

The Art of Justice

Articulating an Ethos and Aesthetic of the Movement

To join the conversation via Twitter use hashtag
#THEARTOFJUSTICE

Follow **@CCCADI** and **@NYUARTSPOLITICS**

WIFI

GuestID: guest1
Password: dspatett

For more information about
the conference, presenters and
resources, visit
www.theartofjusticeconference.com



The Art of Justice
Articulating an Ethos and Aesthetic of the Movement

A One-Day Conference

Saturday
November 7, 2015

diverse
encounters
that
define
generations

CCCADI
IRASS
50
NYU | TISCH
New York University
Hemmerdinger Hall, Silver Building, 33 Washington Place, 1st floor, New York, New York, 10003
8:30 AM Registration | 9:30 AM - 7:30 PM Conference Program
Closing Reception - guest artist **Randy Weston**
RSVP Required: www.theartofjustice.eventbrite.com

Sponsors > Caribbean Cultural Center African Diaspora Institute / Department of Art and Public Policy, New York University
Institute of African American Affairs, New York University / Institute for Research in African American Studies, Columbia University

JOIN THE CONVERSATION

#THEARTOFJUSTICE

www.theartofjusticeconference.com

THE ART OF JUSTICE:

Articulating an Ethos and Aesthetic of the Movement

A One-Day Conference

“We knew we heard Monk and Mongo differently; Trane’s tenor seized our spirit, shook our consciousness while Miles blue thru a cold trumpet that cooled the asphyxiating heat of our collective hell in America... Ours was the first American aesthetic revolution.” -Felipe Luciano 2015

Welcome to the first in a three part series of conversations focused on the role of culture and art as integral to the actions of individuals, advocacy movements to claim their right to culture, racial, civil and social justice. Understanding that the United Nations International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights declares

“... in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the ideal of free human beings enjoying freedom from fear and want can only be achieved if conditions are created whereby everyone may enjoy his economic, social and cultural rights, as well as his civil and political rights,...”

The structural systemic inequity that continues to permeate the policies and institutions that educate frame racial, cultural, social rights as an objective rather than a human right. The Art of Justice seeks to provide insight into movements influenced by the Civil Rights movement that have been objectified as revolutionary and fearful rather than human rights actions to make the promise of democracy and equity a reality.

It is essential to understand historically the centrality and necessity of art in the quest for social and political justice. Especially In the age of Ferguson, it is important to remember that the “Black Lives Matter” movement is in the tradition of ongoing historical struggles. Currently cell phone cameras have provided the evidence to stimulate a new political consciousness through its ability to document social and political conditions in real time. Hip-Hop culture, with its’ fusion of ‘the beat’ and social commentary, has provided the musical context for contemporary social activism. This marriage of aesthetics and politics has a long history

In Memory of Our Ancestors

- | | | |
|------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Abbey Lincoln | Grace Lee Boggs | Max Roach |
| Abdul Rahman | Grace Paley | Maya Angelou |
| Aishah Rahman | Henrietta Engel | Michael Babatunde |
| Al Loving | Herman Engel | Olatunji |
| Albert Ayler | Holt Fuller | Miriam Makeba |
| Alvin Ailey | Ingrid | Mongo Santamaria |
| Amiri Baraka | Washinawatok | Nana Gus Dinizulu |
| Andrew Hill | Jack Tchen | Nina Simone |
| Art Williams | Jacob Lawrence | Nora Astorga |
| Arthur Hall | James Baldwin | Odetta |
| Baba Oserjiman Adefumi | James Brown | Ornette Coleman |
| Barbara Ann Teer | Jane Cortez | Oscar Micheaux |
| Betty Carter | Jean Léon Destiné | Ouman Sembene |
| Billy Bang | Jeff Donaldson | Paul Robeson |
| Celia Cruz | John Coltrane | Rahman |
| Charles Abramson | John Oliver Killens | Randy Martin |
| Charles Moore | Jorge Soto | Richard Wright |
| Charlie Parker | Julia de Burgos | Rod Rodgers |
| Chief Bey | Julito Collazo | Roger Furman |
| Chris Iijima | June Jordan | Romare Bearden |
| Mine Okubo | Kamati Dinizulu | Ron Milner |
| Fred Ho | Katherine Dunham | Roy Campbell |
| Charlie Mingus | Kimako | Safiya Henderson |
| Martin Wong | Langston Hughes | Holmes |
| Cornelus Saures | LaRocque Bey | Sammy Davis, Jr. |
| Curtis Mayfield | Larry Neal | Sekou Sundiata |
| Dizzy Gillespi | Laura Moreno | Silvia del Villard |
| Donald Woods | Leon Thomas | Simba McCray |
| Earth Kitt | Lina P. Derecktor | St. Clair Bourne |
| Elizabeth Catlett | Lloyd Oxendine | Sun Ra |
| Ernest Crichlow | Machito | Thelonious Monk |
| Frank Host | Mahama Johnson | Vincent Smith |
| Franz Fanon | Traoré | Yuri Kochiyama |
| Fred Ho | Malcolm X | Yusef Iman |
| Frida Kahlo | Mario Bauzá | Yusef Rahman |
| Gilberto Hernandez | Marvin Gaye | |

