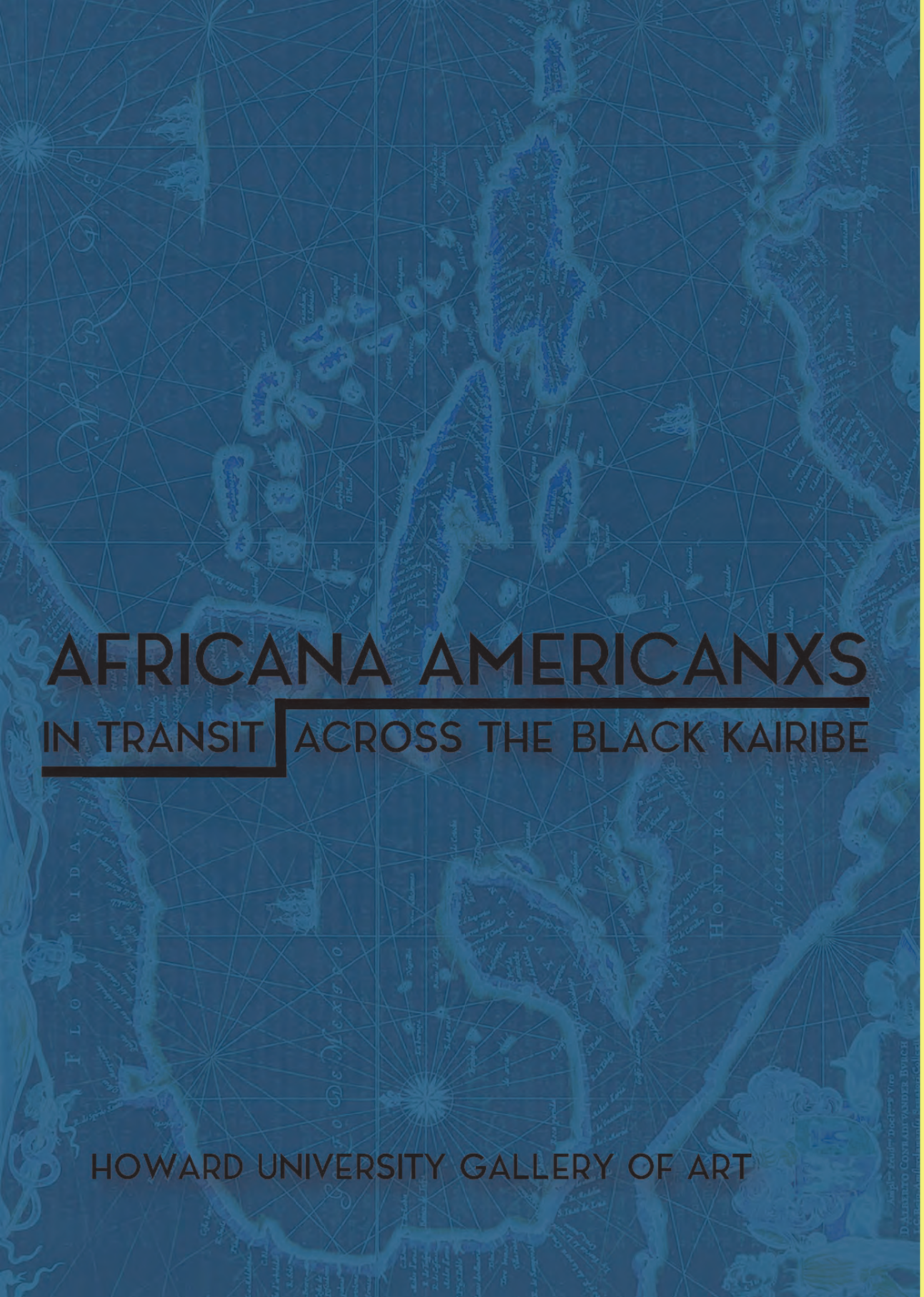
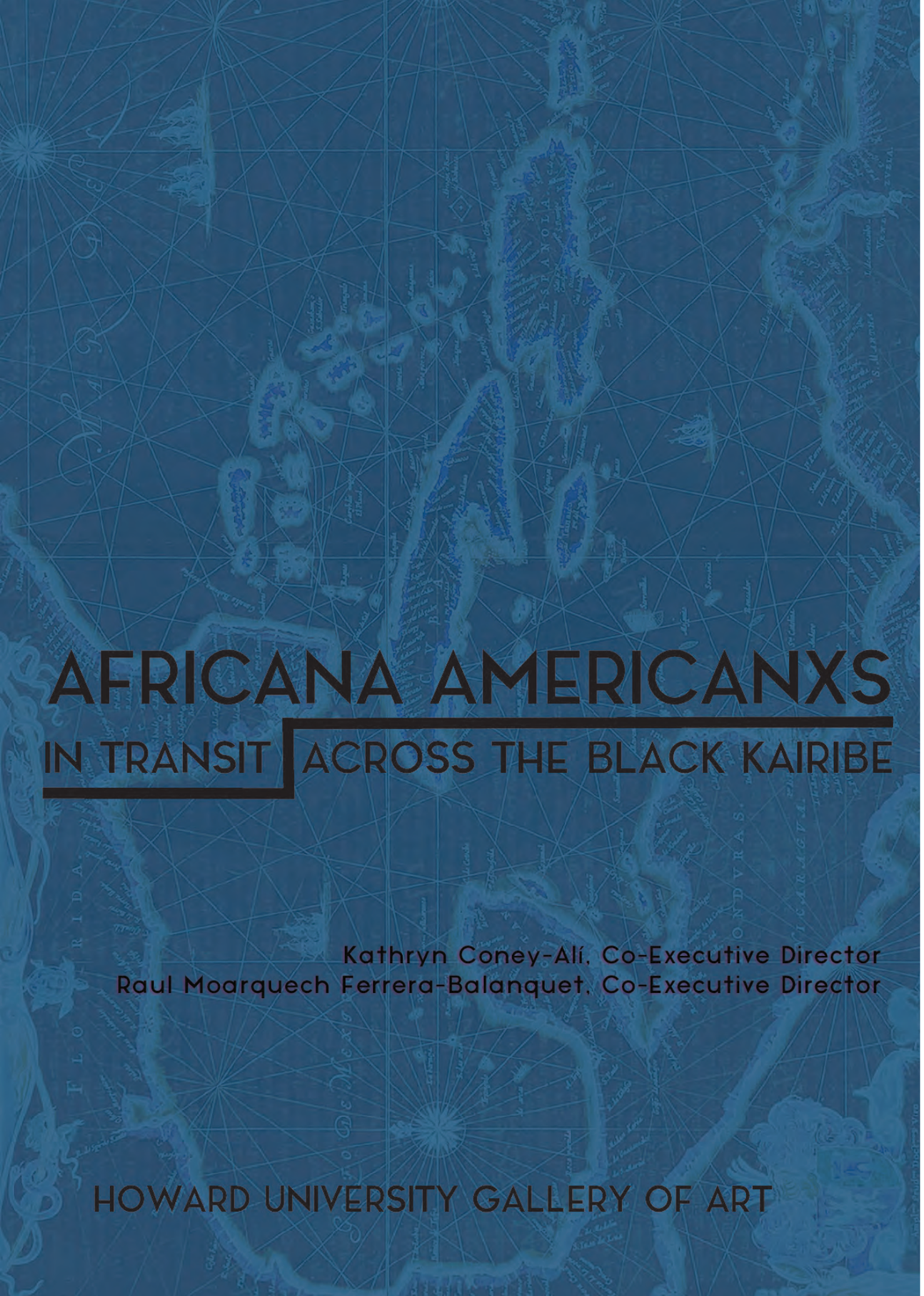


AFRICANA AMERICANXS

IN TRANSIT ACROSS THE BLACK KAIRIBE

HOWARD UNIVERSITY GALLERY OF ART



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Africana Americanxs In Transit Across the Black Kairibe
curated by Raul Moarquech Ferrera-Balanquet, PhD, for the
Howard University Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

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HOWARD UNIVERSITY
Chadwick A. Boseman College of Fine Arts

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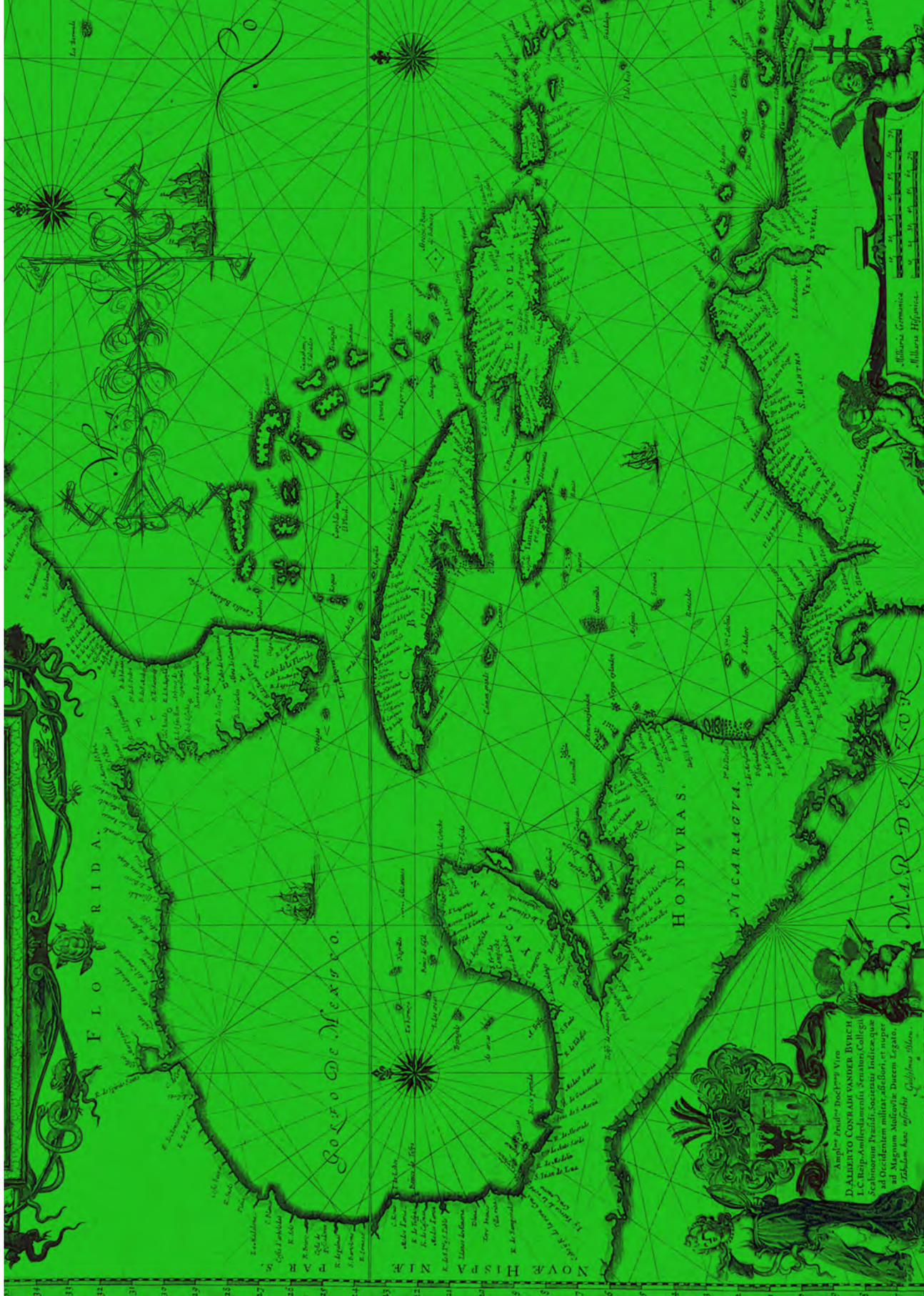


CO-EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS' FOREWORD

Since its founding in 1928, the Howard University Gallery of Art's mission has been guided by the creation of rotating exhibitions of contemporary arts and crafts that feature works of art from different periods, cultures, and countries. Addressing significant sociocultural issues, key political and cultural movements, and relevant artists, the gallery's cosmopolitan collection has gathered significant works by African, Caribbean, and African American artists.

On the eve of its centennial celebration, Howard University Gallery of Art recognizes the curatorship of James V. Harris, Alonzo Aden, James A. Porter, Albert Carter, David C. Driskill, Jeff Donaldson, and Tritobia Benjamin. Their curated exhibitions have provided students, the university, local communities, and regional audiences with an understanding of works by African descendants through exhibitions, public educational programs, and both scholarly and popular publications. Howard University Gallery of Art honors Dr. Alain L. Locke (1886–1954), who bequeathed approximately three hundred pieces of African sculptures and handicrafts to the collection. Locke's legacy and writings are major inspirations for this curatorial project.

When we entered the gallery's directorship, our main goal was to establish a Global Africa exhibition program. Recognizing the presence in the collection of important works produced by African Americans who traveled to the Caribbean and by Afro-Caribbean artists, our first instinct was to focus on the region's history, cultural production, and its diasporic migration flows. *Africana Americanxs In Transit Across the Black Kairibe* took three years in the making and, amid the building's renovation, as Co-Executive Directors, we re-imagined a hybrid online-presential program of activities—symposium, online catalog, website, conferences, screenings, bilingual publications, and workshops—to fulfill the initial goal of opening the exhibition in October 2025. We hope to install the physical exhibition when the renovation is completed next year.

Dean Emerita Phylicia Rashad was a key supporter of our endeavor. Assistant Dean Denise Saunders Thompson gifted us with the *Afro-Atlantic Histories* exhibition catalog, suggesting the study of this landmark exhibition. From the early days of her tenure as Interim Dean, Dr. Gwen Everett commanded the gallery to continue with the curatorial project. Dr. Raquel Monroe, Dean of the Chadwick A. Boseman College of Fine Arts, encouraged the exhibition during her first visit to campus last Spring. Tyeesha Munnerlyn, Budget and Fiscal Affairs Manager; Chad Eric Smith, Director of Marketing and Communications; and Tammy McCants, Director of Center for Student Success at the Chadwick A. Boseman College of Fine Arts, have been instrumental in the production of this exhibition. The support from Registrar, Janie Ritter, and Scott Baker, Assistant Director, is deeply appreciated.

An exhibition of this magnitude could not be possible without the support of its curatorial advisory board: Steven Nelson, Laura Lessing, Keith Morrison, TK Smith, Lyle Ashton Harris, Miguel Rojas-Sotelo, Lucrezia Cippitelli, Simone Frangi, Johanne Africott, Justin Randolph Thompson, Raimi Gbadamosi, and Meleane Harvey. Howard University Gallery of Art recognizes the symposium's presenters Alejandro de la Fuente, Ana Lucia Araujo, Isaac Julien, Billy Gérard Frank, Thomas Allen Harris, Wanda Raimundi-Ortiz, Montré Missouri, Steven Nelson, Raziel Perin, and Harmonia Rosales.

In organizing the exhibition, Howard University Gallery of Art benefited from the support of individuals and institutions such as Adrianne Childs and Camille Brown at The Phillips Collection; halley k. harrisburg, Director of New York City's Michael Rosenfeld Gallery; Emily Faith Martin, Distribution Manager at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago's Video Data Bank; London's Victoria Miro gallery; Isaac Julien Studio; Pedro Pablo Gómez Moreno, Director of the Doctorado en Estudios Artístico, Facultad de Artes, ASAB, Universidad Distrital José de Caldas, Bogota, Colombia; The Italian Council Prize, Harmonia Rosales Studio, Parallel Film Collective, Family Pictures USA, Nova Frontier Film Festival and LAB, and Pazo Fine Art, Washinton D.C.

At Howard University, the exhibition was supported by Dr. Raimi Gbadamosi, Chair of Department of Art, Benjamin Talton and The Moorland Spingarn Research Center; Dr. Lucia Araujo at the Department of History; Dr. Michael Ralph, Chair of the Department of Afro-American Studies; Dr. Tonija M. Hope, Executive Director of The Ralph J. Bunche International Affairs Center, the MFA Film Program, and Joham Watson, Director of the Armour J. Blackburn University Center.

Howard University Gallery of Art is recognized for leading global African critical and cultural efforts during challenging historical moments in the nation. Its preeminent collection of African diaspora art plays a key role in the development of major museum exhibitions in the United States and the world. We are honored for the sociocultural responsibilities invested in us during these troubled times.

Kathryn Coney-Alí
Raul Moarquech Ferrera-Balanquet
Co-Executive Directors, Howard University Gallery of Art

Loïs Mailou Jones, American, 1905 – 1998
Vèvè Voudou II (Voudou Symbols), 1963
Mixed media
21 1/8 × 25 1/4 in.

AFRICANA AMERICANXS IN TRANSIT ACROSS THE BLACK KAIRIBE

Dr. Raul Moarquech Ferrera-Balanquet

Africana Americanxs In Transit Across the Black Kairibe is an interdisciplinary curatorial project that centers on four main critical issues: a decolonial cartography of the Caribbean that recognizes the East as a sacred cosmic orientation; an understanding of Kairibe Malunge; migration as a key component of Africana[1] Kairibe[2] cultural expressions; the power of ancestral memory and oral traditions; and decolonizing the Caribbean's linguistic fragmentation imposed by European colonization.

Preserving the ancestors' memories, the inclusion of Yaka, Yòrubá, and Kongo sculptures in this exhibition highlights the sacredness of the cosmic East in Indigenous Kairibe and West African thought. Since the late 14th century, when transatlantic navigation and enslaved trafficking imposed the North as the primary spatial direction upon Western imaginaries, modern colonial global design altered centuries-old understandings of cosmic spatiality once oriented toward the East.[3] The use of the magnetic compass and its northern directionality marked the beginning of the Western colonial phenomenon, which over time led humanity's disconnection from the environment, the fatal pollution of the industrial era, and the today's climate crisis. Yet many of the Indigenous and Africana Karibe peoples still imagine the East as a sacred place, thanks to the power of ancestral memory and storytelling. After all, the sun arises in the East, and the hurricane—the heart of the sky, as it is named by Indigenous Kairibe—arrives on easterly winds.

