director for the Public
Experience
Prospect New Orleans/US Biennial

Appendix D

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Michelle Moore

Media Contact, Deveney Communication

504-949-3999, ext. 221

mmoore@deveney.com

The Helis Foundation and Prospect New Orleans Announce Basquiat Exhibit in New Orleans

“Basquiat and the Bayou” opens fall 2014 at the Ogden Museum of Southern Art

NEW ORLEANS – July 8, 2014 – With generous lead support from the Diana Helis Henry and Adrienne Helis Malvin Art Funds of The Helis Foundation, Prospect New Orleans is pleased to present “Basquiat and the Bayou” as part of the International Contemporary Art Biennial “Prospect.3: Notes for Now.” The exhibition, which features the painting “Undiscovered Genius Of The Mississippi Delta,” will be on display from October 25, 2014 to January 25, 2015 at the Ogden Museum of Southern Art in New Orleans.

“Basquiat and the Bayou Presented by The Helis Foundation” is a focused exhibition of nearly a dozen paintings and works on paper by Jean-Michel Basquiat that consider his relationship to the American South, where Basquiat traveled shortly before his death in 1988. The project is organized and curated by Franklin Sirmans, The Terri and Michael Smooke Department Head and Curator of Contemporary Art at Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and Artistic Director for “Prospect.3: Notes for Now.”

“The presentation of ‘Basquiat and the Bayou’ embodies The Helis Foundation’s mission to enrich the cultural life of New Orleans and provide residents with new lenses through which to reflect upon their own past, present and future,” explained David A. Kerstein, President of The Helis Foundation.

Despite the brevity of his career, Basquiat's influence on contemporary artists – including several who will show as part of Prospect.3 – as well as on various rap artists, has made him an iconic and mythic figure in contemporary culture. As Ken Johnson recently stated in *The New York Times* “[Basquiat] was not only good; at his best he was one of the most original artists of his generation.”

“I’ve had a longstanding interest in the work of Jean-Michel Basquiat,” said Franklin Sirmans, Curator for “Basquiat and the Bayou Presented by The Helis Foundation.” “In 2005, I worked on the artist’s retrospective at the Brooklyn Museum, in addition to exhibitions dating back to 1993 and several catalogues, and I’m thrilled to have the opportunity to curate this exhibit with a fresh and renewed vision.”

While a number of exhibitions have surveyed the career of Jean-Michel Basquiat, few have attempted an in-depth examination of a specific narrative running through his work. “Basquiat and the Bayou Presented by The Helis Foundation” explores a body of work representing Basquiat’s internal fight with the shadows of the American South, shaped by a long history of slavery, colonialism and imperialism. New Orleans is the crossroads where the Mississippi greets the Middle Passage, and shortly before his death, Basquiat visited the city. He knew the importance to his work of the South and New Orleans specifically. The selection of works in the present exhibition explore themes of geography, history, and cultural legacy in Basquiat’s work in a number of ways.

A fully illustrated catalogue distributed by Delmonico Books/Prestel will accompany “Basquiat and the Bayou Presented by The Helis Foundation,” featuring an essay by Sirmans introducing the work and themes for the exhibition, along with essays by preeminent scholars Robert Farris Thompson and Robert

G. O'Meally. Thompson has written extensively on Basquiat and his text explores three artworks in great depth, tracking the complexities and culture-crossings of the artist's work. O'Meally offers fresh scholarship with an analysis of Basquiat's work in relationship to Romare Bearden and Louis Armstrong.

"Our partnership with the Ogden Museum of Southern Art personifies Prospect New Orleans' larger mission," said Brooke Davis Anderson, Executive Director of Prospect New Orleans, "of pairing international art and artists with New Orleans institutions in ways that enrich people's understanding and appreciation of both contemporary art and the city of New Orleans."