*and others known
and unknown...*

John Kuo Wei (Jack) Tchen is a historian, curator, and writer. Professor Tchen is founding director of the A/P/A (Asian/Pacific /American) Studies Program and Institute at New York University, NYU and a founding faculty of the Department of Social and Cultural Analysis. He co-founded the Museum of Chinese in America in 1979-80 where he continues to serve as senior historian. Jack has just completed a critical archival study of images, excerpts and essays on the history and contemporary impact of “Yellow Peril” paranoia and xenophobia (Verso, Feb. 2014). He served as the senior historian for a New-York Historical Society exhibition on the impact of Chinese Exclusion Laws on the formation of the US. He is currently working on a two hour “The American Experience” PBS documentary with Ric Burns and Lishin Yu on Chinese Exclusion. He is also working on a series of exhibit, conferences, and performances retelling US history from the lens of scientific racism and eugenics “sorting” hierarchies.

Dindga McCannon is a multimedia, mixed media visual artist. Her art career started at age 17, when she joined the Weusi Artists in 1965. (She remains a member to this day.) In 1971, Dindga McCannon, the late Kay Brown and Faith Ringgold founded 'Where We At, Black Women Artists' the first African American Womens Artist collective. The group lasted for 25 years.

Ms. McCannon has exhibited worldwide including the American Craft Museum, the Schomberg Library in Harlem, the Dwyer Cultural Center, the Folk Art Museum, the Renwick Gallery at the Smithsonian, the African-American of Nassau County and more.

Her artwork is in the collections of the Johnson Publication Co., theStudio Museum in Harlem Permanent Collection, Proctor and Gamble Co., and the Brooklyn Museum.

Felipe Luciano a member of the Original Last Poets, Chairman and co-founder of Young Lords Party, first Puerto Rican to produce a popular English speaking Latin music show on WRVR FM, first Puerto Rican dee-jay on WBLS under Frankie Crocker, first Puerto Rican anchorman for WNBC Ch.4, two time Emmy Award winner, recent graduate of Union Theological Seminary with Masters in Theology and Social Justice and currently Director of Communications for the City of Newark under Mayor Ras Baraka.

in the Americas, especially in the 60's, 70's and 80's Native, Black, Latino, Asian and Progressive Euro-American arts movements, which were inspired by the Civil/Human Rights Movement in the United States, and by the freedom or anti-colonial movements in Africa, Asia and the Americas.

With a particular focus on the Black, Nuyorican Arts Movements and intersectionality of Asian, Native American, Progressive White and Gender concurrent movements The Art of Justice: Articulating an Ethos and Aesthetic of the Movement conference will present the ideas, and aesthetics of those earlier movements honoring and guided by the first hand voices documenting their actual experiences. The emphasis is on group discussion, audience participation and documenting the important accomplishments and lessons learned.

The essential themes to be discussed are: the universality of the struggle for justice and the art that served it; the continuity of the struggle with others like the Negritude Movement, the Harlem Renaissance, Marcus Garvey's and the UNIA, and the Hon. Elijah Muhammad and the Nation of Islam; the celebration of historic activist, including Marcus Garvey, Carlos Cooks, Elombe Brath, Amiri Baraka, Mario Bauzá, Frank 'Machito' Grillo, Tito Puente, Asadata Dafora, Pearl Primus, Katherine Dunham, Diego Rivera, Baba Osergiman, Nana Yao Opere Dinizulu, Babatunje Olatunji, Syvilla Fort, Max Roach, Abbey Lincoln, Sun Ra, Nina Simone, Fred Ho, Pete Seeger and others; the reassessment of current movements such as Nuyorican Poets Cafe, La Raza, American Indian Movement, AfriCOBRA, the Asian Arts Movement and the Guerrilla Girls.

