BASQUIAT:
STILL FLY @55
NEW YORK UNIVERSITY TANDON, PFIZER AUDITORIUM
SATURDAY, MARCH 26, 2016
#basquiatstillfly55
FROM THE ORGANIZERS

Dear Participants,

On behalf of the Program in Africana Studies in the Department of Social and Cultural Analysis, we would like to welcome you to our symposium: BASQUIAT: Still Fly @ 55. We encourage you to share with your colleagues, students and communities your experience at New York University Tandon.

Sincerely,

Dr. Renée Blake
(Director of Africana Studies)

Ja’nell Ajani
(Co-Curator)

Ayanna Legros
(Co-Curator)

BASQUIAT: STILL FLY @ 55 PRE-EVENTS:

November 10th, 2015: Wikipedia Edit-a-thon: Basquiat Still Fly @ 55
hosted by Museum of Modern Art, NYU Africana Studies Program, AfroCROWD, and Black Lunch Table.

December 11th, 2015: State of the Arts on WBAI Radio, 99.5 FM
hosted by Savona Bailey-McClain, with special guests Dr. Kwami Coleman (NYU Gallatin, Assistant Professor), Nia Iman Smith (Founder of The Black Connection), Ayanna Legros (NYU Africana Studies) and Ja’nell Ajani (NYU Africana Studies)

December 22nd, 2015, Afternoon: Twitter Conversation
hosted by Greg Tate (Oberlin College Visiting Assistant Professor of Ethnomusicology) and Fredara Hadley (Visiting Assistant Professor at Oberlin College)

December 22nd, 2015, Evening: Basquiat: Still Fly @ 55 Birthday Bash at Silvana’s Restaurant

February 1st, 2016: Talks at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture: Basquiat and Contemporary Queer Art
Panelists include Dr. Jordana Moore Saggese (Author: Reading Basquiat), Kim Drew (Founder of @blackcontempart Tumblr and Associate Online Media Producer at The Metropolitan Museum of Art), Julianna Huxtable (Artist, Model and DJ), The Very Black Project’s Andre Singleton (Social Justice, Civil Rights and Human Rights Activist, and Co-founder of The Very Black Project), and Dr. David Clinton Wills (NYU Visiting Assistant Professor of Media, Culture, and Communication).
STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Jean-Michel Basquiat is arguably one of the most influential artists of the 20th century. Despite his untimely death, he continues to be just as relevant of an artist today. From 2014 - 2015, there was a global resurgence around Basquiat’s artwork and legacy: the renaming of Paris’ 13th arrondissement (2014  France), The Unknown Notebooks Brooklyn Museum (2015  USA), Now’s the Time AGO Art Gallery (2015  Canada), Now’s the Time AGO Traveling Show Guggenheim Bilbao (2015  Spain), I Feel Like a Citizen _space caribbean (2015  Jamaica).

Last December marked what would have been Basquiat’s 55th birthday. BASQUIAT: STILL FLY @ 55 is a one day symposium that reclaims and raises awareness around the legacy of Jean-Michel Basquiat and his significance/cross pollination in art, fashion, music and film. The multiplicity of mediums used by Basquiat propelled him to push the envelope in asking the meaning/definition of art. We must reconstruct the tragedy narrative tied to Basquiat in order to properly celebrate his artwork, his life and legacy. Why is Basquiat an inspiration today? What artists are following in his footsteps? What is the significance of Basquiat’s appropriation and consumption by corporations and buyers?

This symposium places those who knew Basquiat personally with academic scholars, artists and cultural critics in conversation with one another with the goal of unraveling the many sides of Basquiat’s professional and personal life (from his collaborative work with Andy Warhol to his Caribbean identity). Utilizing various social media platforms to inform local and global audiences, the primary goal of this symposium is to contextualize the diasporic impact of this timeless spirit of art and street culture.
BASQUIAT:
STILL FLY @55
SYMPOSIUM

SATURDAY, MARCH 26, 2016
NEW YORK UNIVERSITY TANDON
#basquiatstillfly55

SCHEDULE OF PANELS:
Moderators are denoted with an asterisk (*)

9:30am - 9:45am
Introduction/Introducción/Entwodiksysyon
Opening Remarks
Poetry Reading

10:00am - 11:15am
Black Magic: Art, Style, and the Global Stage
Cey Adams
*Johanna Almiron
Michaela angela Davis
Jason King
Yasmin Ramirez

11:30am - 12:45pm
Feeling Gray: Music, Art, and Being the Only One in the Room
Kwami Coleman
*D’weston Haywood
Michael Holman
Dr. Suzanne Mallouk
Fahamu Pecou
1:00pm - 2:30pm  Lunch/Almuerzo/Manje Midi

2:30pm - 3:45pm  The Economy of Basquiat
                  Sara Jane Boyers
                  Tanisha C. Ford
                  Phoebe Hoban
                  *Sandra Jackson-Dumont
                  Lina Viktor

4:00pm - 5:15pm  Migratory Myths and
                  Island Sensibilities
                  Jana Braziel
                  Staceyann Chin
                  Al Diaz
                  *Millery Polyné
                  Miriam Jimenez-Roman

