

HARVARD UNIVERSITY

W. E. B. DU BOIS INSTITUTE FOR AFRICAN AND AFRICAN AMERICAN RESEARCH
DEPARTMENT OF AFRICAN AND AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES

Barker Center • 12 Quincy Street • Cambridge, MA 02138-3879

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HARVARD UNIVERSITY HOSTS "BRIDGING THE GAPS" 1st Annual CONFERENCE ON AFRICAN ART

Cambridge – On November 5 – 7, the 1st Annual Conference on African American art will take place at Harvard University. With a theme of "Bridging the Gaps", the conference focuses on the generational, methodological, and ideological gaps that exist within the field of African American art and aims to examine the gaps that arise from differing definitions of the field of African American art and art of the African Diaspora.

Co-sponsored by the W. E. B. Du Bois Institute for African and African American Research and Harvard University Art Museums, "Bridging the Gaps" will include seven panels and a moderated conversation between David Driskell and Thelma Golden. Driskell is highly regarded as an artist and a scholar and is cited as one of the world's leading authorities on the subject of African American Art. In 2000, he also received the National Humanities Medal from President Clinton. Golden is the deputy director for exhibitions and programs at the Studio Museum in Harlem and is best known for the controversial 1994 show at the Whitney Museum entitled "Black Male: Representations of Masculinity in Contemporary Art". Kellie Jones is a professor of art history and African American Studies at Yale University.

"This conference is significant because it furthers Harvard's commitment to the study of African American art" said Henry Louis Gates, Jr., chair of the African and African American Studies Department. "'Bridging the Gaps' is the perfect opportunity to bring together hundreds of educators, artists, curators, and collectors to research, examine and expand the boundaries of African American artistic expression."

Noted artists scheduled to attend the conference include National Endowment for the Arts winners Carrie Mae Weems and Sam Gilliam, MacArthur Genius Award winners Kerry James Marshall and Deb Willis, Dawoud Bey whose work was shown in the Whitney Biennial 2000 and Maria Magdalena Campos-Pons whose artwork is prominently featured on the program book cover.

The conference registration fee is \$100. Student registration with valid college/university I.D. is \$40. Registration fees cover entrance into all panel sessions, receptions, and the moderated conversation. The cost of entering the moderated conversation in lieu of attending the conference is \$25. To register on-line and obtain hotel information, please visit www.fas.harvard.edu/~du_bois and click on **African American Art Conference 2004**. For more information or to register by mail, please contact Dell M. Hamilton, Events and Publications Manager, by calling 617.495.3611 or dhamilt@fas.harvard.edu.

Founded in 1975, the W. E. B. Du Bois Institute for African and African American Research is the nation's oldest research center dedicated to the study of the history, culture, and social institutions of Africans and African Americans. With more than 300 Fellows as alumni including major figures such as George Frederickson (Stanford University), Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham (Harvard University), Nellie McKay (University of Wisconsin), Nell Irvin Painter (Princeton University), Arnold Rampersad (Stanford University), and Cornel West (Princeton University), the Institute has done more in its short existence to

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ensure the scholarly development of African and African American Studies than any other pre-doctoral or post-doctoral program in the United States.

When & Where: “Bridging the Gaps” - 1st Annual Conference on African American Art, November 5 – 7, 2004. Panel sessions taking place at Norton Hall, Harvard University, 32 Quincy Street, Cambridge. Conference schedule activities can be found by going to www.fas.harvard.edu/~du-bois and clicking on *African American Art*. Detailed panel sessions listed below:

CONSTRUCTING THE CANON

Co-chairs:

Richard J. Powell, Duke University
Michael Harris, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

TEACHING ABOUT AFRICAN AMERICAN ART

[This panel's scope includes art history, performance, visual culture]

Co-chairs:

Deborah Willis, New York University
Isolde Brielmier, Vassar College

A CENTURY OF CRITICAL THINKING ABOUT AFRICAN AMERICAN ART

Co-chairs:

Tritobia Hayes Benjamin, Howard University
Gwen Everett, Howard University

THE DIASPORIC ELEMENT:

EXPANDING THE DEFINITION OF AFRICAN AMERICAN ART

Co-chairs:

Salah Hassan, Cornell University
Cheryl Finley, Cornell University

ARTISTS: PRACTICE AND PROCESS

[This panel's scope includes African, African American, and Caribbean]

Co-chairs:

Leslie King Hammond, Maryland Institute College of Art
Franklin Sirmans, Independent Curator

MUSEOLOGICAL PRACTICE

[This panel's scope includes curators, public programming, and collecting]

Co-chairs:

Lowery Stokes Sims, The Studio Museum in Harlem
Sandra Jackson, The Studio Museum in Harlem

SPHERE OF INFLUENCE: HOW EXHIBITIONS SHAPE THEORY AND INFLUENCE PRACTICE

Co-chair:

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Valerie Cassel Oliver, Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston