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New Jersey Council for the Humanities

New Jersey Historical Commission

THANKS TO PRESENTERS AND SPEAKERS

June 12, 2019

Heather Brady joined Grounds For Sculpture in 2015 as its first-ever Director of Education and Engagement. In this role, she oversees a diverse mix of education, performing arts, and community programs. Heather came to Grounds For Sculpture from The Noguchi Museum, where she served as Head of Education. Heather also worked as the Director of Education at the Museum of Chinese in America, and as an educator at the Bronx Museum of Arts, the Museum of Modern Art, and in schools and community-based organizations throughout New York City.

Pamela Brooks is a Past President of Social Justice Matters, Inc., and currently serves as Corresponding Secretary for the organization and is a board member of the Anti-Racism Community Collaborative, an initiative of the Anti-Racism Community Collaborative, a joint project of Social Justice Matters, (SJM) and The Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Association of Westfield. She is a librarian, holding a Master's degree in Library and Information Science from Pratt Institute and a B.A. in English from Barnard College of Columbia University. Her work in the community includes a longstanding commitment to Next Chapter Book Clubs for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, where she loves sharing an appreciation of reading, and volunteer involvement with Westfield Area Y Achievers, where she enjoys helping young people develop their writing skills.

Claudia E. Cohen, PhD, is a member of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Association in Westfield, a co-chair of the Social Justice Team at Beacon UU Congregation in Summit and a member of the Summit Interfaith Council's Anti-Racism Committee. She is a scholar-practitioner with expertise in the areas of constructive conflict resolution and intergroup dialogue. She is on the board of the Anti-Racism Community Collaborative, an initiative of the Anti-Racism Community Collaborative, a joint project of Social Justice Matters, (SJM) and The Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Association of Westfield. For the last several years she has worked with the organizations above, and now with ARCC, to create opportunities for safe yet truthful interracial learning and dialogue in Union County. She has a B.A. in Psychology from Stanford University and a Ph.D. in Social Psychology from UC San Diego. She has been on faculty at Rutgers University – New Brunswick and most recently at Teachers College, Columbia University.

Willie Cole is known for his mixed media sculptures that focus on the cultures of West Africa. His upbringing by both his mother and grandmother in the 1960s has had a lasting impact on his work, as his continued use of irons in his sculptures signifies the domestic role of African women during this time. His fascination with African art developed as he continued his education at the School of Visual Arts in New York, where he studied the culture of the Yoruba society. Cole's work has been the subject of several one-person museum exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art, Bronx Museum of the Arts, Miami Art Museum, Birmingham Museum of Art, and more.

In 2015, Cole's work was included in "Represent: 200 Years of African American Art" at the Philadelphia Museum of Art and "Wild Noise: Artwork from the Bronx Museum of the Arts" at El Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana. In 2016, his work was included in "Disguise: Masks and Global African Art" at the Brooklyn Museum. "Willie Cole: On-Site" opened at the David C. Driskell Center, University of Maryland and traveled to the Museum of Art at the University of New Hampshire, and Arthur Ross Gallery, Philadelphia in 2016. The following year, Cole had solo exhibitions at the Snite Museum of Art at the University of Notre Dame and at the College of Architecture and Design Gallery at the New Jersey Institute of Technology. "Willie Cole: Beauties" opened at the Radcliffe Institute at Harvard University in March 2019.

Linda J. Caldwell Epps, Ph.D., is President and CEO of 1804 Consultants, a consulting firm dedicated to the advancement of educational and cultural organizations. Linda has more than 40 years of experience working with educational and cultural institutions, including the New Jersey Historical Society and New Jersey Network Television and Radio. Prior to this, Linda held various positions at Bloomfield College, where she helped lead the institution to successful completion of an \$8.4 million capital campaign. Linda has also served as a Ford Foundation-funded consultant to several institutions of higher learning on issues of diversity and equity in higher education. Linda holds degrees Rutgers University's Douglass College and Seton Hall University. She earned her Ph.D. from Drew University, completing a dissertation titled, *From Zion to Brick City: What's Going On? Newark and the Legacy of the Sixties*. She completed the Institute for Higher Education Management program at Harvard University, the American Associate of Colleges and Universities Diversity Institute at Georgetown University, and is a Leadership New Jersey Fellow, Class of 1992.