5:30pm - 6:15pm  Break/Descanso/Repo

6:15pm - 6:45pm  Screening: Jean-Michel
                  Basquiat: An Interview by
                  Marc Miller

6:45pm - 8:00pm  "Cuz I Felt Like It"
                  Ja’Tovia Gary
                  *Michael Ralph
                  Christopher Stackhouse
                  Greg Tate
                  Lee Quiñones

8:00pm - 9:00pm  Festivities/Fiesta/Fête

“SCHOOL DAZE,” a sculpture installation with live radio broadcast and DJ sets by artist Derrick Adams and his special guests will be located in the Pfizer Foyer all day.
PANEL 1:
BLACK MAGIC: ART, STYLE,
AND THE GLOBAL STAGE

Panel one illuminates Basquiat’s resurgence as a global icon and his significance in popular culture. The appropriation of his style, aesthetics, natural hair and aura have continued to attract Black diasporic youth across the globe. The title of this panel is inspired by Michaela Angela Davis’ concept of “Black Girl Magic” as well as her piece, “Resistance”, in the groundbreaking collection of essays, Black Cool: One Thousand Streams of Blackness, edited by Rebecca Walker. This panel seeks to understand the marketing of Basquiat to global audiences and will uncover how Basquiat’s art and his aesthetic have been embraced by prominent Black celebrities and pop culture such as Swizz Beatz, Jay-Z, Frank Ocean, Drake, Lil Mama, Kanye West, Rick Ross, Kendrick Lamar, Yasiin Bey aka Mos Def, The Weeknd and the Fox Television hit series, Empire. Basquiat’s involvement in photography, artistic representation, neo-expressionism and film allowed him to trudge unknown territories that had otherwise been impermeable to other artists. This panel will also think about how Basquiat’s work is thought about in broader traditions of U.S., Latin American, and Caribbean Art.

PANELISTS

Cey Adams

A New York City native, Adams emerged from the downtown graffiti movement to exhibit alongside fellow artists Jean-Michel Basquiat and Keith Haring. He appeared in the historic 1982 PBS documentary Style Wars which tracks subway graffiti in New York. As the Creative Director of hip hop mogul Russell Simmons’ Def Jam Recordings, he co-founded the Drawing Board, the label’s in-house visual design firm, where he created visual identities, album covers, logos, and advertising campaigns for Run DMC, Beastie Boys, LL Cool J, Public Enemy, Notorious B.I.G., Maroon 5, and Jay-Z. He exhibits, lectures and teaches art workshops at institutions including: MoMA, Brooklyn Museum, Museum of the City of New York, New York University, Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts, Walker Art Center, MoCA Los Angeles, Pratt Institute, Stanford University, Howard University, Atlanta Contemporary Art Center, High Museum, Brooklyn Academy of Music, and Mount Royal University and The University of Winnipeg in Canada. He co-authored DEFinition: The Art and Design of Hip-Hop, published by Harper-Collins; and designed Def Jam Recordings: The First 25 Years of the Last Great Record Label, published by Rizzoli. Cey’s work explores the relationship between transformation and discovery. His practice involves dismantling
various imagery and paper elements to build multiple layers of color, texture, shadow, and light. Cey draws inspiration from 60’s pop art, sign painting, comic books, and popular culture. His work focuses on themes including pop culture, race and gender relations, cultural and community issues.

*Johanna Almiron

Johanna F. Almiron is an Assistant Professor at the University of Wisconsin at Madison in the Department of Afro-American Studies. Her research focuses on social and cultural analysis, visual culture, performance and social transformation. Based on her doctoral research, her current interdisciplinary project contributes to the emerging body of critical cultural studies scholarship on the artist Jean-Michel Basquiat. Various awards and institutions have supported her research including the Nellie Y. McKay Fellowship at UW-Madison, The Frederick Douglass Institute for African and African American Studies at the University of Rochester and The University of Witwatersrand at Johannesburg, South Africa. She earned her Ph.D in American Studies at The University of Hawai‘i at Manoa (2013), an M.A. in Performance Studies at New York University (2002) and B.A. in African American Studies at Oberlin (2001).