The conference is being produced by the Caribbean Cultural Center-African Diaspora Institute, the Institute of African American Affairs and the Department of Art & Public Policy, Department of Performing Arts the three of New York University; and the Institute for Research in African American Studies of Columbia University.

Capturing the stories to provide historical context to present movements and the opportunity to connect with the creative genius of pioneers and current activists is an opportunity for us all to engage and continue to be part of assuring our human rights.

Thank you for joining us,

The Art of Justice Organizing Committee

PROGRAM

Registration: 8:30 AM to 9: 15 AM – Light Breakfast

9:15 AM | *Homage – Amiri Baraka*

9: 30 AM | *Welcome:* Kathy Engel, Chairperson, Department of Art & Public Policy, New York University; Jaira Placide, Associate Director Institute of African American Affairs New York University; Robert O’Meally, Professor Zora Neale Hurston Professor of English and Comparative Literature

9:40 AM | *Slide Show: Kwame Braithwaite, Patrice Lumumba Coalition, African Jazz Art Society & Studios-AJASS*

9:55 AM | *Introduction/Context* – Felipe Luciano, Poet, Chairperson Young Lords Party

10:15 AM | *Performance by Antonio David Lyons*

10:25 AM | *Roundtable 1 – Unifying Visions of Justice*

Ademola Olugebefola, Visual Artist, cofounder WEUSI Artists Gallery and Academy, Dwyer Cultural Center & NYNCA; Jack Tchen, Basement Workshop, Co-Founder Museum of Chinese in America, Associate Professor NYU; Valerie Maynard, Artist Activist; Diane Fraher, Founder and Director of Amerinda; Elizabeth Yeampierre, Executive Director of UPROSE; Moderator: C. Daniel Dawson- Visual Artist, Curator, and Arts Administrator; IRAAS, Columbia University and Gallatin School, NYU

11:30 AM | Q & A

12:00 PM | *Lunch*

1:35 PM | *Slide Show: Hiram Maristany, photographer, Young Lords Party*

1:45 PM | *Roundtable 2 –The Need for Institutions in Our Image*

Woody King Jr., Founder, New Federal Theatre/National Black Touring Circuit; Ed Spriggs, Former Director of Studio Museum, Founder Hammonds House Museum; Caron Atlas, NOCD for Appalshop; Dindga McCannon, Where We at Black Women, Artist, Activist; Nester Otero, Artist; Monica Montgomery, Founder of Museum of Impact; Moderator: Amun Ankhra- Photographer, and Artists Black Arts Movement

Hiram Maristany was born in El Barrio and still lives in the same neighborhood he loves. Hiram came of age in the 1960's, when young Puerto Ricans, born and raised in New York's barrios, asserted a new, New York Puerto Rican identity. Inspired by the Cuban Revolution and the Chicano, Civil Rights, and the Black Power movements, these young people formed new political organizations to revolutionize American society and new arts organizations to spotlight their unique vision of the world. They insisted that their voices be heard, their art work exhibited, their history saved, and their identity not only acknowledged, but celebrated. Like their counterparts in the pioneros (first, or pioneer) generation, Maristany and his peers easily mixed political and cultural activism. Maristany was a founder of the Young Lords Party in 1969, and was the official photographer for that radical youth organization's brief but tumultuous existence. From 1975 to 1977, he served as director of El Museo del barrio, also founded in 1969. Deeply involved in the Puerto Rican arts movement, he has documented its major developments and personalities in El barrio for forty years and served during that time as a mentor to numerous Puerto Rican and Latino artist in the city.

Ademola Olugebefola is a noted contemporary artist whose work has been shown in hundreds of major exhibitions at American museums, cultural centers and universities here and abroad. In the contemporary history of Harlem institutions: He's one of the founders of the Annual Harlem Arts Festival 1965 - 1975 (predecessor of Harlem Week); The House of Umoja Cultural Exchange; the WEUSI Artist Collective/ Academy of African Arts & Studies; Nyumba Ya Sanaa Gallery; HARLEM WEEK; Benin Gallery; Grinnell Gallery; NY Chapter National Conference of Artists; Annual Kwanzaa Expo at the NY Javits Convention Center; The National Arts Consortium; Gumbs & Thomas Publishers and the Harlem Arts Alliance. Ademola is one of the founders of the Dwyer Cultural Center in Harlem. And for the past six years Dr. Olugebefola has represented the NY Metro M.L. King, Jr Center for Nonviolence NGO/DPI at the United Nations.