Prospect New Orleans will produce the conference "Thirty Years of Meaning and Influence: *Flash of the Spirit: African & Afro-American Art & Philosophy* by Robert Farris Thompson" at the Ogden Museum in New Orleans on December 11 & 12, 2014. C. Daniel Dawson is acting as Director of this conference. The conference will feature sessions that address the important way in which the publication, *Flash of the Spirit: African & Afro-American Art & Philosophy*, has been influential in the worlds of academia, international philosophy, art history, art, dance and music. *Flash* was a pivotal text for Basquiat. Dr. Grey Gundaker, Dr. Barbaro Martinez-Ruiz, Dr. Marta Moreno Vega, and Dr. Kellie Jones will lead the sessions. Dr. Robert Farris Thompson will provide the keynote address.

###

About "Basquiat and the Bayou"

The "Basquiat and the Bayou" exhibit is made possible by the Diana Helis Henry and Adrienne Helis Malvin Art Funds of The Helis Foundation. Additional support is contributed by the Henry Luce Foundation and the Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation.

About The Helis Foundation

The Helis Foundation is a Louisiana private foundation, established and funded by the William Helis Family. The Helis Foundation's resources and objectives are divided into two areas: the general fund and the Diana Helis Henry and Adrienne Helis Malvin Art Funds. The general fund focuses on community needs within the Metropolitan New Orleans area by grants to numerous charities. The Art Funds were established by bequests from Diana Helis Henry and Adrienne Helis Malvin. The Art Funds make grants to sustain, to provide free admission to, and to acquire art works for institutions within the Metropolitan New Orleans area. The Art Funds also underwrite major exhibits and projects, such as the Contemporary Arts Center's 30 Americans, Prospect.3's "Basquiat and the Bayou" exhibit scheduled for late 2014 and the Sculpture for New Orleans Poydras Corridor Project for notable sculpture installations on the Poydras Street medians.

About Prospect New Orleans

Prospect New Orleans is an International Arts Biennial. Its third iteration, "Prospect.3: Notes for Now," will take place from October 25, 2014 through January 25, 2015. The exhibition will present the work of more than 50 artists selected by Artistic Director Franklin Sirmans, in more than 15 locations throughout neighborhoods across New Orleans. For more information, please visit www.prospectneworleans.org.

Prospect New Orleans is free and open to the public Wednesdays through Sundays, 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.***

It will be closed on the following holidays:

- *November 27-28, 2014 (Thanksgiving)*
- *December 24-25, 2014 (Christmas Eve and Christmas Day)*
- *December 31, 2014-January 1, 2015 (New Year's Eve and New Year's Day)*

Due to academic calendars, the following venues have special exhibit closures, including:

- *Delgado University*

- November 26-30, 2014 (Thanksgiving Holiday)
- December 20, 2014-January 4, 2015 (Winter Break)
- Dillard University
 - November 26-28, 2014 (Thanksgiving Holiday)
 - December 20, 2014-January 4, 2015 (Winter Break)
- Xavier University
 - November 27-28, 2014 (Thanksgiving Holiday)
 - December 24, 2014-January 1, 2015 (Winter Break)

If traveling to New Orleans for Prospect.3, please consider that holiday schedules may preclude viewing at several venues. Book your travel so as to ensure the opportunity to experience the biennial in totality. Please visit our website for daily information regarding open and closed venues: www.prospectneworleans.org.

**General admission may apply at certain participating venues.*

***Longue Vue House and Gardens opens at 1pm on Saturday and Sunday, or by appointment. For more information or to make an appointment, please call [\(504\) 488-5488](tel:5044885488).*

Appendix E

**Thirty Years of Meaning and Influence -
Flash of the Spirit: African & Afro-American Art & Philosophy
by Robert Farris Thompson
Published in 1983**



Organized by **Prospect New Orleans** and the **Ogden Museum of Southern Art**



C. Daniel Dawson, Conference Director

Columbia University – IRAAS; New York University – The Gallatin School

Sarah Story, Conference Coordinator

Ogden Museum of Southern Art

**Generously funded by The Helis Foundation
with additional funding from the Henry Luce Foundation**

All events will take place at the Ogden Museum of Southern Art
925 Camp Street, New Orleans, LA 70130

Admission to the Ogden Museum will be free to all conference attendees with a conference button, which you will receive at registration. You must pick up a timed ticket for “Basquiat and the Bayou, Presented by The Helis Foundation” at the admissions desk of the museum.