European colonization has fractured the Caribbean diaspora into territories separated by different modern European languages. This fragmentation created lasting divisions and obstructed cultural dialogues among territories that share Indigenous and African ancestral memories. European modernity's hidden maneuvers undermined the fundamental alliances built between Indigenous Kairibe people and runaways West Africans, who, escaping from plantation regimens, reached the mountains and became part of the interethnic cimarrón communities.[4] This curatorial project decenters from the Anglophone, modern-post colonial notion of the "Black Atlantic" and expands the imagined Black territories of Haiti, Martinique, Mexico, Central America, the Spanish-speaking islands, and the northern coast of South America, and Brazil through the terms Africana—derived from Spanish—and Kairibe—an Indigenous Arawak name. These terms contextualize the undercurrents that flow through this exhibition.

Modernity constructed imperial categories based on race. Consequently, postmodern and postcolonial rhetoric often obscure the broader contexts of socio-political activism and cultural practices that sustain interethnic communities within the imagined geographies of the Africana Kairibe.

The Bantu concept of *Malungo* connotes ties of sisterhood and brotherhood forged through a difficult shared journey.[5] As a promise, Malungo represents the creation of social bonds grounded in communal struggle. For Africana descendants, *Malungaje* articulates a sense of camaraderie among artists, art historians, cultural workers, and curators involved in social activism and community work. The convergence in the Caribbean of diverse enslaved West African ethnic groups—including those from Kongo, Angola, Dahomey, Benin, Ghana, Yorubaland, Bamana, and Igbo—enabled the formation of hybrid spiritual and socio-cultural practices.[6] These expressions align with Indigenous Kairibe Ancestrality—both West African and Kairibe people believe in cosmic and environmental spiritual entities. *Malungaje* also evokes the notion of traveling together, remembering in relation, and projecting onto the artworks the ancestral memories that inspire an imagined, emancipated future to which we, as Indigenous and African diaspora people, aspire.

Africana Americanxs In Transit Across the Black Kairibe interrogates five critical frameworks through which historical, socio-political, and artistic movements intersect in the lives of African Americans, Afro-Caribbeans, and U.S. Africana Caribbean Latinxs: *Tracing Ancestral Memories*, *Africana Kairibe Imaginaries*, *Black Geometries*, *The Sacred East*, and *Africana Kairibe Diaspora*. This curatorial project presents a hemispheric history of Black diaspora subjectivity, honoring the intellectual legacy of Howard University professor, philosopher, scholar, and cultural activist Dr. Alain L. Locke; the writings of Suzanne Césarie, Édouard Glissant, Audre Lorde, Michel-Rolph Trouillot, and Jacqui Alexander; and the artistic representation of the Black Caribbean Diaspora as a constellation of visual cultures that sustain ancestral connectivity and envision a Global African futurity.

Africana Americanxs Nomadism

African American artists have traveled and worked in the Caribbean and Brazil throughout the 20th and 21st centuries. Simultaneously, Africana Caribbean artists have moved back and forth, across the continent and its surrounding waters. U.S. Afro-Latinx Caribbean artists live in New York, Miami, Chicago, Baltimore, Los Angeles, Virginia, and other cities across the United States. African Caribbean artists based in

Mexico and Europe are also part of the diaspora. The featured artists in this exhibition constitute a community that transcends birthplace, language, and spiritual practices. Through transcultural and intergenerational connections, they disrupt structural racism and challenge modernity's ongoing colonial legacies that frame the region as a set of island territories fragmented by language. In the Indigenous and Africana Kairibe imaginaries, Yucatán, Belize, Central America, Panama, Colombia, Venezuela, Guyana, and Brazil are Caribbean territories. Even Florida—under Spanish rule until the British Empire invaded Havana in 1762—is conceived as a Caribbean, mobile site inhabited by immigrants and first-generation Cubans, Haitians, Puerto Ricans, Nicaraguans, and Venezuelans, among others.

In 1943, Dr. Alain L. Locke delivered a series of six public lectures in Haiti titled "*The Role of the Negro in the American Culture*." These lectures articulated a new Black diasporic imaginary that inspired him to reevaluate the presence of African descendants living across the Americas.[7] Locke, a respected scholar of African Art, expanded his understanding of the Black diaspora by documenting a continental cultural history and the professional careers of Black artists to that date. In a 1940 publication,[8] Locke included reproductions and bibliographical notes on Africana Cuban artists Pastor Argudín y Pedroso, Ramón Loy, Alberto Peña, and Teodoro Ramos Blanco, along with Jamaican-born Ronald C. Moody, who was living in London.

African American artist William Edouard Scott (1884–1964) received a Julius Rosenwald Fellowship to travel to Haiti in 1931–32, where he visually documented the country's life and culture. During that time, Scott befriended Haitian artist Petion Savain (1906–1973). In his paintings, Scott captured the facial features, body gestures, and clothing of Haitian market women, peasant children, manual laborers, and fishermen. Employing a slight focal distance from the viewer, Scott portrays figures, actions, and landscapes while placing his subjects in familiar environments. Scott's oil on board *Port au Prince, Haiti* (1933), is a colorful figurative landscape in the collection of the Howard University Gallery of Art.

Equal access to travel was a major concern for Afro-Cuban and African American institutions from the early 1930s to the late 1950s. Records from the 1933 Harmon Foundation's *Exhibition of Production by Negro Artists*, held at the New York's Art Center from February 20 to March 4, includes the name of Pastor Argudín y Pedroso, along with Richmond Barthé, James A. Porter, William Edouard Scott, Ellis Wilson, Teodoro Ramos Blancos, James V. Herring, James Lesesne Wells, Aaron Douglas, Robert S. Duncanson, Meta Vaux Warrick Fuller, Augusta Savage, and Laura Wheeler Waring, among others.[9]

In February 1935, the Afro-Cuban artist Argudín y Pedroso had a solo exhibition at the Harmon Foundation's headquarters at 140 Nassau Street in New York City. A portrait of Arturo Alfonso Schomburg, curator of the Division of Negro Literature, History, and Prints at the New York Public Library, was included.[10] It is now part of the New York Public Library Collection.

Teodoro Ramos Blanco (1902–1972) participated in the cultural exchange between Afro-Cuban and African American communities since the early days of the Harlem Renaissance. A graduate of the Havana's prestigious San Alejandro Academy of Fine Arts, Ramos won the Gold Medal at the 1929 Ibero-American Exposition in Seville, and established a studio in Rome in 1930. The Cuban artist was included in the 1933 Harmon Foundation's *Exhibition of Production by Negro Artists*.[11]

In 1933, when President Franklin D. Roosevelt's "Good Neighbor" policy shifted the focus of U.S. military intervention in Latin American to a hemispheric cultural exchange, Howard University emerged as a key institution in this effort. Artist and pioneering African American art historian James A. Porter (1905–1970), professor in Howard University's Department of Art, received a Rockefeller Foundation grant in 1946 to study Cuban and Haitian cultures. His oil on canvas *Balada del Guije* (c. mid-1940s) resulted from research conducted during his time in the Caribbean.

During the 1930s and 1940s, under the leadership of Dr. Mordecai W. Johnson, Howard University became the center of Black culture in the United States. Rayford Whittingham Logan, a history professor at Howard University from 1938 to 1965, promoted cultural and educational exchanges between African American, Afro-Cuban, and Latin American educational institutions and communities.[12] Thanks to Professor Logan's efforts, in 1941, Afro-Cuban sculptor Teodoro Ramos Blanco spent time at Howard University creating a bust of Afro-Cuban independence leader General Antonio Maceo, which was unveiled at the university on June 19, 1941. Ramos Blanco's presence was celebrated as an expression of Pan-American goodwill between the Afro-Cuban and African American communities. According to a reportage by the *Pittsburgh Courie*r, dated June 21, 1941, Dr. Mordecai W. Johnson, Ángel Suarez Rocabruna of Havana's Afro-Cuban Club Atenas—also invited by Rayford Whittingham Logan—, and the distinguished scholar Dr. Eric Williams participated in the unveiling ceremony.

In March 1941, sixteen years after leaving Cuba for Europe, Wifredo Lam, along with several Surrealist artists—including André Breton, Victor Serge, and many other refugees—escaped the Nazi German occupation

by boarding the ship Capitaine Paul-Lemerle in the French port of Marseille. Lam first landed in Martinique, where he met Aimé and Suzanne Césaire,[13] and then traveled to Havana in August of that year. The artist was 39. His return to the native land inspired the reversed projection of ancestral memories onto the canvas, as Lam reconnected with his Afro-Caribbean roots and spirituality. The oil on burlap, *Exodus* (1948) was shown at his 1950 solo exhibition at the Pierre Matisse Gallery in New York City.[14] Dr. Arthur B. Spingarn purchased the painting, and donated it to the Howard University Gallery of Art Collection in 1952.

After receiving a grant from the Julius Rosenwald Fund in 1945, Elizabeth Catlett traveled to Mexico City, where she joined the Taller de Gráfica Popular (TGP). There, she produced *The Negro Woman* (1946–1947), a series of fifteen linoleum prints in which she developed a historiographic narrative of oppression, depicting the racial conflicts experienced by African Americans. Honoring renowned Black historical heroines and working-class women, the series places African American women at the forefront of sociopolitical and historical realities of segregated Black communities. The images comment on fears of enslavement, liberation struggles, the Great Migration northward, and Black musical rhythms.

Loïs Mailou Jones's visual and sensorial vocabulary shifted toward Black geographies, communities, multidirectional geometries, and spiritual practices, as she made frequent trips to Haiti in the 1960s. Jones's extensive experience in depicting impressionistic landscapes inspired some of her early Haitian-based artworks. The vibrant presence of Black Caribbeans in the streets, plazas, markets, religious ceremonies, and social life captivated the artist. Her Haitian artworks from the 1960s share a sense of mobility, perhaps inspired by the island's cultural dynamics and the artist's migratory experience. Haiti offered a new range of subjects and experiences that made Jones part of the island rather than a displaced observer, as seen in the focal distance and angular perspective of her landscapes from the 1937-1938 French period.

At the beginning of the 21st century, African American interdisciplinary artist and media maker Tomas Allen Harris traveled to Salvador Da Bahia, Brazil, tracing a path through the Caribbean and Brazil similar to that taken by Alain L. Locke, Loïs Mailuo Jones, and James A. Porter.

Transmodern Ancestral Memories

For Indigenous Kairibe and Africana descendants, what is left behind is reverse-projected into the infinite cosmic landscape of our imagination. The future is an ongoing series of inverted memories, announcing the unknown that does not terrify, the uncertainty that transform transatlantic survival into the energy of belonging.[15]

Africana Americanxs In Transit Across the Black Kairibe articulates an expansive notion of Negritude, Blackness, Africanness, and solidarity. The exhibition assembles subjective experiences and creative expressions that interconnect intergenerational, multilevel, and multidirectional synchronic and diachronic planes and temporalities. By incorporating ancestral memories and the processes (or acts) of remembering, the curatorial framework rejects the modern notion of "looking back" to the Transatlantic Slave Trade as the original rupture, inspiring emancipation. The West African sculptures at the core of *Africana Americanxs In Transit Across the Black Kairibe* are spiritual objects that establish a transmodern reminiscence to amplify the temporality of remembering. In this exhibition, remembering is understood as the process of sensing a relation among artworks. As historical archives expressing sociocultural struggles and experiences, the exhibition's visual narrative interrupts global structural racism that continues to marginalize African-descended artists—those born in the Caribbean, immigrants, exiles, and subsequent generations born in the United States, Canada, and Europe.

Ancestrality and cultural memory are essential to Africana Caribbean diasporic identity. Ancestral memory serves as a vital links to the oral traditions that sustain communities, employing acts of remembering as tools for navigating contemporary challenges and imagining prosperous, just Black futures. Migration weaves these memories across global diasporas, creating dynamic cultural exchanges that enrich both artistic and social expressions.

In his film *Palimpsest: Tales Spun From Sea and Memories* (2022), Billy Gerard Frank explores how history continues to shape the struggles and triumphs of Africana Caribbean peoples, connecting present-day narratives to the enduring legacies of slavery, resistance, and independence.

Africana Caribbean spirituality and Indigeneity reflect a profound synthesis of African, Indigenous, and European influences, offering pathways to resilience and resistance. Practices such as Vodou, Palo Monte, Santería, and Rastafarianism provide sociocultural and spiritual frameworks for healing, community-building, and reclaiming autonomy.

Informed by feminism, gender and identity politics, environmental consciousness, and LGBTQI+ rights, Africana Kairibe cultural movements challenge systemic inequalities inherited from colonialism. These intersecting frameworks advocate for greater inclusivity and representation, empowering marginalized voices and reimagining

traditional gender roles. Artists, activists, and scholars such as Wanda Raimundi-Ortiz (U.S./Puerto Rico), Keith Morrison (Jamaica/U.S.), and Coco Fusco (U.S./Cuba) amplify the complexities of identity, addressing issues of race, sexuality, and socio-economic disparities while fostering solidarity within diverse communities.

Cuban American interdisciplinary artist Coco Fusco's video *a/k/a Mrs. George Gilbert* (2004) examines the role of photography in constructing racial stereotypes that circulated during the FBI's hunt for African American philosopher and activist Angela Davis.

The exhibition asserts and underscores that there is no single way to articulate Africana Kairibe identities, express Africana Kairibe memories, or imagine future creative projections. It is within this multidimensional imagined cultural phenomenon that this curatorial project considers how bodies and imaginaries amplify the complexity of languages, agency, spirituality, socioeconomic status, erotic identity, creative expressions, nationhood, and interethnic mixing. There is no pure form of Africana Kairibeness. But there is always a mixing, a hybrid collusion, a cross-cultural move. Always negotiating identities and sociocultural meanings, enacting fluid erotic transgressions, re-coding and transcoding of what is lived or remembered. In the Africana Kairibe imagined geographies, there are always ongoing resignifications of critical and creative expressions.

Opaque Caribbean Roots

This exhibition examines U.S. Africana Caribbean artistic production as it connects to diasporic territories in the Greater Caribbean. Aiming to dismantle the colonial-era stereotypes that resurfaced during the most recent U.S. presidential election, *Africana Americanxs In Transit Across the Black Kairibe* highlights the ancestral forms, representations, and structures through which Africana Caribbean-born and descendant artists re-signify their lives, cultures, and the sociopolitical expressions. This exhibition unmasks the colonial mechanisms that fabricate such stereotypes.

Norman Lewis not only experienced erasure from the history of abstract art, but also from his Caribbean roots—his parents were immigrants from St. Kitts—a fate shared by his friend Ernest Crichlow, a first-generation Barbadian American, and printmaker Robert Blackburn, a first-generation Jamaican immigrant. Even though Lewis refused to be labeled during his lifetime, the limited Western European notion of Black art obliterated Lewis's friendships with Ad Reinhardt, Robert Motherwell, Louise Bourgeois, Williem de Kooning, and Adolph Gottlieb, as well as his membership in the 1940s Abstract Expressionist movement.

Guyanese-born Frank Bowling migrated to England where he studied at the Royal College of Art in London. During his prolific career, the artist has explored a wide range of approaches, including figurative, Color Field painting, Pop art, abstraction, and collage. His iconic *Map Paintings* series consists largely of abstract works containing ghostly silhouettes of the continents of Africa and South America, which were traced from images cast by an optical projector epidiascope. The series was shown at his solo exhibition at the Whitney Museum of American Art in 1971. In the early 1980s, Bowling began incorporating found objects and acrylic foam into his painting, further blurring the line between painting and sculpture.

Known as one of the most important artists of the second half of the 20th century, the first-generation Haitian-Puerto Rican-desdended, Brooklyn-born Jean-Michel Basquiat developed a visual grammar informed by Haitian, Puerto Rican, Nuyorican, and Black popular cultures. It included a plethora of symbols, such as the crown, the griot, the warrior, the hammer and the sickle, as well as Haitian vèvè cosmograms, a triad of vertical line, lists, texts, diagrams, and the serpent.

Born in Brooklyn to Barbadian immigrant parents, Ernest T. Crichlow grew up in a working-class, multiethnic community. While attending New York's School of Commercial Illustrating and Advertising Arts, Crichlow meet Augusta Savage at her Harlem studio. There, he befriended Norman Lewis and became a member of the Harlem Artists Guild. During the Depression, Crichlow learned about lithography and etching through Harlem's WPA Federal Art Project, where he created the ironically-titled 1938 lithograph, *Lovers*, in which a hooded KKK man grabs a Black female whose right hand tries to unmask her assailant.

Racialized stereotypes have long obscured the contributions of Africana Caribbean migrant communities to the nation's diverse cultural, economic, and social landscapes. Contrary to the demeaning caricatures that have been circulated, Africana Caribbean Latinx migrant communities are not dog meat eaters, nor are Caribbean territories—including those under United States jurisdictions, such as Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands—"garbage lands in the middle of the sea," as claimed in recent racialized rhetoric shared on social media and speeches during the last presidential election campaign. While much of this racialized portrayal of Caribbean Blackness has become fodder for right-wing discourse, the true contributions of Africana Caribbean Latinx migrant communities to the United States's cultural richness have been obscured and marginalized.

Art and cultural production in these communities, speak to Black bodies and lived experiences—sociopolitical, historical, communal,

cultural, spiritual, and environmental—as the sources of their visual, audiovisual, and performance expressions.

The placement of West African sculptures in relation to 20th and 21st century Black diaspora art production reaffirms the exhibition's goal of cosmically reorienting the body and the community's imaginaries to the sacred East. By embracing multidimensional imaginaries, *Africana Americanxs In Transit Across the Black Kairibe* examines how bodies and collective experiences—as well as millennia-old knowledge embedded in the ancestral memory—amplify languages, spiritual practices, socioeconomic realities, and fluid erotic identities, all woven into personhood, nationhood, and interethnic exchange.

As future-reversed memories, imagined geographies and temporalities, and socio-cultural actions, the artworks and films included in *Africana Americanxs In Transit Across the Black Kairibe* honor centuries of cultural virtuosity inscribed in Indigenous Kairibe, African, and interethnic cultural production. Ultimately, this exhibition celebrates the creative forces that have shaped and continue to shape Black futurities.

Notes

1. The use of the Spanish term *Africana* intends to decolonize the linguistic fragmentation imposed by modern colonial languages in the Caribbean during colonial occupation.
2. Karibe is the Loko Arawak term defining the Caribbean. Kaire means "island," and be is the plural nominal form of the substantive.
3. Walter D. Mignolo affirms that the "spatial dimension imbedded in the modern world system shows its external borders where the colonial difference was and still is played out… the physical as well as the imaginary location where the coloniality of power is at work in confrontation of two kinds of local histories displayed in different space and times across the planet…Christian and Native American cosmologies." See *Local Histories/Global Designs: Coloniality, Subaltern Knowledges, and Border Thinking* (Princeton University Press, 2000, ix).
4. Michel-Roulph Trouillot explains how understandings of the Third World's historical narratives have been shaped by Western convention and the distribution of archival power. See *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Bacon Press, 1995, 55).
5. The term Malungo brings together the ideas of brotherhood/sisterhood, the "big canoe," and misfortune. For more information concerning the meanings of *Malungaje* in the Black Caribbean and Brazil, see Jerome C. Branche, *The Poetics and Politics of Diaspora: Transatlantic Musings* (Routledge, 2015, 4-7).
6. Robert Farris Thompson argues that the encounter of different West African ethnic groups gave rise to Africana Caribbean spirituality and cosmology. See *Flash of the Spirits* (1984, 164–165).
7. "The Negro in the Three Americas," one of the lectures published in 1944 by *The Journal of Negro Education*, articulates a sense of connectivity and communality between Pan-Americanism and the presence of African descendants in the American hemisphere, marked by the shared experiences of slavery and racism.
8. In *The Negro In Art: A Pictorial Record of the Negro Artist and of the Negro Theme in Art* (1940).
9. Records from the 1933 Harmon Foundation's *Exhibition of Production by Negro Artists*, held at the New York's Art Center from February 20 to March 4 can be accessed online at https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/857075 (accessed April 22, 2025)
10. *The New York Age*, February 23, 1935, p. 3.
11. Records from the New York Public Library Digital Collections include a letter written in Havana, dated January 16, 1933, testifying to the exchange between Arturo Alfonso Schomburg and Teodoro Ramos Blanco. Ramos Blanco expressed concern about financial resources to travel to New York and described conversations at the American Consulate in Havana, regarding the transportation of his artworks.
12. For more information, consult Frank Andre Guridy's *Afro-Cubans and African Americans in a World of Empire and Jim Crow* (University of North Carolina Press, 2010, 180).
13. In "Surrealism and Us" (1943), Suzanne Césaire refers to this historical period and affirms that the dynamic of surrealism [in the Caribbean] is always disruptive, "which offers the greatest chances for success." The essay was first published in *Tropiques* 8-9, and reprinted in *Surrealism and Us: Caribbean and African Diaspora Artists Since 1940*, edited by Maria Elena Ortiz (Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth and DelMonico Books, 2024, 91-93).
14. From 1944 to 1950, while living and working in Havana, Wifredo Lam exhibited at Pierre Matisse Gallery in New York.
15. In *Poetics of Relation* (1997), Édouard Glissant explains the three instances of Caribbean imaginary as metamorphosis in relation to the sea and the transatlantic ancestral memories embedded in the bodies of Africana descendants living in Continental America. The "third abyss," as Glissant names it, explains how what the uncertainty projects reversed memories "of all that had been left behind" (5-9).

Billy Gerard Frank, Grenada/USA, b. 1970
Indigo: Entanglements Fragment G-15, 2024
Mix Media, Natural Pigments, Fabric and Text on Wood Panel
12 x 12 x 1.5 in.

TRACING ANCESTRAL MEMORIES

Romare Bearden's extended sojourns in the 1970s and 1980s to the Caribbean island of St. Martin, where he and his wife built a second home, coincided with his increasing focus on the use of watercolor. This experimentation led him to monotype printmaking and, later, to silkscreen printing.

As seen in *Misty Island* (1977), Bearden's Caribbean sense of space amplifies the frontal plane. The portrait of a large barefoot Black woman, carrying a fish hat and holding a sack of fruit in her left arm, produces an optical depth in relation to the surrounding landscape. The sharp, contrasting kaleidoscope of colors reminds viewers of Bearden's collage techniques. Presented against a tropical palette, the standing Black female gazing at the viewer, becomes a magnificent gesture that transforms the visual composition into an imagined, moving narrative. As in oral storytelling, the local people's memories blend with the island's sounds and the lush landscape.

Born in Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, Bearden's family moved to New York City in 1914. He studied at the Art Students League with George Grosz, a German immigrant who had been a major figure in the Dada artistic movement. The politically charged Dada images interested Bearden, as seen works from his first solo show, held at 306 West 141st Street—a vital meeting place for artists in the Harlem funded by the WPA Federal Art Project. Bearden was an original member of Spiral, a group formed in 1963, which was active in responding to the exclusion of African American artists from the Metropolitan Museum of Art's controversial *Harlem on My Mind* exhibition in 1969.

Romare Bearden, American, 1911 - 1988
Misty Island, 1977
Silkscreen
21 x 27 in.

The Ronald W. and Patricia Walters Collection

In 1945, after receiving a grant from the Julius Rosenwald Foundation, Catlett traveled to Mexico City and began working at Taller de Gráfica Popular (TGP). There, she produced *The Negro Woman* (1946–1947), a series of fifteen linoleum prints in which the artist developed a historiographic trace of oppression depicting the racial conflicts experienced by African Americans.

Honoring renowned Black historical heroines as well as working-class women, the series places African American women at the foreground of the sociopolitical and historical realities of segregated Black communities. The series portrays the fears of enslavement, struggles for liberation, the Great Migration to the North, and Black musical rhythm. Catlett positions herself within this series, beginning to heal the experienced colonial wounds inflicted by life in such racialized nations as the United States and Mexico.

As in *...Special Houses* (1946), the faces of two women looking past each other are situated against an urban apartment-houses landscape, enunciating a feminist pictorial emancipation in relation to social issues. The visual composition narrates the working-class conditions of northern cities and makes references to the segregated housing Catlett experienced when attending the University of Iowa.

Born in Washington, D.C., in 1915, Catlett graduated from Howard University with a B.S.A. in 1935 and earned a master's degree in sculpture at the University of Iowa, where she studied with Grant Wood. During the 1960s Civil Rights and Black Power movements, Catlett's work gained recognition and was greatly admired. In the 1970s and 1980s, the Feminist movement and the Identity Politics Generation in the United States brought her even more widespread attention and respect.

Elizabeth Catlett, American - Mexican, 1915 - 2012
...Special Houses, 1946
Linocut on medium-weight wove paper
5 1/4 × 7 in.

Funded by a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1949, Eldzier Cortor traveled to the West Indies to paint in Jamaica and Cuba before settling in Haiti for two years, during which he taught classes at the Centre d'Art in Port-au-Prince. His encounters with African Diaspora and Caribbean cultures, as well as the islands' tropical environments provided fresh inspirations for Cortor's exploration of abstract design and the beauty of the Black female figure.

The figurative expressionist engraving *Cuban Theme* (c. 1949) combines Caribbean folk and surrealist patterns, as the print becomes fantastically modern through Cortor's modulations of vivid red, yellow, and gray tones. Committed to depicting beauty in the Black body, Cortor presents elongated female anatomies—a distinctive feature of his work—positioned at multiple distances alongside forms that are neither figurative nor purely abstract. Here, the visual narrative echoes West African Art, abstraction, and the interior spaces of late 1800s Cuban colonial houses.

Born in Richmond, Virginia, in 1916, Eldzier Cortor moved with his family to Chicago during the Great Migration. In 1935, he enrolled as a full-time student at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, where he studied Western and African Art, as well as the museum's vast collection.

In 1940, with fellow artist and organizer Margaret Burroughs, Cortor founded the South Side Community Art Center (SSCAC), a surviving art center from the Works Progress Administration era. Thanks to a 1944 Rosenwald Foundation Fellowship, the artist spent two years in the Sea Islands—home of the Gullah African descendants—studying and visually recreating both the features of the traditional Sea Islanders and their way of life.

Eldzier Cortor, American, 1916 - 2015
Cuban Theme, c. 1949
Color engraving
19 × 23 in.

From 1983 until his death in 2017, Barkley Hendricks traveled regularly to Jamaica, embracing the island as a healing place away from the cold weather of New London, Connecticut. Inspired by the island's surroundings and its pure, spacious light, Hendricks sought to capture this ethereal beauty, creating a dozen oil paintings that depict mountains, sea landscapes, distant villages, and limestone quarries.

Composed on oval tondo canvases, a format popular in the Italian Renaissance, *Black River Mountain View* (c. 2003–2008) invites the viewer into the world of the natural and sublime. Mounted in a gold leaf frame, the painting emulates the shape of the human eye, offering a central field of vision and limiting the peripheral view.

As in the paintings of 19th-century masters –Duncanson, Bannister, Dorsey–Hendricks' landscape transcends space and time as a form of sensorial transplantation, offering a sense of calm that removes–yet speaks of–spatial racial geographies. The eyes slowly travel from the mountains, reaching the sea. The weaves, caressing the shore, invoke the historical impact of the transatlantic slave trade and British coloniality.

A graduate of Yale University, Hendricks was known for large-scale artworks and life-size figures in oil, often set against a monochromatic acrylic ground composition. He was an integral force in the transformation of racial imaginaries in the 1970s. His visual discourse valorized Black self-consciousness in emphatic displays that are situated at the intersection of avant-garde tactics and kitsch genres, suggesting a series of contrapuntal relations between various forms of cultural alterity and vernacular style.

Barkley Hendricks, American, 1945 - 2017
Black River Mountain View, c. 2003-2008
Oil on linen
11 in. diameter

As she made frequent trips to Haiti were made in the 1960s, Loïs Mailou Jones's visual and sensorial vocabulary shifted toward black geographies, communities, multidirectional geometries, and spiritual practices. Living in Port-au-Prince introduced Jones to visual art traditions and cultural forms that informed her creative production beyond the Impressionist and Post-Impressionist styles she previously studied. Sensing transnational mobility, Jones was inspired to become conversant with Creole and Voduo's cultural iconographies, symbols, and cosmologies.

Veve Voudou III (1963) is a testament to her cultural understanding and synthesis of Haitian Creole secular, religious, and spiritual worlds. The placement of the Marasa, Loko, Ayizan, and Gran Bois vèvè ideograms within the overall composition of her paintings demonstrates how Jones' spatial imaginary moved away from a learned central perspective, embracing a de-Westernized visual narrative. Departing from her impressionistic landscapes, Jones incorporated Vodou symbolism and accented patterns into her visual vocabulary, drawing on African multidirectional geometry.

As if her early studies in design and pattern were motivated the creative process, the artist understood the vitality of vèvè graphic writing and ceremoniously placed these symbols on the canvas.

As the Jones's representational style and geometric figurations changed, her color palette also transformed to express the profundity of her own ancestral excavations—the acquired knowledge, the meanings, and grammar of a visual language that, although embedded in her unconscious, had been repressed and silenced by Western education. Her Haitian artworks from the 1960s share a sense of mobility, perhaps inspired by the location's cultural dynamics and the artist's migratory experience.

Loïs Mailou Jones, American, 1905 - 1998
Veve Voudou III, 1963
Oil on canvas
37 × 45 3/4 in.

Drawing on the socio-cultural and spiritual knowledge experienced she absorbed in Haiti, Loïs Mailou Jones composed a harmonious visual arrangement of captivating images, icons, bright colors, symbols, and geometrical configurations. In *Vèvè Voudou II (Voudou Symbols)* (1963), viewers can appreciate the superimposition of multiple planes and how the colored figures intersect these planes in a contiguous movement, even if they are at different levels. Jones understood that the Haitian cultural knowledge she acquired, and West African geometry in its Afro-Caribbean form, is both multidimensional and multi-directional, in contrast to the three-dimensional Cartesian spatiality.

The artist chose to place, at the front plane, the vèvè representing the Loa Agaou, the deity associated with storms, the sounds of thunder, and tremors. Perhaps, as is customary when Vodou high priests are consulted, Jones was advised that due to her personality, the Loa Agaou was guarding her head. In the plane below, a graphic representation of the Loa Ayizan—female healing wisdom and power, protector of the initiated, marketplace, and commerce—appears with its lower portion covered by a dark blue figure. It is possible that Loïs Maliou Jones had been mastering the iconography of the Loas.

Incorporating text in a graphic style places the artwork in conversation with the typographic experimentation of the Dada movement. At the deepest horizontal plane, a graphic composition simulating Dada poetry transcribes, in the Latin alphabet, the country's name along with the word "vodou" and several of the Loas—mystères—or deities' epithets: Kadja, Bosou, Damballah, Ossamge, Zaka. Maliou Jones integrates Vodou imagery to implicitly link the present and future of African American culture to Haitian, Afro-Caribbean, and African diaspora ancestral memory.

Loïs Mailou Jones, American, 1905 - 1998
Vèvè Voudou II (Voudou Symbols), 1963
Mixed media
21 1/8 × 25 1/4 in.

The 1986 silkscreen *The Birth of Toussaint* is part of the series *The Life of Toussaint L'Ouverture*. Developed by Jacob Lawrence in collaboration with Howard University alumnus Lou Stovall (1937–2023), the 15-print silkscreen series was printed at Stovall's workshop in Washington, D.C., between 1986 and 1997. Presenting an angular perspective and shades of brown, eggplant, and olive green, the print depicts a mother tucked in bed holding a baby in her arms, a window at the far left, a small table in the center of the room, and tall green strands of grass visible through the window.

Commissioned by The Amistad Research Center in New Orleans, the artist translated the historical narrative first developed in his 1936–38 original tempera-on-paper series, which debuted at the Baltimore Museum of Art in 1939. *The Life of Toussaint L'Ouverture* laid the groundwork for Lawrence's lifelong interest in human freedom and social justice. Toussaint L'Ouverture commanded enslaved Africans and free Black Haitian rebelling forces against the brutal French colonial system in 1791. Retelling the Black Haitian narrative of liberation, the artist advanced a unique exploration of Black cultural expression and pride.

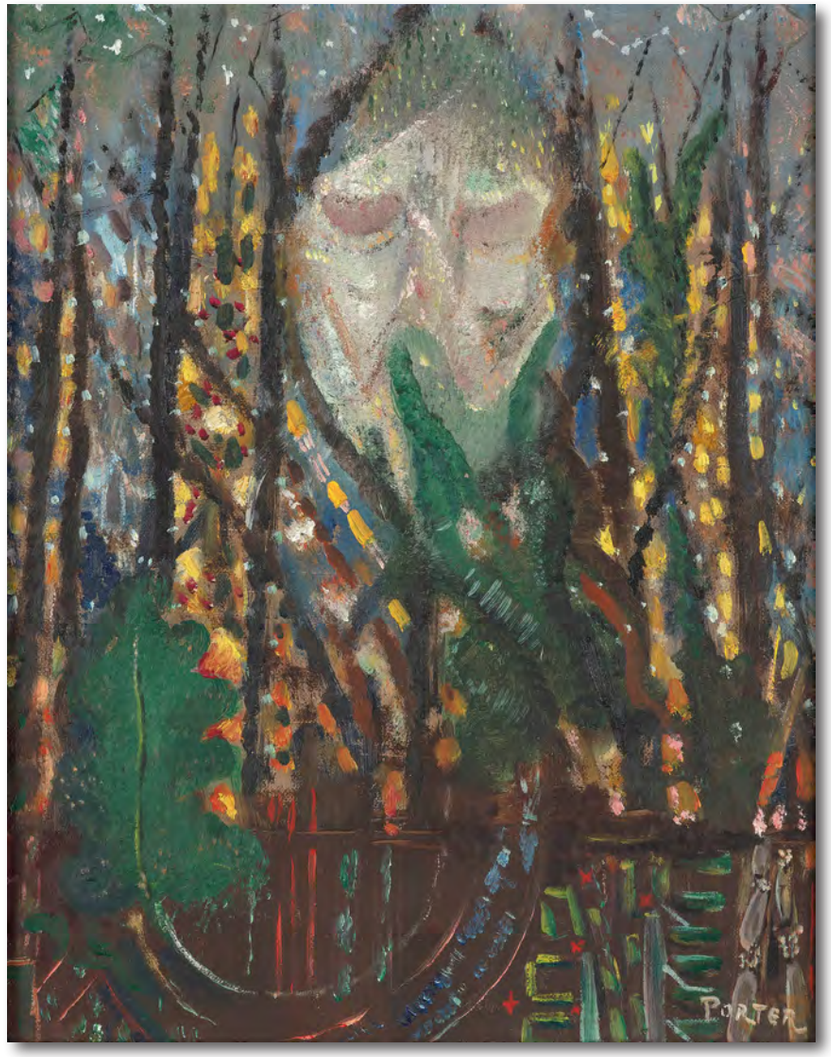
Born in Atlantic City, New Jersey, in 1917, Lawrence spent his life documenting African American life and history. In the late 1930s, he began studying African American history at the New York Public Library's Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture. By connecting historical narratives to contemporary life, the artist solidified his contribution to the lasting vision of the Harlem Renaissance. In 1941, at age 24, Lawrence became the first African American to have a work in the permanent collection of the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

Jacob Lawrence, American, 1917 - 2000
The Birth of Toussaint, 1986
Silkscreen
32 1/8 x 22 in.

Best known for his portraiture and drafting skills, James A. Porter also embraced abstraction and surrealism. His trips to the Caribbean—Haiti and Cuba—in the 1940s inspired an abstract-figurative realism focused on the culture and social life of African descendants. To highlight the continuum persistence of Black elements, Porter's oil painting *Balada del Guije* (c. mid-1940s) is inspired by a Cuban folktale as it recreates the El Güije myth. Portrayed in the backplane as a dark character with big round eyes and a grotesque facial expression, the mythical persona inhabits a colorful tropical landscape bordering a river or lagoon.