Linda Corliss Harrison was appointed eighth director and CEO of the Newark Museum in January 2019. Ms. Harrison is the former Director and CEO of the Museum of the African Diaspora (MoAD) in San Francisco, where she expanded the museum's mission, advocating for contemporary art through its exhibitions, public programs and education programming, making it an anchor arts institution in San Francisco and the Greater Bay Area. Ms. Harrison's is credited for the redesigned the Museum of the African Diaspora – with the assistance of the Gensler Architect Team – doubling the number of galleries.

Ms. Harrison, a Getty Foundation Fellow, has garnered awards for her work on behalf of the Yerba Buena Arts district. Among other awards, she is a recipient of the 2017 Yerba Buena Center of the Arts 100 List and the 2017 Arts and Culture award from San Francisco's Commission on the Status of Women and the San Francisco Business Times Top 100 Women in Business Award. Additionally, in her career as Realtor, she received numerous awards for her work with the City of San Francisco supporting affordable housing initiatives for low and moderate income residents. She is a graduate of Loyola University of Chicago and The Getty Foundation Executive Leadership Program. She currently serves on the American Alliance of Museums (AAM), National Program Committee.

Rev. Dr. M. William (Bill) Howard, Jr., has from his early years in Americus, Georgia to the present, has sought to apply his faith toward transforming the human condition. As an elected youth leader of the Sumter County (GA) Voters League in 1961, he was engaged in the first massive voter education and registration drive in

Southwest Georgia. As a national staff member of the (Dutch) Reformed Church in America; as Moderator of the Programme to Combat Racism of the World Council of Churches; as President of the National Council of Churches; and as President of the American Committee on Africa, he was deeply involved in a wide-range of Human Rights and anti-colonial campaigns in the US, Southern Africa, the Middle East, Latin America and Asia. He was denied visas to South Africa until after Nelson Mandela was released in 1990; in 1979, with the late Dr. William Sloane Coffin, Bishop Thomas Gumbleton and the late Leon-Etienne Cardinal Duval, he ministered to US personnel being held hostage in Iran; and with the Reverend Jesse L. Jackson, he helped to secure the release of US Navy pilot, Robert O. Goodman from Syria in 1983.

Dr. Howard is an ordained minister in the American Baptist Churches, USA, and a graduate of Morehouse and Princeton Theological Seminary. In 1992 Rev. Howard assumed the presidency of New York Theological Seminary, a graduate school of theological education devoted to leadership development for church workers in the New York metropolitan region. He was called to pastor Bethany Baptist Church in Newark, NJ in 2000, where he served through 2015. Dr. Howard has served on the national boards of the Urban League, The Independent Sector, and The Children's Defense Fund, among others. He chaired Newark Mayor Cory Booker's transition team; and he chaired the NJ Death Penalty Study Commission, which led to the State of NJ becoming the first state in the USA to abolish the death penalty since it was re-authorized by the US Supreme Court in 1976. He served on the Rutgers University Board of Governors for a decade, and was elected as its chair for three terms. He is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, and has received numerous citations, awards, honorary degrees and keys to cities.

Laticia Lewis is a violinist, composer, producer, performer and educator. She is a graduate of Rutgers University, and a certified Teacher of Music in the New Jersey School System. For over twenty years, she has redefined several genres of music with unique interpretations and inspirational play in her performances. Featured with various musical groups, she has performed in venues throughout the country and abroad. In addition to her artistry of performance, she writes and composes original contemporary music for violin and piano, and for independent projects and film. Laticia has taught and directed music for 15 years, and has earned awards and accolades throughout her teaching career. As the director of her school's music program, she created a violin ensemble through a grant the school received on behalf of her developing the curriculum. In addition, she teaches violin lessons to students of all ages. She is a member of Mount Zion A.M.E. Church in New Brunswick, NJ. Laticia truly enjoys playing before audiences, and provides her continual service to the community through numerous musical festivals, weddings, concerts, and special affairs annually. She will perform some selections, including her own original production and modern arrangement of the Negro Spiritual, "Wade in the Water."