Conference Schedule

Thursday, December 11

9AM - 10AM Complimentary coffee

Big Class will be streaming a video in the Library about their “Basquiat & the Bayou Presented by The Helis Foundation” projects

10AM Greeting by William Andrews, Director, Ogden Museum of Southern Art and
Brooke Davis Anderson, Executive Director, Prospect New Orleans
Welcome by C. Daniel Dawson, Conference Director
Prospect.3: Notes for Now Introduction by Franklin Sirmans

10:30AM - 1:00PM Session 1: Dr. Kellie Jones

Session 1 The Influence of Flash of the Spirit in the world of academia, scholarship and art history.
Panelists include Jessica N. Bell, Tobias Wofford, Charles Ian White, Alinta Sara, Cheryl Finley, and Henry John Drewal.

1:00PM - 2:30PM Lunch on your own

2:30PM - 5PM Session 2: Dr. Bárbaro Martínez-Ruiz

The international impact of *Flash...* with a focus on the geographic areas discussed in the text, e.g., Brazil, Cuba, Haiti, Mali, Nigeria, etc; Panelists include Cynthia Becker, Donald Cosentino, Duane Deterville, Michelle Eistrup, Phyllis Galembo, and Yuko Miki.

5PM – 6PM Reception at the Ogden Museum

6PM – 8PM Ogden After Hours- Basquiat and the Blues featuring Evan Christopher, Don Vappie and Alfred Roberts.
Weekly live music concert at the Ogden Museum http://www.ogdenmuseum.org/ogden_after_hours.html
Free to conference attendees

Friday, December 12

9AM - 10AM Complimentary coffee

Big Class will be streaming a video in the Library about their “Basquiat & the Bayou Presented by The Helis Foundation” projects

10AM Greeting and Welcome, C. Daniel Dawson, Conference Director

10:30AM - 1:00PM Session 3: Dr. Grey Gundaker

Session 3 will focus on the influence of Flash...in reconstructing how we define art or redefine objects in a cultural context.
Panelists include Willie Birch, David Doris, Freddi Williams Evans, Leslie King Hammond, Judith McWillie, and Lyneise Williams.

1:00PM - 2:30PM Lunch on your own

2:30PM - 5PM Session 4: Dr. Marta Moreno Vega

Session 4 will focus on the extra-academic influence of Flash... in the areas of religion, dance, music, theater and the visual arts.
Panelists include Johanna Almiron, Scott Barton, Zeco Ligiero, Robert O'Meally, and Adam Rudolph.

5PM – 7PM a reception at the Ogden Museum

7PM – 8PM Keynote Speaker Dr. Robert Farris Thompson

Appendix F



Thirty Years of Meaning and Influence of *"Flash of the Spirit: African & Afro-American Art & Philosophy"*

by Robert Farris Thompson

Published in 1984

U.S. Biennial, Inc.

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New York, NY 10013

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New Orleans, LA

December 11-12, 2014

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David Workman

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Brooke Davis Anderson

PARTICIPANT:

Name: Dr. Kellie Jones

Title:

Address:

Primary Tel:

Email:

PRESENTATION: *Title TBA*

DATE/TIME/LOCATION: Thursday, December 11, 10AM – 12:30PM, Ogden
Museum of Southern Art, Patrick F. Taylor Library

As conference producer, Prospect New Orleans agrees to the following:

For your participation, you will receive a \$2,000 honorarium (at the close of the conference), hotel arrangements for 3 nights, December 10, 11 and 12, 2014, and round trip coach airfare to New Orleans. Project Coordinator will arrange your hotel. She will coordinate your travel, in consultation with you.