Edward S. Spriggs has served in the Black arts for over fifty years. He has done so in California, New York, Washington, D.C., Nigeria, and the Southeast. He has worked as a Graphic artist, documentary filmmaker, museum director, grants officer, international festival planner, independent curator, arts administrator, writer, and fine art appraiser. [He faked retirement in 2002.]

Néstor Otero was born in Caguas, Puerto Rico. A multidisciplinary artist, Néstor has exhibited around the world, including the 23 Bienal de Sao Paulo, Brazil, the V and IX Bienal Internacional de Pintura de Cuenca, Ecuador, the 2da Bienal de Pintura del Caribe y Centroamerica of Dominican Republic, INSIDE: TheProjectgroup STOFFWECHSEL" in Kassel, Germany, the Bienal de la Habana in Cuba, El Museum de Arte de Puerto Rico, El Museo del Barrio, New York City Gallery, EXIT Art, Kenkeleba House, the Hillwood Art Gallery at Long Island University's C.W. Post Campus and the Museum of Contemporary Hispanic Arts(MoCHA), among others. This year he was the recipient of an *Artist Grant from the Fondo Puertorriqueño*. In 2002 he established together with the painter and sculptor Annex Burgos, the multidisciplinary design studio, zalto. multidisciplina+estrategia and it's editorial arm Mandibula (focusing on artist's editions).

Taiyo Na Honored in 2010 by Governor David A. Paterson and the State of New York for his "legacy of leadership to the Asian American community and the Empire State," Taiyo Na is a musician, writer, performer and educator. His critically acclaimed album Love is Growth (Issilah Productions, 2008) features the song "Lovely To Me (Immigrant Mother)," whose music video was heralded by MTV Iggy as "the realest thing seen in a while." In 2010 & 2011, he released the albums Home:Word & Home:Word [Deluxe Edition] with hip-hop duo Magnetic North. The title track off those albums was released as a single in Japan in 2011 and hit #2 on their iTunes Hip-Hop charts, while the latter album reached #3. The albums included the music videos "Summertime," "I Got My," "Fukushima," "New Love" and "Home:Word," which was directed by Wong Fu Productions. Their song "All On The Table" with Robert de Boron hit #1 on Japan iTunes hip-hop charts in April 2013. He was seen as "Min" in Dennis Kim's play Tree City Legends directed by Marc Bamuthi Joseph at San Francisco's Intersection for the Arts and the Painted Bride Arts Center in Philadelphia (2012 & 2014).

Kwame Brathwaite has been considered the ever-present "photo-documentarian" of the Black Cultural movement, the "keeper of the images." While earning a living as a fashion and entertainment photographer, his primary interest has been the recording of the history of the African Cultural Revolution and the African liberation struggle. Co-founded the African Jazz-Art Society, 1956); The Grandassa Models (Black is Beautiful) 1961 and wearable art shows, AFRIMODA, FashionArt and FashioNations (1986).

2:45 PM | Q & A

3: 20 PM | Presentation by Camonghne Felix

3:25 PM | Roundtable 3 – "Stancing" for Justice: The Right To Our Humanity! Monifa Bandele, Founding Member Malcom X Grassroots Movement; Robert Stam, Professor Cinema Studies, NYU; Shola Lynch, Filmmaker and Curator, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture; Charles Rice Gonzales, Executive Director BAAD; Taiyo Na, Poet; Moderator: Lumumba Bandele, NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund

4:30 PM | Q & A

5: 00 PM | Presentation by Taiyo Na

5:10 PM | Summary: Robert O'Meally, Professor Zora Neale Hurston Professor of English and Comparative Literature

6:00 PM | Performance by Randy Weston

7:00 PM | Closing Reception

Acknowledgements

The Art of Justice conference is presented by Caribbean Cultural Center-African Diaspora Institute (CCCADI) in Collaboration with Tisch School of the Arts Department of Art & Public Policy, New York University; Institute of African American Affairs, New York University; and Institute for Research in African American Studies, Columbia University; with the support from the NYU Tisch Institute of Performing Arts and The Tisch Initiative for Creative Research.