Kevin Maynor is an American opera singer and is currently resident of Trilogy: An Opera Company, in Newark, New Jersey. In 1985, Maynor made his debut with the New York City Opera. Declared as, "one of the very greatest bass voices of the century", Mr. Maynor has sung throughout the world in both opera houses and concert halls. Maynor has recorded with Telarc, Qualiton, Guild, Sony Music Beijing, New World Records and Fleur de son. He has sung pieces by Verdi and Mozart and was often recognized for being cast in Wagner's Ring Cycle (Scottish Opera, Teatro Municipal de Santiago, Dallas opera, Lyric Opera Austin).

Maynor has sung roles with the Lyric Opera of Chicago, New York City Opera, Santa Fe Opera, Opera Orchestra of New York, Cincinnati Opera, Teatro Amazonas de Opera in Brazil, Teatro Municipal de Santiago in Chile, Edmonton Opera, L'Opera de Montreal, Florida Grand Opera, Pittsburg Opera, Opera National du Rhin of France, Dallas Opera, Opera Company of Boston, The Spoleto Festival, Opera Pacific, The Saratov Opera in Russia, The Pacific Opera in Victoria, Scottish Opera, and at The Metropolitan Opera, among others. He has also sung with the symphony orchestras of Atlanta, Fort Worth, Quebec, New Orleans, Milwaukee, The

Buffalo, Long Island Philharmonic, The New World Symphony, The American Symphony, Kalamazoo, Canton, Knoxville, Virginia, Eugene Symphony, Santa Fe Symphony, Phoenix Symphony, Mississippi, among others. Mr. Maynor has sung everywhere from Carnegie Hall to The Beijing Concert Hall in China. As a recitalist, Kevin Maynor has received praise throughout North America, South America, Europe, Australasia and Africa as well as Asia including India and China.

Gwen Moten is an arts and cultural educator, events planner and producer, Broadway and international concert artist, music conductor, researcher, lecturer on The History of African American Music, CEO of Theatre World Music Service, published columnist presently with Destination Newark Magazine, and City Landmarks and Historic Preservation Commissioner. She is a former corporate executive for the Newark Performing Arts Corporation/Newark Symphony Hall.

Ms. Moten was an invited representative at the United Nation's Department of Public Information / Non-Governmental Organizations and served on sub-committees for international conferences. She was appointed an international cultural representative for the United States of America under President William Jefferson Clinton as The American Cultural Specialist. Ms. Moten was given the distinguished honor of opening NASDAQ in New York City. Numerous governmental commendations from The White House to international Heads-of-State throughout Africa, Japan, and Belgium have been bestowed upon her. She serves as the Executive Director of the Mayor's Office of Arts, Cultural Development and Tourism for the City of Newark, New Jersey. This past May 11, Ms. Moten, along with other honors, was presented with a Proclamation from Mayor Ras J. Baraka as a Trailblazer Lifetime Achievement Awardee for the many services she has given. Her life experiences and career are expressed in her one-woman show: *From Birmingham To Botswana, The Journey Of An African American International Traveler*.

Salamishah Tillet, Ph.D., is Henry Rutgers Professor of African American and African Studies and Creative Writing, Faculty Director of the New Arts Justice Initiative at Express Newark, and Associate Director of the Clement A. Price Institute on Ethnicity, Culture, and the Modern Experience at Rutgers University-Newark. She is the author of *Sites of Slavery: Citizenship and Racial Democracy in the Post-Civil Rights Imagination* and co-editor of the *Callaloo: A Journal of African Diaspora Arts and Letters* Special Issue on Ethiopia. She is currently completing a book called *In Search of the Color Purple*, a memoir about Alice Walker's novel, along with a book on civil rights icon Nina Simone.