In the exhibition catalog of *James A. Porter, Artist and Historian: The Memory of the Legacy*, shown at the Howard University Gallery of Art in 1993, there is a reference to Afro-Cuban poet Nicolas Guillén in relation to *Balada del Guije* (c. mid 1940s). As in Guillén's poem, the phantasmagoric nocturnal scene can be a horrifying place for those unaware of the richness of African Diaspora storytelling. It is possible that Porter met Guillén during his 1945 visit to Havana and later read the poem in the anthology *Cuba Libre* (1948), translated and published by Langston Hughes and Ben Frederic Carruthers.

Porter's paintings from this period reflect how, through his travels to the Caribbean, he experienced the social and cultural connections between people in the Diaspora and the enduring presence of West Africa's ancestral legacy. These artworks foreshadow the artist's future trips to Africa in the 1960s, when his artistic vocabulary evolved to incorporate metaphorical representations, as seen in *Storm Over Jos (Nigeria)* (1964) and *Tempest of the Niger* (1964), both also featured in his 1993 retrospective exhibition.



James A. Porter, American, 1905 - 1970
Balada del Guije, c. mid 1940s
Oil on canvas
14 1/2 x 11 1/4 in.

Known as the "Dean of Negro Artists," Indianapolis-born African American artist William Edouard Scott received a Julius Rosenwald Fellowship to travel to Haiti during 1931 and 1932 to visually document the life and culture of the country. During his first visit, Scott befriended Haitian artist Petion Savain (1906–1973).

By personalizing Haitian people—market women, peasant children, manual laborers, and fishermen—Scott captured everyday scenes, body language, and traditional clothing. Employing a focal distance, just a few meters away from the observed scene, *Port au Prince, Haiti* (1933) situates the viewer before a *mise-en-scène* rich with figures, gestures, and landscape detail. Scott offers a standard of equality between painted figures and the viewer's own vantage point, who, sensing the composition, becomes an accomplice-participant in the painted scene. Interested in placing the subjects within a familiar landscape, *Port au Prince, Haiti* (1933) is a colorful figurative landscape. Its richness of color, nuanced use of light, and the multidirectional composition demonstrate the vitality and power that make Scott's Haitian paintings among his most accomplished works.

William Edouard Scott attended the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 1904, where he won the Frederick Mangus Brand prize for pictorial composition. In Paris, he studied at Académie Julien and Académie Colarossi, where he was mentored by African American artist Henry O. Tanner. In 1943, Scott was awarded a commission on the general theme of the "contribution of the Negro to the American Nation" for the Lincoln-Douglass murals at the new Recorder of Deeds headquarters in Washington, D.C. As the only African American artist selected, Scott painted a mural titled *Frederick Douglass Appeals to President Lincoln.*

William Edouard Scott, American, 1884 -1964
Port au Prince, Haiti, 1933
Oil on board
17 1/2 × 21 1/2 in.

Awaiting His Return (1946) was the first of four lithographs printed in black on wove paper by Charles White at the printmaking collective Taller de Gráfica Popular (TGP) when he accompanied sculptor Elizabeth Catlett to Mexico City in 1946. The black-and-white lithograph depicts a sculptural portrait of a woman sitting at a table, reminiscent of West African's multidirectional geometry. The lines, patterns, and tones contrast with the lights and shadows, evoking White's mastery of draftsmanship and social realism.

Born in 1918 in Bronzeville, a South Side Chicago neighborhood, White experienced an impoverished childhood. A gifted draftsnab, White earned a full scholarship to attend the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and studied lithography during the 1937–38 academic year. His *Five Great American Negroes and The History of the Negro Press* murals were displayed at the 1940 American Negro Exposition in Chicago, curated by Howard University Gallery of Art's Alonzo Aden.

A major figure in the Social Realism movement, White employed reproductive methods—especially lithographs and linocuts, and photomechanical reproductions of his drawings—to disseminate his work as broadly as possible. Working at the Taller de Gráfica Popular aligned with his political views, due to the collective's strong commitment to social activism and to using edition prints as a medium to educate and inspire the working masses. Mobilized during the long civil rights movement in the U.S., White continuously challenged the establishment by shifting interpretations of American art. In the late 1960s, confronting the systematic racism inherited from slavery, White made a series of pre-Civil War-style posters that included advertising for slave auctions and rewards notices for the capture of runaway slaves.

Charles White, American, 1918 - 1979
Awaiting His Return, 1946
Lithograph
19 x 15 11/16 in.

After receiving an award from the Terry Art Institute in 1952, Ellis Wilson traveled to Haiti, where he produced a series of paintings that reflected the vitality of Haitian people, their culture, and everyday life. As a result of his trips to Haiti, Wilson's visual vocabulary developed sophisticated patterns, non-Western geometries, and bold colors that combined expressionistic, realist, abstract, silhouetted, and graphic aesthetics.

Employing a focal distance that emphasizes collective action, the oil-on-canvas *Haitian Harvest* (1955) graphically presents the active of daily life and labor at a market. Wilson dissolves the painting's spatial settings into reduced black-and-white chromatic variations, flattening the volumes but simulating depth with simplified forms and body details. In this small painting, a flattened proximity of black faces, stripped of their human traits, offers a multidirectional abstract geometry that poetically relates the visual elements to the experimental abstraction acquired by African American artists during the 1950s.

Born in Mayfield, Kentucky, in 1899, Wilson graduated from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 1923. He was a prominent figure of the Harlem Renaissance in exhibitions sponsored by the Harmon Foundation. After winning a 1944 Guggenheim Fellowship, Wilson traveled through the American South, becoming interested in African American folklore, community histories, and cultural heritage. As reflected in his oeuvre, Wilson expressed African American social, cultural, and political values through experimentation with abstracted aesthetics, developing an artistic philosophy against the backdrop of African American Modern art.

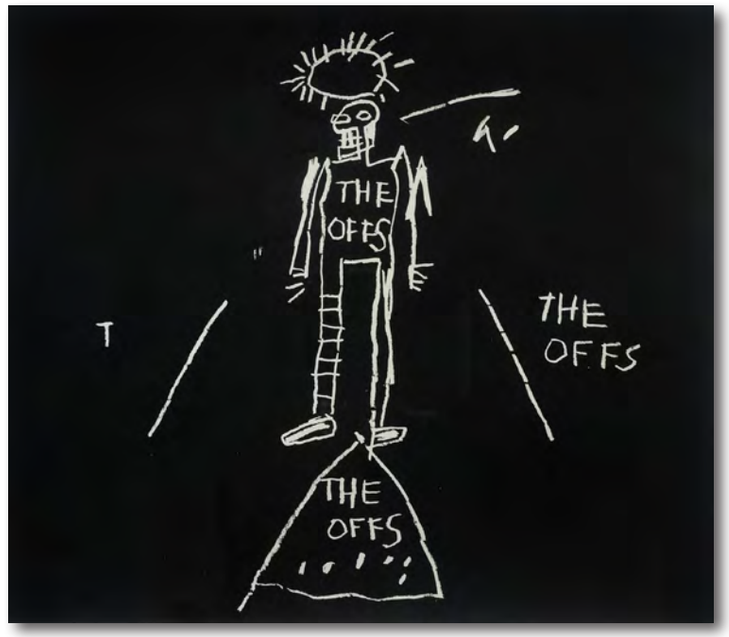
Ellis Wilson, American, 1900 - 1977
Haitian Harvest, 1955
Oil on canvas
9 3/4 × 8 in.

AFRICANA KAIRIBE IMAGINARIES

Known as one of the most important artists of the second half of the 20th century, Brooklyn-born, first-generation Haitian and Puerto Rican artist Jean-Michel Basquiat developed a visual grammar informed by Haitian, Puerto Rican, Nuyorican, and Black popular cultures. His visual grammar and iconography included a plethora of symbols, such as the crown, the griot, the warrior, the hammer and the sickle, a triad of vertical lines, Haitian vèvè cosmograms, text, diagrams, and the serpent.

First designed by Basquiat in 1984 for the punk band The Offs' debut album, the 2019 lithograph is part of a 500-print edition made from the original metal plate used for the LP's vinyl illustration. As in other of Basquiat's artworks, this print features the crown, the griot, the warrior, an angular line moving to the head, and two descending lines alluding to the Haitian Lwa Damballah Ayida-Wedo—signifying the connection between earth and the celestial plane. The symbols, scratched against a black surface, contrast with the three instances of the band's name and the near-empty left side. The centrality of the moving male figure suggests self-representation, as it is often the case in some of Basquiat's paintings.

The Offs (2019) must be viewed in relation to the screenprint on canvas *Untitled* (1983) in the MoMA's collection. Known for his vibrant combination of colors, Basquiat here presents a duotone lithographic print that highlights the artist's preoccupation with textuality, rhythm, and cultural expression. In November 1986, a retrospective of sixty works was shown at the Kestner-Gesellschaft in Hannover, Germany. In 1988, the prolific artist Jean-Michel Basquiat died in New York City at the age of twenty-seven.



Jean-Michel Basquiat, American, 1960 - 1988
The Offs, c. 2019
Lithograph
9.5 x 11 in.

The Ronald W. and Patricia Walters Collection

Guyanese-born Frank Bowling migrated to England, where he studied at the Royal College of Art in London. During his prolific career, the artist has explored a wide range of approaches, including figurative, Color Field painting, Pop Art, abstraction, and collage. The iconic "Map Paintings" series consists of largely abstract works containing ghostly silhouettes of the continents of Africa and South America, which were traced from images projected using an epidiascope. The series was shown at his solo exhibition at the Whitney Museum of American Art in 1971. In the early 1980s, Bowling began to incorporate found objects and acrylic foam into his paintings, blurring the line between painting and sculpture.

In *Redbreasts Bunched* (1995), color and geometry are the central elements of Bowling's visual expression, which, along with light, speak of the media's foundational raison *d'être*: the action of painting. A section of the quadrate canvas—ripped on its lower right side and replaced by a distorted triangular piece—is stitched along its edges with four rectangular pieces. This structural configuration highlights the artist's geometrical experimentation and his interest in mixing other media, such as collage and textiles. Reminiscent of the artist's epidiascope projections, the center of the undulant semi-circular marks in the upper quadrant emanates a simulated mid-day Caribbean luminescence. The swirling traces can be read as metaphors for ocean weaves, temporal shifts, and spatial constructions associated with stream-of-consciousness painting.

In 2019, Tate Britain presented the retrospective "Frank Bowling," which cemented his reputation as one of the foremost British artists of his generation. His work is in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Museum of Modern Art, New York; Royal Academy of Arts, London; Tate, London; and Moderna Museet, Stockholm, Sweden.

Frank Bowling, Guyanese-British, born 1936
Redbreasts Bunched, 1995
Acrylic and mixed media on canvas
23 × 23 in.

Born in Brooklyn to Barbadian immigrant parents, Ernest T. Crichlow grew up in a working-class multiethnic community. While attending New York's School of Commercial Illustrating and Advertising Arts, Crichlow met Augusta Savage at her Harlem studio. There, he befriended Norman Lewis and became a member of the Harlem Artists Guild. During the Depression, Crichlow learned about lithography and etching at Harlem's WPA Federal Art Project, where he created the 1938 lithograph, ironically titled *Lovers*, in which a hooded KKK man is grabbing a Black female whose right hand tries to unmask the assailant.

In *Evening Thought* (2002), the pensive Black woman—a recurring subject matter in Crichlow's artworks—appears behind the curtain on the right side of the print, cautiously gazing outward, signaling a presence outside the window. In Crichlow's oeuvre, the Black female figure is portrayed as strong, beautiful, and fragile, always in a spatial relation to greenery and nature, representing strength and the environmental cycles. As if the ancestral memory of a Caribbean grandmother were defying the composition, the Black female body becomes a site of social struggles, a visual narrative shaped by the artist's migratory roots, experiences of racialized prejudice, and economic disparities of the Depression era.

In 1969, with Romare Bearden and Norman Lewis, Crichlow established the Cinque Gallery in New York City. Crichlow's work is in the collections of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston; Newark Museum, New Jersey; The University of Delaware's Paul R. Jones Collection; Clark Atlanta University Art Museum, Georgia; and the Howard University Gallery of Art, Washington, DC.

Ernest T. Crichlow, American, 1914 - 2005
Evening Thought, 2002
Lithograph
25 × 18 in.

The Ronald W. and Patricia Walters Collection

In 1945, Carmelo Gonzalez Iglesias introduced African American artist James A. Porter to Havana's art scene, forming an enduring friendship. By 1946, when Gonzalez Iglesias enrolled at the Art Students League in New York City to study printmaking, Cuban American geometric abstractionist Carmen Herrera was also studying at this prestigious institution. The lithographs produced during this period earned Gonzalez Iglesias the Library of Congress Printmaking Purchase Award in 1953 and 1954, which led to a solo exhibition at the Howard University Gallery of Art in 1956.

Lavandera (1946) combines Gonzalez Iglesias's interest in Abstract Expressionism and geometrical forms with his engagement in the sociological and labor issues faced by Cuba's multiethnic society. Preoccupied with documenting his time and exploring political identities, the artist does not abandon portraiture techniques, instead, he configures a standing Black Cuban woman with her arms crossed, standing in front of a line of white shirts hanging from a clothesline. With an aura of simplicity and concern, the lithograph offers insight into drawing, texture, color patterns, spatiality, and volume—hallmarks of the artist's expansive visual vocabulary.

A prolific painter, muralist, sculptor, and printmaker, Gonzalez Iglesias is credited with founding the Association of Cuban Printmakers (AGC) after his return to Cuba in 1949. Perhaps influenced by Robert Blackburn's decision to convert his apartment into a printmaking workshop, the Cuban artist offered printmaking classes into his home studio and shared the woodcut techniques he had learned in New York City. The AGC's history has been featured in the exhibition ***Prints, Power, and the People*** (2025), organized by Natalia Angeles Vieyra, Associate Curator of Latinx Art at the National Gallery, and printmaker Aliosky Garcia Sosa.

Carmelo Gonzalez Iglesias, Cuban, 1920 - 1990
Lavandera, 1946
Lithograph
20 x 12 in.

Trained at the San Alejandro School of Painting in Havana, Cuba, from 1918 to 1923, Wifrido Lam studied with Leopoldo Romañach and Armando G. Menocal, a leading figure of Cuban Impressionism. Lam's father was a skilled calligrapher and a carpenter. Antonica Wilson, his grandmother, was a well-respected Afro-Cuban priestess who shared with the young artist the spiritual symbolism and the rich West African mythical corpus that abounds with the adventures of its anthropomorphic deities. To speak of Afro-Cuban aesthesis in Lam's visual imaginary, one must acknowledge how the act of creation is embedded in Yoruba and Lucumi's cultures.

Wifredo Lam's *Exodus* (1948) is a complex visual discourse integrating history, personal experience, and ancestral culture. The painting references to the artists living in Paris on the eve of the Nazi invasion in 1940 and their exilic migration to the Caribbean in 1941. *Exodus* (1948) also needs to be understood in relation to Cuban modern colonial history, the slave trade, the sugar plantation system, and Lam's birthplace of Sagua la Grande, a coastal town in northern Cuba.

The burlap fabric, which originates from the skin of jute—a Caribbean and Mesoamerican plant—makes reference to Afro-Caribbean Congo legacy and cultural practices spanning from the 1550s through the end of the 1940s. Many enslaved African and Afro-Caribbean descendants used burlap textile to sew their own clothes. Interpreted in relation to West African cultural influence, Exodus's format, figures, use of space, colors, and visual narrative are the result of Lam's introspective journey into the ancestral cultural memory of his Afro-Cuban and Chinese heritage.

Wifredo Lam, Cuban, 1902 - 1982
Exodus, 1948
Oil on burlap
50 × 62 in.

Gift of Dr. Arthur B. Spingarn

Norman Lewis not only experienced erasure from the history of abstract art, but also from his Caribbean roots—his parents were immigrants from St. Kitts—a fate that also befell his friend Ernest Crichlow and printmaker Robert Blackburn, a first-generation Jamaican immigrant.

Even though Lewis refused to be labeled during his lifetime, the limited Western European notion of Black art obliterated his friendships with Ad Reinhardt, Robert Motherwell, Lousie Bourgeois, Willem de Kooning, and Adolph Gottlieb, as well as his membership in the 1940s Abstract Expressionism movement.

Moon Glow (1954) evokes a bright and cloudy nocturnal landscape in which calligraphic vertical dark strokes and shapes represent singular cuts crisscrossing the surface, serving as openings toward the infinite Cosmos. As a metaphorical expression of Caribbean islanders' imagination and their relation to nature, the artist's fascination with jazz and outer space is evident in a defined blue circle that extends diffuse chromatic echoes into multiple directions—a rupture from Cartesian geometry—creating an asymmetric dynamic interplay of color, temperature, volume, and velocity.

A co-founder of the Harlem Artists' Guild and member of the Spiral collective, Lewis was dissatisfied with the Cartesian spatiality that dominated social realist art. His abstractions are political visual interventions, offering powerful ways of connecting to the Civil Rights movement, as can be seen in the oil canvas *Title Unknown (Alabama)* (1967), in which two triangular shapes are tightly packed with people, crosses, and KKK hoods. In 1998, the Studio Museum in Harlem showcased *Norman Lewis: Black Painting, 1946–1977*.

Norman Lewis, American, 1909 - 1979
Moon Glow, 1954
Oil on paper
18 × 23 in.

The Ronald W. and Patricia Walters Collection

As one of Jamaica's first representatives in the 49th Venice Biennial, in 2001, Keith Morrison explores through his visual vocabulary issues of racial heritage, economics, identity, and visibility prevalent on the island.

Inspired by personal experience, self-knowledge, and memory, the color lithograph *The Tango* (2012), printed at Philadelphia's Brandywine Workshop and Archives, celebrates the forest as several plants emanate from a five-string musical instrument. The exuberant vegetation spreading across the image references Afro-Caribbean spiritual beats. As in many of Morrison's artworks, there is an ascendant landscape whose directionality—along with the color palette and graphic patterns—accentuates the flowing presence of an ethereal wind.