As a Session Chair, you agree to the following:

As a Session Chair you will be responsible for creating a cohesive theme for your session, making a presentation at the start of your session, selecting 4-5 presenters from a "Call for Papers" that will be organized and overseen by Project Coordinator, Sarah Story, moderating the session conversation, and leading a Q&A during your 2.5 hour session.

Deadlines:

By April 25, 2014: Sign Letter of Agreement (below) and return 2 copies to
conference@ogdenmuseum.org

By April 25, 2014 Send Bio, headshot and CV to
conference@ogdenmuseum.org

PROSPECT NEW ORLEANS

May 16, 2014: Send title of Session and a description to
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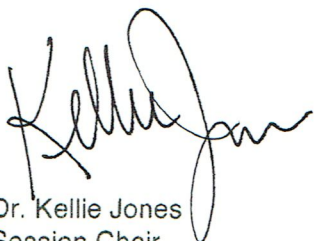
Fall 2014: Select 4-5 presenters from a "Call for Papers"

Other dates to come!

Additional Agreements:

I permit Prospect New Orleans and the Ogden Museum of Southern Art to photograph, podcast, audiotape and/or video record the conference for archival and/or publication in any format.

Signatures:



Dr. Kellie Jones
Session Chair
Social Security #:
Date:



Brooke Davis Anderson
Executive Director
Prospect New Orleans/US
Biennial
Date:

PROSPECT
NEW ORLEANS

Thirty Years of Meaning and Influence of
*"Flash of the Spirit: African & Afro-American Art &
Philosophy"*
by Robert Farris Thompson
Published in 1984

U.S. Biennial, Inc.
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New Orleans, LA December 11-12, 2014

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William A. Fagaly
Robert Herndon
William H. Hines
Beth Lambert
Nancy Delman Portnoy
David Workman

Ex Officio
Brooke Davis Anderson

PARTICIPANT:

Name: Dr. Kellie Jones

Title:

Address:

Primary Tel:

Email:

PRESENTATION: *Title TBA*

DATE/TIME/LOCATION: Thursday, December 11, 10AM – 12:30PM, Ogden
Museum of Southern Art, Patrick F. Taylor Library

As conference producer, Prospect New Orleans agrees to the following:

For your participation, you will receive a \$2,000 honorarium (at the close of the conference), hotel arrangements for 3 nights, December 10, 11 and 12, 2014, and round trip coach airfare to New Orleans. Project Coordinator will arrange your hotel. She will coordinate your travel, in consultation with you.

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Signatures:



Dr. Kellie Jones
Session Chair
Social Security #:
Date:



Brooke Davis Anderson
Executive Director
Prospect New Orleans/US
Biennial
Date:

Vita

Sarah Elizabeth Story joined the Ogden Museum of Southern Art in 2012 as the Project Coordinator and became the Deputy Director in 2015. She previously worked as Curator of Education at the University of Mississippi Museum and Historic Houses for three years where she initiated an internship program with the College of Education, Nutrition and Hospitality Management and Department of Art to serve the Museum's K-12 educational programs. She received a BFA in painting from the University of Mississippi in 2011, and is pursuing a Masters in Arts Administration at the University of New Orleans. Additionally, Story was an elementary school art teacher in Trujillo, Peru, and assisted with academic research in 14th century manuscripts in Dresden, Germany.



MASTER'S EXAMINATION REPORT Non-Thesis

CANDIDATE: Sarah Story

MAJOR PROGRAM: Graduate Program in Arts Administration

APPROVED

Kellie Chavez
Major Professor (typed)

Greene

Signature

Richard Reed
Committee Member (typed)

Signature

Ashlye Keaton

Ashlye Keaton

Committee Member (typed)

Signature

Executive Director of Graduate Programs

Signature

DATE OF EXAMINATION: June 25, 2015