Dr. Tillet is a scholar of African American culture whose work is at the intersection of arts and activism. A cultural critic who is a regular contributor to the *New York Times* Arts & Leisure section, she is currently the Robert S. Blank Presidential Associate Professor of English and Africana Studies and a faculty member of the Alice Paul Center for Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies at the University of Pennsylvania. She is a much sought-after commenter on the politics of artistic expression and a leading thinker on the relationship between art and social justice. In 2003, she co-founded A Long Walk Home, a Chicago-based national non-profit that uses art to educate, inspire, and mobilize young people to end violence against girls and women. Tillet has appeared on the BBC, CNN, MSNBC, NPR, and TedxWomen, and has written for *The Atlantic*, *Chicago Tribune*, *The Guardian*, *The Nation*, *The New York Times*, *The Root*, and *Time*. In 2010 she wrote the liner notes for John Legend and The Roots' three-time Grammy award-winning album, *Wake Up!*. In 2013 she published *Gloria Steinem: The Kindle Singles Interview* for Amazon.

Richard Wesley is an American playwright and screenwriter. He is an associate professor at New York University's Tisch School of the Arts in the Rita and Burton Goldberg Department of Dramatic Writing. Wesley studied playwriting and dramatic literature at Howard University and graduated with a Master of Fine Arts degree in 1967.

He first became known for the 1971 New York Shakespeare Festival of his play *Black Terror*, which portrayed the story of a black revolution and for which he received the 1971/1972 Drama Desk Award as most promising playwright. Wesley wrote the screenplays for the 1974 film *Uptown Saturday Night* and the 1975 film *Let's Do It Again*, both starring Bill Crosby and Sidney Poitier. In 1975, Wesley wrote and directed *The Past Is the Past*, a drama about a black man who meets the father who abandoned him years prior. His 1978 play, *The Mighty Gents*, is the story of the members of a gang that had conquered their rival gang, the Zombies, and ruled the Central Ward of Newark. The play depicts the gang members in their 30s and left with only the recollections of their earlier success. His 1989 play, *The Talented Tenth*, borrows its title from W. E. B. Du Bois's 1903 article, *The Talented Tenth*, which described the likelihood of one in ten black men becoming leaders of black people by continuing their education, writing books, or becoming directly involved in social change. The play received six awards, including dramatic production of the year and best playwright, at the 1989 AUDELCO Recognition Awards.

In 2013, Wesley was asked by the Trilogy: An Opera Company of Newark, New Jersey to write the libretto for the opera *Papa Doc*, composed by Dorothy Rudd Moore and based on an essay by Edwidge Danticat from her 2010 book *Create Dangerously*. On November 12, 2016, *Five*, an opera from Trilogy: An Opera Company about the 1989 Central Park Five jogger case in New York City, composed by Anthony Davis with a libretto by Wesley, premiered at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center in Newark.

Wendel A. White was awarded a BFA in photography from the School of Visual Arts in New York and an MFA in photography from the University of Texas at Austin. White taught photography at the School of Visual Arts, NY; The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art, NY; the International Center for Photography, NY; Rochester Institute of Technology; and is currently Distinguished Professor of Art at Stockton University.

His work has received various awards and fellowships including a John Simon Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship in Photography, three artist fellowships from the New Jersey State Council for the Arts, a photography grant from the Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts, and a New Works Photography Fellowship from En Foco Inc. His work is represented in museum and corporate collections including, among others, the Museum of Fine Art, Houston, TX; Museum of Contemporary Photography, Chicago, IL; Archive of Documentary Arts, Rubenstein Library, Duke University, NC; Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts, Chicago, IL; En Foco Inc., Bronx, NY; New Jersey State Museum, Trenton, NJ; University Museums Collection, University of Delaware, Newark, DE; The Arts at CIIS, San Francisco, CA; Rochester Institute of Technology, NY; Haverford College, PA; Johnson and Johnson, New Brunswick, NJ; Chase Manhattan Bank, New York, NY; Paul R. Jones Collection of African American Art at University of Delaware; NYPL Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, New York, NY.