Morrison holds BFA and MFA degrees from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and has been a major critical voice and promoter of African Diaspora art since he became an Assistant Professor at Fisk University in 1967. In addition to his post at San Francisco State, Morrison was appointed Dean of Temple University's Tyler School of Art in July 2005.

His works are held in major collections, including the Art Institute of Chicago; the Cincinnati Art Museum; the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Smithsonian American Art Museum, the Monterrey Museum of Modern Art in Mexico, the Howard University Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C.; and the National Gallery of Art in Jamaica.

Keith Morrison, American/Jamaican, born 1942
The Tango, 2012,
Offset Color lithograph
21 x 15 in.

The Ronald W. and Patricia Walters Collection

Recipient of the Second Prize from IBM at the 1939 New York World Fair, George Remponeau, began his artistic career under the auspices of Petion Savain during the 1930s. He is known as the first artist to illustrate Black faces and bodies in Haitian school books. The deep roots of the countryside, where the African heritage is still alive, are seen in his early paintings. The palm trees are encoded with Yoruba ancestral knowledge and signifiers.

Remponeau's visual vocabulary fluctuates between classic landscapes, baroque scenarios, and stylistic watercolor portraits. The artist visually expresses how Haitian culture weaves together its modern colonial history to Caribbean *métissage* and the country's cosmopolitan sensibility.

Pensive Female (1946) belongs to a series of watercolor drawings that depict a nation inhabited by proud people. Producing a sense of belonging in the viewer, Remponeau's classic portrait style blends a seated Black female, wearing a hat, into an open, earthy, meditative landscape, delineated by a few undulant lines. The spatial arrangement invites the viewer closer to the woman, who rest her chin on her left hand. Inspired to wander along her internal thoughts, one can notice how her firm sight defines a continuous horizontal plane that extends beyond the frame.

A precursor of the Centre d' Art established in 1944, along with Luce Turner (1924 - 1995) and Lucien Price (1915 – 1963), Remponeau's visual grammar has been associated with Expressionism, Cubism, and Modernism, which made him a target of exclusion by Anglo-American white scholars and collectors such as Dewitt Petters and Selden Rodman. These figures, who dominated Haitian art market circulation, promoted the "primitive" naïf style that today is known as Haitian Renaissance Art. Remponeau opened his own gallery and became a respected art professor in Port-au-Prince.

George Remponeau, Haitian, 1916 - 2012
Pensive Female, 1946
Watercolor
10 1/4 x 8 1/4 in.

Born in the rural community of Byndloss in St. Catherine, Jamaica when it was under British colonial rule, self-taught artist Mallica "Kapo" Reynolds started painting in the mid-1940s after relocating to Kingston. Gaining national and international recognition in the 1960s, Kapo developed a unique visual vocabulary that contributed to the formation of a truly indigenous Jamaican iconography, integrating the anti-colonialist consciousness permeating the island's culture during the 20th-century culture.

Recognized as a master painter who linked his artistic practice to Jamaica's African cultural roots, Kapo depicted in *Countryside* (1975) a colorful small rural town—a reminiscence of his birthplace—inhabited by cheerful Afro-Jamaicans with open arms, holding flowers at the roadside. Their bulbous, undulating body gestures suggest dance movements, echoing the hill and the bold painted houses, which are surrounded by red and yellow flowers.

A deeply religious man, Kapo was ordained as a bishop, and later founded of the St. Michael's Revival Tabernacle. He led the "Intuitives," a collective of artists who chose to capture on canvas the spirit of living forces behind objects, situations, and landscapes.

Winner of the Gold Musgrave Medal in 1985, Kapo held solo exhibitions at Hills Galleries, Kingston, Jamaica (1968); Just Above-Midtown Gallery, New York City (1975); and Giammiaca Gallery, Los Angeles, (1980). His paintings were included in *Caribbean Art at the Crossroads of the World*, Museo del Barrio, New York City, (2012); *Jamaican Intuitives*, Wolverhampton Art Gallery, United Kingdom (1986); and *Four Jamaican Primitives*, Art Museum of the Americas, Washington D.C. (1978). A dedicated gallery of his work is housed at the National Gallery of Jamaica.

Mallica "Kapo" Reynolds, Jamaican, 1911 - 1989
Countryside, 1975
Color Print
14 1/2 × 19 in.

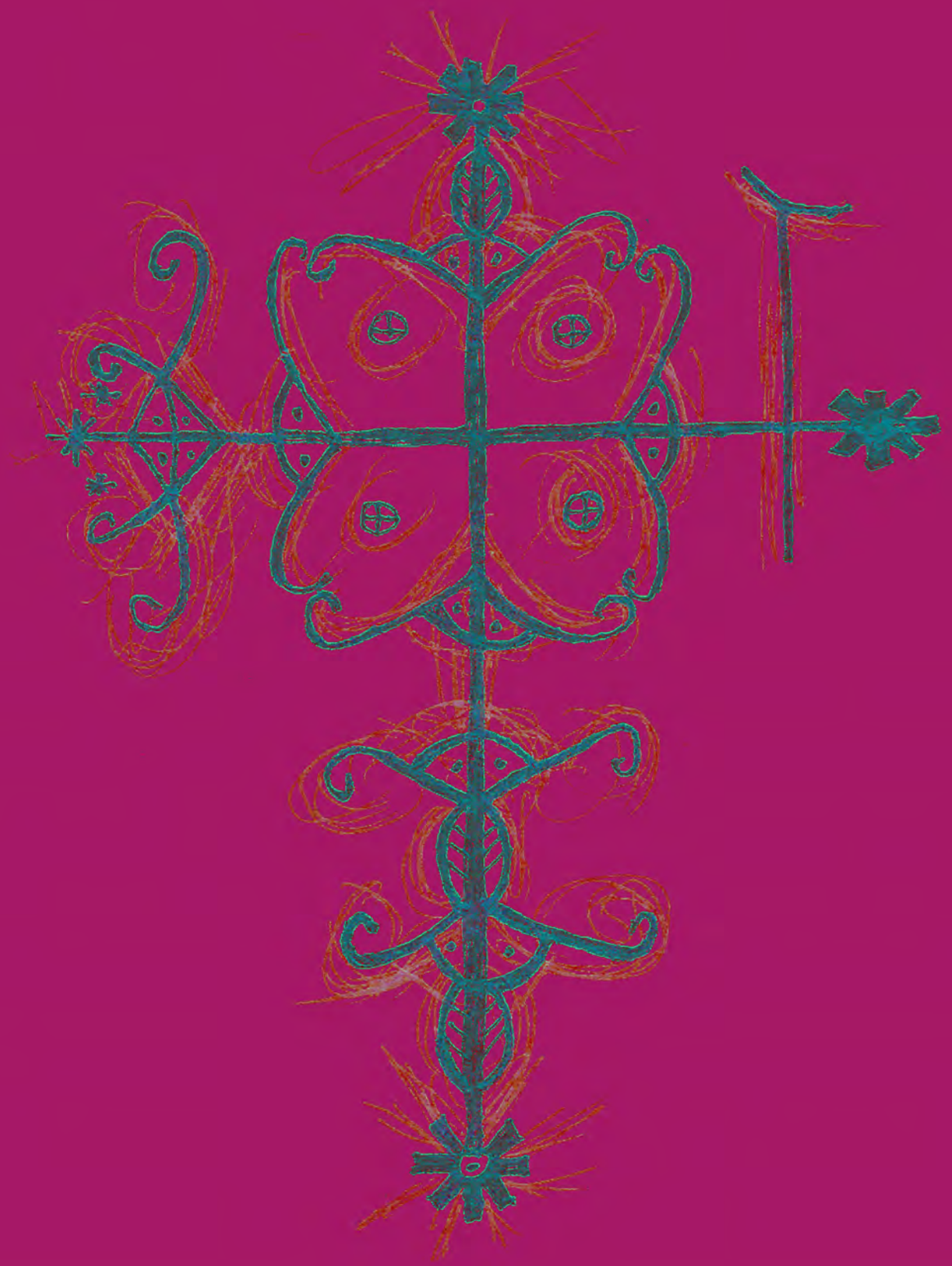
Inspired by his friendship with African American artist William Edouard Scott and his impressionistic Haitian landscapes, Petion Savain's early paintings from the 1930s combined poetic realism and naivete visuality.

After winning a bronze medal at the New York World's Fair in 1940, the devoted learner Savain enrolled at the Art Students League of New York to study fresco techniques and graphic art. These acquired skills radically changed Savain's visual grammar, composition, and use of space, toward a figurative representation that widened the inclusion of social bodies performing everyday tasks.

In *Village Women* (c. 1966–1969), Savain breaks away from the illusionistic Cartesian space, simplifying the forms as crowds appear compressed against the landscape. The use of flat colors, shading, and angular, distorted perspectives provides a unique visual grammar that can be recognized as Haitian. Multidirectional movements further disrupt the Renaissance realist central perspective, as hands, facial gestures, and figures crossing or exiting the scene accentuate the multiple spatial levels that Savain projects onto his canvases.

Petion Savain contributed to a reconfiguration of Haiti's visual arts, as well as alternative representational dynamics of forms, motifs, themes and symbols. During the 1960s, he experimented with oil and acrylic mediums, as well as tall rectangular and proportional dimensions for the canvas. Savain signed his artworks on the lower left or lower right, sometimes writing the year below surname. Today, his paintings are recognized for their depictions of streets and market scenes that are graphically arranged in curvilinear patterns, with bright pastel colors, and multidirectional flows.

Petion Savain, Haitian, 1906 - 1973
Village Women, c. 1966-1969
Acrylic
18 x 20 in.



BLACK GEOMETRIES

Mississippi-born Richard Barthé left poverty and racial segregation to travel North as part of the Great Migration. As the only Black student at the Art Institute of Chicago's Fine Arts program, Barthé graduated in 1929, before moving to New York. There, Barthé became a central figure of the Harlem Renaissance and cast *Black Narcissus* (1929), a bronze sculpture in which a nude body defies Western representation of masculine beauty.

During his lifetime, Barthé expressed, through his sculptures, an intricate style and fluid relationship between the body, its complex gestures, and the inner self-expression. Interested in the human figure and facial expressions, the artist's sculptures and public artworks offered numerous reflections of Black beauty, eroticism, politics, culture, and pride.

West Indian Girl (1930) should be recognized in relation to the bronze sculpture *Masai African Man* (1933) and *Head of a Negro Man* (1939). In these busts, the African heritage is traced, traveling from the Caribbean, reaching West Africa, and crossing the Continent toward Kenya and Tanzania, producing a cartography of Barthé's inspirational locus, and reaffirming the Black body as a site of poetry, rhythm, and beauty.

In 1949, evading racial discrimination, even his professional success, Barthé moved to Colgate, a village south of Ocho Rios in Jamaica. His Caribbean period was successful, earning major commissions to create two public monuments in Port-au-Prince honoring the early 19th-century Haitian leaders Toussaint Louverture and Jean-Jacques Dessalines. At first, these two public sculptures may not resemble the artist's early male nude pieces. Looking closely, it can be observed how the artist's technical and aesthetic strength were fundamental pillars of his oeuvre.

Richmond Barthé, American, 1901 - 1989
West Indian Girl, 1930
Plaster
13 1/2 in.

After Elizabeth Catlett's University of Iowa MFA thesis sculpture *Negro Mother and Child* (1940), won the First Prize in Sculpture at the American Negro Exposition in Chicago, the artist headed for a prolific career. Alain L. Locke included the 35-inches-tall limestone work in his acclaimed book *The Negro and Art* (1940), among recognized African American artists such as Augusta Savage, Richmond Barthé, and Meta Warrick Fuller.

By the time *Singing Head* (1968) was cast in bronze, Catlett had been living as an expatriate in Mexico for 22 years. As a result of her transnational experience, the artist began to combine African and Mesoamerican geometries in her carved works, focusing on forms that delinked from Cartesian dimensionality. Depicting a woman's head with broad cheekbones, stylized facial features, hair drawn back, and mouth open in a singing gesture, Catlett creates a multidirectional spatiality that opens a tactile response, bringing the viewer closer to the sculpture. The female singing head became a trope during the artist's life, as if the medium—bronze, marble, limestone, mahogany, onyx, cedar—dictated the various motifs differentiating one head from the others. The unrestrained vocal expression historicizes Black and Indigenous rhythms, evoking ancestral memories and women's subjectivities.

Throughout her life, Catlett was interested in synthesizing geometrical abstract forms when transforming the materiality of the medium into human expressions. During the 1970s, the artist developed her own conceptualization of the Black female body, which led to experimentation with materials and repetitive multidimensional forms that always ended in a familiar yet distinct sculpture.

Elizabeth Catlett, American - Mexican, 1915 - 2012
Singing Head, 1968
Cast bronze
7 1/4 × 5 × 9 in.

The Ronald W. and Patricia Walters Collection

Considered a precursor of the Cuban Avant-Garde and an artist proud of his Black identity, Teodoro Ramos Blanco belongs to the Afrocubanismo movement, a generation of intellectuals—Nicolas Guillén, Fernando Ortiz, Alejo Carpentier—who, during the first half of the 20th century embedded sociohistorical signifiers in their cultural productions. In an article published in the November 1930 issue of *Opportunity* magazine by Langston Hughes, Ramos Blanco is recognized for the strength and dignity with which he portrayed Black independentist heroines and for how his presence in the New Negro movement linked Harlem to Havana.

Ramos Blanco's sculptures are characterized by the amplification of profound visual expressions through engaging corporal subjectivities, whose minimalist facial and body features break away from Western geometry. Departing from realist figuration and portraiture, Ramos Blanco highlights in his artworks a felt sensorial thought, as seen in the *Smiling Boy* (1961), in which the wide-open lips and big teeth debunk any type of racial stereotype that can be assumed by a colonial gaze. The voluptuous deifying eyes feature a Black child's innocent pride, with a dose of resilience and resistance.

After graduating from Havana's San Alejandro Art School, Ramos Blanco completed his studies in Rome, where he exhibited at the Palazzo Venezia. In 1931, the artist was invited to the Harmon Foundation's annual *Exhibition of Work by Negro Artists* in New York. Alonzo Aden, the first curator of the Howard University Gallery of Art, selected his sculptures for the 1940 American Negro Exposition in Chicago. In 1943, his work was included in the Latin American Collection at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. In 1985, Ramos Blanco's glazed clay *Guitar Player* (1939) was part of the exhibition *Art in Washington and Its Afro-American Presence: 1940-1970,* at the Washington Project for the Arts, Washington, D.C.

Teodoro Ramos Blanco, Cuban, 1902 - 1972
Smiling Boy, 1961
Terracotta

The 1804 Haitian Revolution has been an inspirational force for African Americans' idea of freedom and creative expressions. After fighting in the United States War of Independence, Grenadian-born Henri Christophe was a leader of the revolution, then president, and self-proclaimed King Henry I, who, under the pretense of defending the country, brutally forced Haitians to build the Citadel, an elaborate palace-fortress located in the north.

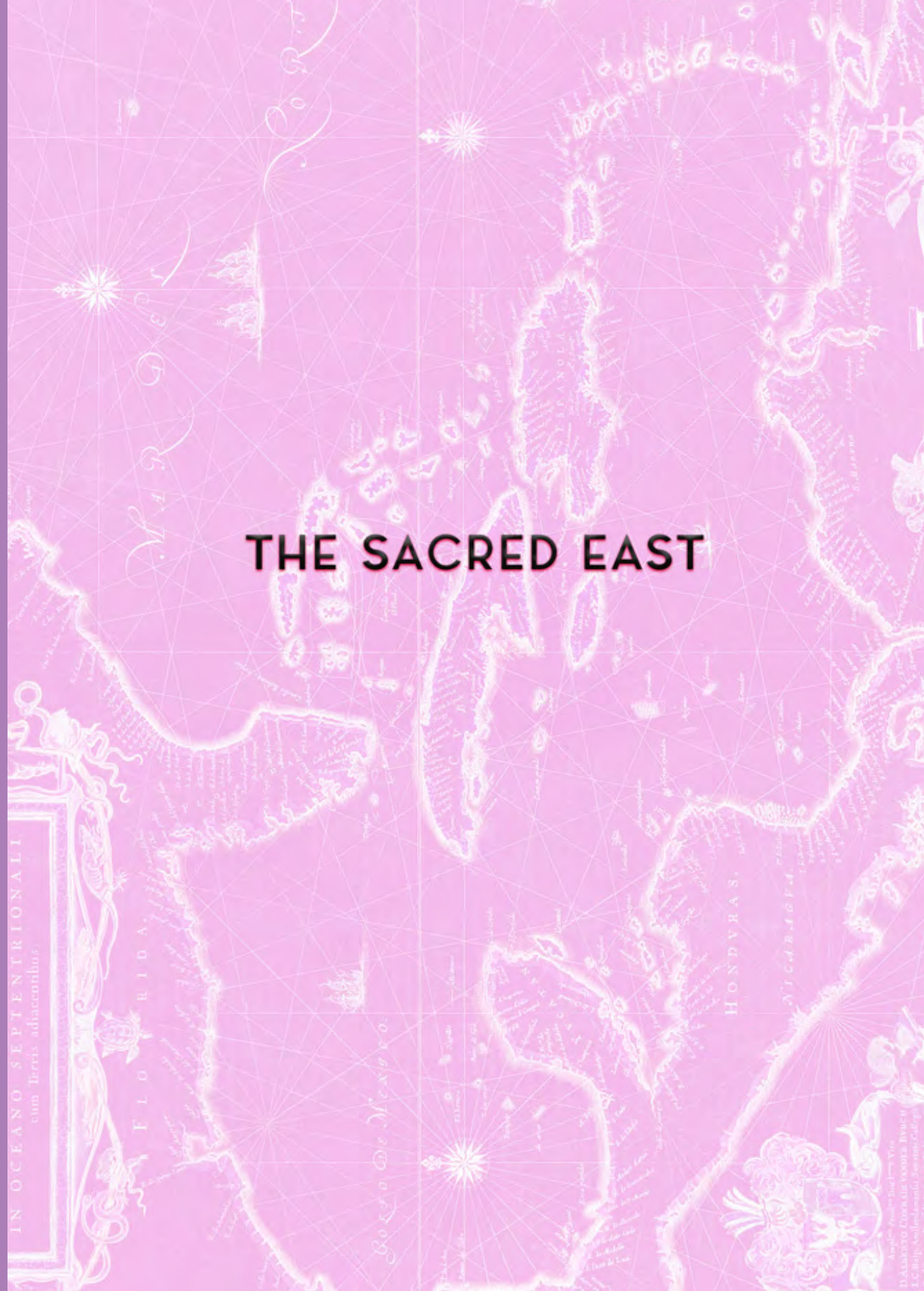
Augusta Savage, the most recognized female sculptor of the Harlem Renaissance, never physically traveled to Haiti, but the echoes of the early 19th-century revolt and its leaders' actions resonated in her creative expression. In the bronze sculpture *La Citadelle—Freedom* (1930), Savage subverts the black male leadership myths associated with the revolt. The artist portrays a woman with her left arm stretched up to the sky and her leg lifted, as if the movement represents a flight for freedom. The sign of mobility and the multidirectional planes embedded in the female's body gesture not only break from Cartesian geometry but also provide a historical connectivity embracing African descendants across the diaspora.