Special thank you to Manhattan Neighborhood Network, HowlRound TV, Emily Brown, Kristin Killacky, Sophia Mak, Crystal M. Marich, Antonio Lyons, Janet Sackey, Regina Bultrón-Bengoia, as well as NYU and Columbia students volunteering today.

Organizing Committee: Amun Ankhra, Kwame Brathwaite, C. Daniel Dawson, Angela Fontanez Fontanez, Felipe Luciano, Janée Moses, Ademola Olugebefola, Robert G. O'Meally, Yasmin Ramirez, Ed Spriggs, and Marta Moreno Vega.

Diane Fraher (Osage/Cherokee) is the writer and director of *The Heart Stays*. She writes and directs narrative feature films about contemporary Native Americans. In her words, her films “explore the struggle of Native Americans to identify with traditional values within the context of modern society.” Ms. Fraher is one of the pioneer Native artists who formed the New York Movement in Contemporary Native Arts (1972-Present), the only such documented Native American arts movement in the United States, outside of Santa Fe, NM. Her first feature-length narrative film, *The Reawakening*, was the first feature film written and directed by a Native woman and wholly produced by Native people Diane Fraher is a 2013 Fellow in Screenwriting from the New York Foundation for the Arts. In 1987, Ms. Fraher founded American Indian Artists Inc., (AMERINDA) New York, NY, a community based multi-arts organization which provides programs and services to emerging and established Native American artists. AMERINDA is the only organization of its kind for Native American artists in the United States.

Monica O. Montgomery is a cultural entrepreneur, curating media, museums and memory to enhance creative inspiration. She is the Director of the Lewis Latimer Historic House Museum. As a museum anarchist, she remixes the museum experience, interpreting diversity, creativity and community, to bridge past and present through the lens of Latimers legacy. She is the Founding Director of the Museum of Impact (MOI) the world’s first mobile Social Justice Museum. She is an alumna of Temple University with a Bachelor of Broadcast Communication, and La Salle University, Master of Corporate Communication. Monica is a Creative Community Fellow with National Arts Strategies, Innovative Cultural Advocacy Fellow with Caribbean Cultural Center African Diaspora Institute and Cultural Equity Fellow with the New York Community Trust. She is the Strategic Director of Museum Hue, a platform for cultural diversity, advancing the viability and visibility of people of color, utilizing the arts, culture and museums as a medium for discussion, creation, and solutions.

Camonghne Felix is an MFA Candidate at Bard College and the 2013 recipient of the Cora Craig Award for Young Women. You can find her work in various spaces, with work forthcoming in Poetry Magazine, Apogee, and Callaloo Journal. She is also the author of the chapbook *Yolk*, published via Penmanship Books.

Valerie Maynard Born in Harlem in 1937, Valerie Maynard’s work is featured in private collections around the globe, including the personal art collections of Stevie Wonder, Lena Horne and Nobel laureate, Toni Morrison. In January 1977, she was part of a contingent of hundreds of African-American artists who represented the North American Zone, exhibiting in FESTAC 77, the Second World Black and African Festival of Arts and Culture in Lagos, Nigeria. Maynard has received numerous awards and taught extensively. As an Artists’ Book Resident, she produced *Lost and Found*, a portfolio of ten black and white silkscreen prints that forms part of the artist’s “No Apartheid?” Series. Maynard also specializes in the restoration and preservation of traditional art forms of people of color. In 2003, as part of a station renovation. She was commissioned by the MTA to create a permanent installation at the 125th Street Subway Station. “Polyrhythmics of Consciousness and Light” depicts colors and shapes against a geometric field that she describes as capturing “boundless energy” and “the Harlem of our dreams.”

Elizabeth C. Yeampierre is a nationally recognized Puerto Rican attorney and environmental justice leader of African and Indigenous ancestry born and raised in New York City. She is Executive Director of UPROSE, Brooklyn’s oldest Latino community based organization. Her award winning vision for an inter-generational, multi-cultural and community led organization is the driving force behind UPROSE. She is a long-time advocate and trailblazer for community organizing around just, sustainable development, environmental justice and community-led climate adaptation and community resiliency in Sunset Park. Prior to assuming the Executive Director position at UPROSE, Ms. Yeampierre was the Director of Legal Education and Training at the Puerto Rican Legal Defense Fund, Director of Legal Services for the American Indian Law Alliance and Dean of Puerto Rican Student Affairs at Yale University. She holds a BA from Fordham University, a law degree from Northeastern University. Elizabeth is the first Latina Chair of the US EPA National Environmental Justice Advisory Council.

Woodie King, Jr. is a founder and Producing Director of New Federal Theatre in New York City. His directional credits are extensive and include work in film as well as Broadway, Off-Broadway, and regional theater. *He has won numerous awards, including* an NAACP Image Award, Paul Robeson Award; the Rosetta LeNoire Award; the TCG Award, an Obie Award. His countless productions include, Checkmates. SPLENDID MUMMER, A RAISIN IN THE SUN, ANGELS IN AMERICA: MILLENNIUM APPROACHES and in 2010 MEN IN WHITE both at Ohio State University. He directed THE PIANO LESSON at Tennessee Repertory Theatre in Nashville and again at Seminole State College in 2012. Last year he also directed Lonette McKee in the critically acclaimed SOWA'S RED GRAVY. In 2012, he was inducted in the American Theatre Hall of Fame.

Robert G. O'Meally is Zora Neale Hurston Professor, Columbia University, and director of Columbia's Center for Jazz Studies. His books include *Lady Day: The Many Faces of Billie Holiday*, *The Craft of Ralph Ellison*, and *Romare Bearden: A Black Odyssey*. He has edited or co-edited many volumes, including *The Jazz Cadence of American Culture*, *History and Memory in African American Culture*, and *The Norton Anthology of African American Literature*. Several of his music projects have won awards; his co-produced Smithsonian box set, *The Jazz Singers*, nominated for a Grammy. In recent years, O'Meally has curated art exhibitions, including one that traveled for the Smithsonian Institution and others presented this year in New York, Paris, and Istanbul. O'Meally is an amateur saxophonist whose sons say Dad plays "for his own amazement!"

Charles Rice-González, born in Puerto Rico and reared in the Bronx, is a writer, long-time community and LGBT activist, co-founder and Executive Director of BAAD! The Bronx Academy of Arts and Dance and a Distinguished Lecturer at Hostos Community College - CUNY. He received a B.A. in Communications from Adelphi University and an M.F.A. in Creative Writing from Goddard College. His debut novel, *Chulito* (Magnus 2011), has received awards and recognitions from American Library Association (ALA) and the National Book Critics Circle. He co-edited *From Macho to Mariposa: New Gay Latino Fiction* (Tincture 2011) with Charlie Vazquez. He is also an award-winning playwright and serves on the boards of the Bronx Council on the Arts and the National Association of Latino Art and Cultures.

Robert Stam is a University Professor at New York University, where he teaches about the French New Wave filmmakers. Stam has published widely on French literature, comparative literature, and on film topics such as film history and film theory. He wrote with Ella Shohat [Unthinking Eurocentrism: Multiculturalism and the Media](#). Stam has authored, co-authored and edited some seventeen books on film and cultural theory, literature and film, national cinema (French and Brazilian), aesthetic and politics, intellectual history, and comparative race and postcolonial studies. With work that has ranged across a number of different fields, Stam has participated in a number of post-structuralist and postcolonial "turns" within film and cultural studies. A 1983 Screen essay "Colonialism, Racism, and Representation" brought post-structuralist theory to bear on issues of representations of colonial history and racial oppression. Attempting to go beyond the methodological limitations of the then dominant paradigm of "positive image" and "negative stereotype" analysis, Stam argued for an approach that emphasized not social accuracy or characterological merits but rather such issues as perspective, address, focalization, mediation, and the filmic orchestration of discourses.

Caron Atlas is Director of Arts & Democracy, which cross fertilizes arts and culture, participatory democracy, and social justice, and CoDirector of Naturally Occurring Cultural Districts New York (NOCDNY), a citywide coalition that revitalizes NYC from the neighborhood up. She also teaches at Pratt Institute and Hunter College and is on the district and steering committees for participatory budgeting in New York City. Previously she worked at the Appalachian cultural center, Appalshop, and was the founding director of the American Festival Project, a national alliance of artists working for community change. She has also worked with National Voice, Animating Democracy, Pratt Center for Community Development, Urban Institute, and the Network of Ensemble Theaters and been a foundation consultant.

Randy Weston After contributing seven decades of musical direction and genius, Randy Weston remains one of the world's foremost pianists and composers today, a true innovator and visionary. Encompassing the vast rhythmic heritage of Africa, his global creations musically continue to inform and inspire. "Weston has the biggest sound of any jazz pianist since Ellington and Monk, as well as the richest most inventive beat," state's jazz critic Stanley Crouch, "but his art is more than projection and time; it's the result of a studious and inspired intelligence...an intelligence that is creating a fresh synthesis of African elements with jazz technique".