White has served on the boards of various non-profit and public organizations including the Society for Photographic Education, Kodak Educational Advisory Council, NJ Save Outdoor Sculpture, New Jersey Black Culture and Heritage Foundation, the New Jersey Council for the Humanities, and the New Jersey Martin Luther King Jr. Commemorative Commission.

Recent projects include; *Red Summer*, *Manifest*, *Schools for the Colored*, *Village of Peace: An African American Community in Israel*, *Small Towns*, *Black Lives*, and others. A selection of images from the Manifest project are the subject of a Smithsonian Magazine article, "The Powerful Objects From the Collections of the Smithsonian's Newest Museum" (in the September 2016 issue), dedicated to the opening of the National Museum of African American History and Culture.

OTHER MEMBERS OF THE SANKOFA TEAM

Sharon Elaine Buck, who prefers to be called Elaine, is a founder the Stoutsburg Sourland African American Museum and a member on the Advisory Board. Elaine is also a thirty year Trustee of the Stoutsburg Cemetery Association which is a historic cemetery for people of African descent located in the Sourland Mountains in Hopewell, New Jersey. Along with her research partner, Beverly Mills, Elaine has co-authored a book entitled “If These Stones Could Talk” which is based on over a decade’s worth of research on the contribution of African Americans who lived in the Sourland Mountain region and surrounding area. She is a co-founder of Friday Truehart Consultants, is a consulting company that works closely with K-12 educators from various school systems who are interested in including African American history in their lesson plans and curriculum. Along with her colleague Beverly Mills, Elaine was instrumental in forming a partnership, named the Sankofa Collaborative; an initiative created to ensure that material and resources that relate to African American history is accessible statewide to a broader and more diverse audience. Partners in the Sankofa Collaborative include the William Trent House, Grounds For Sculpture, New Jersey Historical Society and 1804 Consultants.

Bruce Daniels has been the Facilities Director and Project Manager at Grounds For Sculpture for more than 30 years. He was involved in the initial planning of the park and was responsible for all of its building and landscape construction, as well as the day-to-day supervision of its operations. Bruce is also Vice President of the Stoutsburg Sourland African American Museum. Bruce has a master’s degree in Sociology from Rutgers College.

Beverly Mills is a founder of the Stoutsburg Sourland African American Museum and a member on the Advisory Board and a thirty-five year Trustee of the Stoutsburg Cemetery Association. Along with her research partner, Elaine Buck, Beverly has co-authored a book entitled “If These Stones Could Talk” based on over a decade of research on the contribution of the African American population who lived in the Sourland Mountain and surrounding region. It was through this research that Beverly has been able to trace her ancestry to African Americans who were enslaved in the Hopewell Township, New Jersey area prior to the Revolutionary War. Beverly is a co-founder of Friday Truehart Consultants.

For many years Beverly, along with fellow trustees of the Stoutsburg Cemetery Association, has presented at various schools, community groups and historic sites. She has also partnered with the William Trent House, 1804 Consultants, the Grounds For Sculpture and the National Assessment of Educational Progress for the State of New Jersey to host a series of symposiums created to explore African American history in New Jersey, how to interpret African American history at historic sites and museums and how to present and discuss difficult topics in African American history.

Beverly is the first African American woman to hold the elected position as a Councilwoman in Pennington Borough, NJ. Her past affiliations include Trustee on the board of Ellarslie (The Trenton City Museum), a Trustee of the Hopewell Valley Historical Society, a member of the Friends of the Trenton Public Library and Chairperson of the Trustee Board of the First Baptist Church of Pennington.

Samuel A. Stephens, Ph.D., is a Trustee of the Trent House Association, which works with City of Trenton to maintain the 1719 William Trent House Museum and provide programming related to the history of the House. With a background in sociology, he has led the Trent House Association’s work on expanding its research into and deepening its interpretation of slavery at the Museum, including work with consultants on the Museum’s tours and exhibits and on field trip lesson plans for school groups. He co-founded and is the Museum’s representative on the Sankofa Collaborative, which has conducted a number of well-received public workshops on presenting, interpreting, and discussing African American history and culture in various settings, including museums and historic sites, libraries, schools, and community groups.