

# **African-American Arts: Activism and Aesthetic Conference**

**Bucknell University  
Lewisburg, Pennsylvania**

**September 29th, 30th, and October 1st, 2016**

The Griot Institute at Bucknell University and the Africana Studies program announce and invite paper submissions for a conference entitled African-American Arts: Activism and Aesthetics, to be held September 29th, 30th, and October 1st, 2016 in Lewisburg, Pennsylvania (approximately three hours from the metropolitan areas of Washington, DC, Baltimore, Maryland, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and New York, New York).

The conference will engage participants in a set of critical conversations by activists, scholars, and artists reflecting on the legacies of African-American activism as an element of artistic practice, particularly as they concern artistic expression and racism and the intersections of creative processes with aesthetic, economic, sociological, and psychological inequalities.

What are the connections between African American arts, the work of social justice, and creative processes? If we conceive of the arts as part of the legacy of black activism in the United States, how can we use that construct to inform our understanding of the complicated intersections of African-American activism(s) and aesthetics?

## **Invitation**

The conference invites scholars, activists, artists, and others to send abstracts engaging the questions and concerns of the conference as they intersect with African-American film, theater, dance, visual art, music, literature, performance and other art forms from disciplinary, multidisciplinary, and/or interdisciplinary perspectives.

## **Topics**

Possible topics for papers, lecture-demonstrations, and/or panels include but are not limited to:

The Black Arts Movement of the 1950s, Slam poetry and social justice, New Black Aesthetic, Improvisation, Histories of Black Arts Movements, Hip hop, and political activism, Afrofuturism as a social justice project, Performance and politics, African-American aesthetics, Author as public intellectual, as well as the work of and questions raised by the creative productions of artists, including but not limited to: Erika Alexander, Alvin Ailey Dance Theater, Debbie Allen, Erykah Badu, RadcliffeBailey, James Baldwin, Harry Belafonte, Gwendolyn Brooks, Octavia Butler, Ta-Nehisi Coates, John Coltrane, Misty Copeland, Julie Dash, Miles Davis, Jimmy Greene, Zora Neal Hurston, Samuel L. Jackson, Bill T. Jones, Spike Lee, Jacob Lawrence, Kasi Lemmons, Audre Lorde, Manning Marable, Wynton Marsalis, E. Ethelbert Miller, Toni Morrison, Gordon Parks, Prince, Faith Ringgold, Nina Simone, Anna Deveare Smith, Esperanza Spalding, Henry Ossawa Tanner, Alice Walker, Kara Walker, Carrie Mae Weems, Phillis Wheatley, and August Wilson.

## **Keynote Speaker**

The keynote speaker will be Carrie Mae Weems. Over the past thirty years Carrie Mae Weems has worked toward developing a complex body of art that has employed photographs, text, fabric, audio, digital images, installation, and video. Her work has led her to investigate family relationships, gender roles, the histories of racism, sexism, class, and various political systems. Weems has received numerous awards, grants and fellowships including the prestigious Prix de Roma, The National Endowment of the Arts, the Alpert, the Anonymous was a Woman and the Tiffany Awards. In 2013, Weems was not only the recipient of the MacArthur "Genius" grant, but she also received the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation's Lifetime Achievement Award.

## **Performance**

Grammy-award nominated jazz musician, Jimmy Greene, will perform at the conference on Friday night for conference attendees. A native of Hartford, CT, Greene is considered one of the most respected saxophonists of his generation since his graduation from the Hartt School of Music in 1997. The Jimmy Greene Quartet performs regularly in jazz venues, festivals and clubs worldwide, including the Village Vanguard (New York), Le Club (Moscow), Casa del Jazz (Rome), Sunside Jazz Club (Paris), Red Sea Jazz Festival (Israel), Lapataia Jazz Festival (Uruguay) and Amazonas Jazz Festival (Brazil). *Down Beat* magazine recognized Greene as one of "25 Young Rising Stars in Jazz." Greene is Coordinator of Jazz Studies and Assistant Professor of Music at Western Connecticut State University in Danbury, CT.

## **Abstracts**

Abstracts of approximately 250 words are due by midnight July 15, 2016 should be submitted to <https://griotinstituteforafricanastudiesbucknell.submittable.com/submit>

## **Presentations**

Conference presentations must be no longer than 15 minutes. Presenters will be notified of status on or before September 1st. All presenters and attendees must register for the conference to attend.

## **More information**

For complete conference information and to register, please visit conference website:

<http://www.bucknell.edu/ArtsActivismConference>

Conference email: [griot@bucknell.edu](mailto:griot@bucknell.edu)