Monifa Akinwole-Bande

Monifa Akinwole-Bande is a blogger, human rights activist and community engagement consultant. She is a co-founder and coordinator for 10 years of the Black August Hip Hop Project a program of the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement (MXGM). As an activist with MXGM, Monifa works on issues of police brutality and political prisoners. MXGM's Cop Watch project, along with a coalition of organizations, filed suit against the New York City Police Department after the 1999 shooting of Amadou Diallo. That suit helped lead to the end of the NYPD Street Crimes Unit, which was responsible for the killing. Monifa has also worked on numerous film campaigns as an outreach coordinator, including Black Power Revisited (2013), Soul Food Junkies (2012), Emmy® winning Freedom Riders (2010). She is currently the food and economic security campaign director for MomsRising.org, and the senior training advisor for the National Coalition on Black Civic Participation (NCBCP). Prior to joining NCBCP Monifa led a national campaign to expand voting rights to people with felony convictions in 15 states as the national field director for the Brennan Center for Justice Right to Vote Campaign (RTV) expanding voting rights to more than 250,000 people.

Shola Lynch

Lynch is an award-winning American Filmmaker best known for the feature documentary FREE ANGELA & All Political Prisoners and the Peabody Award winning documentary CHISHOLM '72: Unbought & Unbossed. Amongst her numerous awards, include 2014 NAACP Image Award for Excellence for Best Documentary. She was named the Curator for Film in 2013, Moving Image and Recorded Sound at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture. Shola holds an MA in American History and Public History Management from University of California Riverside as well as a graduate degree in Journalism from Columbia University. She is working on a book based on her film Free Angela. She has produced and scripted stories that have aired on BET, CNN, ESPN, PBS, to name a few. In 2013, The Sundance Institute selected Shola as one of five women to be mentored in their prestigious Women's Filmmaker Initiative. Shola was also recently awarded a prestigious Creative Capital Award for her next film, a narrative on the great liberator Harriet Tubman. She has recently screened and presented at The Guggenheim Museum, The Tribeca Film Festival, The Sundance Film Festival and The Toronto International Film Festival.

Antonio David Lyons

Antonio David Lyons is the founder of We Are Here, a social sculpture that utilizes discursive play to engage men and boys in themes of gender violence, identity, relationships and HIV/AIDS. He holds an MA in Applied Theatre from the City University of New York (CUNY). His thesis project *The WHY Factor* was conducted in collaboration with CUNY/BMI (Black Male Initiative). In addition to his studies Antonio continued to integrate his artistry with social activism while working at the Creative Arts Team (CAT), an educational theatre company that specializes in creating interactive learning experiences with youth and adult populations. He is also Chair of the newly formed Black Theatre Commons. Among numerous television roles, Antonio has been on NY, "The District" and "The Agency", "24". His film credits include, "The Book of Negroes" (BET/CBC), the HBO series "Generation Kill", "Hotel Rwanda", "American History X", and "The Sum of All Fears", to name a few. Antonio's signature voice and words are featured on the introduction to "Total Bliss" with Azania on Metro FM (9am-12pm/daily). In 2007 he released his solo project "Human Jewels". In March 2011 his sophomore project, "We Dance We Pray", hit shelves.

Lumumba Akinwole-Bande

Lumumba Akinwole-Bande is the Senior Community Organizer in LDF's Criminal Justice Practice. He is a community organizer and educator from Central Brooklyn. From 1994 – 1998 Lumumba served as programming coordinator at the Franklin H. Williams Caribbean Cultural Center African Diaspora Institute (CCC). During his tenure at CCC, he also co-founded Azabache, an organizers training conference and workshop series for young activists. All the while as a Black Studies Major at City College of NY/CUNY, he went on to receive his Masters in Human Service from Lincoln University in 1998. As a member and organizer with the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement, Mr. Akinwole-Bande helped establish its campaign to counter police abuse and misconduct. He also co-founded the world renowned Black August Hip Hop Project. Black August raises awareness and support for political prisoners in the United States. From 2002 to 2007 Lumumba served as a counselor and lecturer at Medgar Evers College/CUNY. Lumumba currently serves as an adjunct lecturer teaching Community Organizing at Lehman College/CUNY.