One of the first female students accepted at the New York Cooper Union School of Art, the sculptor was a prominent figure in The New Negro Movement, forming networks with artists in Harlem, Chicago, Paris, and the Caribbean. In 1929, with the support of the Rosenwald Fund, Savage traveled to Paris to study at the Académie de la Grande Chaumière. She won several awards at the Paris Salon exhibitions. Savage's political activism extended to art pedagogy, teaching children and some of the most notable African American artists of the 20th century, among them, first-generation Caribbean immigrant Norman Lewis and Ernest Crichlow.

Augusta Savage, American, 1892 - 1962
La Citadelle–Freedom, 1930
Bronze
15 × 5 × 5 1/2 in.

Gift of Mrs. Lyle Lane

THE SACRED EAST



The Bayaka people of the Bandundu region of Zaire and northern Angola still craft masks for the *Nkanda*, a rite that marks the arrival of male puberty. After a one-year learning period in which the initiates are taught how to hunt, dance, and participate in tribal activities, the youth leaders wear pre-carved masks in the grand *Nkanda* ceremony. The color combined masks, known as *mbala*, are made of lightwood, topped with a forest tree decorated with ribbon or braid, ready to be worn cap-style during the dance. They are charms intended to protect male fertility and are worn only once but are preserved by the community.

Aspiring to transform Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) into world-renowned centers for the study of African Art and to build a museum, Alain L. Locke first encountered African artworks in Paris when studying in Berlin during the 1910s. By 1914, European colonial powers had colonized 90% of continental Africa, promoting the looting of African sculptures, religious objects, artifacts, and textiles. The French art dealer Paul Guillaume organized the *Première Exposition d'Art Nègre et d'Art Océanien* exhibition in 1919 at the Galerie Devambez in Paris, which influenced Locke's desire to acquire African Art and build a museum.

In May 1924, after visiting the Barnes Foundation's African Art collection in Merion, Pennsylvania, Locke published "A Note on African Art" in *Opportunity: A Journal of Negro Life*, in which the cultural philosopher evaluated the African Art's marked influences upon modern art and its direct contact with Negro Art, acknowledging its inspiration. By 1927, already an authority on African Art, Locke traveled to Europe thanks to patron Charlotte Mason and expanded his collection, now housed at the Howard University Gallery of Art.

Elephant Mask, Yaka
Plant fiber, natural pigment, printed textile, and wood
12 × 20 × 17 in.

Alain L. Locke Collection

The presence of Shango, the Yorùbá deity of thunderstorms, has historically connects the Caribbean across the Atlantic to Nigeria and the Dahomey (known as Benin). Shango, the fourth king of Oyo, is renowned as a great warrior and sorcerer who was forced into exile due to political conflicts associated with territorial expansion, access to the sea, and the economy of the slave trade. Shango died violently, and soon after, furious thunderstorms and thunderbolts took ravaged the region—perceived as Shango's wrath. Shango's cult was widespread in Oyo between the 17th and 19th centuries.

Shango female sculptures are identified by the protuberance of their crests, carrying Ashe, the Orisha's power. Shango is known for his strong male energies. His devotees are called Ìyàwó—wife—independently of their gender. This speaks to the fluid erotic energies embedded in Yorùbá thought and life. Yorùbá sculptures depict mediations between Iyawo, priests and priestesses, and the deity's spirit.

The sculpture's female characteristics, face scars, hairstyle, and spiritual body position refer to all of the deity's followers. Touching the breasts conveys the actions of caretaking and nurturing, for which the Orisha is known. The left hand indicates spiritual communication between the body and the Orisha, since it is known that this arm is used by the deities. The right hand invokes the deity's ashe—power—and the ritual performance. The hairdo signals possession, trance, and the healing power of medicine.

Placed in shrines, Shango's devotee kneeling female sculptures invoke worship. They convey myriad autonomous forces operating withinthe Yorùbá cosmos. They represent receivers of sacrifices, as well as mediators, focusing the deity's energies into the devotees before the ceremonial trance is performed.

Shango Devotee Kneeling Female Figure,
Yoruba
Carved wood
8 × 4 × 9 in.

The Yorùbá are said to have the highest twinning rate in the world, and, therefore, Yorùbá people believe that Ere Ìbejì, twins, are special children with supernatural powers to be venerated. The Yorùbá Ere Ìbejì, statues are associated with the Orisha Shango, and in many instances, they carry the deity's characteristics. Once seen as an unnatural occurrence in Oyo, the birth of twins was celebrated in Isokun, right on the border, where the ritual for the Ere Ìbejì, was perceived as the parents' good fortune.

Carved Ìbejì, statues, male and/or female, are usually nude. In this pair of sculptures, the lower body is dressed, which may indicate that these figures were made after European Christian colonization took place in Nigeria. As is commonly known, the high-crested head is oversized in relation to the body. The hairdo's designs marked their genders. Therefore, the braided pattern crest is the only different head feature in the male figure. The female's head includes the braider pattern crest, but the carved pattern extends from the top to cover the sides and the back. Three deep scars, a symbol of Shango, are placed in the center of their foreheads. The eyes are protruding, and the nose is pointed. The arms, which are typically shown at the sides of the body, are here presented with the wrists crossed in the back. In the female Ìbejì, figures, the breasts are protruding.

The Ere Ìbejì, cult arrived in the Caribbean during the transatlantic slave trade. In Haitian Vodou spirituality, the Lwa Marassah is associated with the twins. Marassah represents love, truth, and justice, as well as the liaison between Earth and Heaven. As in Yorùbá cosmology, the double Marassah manifests in birth, in the movement of semen, and in seeds. The pair symbolizes the alliance between earthly and celestial bodies—the children -mysteries who inhabit Papa Legba's crossroads and are present at the beginning of the ceremonies, personifying astronomical and astrological knowledge.

Male and Female Ìbejì, Statues, Yoruba
Carved Wood
2 × 3 × 10 in.

The Bakongo people believe that the earth is a self-sufficient element in which human life, nature, and spiritual entities coexist. In Kongo spirituality, Nkisi statues are part of the **Nganga**—known in Spanish as Prenda—a metal receptacle holding the power of a congregation. The term Nkisi comes from the Bakongo root verb *kinsa*, which means "to take care." There are several types of Nkisi, *Na Moganga*, *Biteke*, *Npezo*, *Mbula*, and *Nkondi*. With their own characteristic features, each performs different functions: healing, protecting, harming, and sickening. The most common Nkisi known in the West is the feared *Nkondi,* the hunter, which holds iron blades and nails in different parts of its body. It is used for its clairvoyance, destruction, and the pursuit of criminals and wrongdoers.

The wood-carved Nkisi statue presented here is a standing figure supporting its chin with both arms, which is characteristic of the *Na Moganga* group representing healing. With a general aspect of a restful, reasoning, vocal, and powerful person, the statue carries a round hat made of cloth, and the head holds seven small metal pieces, which resemble iron blades, carefully inserted around it. The metal pieces are also inserted into the shoulders and the upper legs. Its mild expressive face is carefully sculpted with an open mouth, as if the statue were chanting. The body is richly decorated with textiles, leather, and gourds. For its performative gesture, the Nkisi statue conveys joy and good fortune.

Kongo spirituality, known in Cuba as Palo Monte, was brought to the Caribbean during the Middle Passage. In Cuba, the first nine *Nganga*—Prendas were founded during the 19th century. They were fundamental to spread of Kongo thought, graphic writing, language, culture, spirituality, and cosmology across the country.

Nkisi Figure, Congo
Carved Wood, textile, metal, and dried plant material
21 × 6 × 5 in.

Gift of Mr. Robert Elkin, MD

AFRICANA KAIRIBE DIASPORA

Born in Cuajinicuilapa, Guerrero, Baltazar Castellano Melo is an Afro-Mexican artist and a graduate of the School of Fine Arts in Oaxaca. Working on painting, sculpture, public mural, printmaking, installation, and performance, Castellano Melo questions the hegemonic construction of Mexican identity, the colonial myths displacing the Afro-Mexican communities, and the migration of Indigenous people, mestizos, and Afro-Mexicans. The artist reframes mestizaje, memory, and historical migration, offering contemporary Black imaginaries that lift the veil of lies, amnesia, and oblivion.

Afropuchunco (2006) presents a dreamlike-seated African descendant man against a black background. The black-and-white composition references a history of photographic portraits, as the print highlights the artist's knowledge of xylography, printmaking, and sculpture. The patterns carved in the wood create a plate, foreseeing a conversation between the medium's graphic grammar and West African textile motifs. The expanded afro hairdo has been carefully designed around a diagramed face that contrasts with the texture of the clothes, the feet, and the black space.

Castellano Melo narrates Afro-Indigenous Mixteco people's stories through his prints, murals, and paintings. He has exhibited at the Museo de Culturas Populares, Coyoacán, Mexico City; Museo Amparo, Puebla, Mexico; Kennedy Heights Arts Center, Cincinnati, Ohio; and Casa de la Cultura Puerto de Sagunto, Valencia, Spain.

Baltazar Castellano Melo, Mexican, b. 1983
Afropuchunco, 2006
Xylography
15 23/64 x 15 23/64 in.

Private Collection

Grenadian-born Billy Gerard Frank is an artist, filmmaker, production designer, educator, and founder of Nova Frontier Film Festival and Lab. The artist represented Grenada in the 59th and 58th editions of La Biennale di Venezia.

Frank's research-based practices interrogate issues concerning migration, race, exile, global politics, post-colonialism, and queer decoloniality, challenging normative discourses around them. *Indigo: Entanglements Fragment G-14* (2024) is part of a series that interrogates the unmitigated drama and tragedy of New World slavery and the transatlantic slave trade. The multimedia painting incorporates media such as silkscreen, vintage African fabric, newsprint, and acrylic to provoke a reckoning with the entangled and complicated relationships and histories around slavery.

Exploring archival and ethnographic images and the framing of Black figures in European paintings of the 17th and 18th centuries, the *Indigo: Entanglements* series reinscribes images, symbols, text, and collective memories culled from histories to explore the drama of modern coloniality. This series consists of large canvases, works on paper, and smaller pieces on wood panels. Some of the mixed-media paintings incorporate African woodcuts and cowrie shells, sourced from the Maldives, which historically were used as currency in the slave trade. Some of the works also touch upon the role of Christianity and the church during the slave trade.

Billy Gerard Frank attended the Art Students League of New York and the National Academy of Fine Arts, where he studied under the American abstract expressionist and realist painter John Hultberg. His artworks are included in the collections of the Brooklyn Museum in New York; the Osher Map Library and Smith Center for Cartographic Education Museum in Maine; the Butler Institute of American Art in Ohio; and the Farnsworth Museum in Maine.

Billy Gerard Frank, Grenada/USA, b. 1970
Indigo: Entanglements Fragment G-14, 2024
Mixed Media, Natural Pigments, Fabric, and Text on Wood Panel
12 x 12 x 1.5 in.

The Grenadian-born interdisciplinary artist Billy Gerard Frank, who lives in New York City, produced *Palimpsest: Tales Spun From Sea And Memories* (2022), which premiered at the 59th International La Biennale di Venezia (2022) in the Grenada National Pavilion.

The film examines and narrates overlaying tales of the slave trade and abolitionist movement, focusing on Scotland and Great Britain's entangled relationship with the slave trade, the Caribbean, and Africa through the lens of Quobna Ottobah Cugoano, also known as John Stuart (c. 1757–after 1791). Born in the Fante village of Agimaque in the Gold Coast (Ghana), Cugoano was captured at 13, sold into slavery, and transported to Grenada. He was later bought by Scottish plantation owner Alexander Campbell, who brought him to England as his personal servant. There, Cugoano became a seminal figure in the abolitionist movement, a political activist, and writer who was active in Britain in the latter half of the eighteenth century. His book *Thoughts and Sentiments on the Evil and Wicked Traffic of the Slavery and Commerce of the Human Species* (1787), published in England after he gained his freedom, remains one of the most direct criticisms of slavery by a writer of African descent.

Set partially on a beach in Ghana, the film features an elderly woman offering wise counsel to a young Cugoano, placing the narrative in the context of Cugoano's life story. The film's fragmented, multilevel structure is enriched by historical and literary references, including the tradition of Shakespearean mas. African masks add layers to the visual grammar, connecting ancestral cultural memories across the Atlantic, from Ghana to Granada to England.

Billy Gerard Frank, Grenada/USA, b. 1960
Palimpsest: Tales Spun From Sea and Memories, 2022
Video, 24 minutes

Known for the performance "Two Undiscovered Amerindians Discover the West" (with Guillermo Gómez-Peña), the Cuban-American interdisciplinary artist Coco Fusco has been interested in the role photography plays in constructing racial stereotypes, especially in the images circulated during the FBI's hunt for African American philosopher and activist Angela Davis.

Combining fictional and documentary materials, *a/k/a Mrs. George Gilbert* (2004) reflects on the use of electronic surveillance against Black intellectuals and activists in the 1960s and 1970s. This experimental work follows an FBI agent who confesses his involvement in the nationwide search for Angela Davis: the Black philosopher fired from UCLA in 1969 at the order of then-Governor Ronald Reagan, and in 1970 was placed on the FBI's "Ten Most Wanted List," after which she went underground. During the two months that Davis was a fugitive, women were incorrectly identified by law enforcement officials, and many were arrested. Her case was one of the most famous trials in recent history. Davis was acquitted of all charges in 1972.

An interdisciplinary artist and writer based in New York, Fusco holds an M.A. in Modern Thought and Literature from Stanford University (1985), and a Ph.D. in Art and Visual Culture from Middlesex University (2007). Her performances and videos have been presented at the 56th Venice Biennale, the Sharjah Biennale, Basel Unlimited, and three Whitney Biennials (2022, 2008, and 1993). Her works are in the permanent collections of the Museum of Modern Art, The Walker Art Center, The Art Institute of Chicago, The Whitney Museum, the Centre Pompidou, and the Museum of Contemporary Art of Barcelona. El Museo del Barrio is currently showcasing Fusco's *Tomorrow, I Will Become an Island* (September 2025–January 2026). She is a Professor at the Cooper Union School of Art.

Coco Fusco, USA/Cuba, born 1960
a/k/a Mrs. George Gilbert, 2004
Video, 31 minutes

African American interdisciplinary artist Thomas A. Harris has been preoccupied with the routes of the African Diaspora in the Greater Caribbean since the 1980s, when he traveled to the southern coastal towns of Costa Rica, where he encountered Black communities rendered invisible by the insular, archipelagic idea of the Caribbean. Rather than a distant tourist observer, Harris has chosen to live and dwell in the locations, articulating a proximity to the subjects and the landscapes that speak, as well, of the artist's subjectivity.

Echoing the crossroads of art and vernacular photographic portrait, Harris ensures that the female subject becomes the point of interpretation rather than the observant photographer, who, notably, is acknowledged by the woman's gaze in *Cahuita Oshun I* (1987). The black-and-white photographs enhance the visibility of the Black Caribbean basin, debunking the white racialized image promoted by the Costa Rican nation to attract tourism. Harris's photographs document a visual economy of people as images that implicates a historical connection between African American artists, African Caribbeans, and the region, serving to demolish the borders of the racialized nation.

A Harvard graduate, Thomas A. Harris, was included in the 1995 Biennial Exhibition of the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York. His films have been shown at international film and art festivals, such as Sundance, Berlin, Toronto, Tribeca, FESPACO, Outfest, Flaherty, Cape Town, and the Melbourne Art Festival. He is a Professor in the Practice at Yale University's African American Studies and Film and Media Studies.

Thomas Allen Harris, American, b. 1962
Cahuita Oshun I, 1987
Black and White Photograph
8 x 10 in.

African American interdisciplinary artist and media maker Thomas Allen Harris journeyed to Salvador da Bahia, Brazil, in 1996, connecting his spiritual seeking with earlier travels to Tanzania, East Africa. A member of the New Wave of Queer Cinema of the 1980s and 1990s, Harris produced the experimental documentary, *E Minha Cara / That's My Face* (2001), which blends Super-8 film with multi-voice sampling rap and hip-hop strategies in a subjective ethnography that highlights Black African diasporic life. *In That's My Face*, it is not only the blurred, unfocused footage that creates space for the viewer's imagination, but also the mismatching of image and sound. The film creates a "dreamscape" akin to a spiritual trance.

The documentary's soundtrack incorporates Harris's own voice in a very mystical, soft tone that invites the audience's imagination. At times, multiple voices overlap. Portuguese occasionally mixes with English; at other moments, it is translated into English while the original Portuguese remains audible. These techniques encourage the viewer to complete the picture with their imagination and to create their own dreamscape. In a most extraordinary manner, the African American director takes us on a musical and humorous journey through his ancestral search—offering glimpses of the African continent, the civil rights movement, the intricate labyrinths of Salvador da Bahia, and the rich spirituality of the Black diaspora.

A recent recipient of the United States Artist Award, Harris has also received awards, grants, and fellowships from such institutions as the Sundance Institute, Ford Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, Jerome Foundation, Paul Robeson Fund, and Lannan Foundation.

Tomas Allen Harris, USA, born 1962
E Minha Cara / That's My Face, 2001
Video, 56 minutes

Frantz Fanon: Black Skin, White Mask (1996) is a documentary film directed by the acclaimed Black British artist Isaac Julien, in collaboration with art historian Mark Nash. Perhaps one of his forgotten films, not included in the artist's retrospective at Tate Britain in 2023, *Frantz Fanon: Black Skin, White Mask*, portrays a painterly quality that is immensely elastic, as its complex *mise-en-scène* offers quite contrasting scenarios that provoke constant ruptures in the cinematic experience.

An experimental montage combining dramatized reconstructions, interviews, and archival footage, the innovative documentary reinscribes Fanon's life and writing. A highly influential thinker, Fanon authored *Black Skin, White Mask* (1952) and *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961), works that place him at the core of post-colonial and decolonial emancipation processes. The screening of the film invites debates on the racialized maneuvers orchestrated during the 2024 United States presidential campaign, which are now polarizing society at large. Known for addressing black figures and themes in his audiovisual works, the filmmaker argues for the understanding that "race" is a fiction that racism has helped keep alive.

Born and raised in London's East End to parents from the Caribbean island-nation of St. Lucia, Julien co-founded the Sankofa Film and Video Collective, a group committed to liberating the aesthetics of Black independent film. He has been a prominent figure inspired by Black diaspora movements in the USA and the Caribbean, as well as the New Wave of Queer Cinema of the 1980s and 1990s. Isaac Julien's work is in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art, New York; Tate London; Lous Vuitton, Paris' and the Hirschhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C.

Isaac Julien, England, b. 1960.
Frantz Fanon: Black Skin, White Mask, 1996
Collaboration with Mark Nash
Film, 70 minutes

Cuban-born Pau Mar is an interdisciplinary artist, curator, and cultural activist living in Barcelona, Spain. Her work is an introspective journey to connect with her African and Caribbean roots. Her prints and performances are testimonies to the impact of forced migration on both herself and the Afro-Cuban community. Her symbology and visual grammar incorporate natural, historical, and spiritual elements—faces, shells, profiles, eyes, hearts, and tree branches.

In *Peón Negro, Crisálida, I / V* (2020), by outlining the upper part of a female body, Pau Mar frames her ancestors' silent histories and traces her own migrant journey. The print graphically renders a powerful *mise-en-scène*, inviting the viewer to reflect on how the patterns, textures, and tones express women's issues, Afro-Cuban spirituality, and the deep scars inflicted by racialized colonization and the transatlantic slave trade. The linoleum print evokes a sense of loneliness, eroticism, the energy of offering and receiving, dreams and interpretations, hopes, subjectivity, and vulnerability, surrounding the piece with a mystical aura.

A founder of the collective Afrocubanas, along with Black intellectuals Inés María Martitatú and Daysi Rubiera, Pau Mar has exhibited at Ateneo L´Harmonia, Fábrica de creación Fabra i Coats, Barcelona, Spain; Oktava Konstoch Konsthantverk Gallery, Oskarshamn, Sweden; City Lights Gallery, Connecticut, USA; Museo Casa Alphonsus de Guimaraes, Mina Gerais, Brazil; Galeria La Etangd Arts, Bages, Aude, France; Wingfield Barns Cultural Center, England; and Convento San Francisco de Asis Museum, Havana, Cuba.

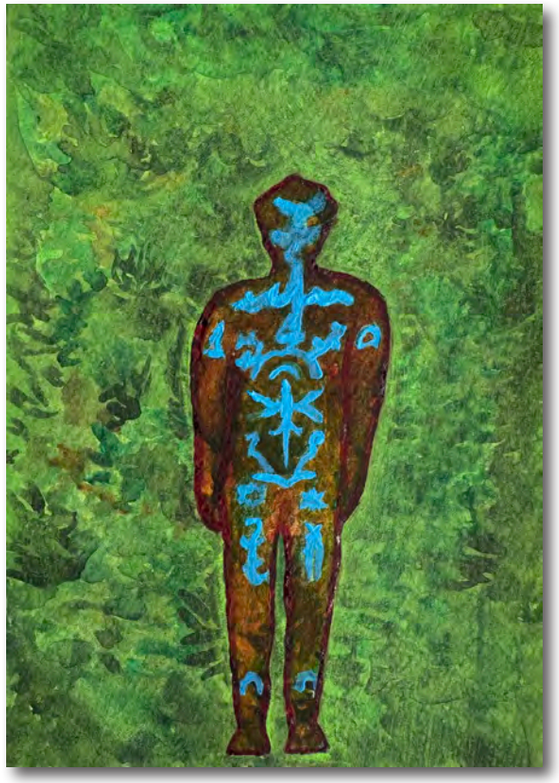
Pau Mar, Cuba/Spain. b. 1963
Peón Negro, Crisálida, I / V, 2020
Series Negra con Tumbao
Linoleum Print on Paper
7 3/4 x 9 5/8 in.

Private Collection

Dominican-born Raziel Perin is an established multidisciplinary artist living and working between Rotterdam, the Netherlands, and Milan, Italy. Perin's practice spans drawing, painting, sculpture, installation, and performance. Rooted in personal history and the migratory experience of his Italian-Dominican family, his work weaves organic materials such as manioc, yams, corn flour, and iron into explorations of memory, myth, and belonging. Sculpted manioc roots, dried and adorned with stones, evoke siren-like deities infused with ancestral Afro-Caribbean mythologies and Dominican folktales passed down orally through the African diaspora. His cut and bent iron-bar sculptures are welded drawings charged with symbolic and magical significance, anchored in forms of activation that insist on movement beyond the static, unchanging archival object.

Grounded (2025) explores the afterlives of slavery and the plantation system through a healing, visionary lens, creating archetypal and spiritual images of Black bodies in search of freedom, which result in fragmented yet powerful physique. As seen in the ideograms placed in the figure, the body carries both ancestral memory and imaginative potential, allowing the artist to construct personal and collective mythologies as acts of resistance and empowerment—grounded in embodied research, historical consciousness, and spiritual inquiry.

Raziel Perin holds a B.A. in Painting and Visual Arts from NABA—Nuova Accademia di Belle Arti, Milan, Italy. He is currently enrolled in a master's program in Art and Design at the Piet Zwart Institute in Rotterdam, Netherlands. He has exhibited at BRUTUS, Rotterdam, Netherlands; Murate Art District, Florence, Italy; Italian Cultural Institute, Paris, France; CBK Zuidoost, Amsterdam, Netherlands; Le Galerie Mobile, Milan, Italy; and the Altos de Chavón Foundation, La Romana, Dominican Republic.



Raziel Perin, D. R./Italy, b. 1992
Grounded, 2025
Oil on paper
3 4/8 x 4 6/8 in.

Bronx-born Nuyorican artist Wanda Raimundi-Ortiz is best known for her public, socially engaged performances and her graphite portraits. What unifies her symbolic expressions—video, spoken word, installation, textile, and object—is storytelling and sociocultural activism. The artist's work exposes the nuances of multiple identities as they connect to her family, and to the cultural, political, and migratory oscillations, challenging the cultural narratives of what it means to be "Puertorriqueña."

Inspired by her sociocultural experiences and performances, *Wig Variant series: Selfportrait with wig variant #2* is a multilayered autobiographical work on paper. The graphite drawing argues for a female subjectivity, wigs, hair, and landscape in Afro-Puerto Rican culture. Placing the female body against a forest interrogates the relationship between the artist's urban upbringings and her recurring travels to the island. The interwoven braids with the turban's fabrics reference the roots and the Yòrubá and Lukumi creation stories in which women carry the seed on their hair. Looking directly at the viewer, the female gaze signals the artist's suggestion for organizing a collective narrative. Furthermore, the body gestures, the inclined head turned to the right, and the left hand crossing the frontal body, connect to the artist's performance history.

Trained at the State University of New York's Fashion Institute of Technology, the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, and Rutgers University's Mason Gross School of the Arts, Wanda Raimundi-Ortiz is a master drafter whose variation of chiaroscuro tones, depth of field, and composition propose an innovative craftsmanship. As perceived in her work, being a Puerto Rican descendant is inextricably linked with diaspora, Black and Caribbean epistemologies, and a constant reimagining of home and belonging.

Wanda Raimundi-Ortiz, American, b. 1973
Selfportrait with wig variant #2, 2022
Wig Variant series:
PanPastel, charcoal, white charcoal on Arches BFK Paper
22 x 30 in.

Included in the series of women portraits *Displacement: Symbols and Journeys*, the graphite drawing *Reina Madre* (2016) is a story concerned with power dynamics, female vocality, ancestral history, and the importance of mothering by an empowered Puerto Rican immigrant woman who epitomizes displacement and resilience.

Inspired by 17th and 18th-century European portraiture, *Reina Madre* resembles other works in the series that employ the direct female gaze and inclined head, this time turned to the left. The detailed crown and dark hair heavily contrast with the face and a faded necklace, as if the artist intends to narrate the mobility from the head down to the absence of the lower body. The head of Queen Mother, *Reina Madre*, is set against an empty background, which produces an ethereal effect that amplifies the mother's royalty.

Wanda Raimundi-Ortiz's work has been featured in venues such as The Momentary, National Museum of Women in the Arts, the Museum of Arts and Design, the Garage Museum in Moscow, the Orlando Museum of Art, the Corcoran Gallery of Art, the Gyeongnam Art Museum, the Museo de Arte de Puerto Rico, and at the Manifesta and Performa biennials.

In 2017, the Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery commissioned Raimundi-Ortiz for her *Pietà* performance, in which the artist cradled thirty-three men and women of color in her arms for three minutes. The tender gesture was meant to soothe the overwhelming fear of loss that people of color carry with them due to the vulnerability of their children to state violence. Presently, Wanda Raimundi-Ortiz is presently showcased in *Vaivén: 21st-Century Art of Puerto Rico and Its Diaspora*, an exhibition at the University of Minnesota's Katherine E. Nash Gallery.

Wanda Raimundi-Ortiz, American, b. 1973
Reina Madre, 2016
Graphite on Arches BFK Paper
22 x 30 in.

Sergio Sánchez Santamaría, who identifies as an Indigenous Afro-Mexican, testifies to how the Black presence—*la Tercera Raiz*, the third root—occupies significant positions in the country's history. Sánchez Santamaría's prints connect concepts, graphic languages, and historical subjectivity, employing rhythmic compositions where the cut, traces, movements, patterns, as well as the black-and-white spaces, become elements of a visual discourse that is always searching for ways to imagine identities, experiences, gestures, artifacts, territories, and socio-historical and political issues that speak to Indigenous and Afro-Mexican subjective and collective experiences. He was trained at Mexico City's Taller de Gráfica Popular (TGP).

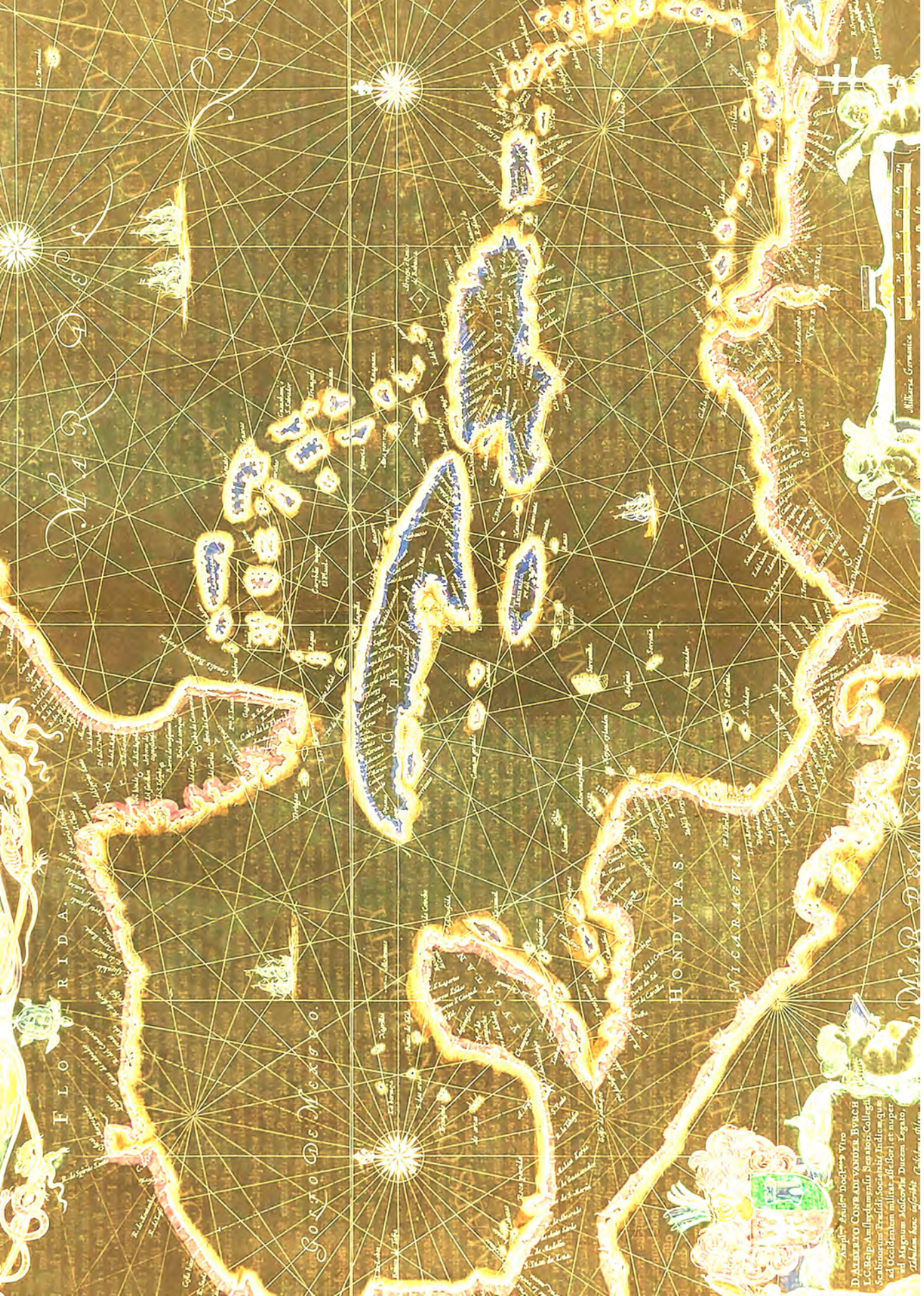
On October 16, 1968, two African American athletes raised their black-gloved fists as the U.S. national anthem was played during their medal ceremony at the Olympic Games in Mexico City—a gesture still recognized globally as a symbol of Black Power.

The raised fist is reimagined by Sergio Sánchez Santamaría in *No quiero caridad, quiero trabajo* (circa 2014), a linoleum print where a multi-scalar geometry defies Western Euclidean order to amplify the size and volume of the fist—located at the upper side of the image—in relation to the smaller size of the legs and the landscape in the lower half.

The uplifted fist here projects the struggle of the rural campesino class, as it is graphically stated in the background's outlined location. One can speculate that the fist is reinserted in Sánchez Santamaría's visual language to weave its political identity into the class and identity struggles of Indigenous and Afro-Mexican rural people, who remain among the poorest in Mexico.

Sergio Sánchez Santamaría, Mexican, b. 1976
No quiero caridad, quiero trabajo, 2014
Linoleum Print
11 39/64 x 15 3/4 in.

Private Collection



EXHIBITION CHECKLIST

Richmond Barthé, American, 1901 - 1989
West Indian Girl, 1930
Plaster
13 1/2 in.

Jean-Michel Basquiat, American, 1960 - 1988
The Offs, c. 2019
Lithograph
9.5 x 11 in.

Romare Bearden, American, 1911 - 1988
Misty Island, 1977
Silkscreen
21 x 27 in.

Frank Bowling, Guyanese, born 1936
Redbreasts Bunched, 1995
Acrylic and mixed media on canvas
23 x 23 in.

Elizabeth Catlett, American - Mexican, 1915 - 2012
...Special Houses, 1946
Linocut on medium-weight wove paper
5 1/4 x 7 in.

Elizabeth Catlett, American, 1915 - 2012
Singing Head, 1968
Cast bronze
7 1/4 x 5 x 9 in.

Baltazar Castellano Melo, Mexican, b. 1983
Afropuchunco, 2006
Xylography
15 23/64 x 15 23/64 in.

Eldzier Cortor, American, 1916 - 2015
Cuban Theme, c. 1949
Color engraving
19 x 23 in.

Ernest T. Crichlow, American, 1914 - 2005
Evening Thought, 2002
Lithograph
25 x 18 in.

Billy Gerard Frank, Grenada/USA, b. 1970
Indigo: Entanglements Fragment G-14, 2024
Mix Media, Natural Pigments, Fabric and Text on Wood Panel
12 x 12 x 1.5 in.

Billy Gerard Frank, Grenada/USA, b. 1970
Indigo: Entanglements Fragment G-15, 2024
Mix Media, Natural Pigments, Fabric and Text on Wood Panel
12 x 12 x 1.5 in.

Billy Gerard Frank, Grenada/USA, b. 1970
Palimpsest: Tales Spun From Sea and Memories, 2022
Video, 24 minutes

Coco Fusco, USA/Cuba, born 1960
a/k/a Mrs. George Gilbert, 2004
Video, 31 minutes

Carmelo González Iglesias, Cuban, 1920 - 1990
Lavandera, 1946
Lithograph
20 x 12 in.

Thomas Allen Harris, American, b. 1962
Cahuita Oshun I, 1987
Black and White Photograph
8 x 10 in.

Thomas Allen Harris, American, b. 1962
Cahuita Oshun II, 1987
Black and White Photograph
8 x 10 in.

Tomas Allen Harris, American, born 1962
E Minha Cara / That's My Face, 2001
Video, 56 minutes

Barkley Hendricks, American, 1945 - 2017
Black River Mountain View, c. 2003-2008
Oil on linen
11 in. diameter

Lois Mailou Jones, American, 1905 - 1998
Veve Voudou III, 1997
Silkscreen
30 x 38 in.

Lois Mailou Jones, American, 1905 - 1998
Vèvè Voudou II Voudou Symbols, 1963
Mixed media
21 1/8 x 25 1/4 in.

Isaac Julien, British, b. 1960.
Frantz Fanon: Black Skin, White Mask, 1996
Collaboration with Mark Nash
Film, 70 minutes

Wifredo Lam, Cuban, 1902 - 1982
Exodus, 1948
Oil on burlap
50 x 62 in.

Jacob Lawrence, American, 1917 - 2000
The Birth of Toussaint, 1986
Silkscreen
32 1/8 x 22 in.

Norman Lewis, American, 1909 - 1979
Moon Glow, 1954
Oil on paper
18 x 23 in.

Pau Mar, Cuban/Spain. b. 1963
Peón Negro, Crisálida, I / V, 2020
Series Negra con Tumbao
Linoleum Print on Paper
7 3/4 x 9 5/8 in

Keith Morrison, American/Jamaican, b. 1942
The Tango, 2012,
Offset Color lithograph
21 x 15 in.

Raziel Perin, Dominican Republic / Italian, b. 1992
Grounded, 2025
Oil on paper
3 4/8 x 4 6/8 in

James A. Porter, American, 1905 - 1970
Balada del Guije, c. mid-1940s
Oil on canvas
14 1/2 x 11 1/4 in.

Wanda Raimundi-Ortiz, American, b. 1973
Wig Variant series: Selfportrait with wig variant #2, 2022
PanPastel, charcoal, white charcoal on Arches BFK Paper
22 x 30 in.

Wanda Raimundi-Ortiz, American, b. 1973
Reina Madre, 2016
Graphite on Arches BFK Paper
22 x 30 in.

Teodoro Ramos Blanco, Cuban, 1902 - 1972
Smiling Boy, 1961
Terracotta

George Remponeau, Haitian, 1916 - 2012
Pensive Female, 1946
Watercolor
10 1/4 x 8 1/4 in.

Mallica "Kapo" Reynolds, Jamaican, 1911 - 1989
Countryside, 1975
Image: 14 1/2 ? 19 in.

Sergio Sánchez Santamaría, Mexican, b. 1976
No quiero caridad, quiero trabajo, 2014
Linoleum Print
11 39/64 x 15 3/4 in.

Petion Savain, Haitian, 1906 - 1973
Village Women, circa 1966-1969
Acrylic
18 x 20 in.

Augusta Savage, American, 1892 - 1962
La Citadelle—Freedom, 1930
Bronze
15 x 5 x 5 1/2 in.

William Edouard Scot, American, 1884 - 1964
Port au Prince, Haiti, 1933
Oil on board
17 1/2 x 21 1/2 in.

Ellis Wilson, American, 1900 - 1977
Haitian Harvest, 1955
Oil on canvas
9 3/4 x 8 in.

Charles White, American, 1918 - 1979
Awaiting His Return, 1946
Lithograph
19 x 15 11/16 in

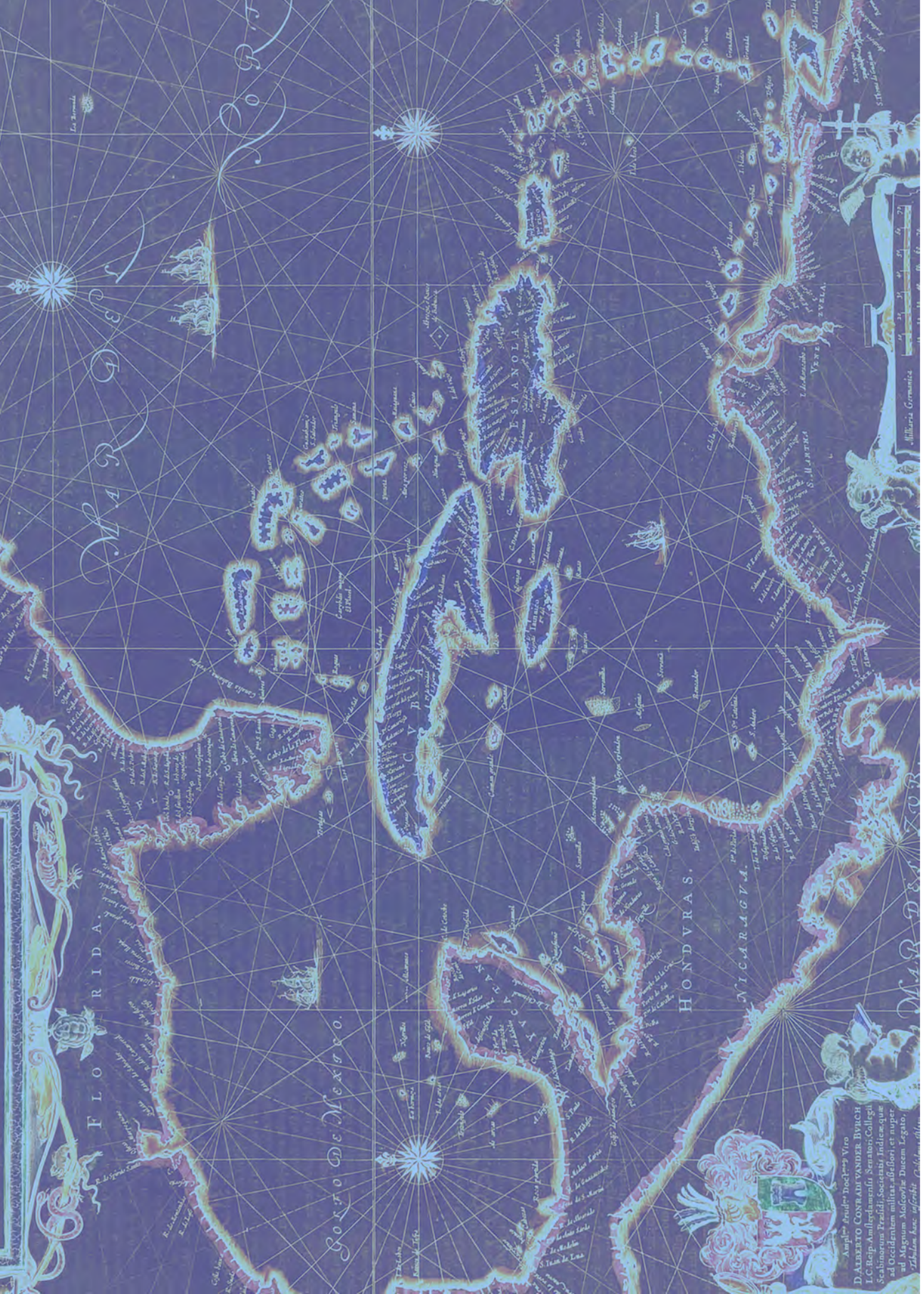
The Sacred East

Elephant Mask, Yaka
Plant fiber, natural pigment, printed textile, and wood
12 x 20 x 17 in.

Shango Devotee Kneeling Female Figure, Yoruba
Carved wood
8 x 4 x 9 in.

Male and female Ìbeji Statues, Yoruba
Wood
2 x 3 x 10 in.

Nkisi Figure, Congo
Wood, textile, metal, and dried plant material
21 x 6 x 5 in.



CURATORIAL BOARD

Steven Nelson
Professor Emeritus of African and African Art History at UCLA, Dr. Steven Nelson is also former Dean of the Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts at National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

Laura Lessing
Art historian and educator, Dr. Laura Lessing is the Director of the University of Iowa Stanley Museum of Art, with more than 25 years of experience working in museums, including the Art Institute of Chicago and the Nelson Atkins Museum of Art in Kansas City.

Keith Morrison
Artist, art educator, curator, and art critic Keith Anthony Morrison was born in Jamaica. Former Dean of Tyler School of Art, Temple University, Philadelphia. He has organized several important exhibitions, and is the author of the well-known exhibition catalogue, *Art in Washington and its Afro-American Presence: 1940-1970*.

TK Smith
Curator, writer, and cultural historian, TK Smith currently works as Curator, Arts of Africa and the African Diaspora, at the Michael C. Carlos Museum at Emory University. While Assistant Curator: Art of the African Diaspora at the Barnes Foundation in Philadelphia, he was the venue curator of *William Edmondson: A Monumental Vision* (2023) and *Sue Williamson and Lebohang Kganye: Tell Me What You Remember* (2023).

Lyle Ashton Harris
Artist, educator and curator, Harris is a Professor of Art and Art Education at New York University. His work has been included in *Photography's Last Century* (2020), Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; the *52nd Venice Biennale* (2007); and *Black Male: Representations of Masculinity in Contemporary American Art* (1994), Whitney Museum of American Art. Co-curator of *Nero su Bianco* (2015), American academy on Rome.

Miguel Rojas-Sotelo
Art historian, artist, scholar, and curator, Dr. Rojas-Sotelo is the Director of the North Carolina Latin American Film Festival. He has curated *Global Caribbean V – Glocal Caribbeaness* (2013) Little Haiti Cultural Center, Miami; and co-curated *Indigeneity – Decoloniality – @rt* (2014), Federic Jamenson Gallery, Durham, NC and *Arte Nuevo InteractivA* (2007 and 2009), Merida, Mexico.

Lucrezia Cippitelli
Co-artistic Director, Kunst Meran, Merano, Italy and Professor of Aesthetics, Brera Academy of Fine Arts, Milan, Italy. Dr. Cippitelli has curated *Sammy Baloji. K(C)ongo Fragments of interlaced dialogues. Subversive Classifications*, The Uffizi Galleries, Florence; and co-curated *Aerolectics* (2025), a solo exhibition of Belinda Kazeem-Kamiński at Kunst Meran Merano Arte; and *Arte Nuevo InteractivA* (2005 and 2007), Merida, Mexico.

Simone Frangi
Co-artistic Director, Kunst Meran Merano Arte, Italy and Professor of Art Theory and Visual Culture, Academy of Fine Arts and Design, Grenoble, France. Frangi has curated *Somatechnics. Transparent Travelers and Obscure No-Bodies* (2018), the Museion, Bolzano; and co-curated *Aerolectics* (2025), a solo exhibition of Belinda Kazeem-Kamiński at Kunst Meran Merano Arte.

Johanne Affricott
Currently, Affricot serves as Curator-at-Large at the American Academy in Rome (2023–24) and is the artistic director of SPAZIO GRIOT and GriotMag. Curator of *Artists Making Books: Pages of Refuge and Resistance* (2024), American Academy in Rome; and co-curator of *Il Mio Filippino: For Those Who Care To See* (2023) Mattatoio, Rome.

Justin Randolph Thompson
Artist, cultural facilitator and educator, Justin Randolph Thompson is Co-Founder and Director of the Black History Month Florence, and The Recovery Plan, Florence, Italy. Curator of *William Demby. Tremendous Mobility* (2025), Murate Art District, and *On Being Present: Recovering Blackness in the Uffizi Galleries* (2020), Florence, Italy.

Raimi Gbadamosi
Artist, writer and curator, Dr. Raimi Gbadamosi is the Department of Art's Chair and Professor at Howard University. He has curated *When in Rome III* (2004), Castlefield Gallery, Manchester; *What's Going On?* (2013-2015), Usher Gallery, Lincoln; and *Belfast Exposed* (2010), Belfast, Ireland.

Meleane Harvey
Dr. Melanee C. Harvey is associate professor of art history in the Department of Art at Howard University. Curator of *Wherever There is Light* (2024), The Center for the Contemporary Image, Philadelphia, PA; and *Temples of Hope, Rituals of Survival: Gordon Parks and Black Religious Life* (2025), Howard University Museum, Washington, D.C.

HOWARD UNIVERSITY GALLERY OF ART

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Africana Americanxs In Transit Across the Black Kairibe

The Africana Americanxs In Transit Across the Black Kairibe exhibition features over 30 works of art and films from the Howard University Gallery of Art Collection and contemporary African Caribbean diaspora artists. The exhibit interrogates five major themes at the axis of a multidirectional path that intersect historical socio-political and artistic movements as seen in the lives of African Americans, Afro Caribbeans, and US Africana Caribbean Latinxs such as: Tracing Ancestral Memories, Africana Kairibe Imaginaries, Black Geometries, The Sacred East, and Africana Karibe Diaspora. The curatorial project presents a continental history of black diaspora subjectivity in the legacy of Howard University professor, philosopher, scholar, and cultural activist Dr. Alain L. Locke and the artistic representation of the Black Caribbean as visual culture for ancestral connectivity and Global Africa futurity.

finearts.howard.edu/gallery-art/exhibitions/africana-americanxs-transit-across-black-kairibe

About Howard University Gallery of Art

The Howard University Gallery of Art was established in 1928 by the action of the Board of Trustees in response to an offer of funds made by a philanthropic couple of Washington, D.C. By 1941, the name of the gallery changed to Art Gallery when it was moved to the East Wing of the Founders Library. From the early days to the present, Howard University Gallery of Art has engaged in art collecting, preservation, and conservation at Howard University.

https://finearts.howard.edu/gallery-art

About The Chadwick A Boseman College of Fine Arts

The Howard University Chadwick A. Boseman College of Fine Arts is one of the nation's premier institutions for visual arts, music, dance, and theatre. Rooted in the legacy of Howard—the top-ranked coeducational HBCU—its excellence is carried forward by the remarkable talent, training, and impact of its faculty, students, staff, and alumni, who are shaping culture, telling untold stories, and transforming communities through the arts. Learn more at https://finearts.howard.edu/.

About Howard University

Howard University, established in 1867, is a leading private research university based in Washington, D.C. Howard's 14 schools and colleges offer 140 undergraduate, graduate, and professional degree programs and lead the nation in producing African Americans with professional doctoral degrees. Howard is the top-ranked historically Black college or university according to Forbes, the only HBCU with an R1 research institution designation, and the only HBCU ranked among U.S. News & World Report's Top 100 National Universities. Renowned for its esteemed faculty, high achieving students, and commitment to excellence, leadership, truth and service, Howard produces distinguished alumni across all sectors, which have included the first Black U.S. Supreme Court justice and the first woman U.S. vice president; a Nobel Prize laureate; Schwarzman, Marshall, Rhodes and Truman Scholars; prestigious fellows; and over 170 Fulbright recipients. Learn more at www.howard.edu.

This exhibition is a collaborative effort by

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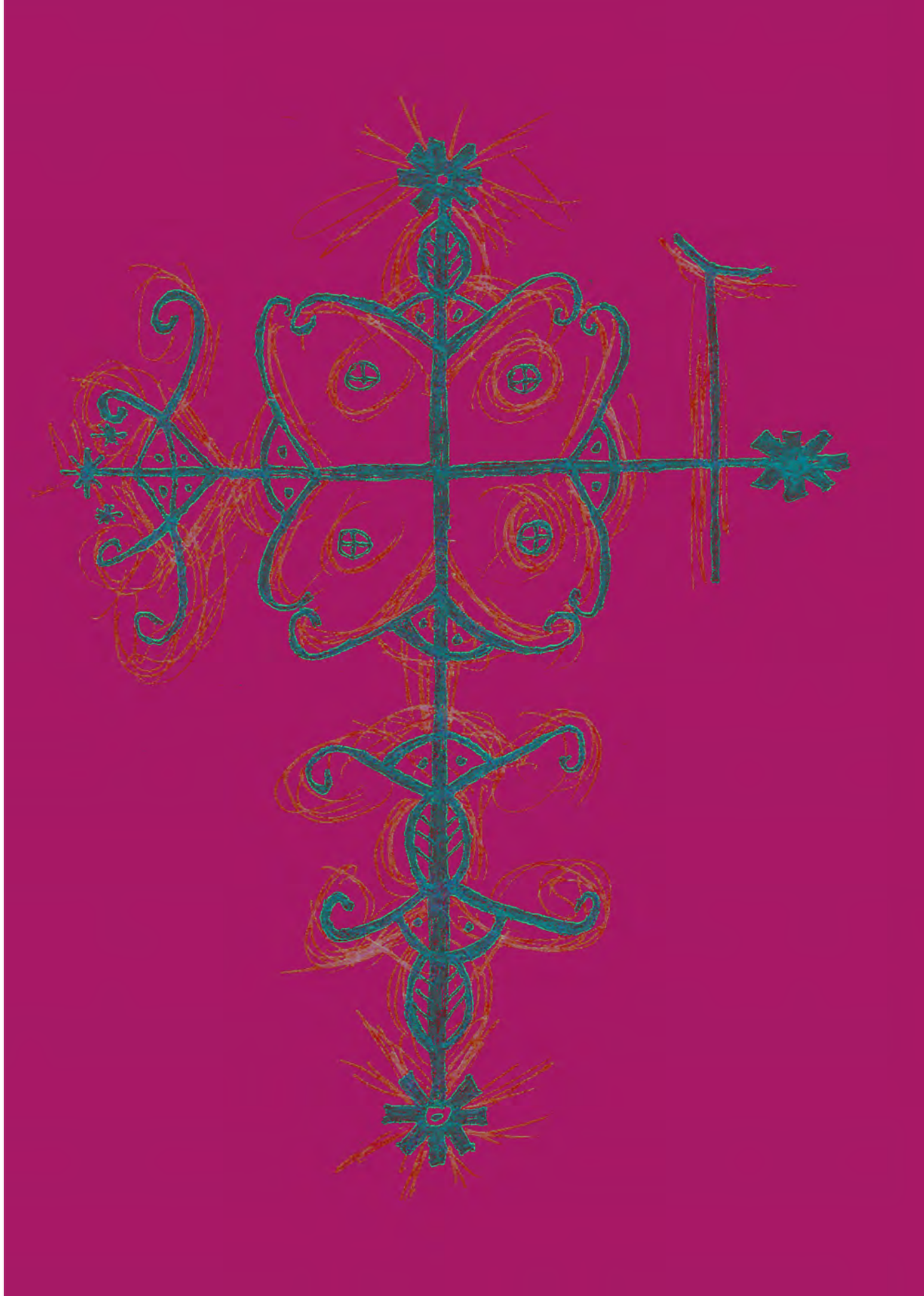


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