An image activist takes, creates, celebrates and expands the narratives of an under and misrepresented group. Michaela angela Davis is an image activist, writer, cultural critic, fashion, beauty culture editor, editorial brand director, commentator, speaker, conversationalist and community servant who engages in and expands the conversation of identity, race, gender and beauty across all media. Michaela is the creator of MAD FREE an exclusive content creating, cultural curating service-premiere project is “Liberating Conversations About Image, Beauty & Power” a multi-platform conversation project with revolutionary women of color, and has brought it to South Africa, India, France, Australia New Zealand and beyond. The newest, The Hair Tales: Real Stories from Phenomenal Women explores the intersections of Black hair heritage, identity politics and pop culture. She is the editorial brand director at BETNetworks and was the chief editorial creative consultant for the rebranding CentricTV, which garnered the Promax Gold Award in 2015. Michaela frequently appears on CNN, offering her insight on topics including Trayvon Martin, Ferguson, Baltimore, the #BlackLivesMatter movement, Rachel Dolezal and images of Blacks in Hollywood.
Jason King is an Associate Professor, Director of Global Studies, and Director of Writing, History & Emergent Media Studies and the founding faculty member at New York University’s Clive Davis Institute of Recorded Music. A journalist, musician, DJ and producer, he worked alongside music impresario Clive Davis to help build and develop the program and he served as the program’s first Interim Chair, Associate Chair and Artistic Director. Jason has been teaching classes on popular music history, the music business (marketing/branding) and the social aspects of music technology for more than fifteen years at New York University, as well as teaching at NYU campuses in Singapore and Abu Dhabi and developing study abroad initiatives in Berlin and Havana. Jason’s academic essays on music figures like Luther Vandross and Roberta Flack have been published in numerous anthologies and edited collections, and he is the author of *The Michael Jackson Treasures*, a 2009 Barnes and Noble exclusive biography on the King of Pop, which has been translated in more than 7 languages, and a forthcoming book called Blue Magic, on the role of metaphysics and energy in the music of artists like Timbaland, from Duke University Press. He is a regular contributor to publications like Billboard, Buzzfeed, and Slate and he has appeared in many music documentaries, including Spike Lee’s critically acclaimed *Bad 25* and *Michael Jackson’s Journey from Motown to Off the Wall. He is the host and curator of NPR&B, NPR’s 24/7 R&B radio channel, and a member of the NPR Music team, as well as the producer, songwriter, performer, and driving force behind Company Freak, an international dance music “superband” featuring original members of groups like Chic and D-Train. Follow him: @jasonkingsays
Yasmin Ramirez holds a Ph.D. in Art History from the Graduate Center of the City of New York. Born in Brooklyn, N.Y. on April 22, 1960, Yasmin Ramirez was active in the downtown art scene of the early 1980s as a club kid, gallery assistant, independent curator, and art critic for the East Village Eye. She became acquainted with many emerging artists and writers that are now held as icons of the 1980s, including Jean Michel Basquiat. Currently Adjunct Curator at the Bronx Museum of Fine Arts, Yasmin Ramirez has also collaborated on curatorial projects with El Museo Del Barrio, The Loisaida Center, The Caribbean Culture Center, The Studio Museum in Harlem, Franklin Furnace, The Center for Puerto Rican Studies at Hunter College, NYU Department of Social and Cultural Analysis, and Taller Boricua. Among the notable exhibitions and panels she has organized are: Martin Wong: Human Instamatic (2015); Presente: The Young Lords in New York (2015); The Puerto Rican Art Workers and the Construction of the Nuyorican Art Movement (2014); Re-Membering Loisaida: On Archiving and the Lure of the Retro Lens (2009); “Esto A Veces Tiene Nombre: Latin@ Art Collectives in a Post-Movement Millennium (2008); The Boricua in Basquiat (2005); Voices From Our Communities: Perspectives on a Decade of Collecting at El Museo del Barrio (2000); Pressing the Point: Parallel Expressions in the Graphic Arts of the Chicano and Puerto Rican Movements (1999).


**Panel 2:**

**FEELING GRAY: MUSIC, ART, AND BEING THE ONLY ONE IN THE ROOM**

Panel two seeks to complicate the dualing narrative of Basquiat as a “self-actualized artist” versus a “self-sabotaged artist” (Michael Holman). This panel showcases how Basquiat’s engagement with Hip-Hop, Rock and Jazz scenes/music allowed him to defy paradigms of black masculinity and push boundaries. This panel covers Basquiat’s entrance into the Downtown Scene, Punk and Rock/Roll Culture of New York City (visa-vis musical performers such as Madonna and Blondie) and the musical band Gray (which is still active). Basquiat’s art practice within the contemporary art scene at the time was
the way he elevated the art form of graffiti, often considered “low” amongst elite New York art collectors, to “high” artistic standards. How did Basquiat’s persona and personality inspire his approaches to art? To what extent does his artwork reveal something about his subjectivity? What does it mean for someone who is seeking to critique structures of power? What is the boundary between the artwork and the artist?

**PANELISTS**

**Kwami Coleman**

Kwami Coleman is a pianist, composer, and musicologist specializing in improvised music. His research interests include experimental music history, jazz history, the history and music cultures of the African Diaspora, the political economy of music, music technology, aesthetics, and cultural studies. Kwami is currently working on a monograph of Miles Davis and the jazz avant-garde and articles on black musical avant-gardism and historiography, the pianist/composer Andrew Hill, and the authenticity wrought by locality in African American music culture of the last century. He is also actively engaged in several music projects including his own recording of original compositions for small ensemble. Kwami is a founding member of the Afro-Latin@ Forum, a non-profit organization devoted to the study and increased visibility of Latinos of African descent in the United States, now housed in NYU’s Steinhardt School.

***D’weston Haywood**

Haywood’s work concentrates on histories of Black protest and protest thought, Black cultural politics, Black media and public spheres, and Black masculinity. Haywood is working on a monograph, “Let Us Make Men: Black Newspapers and a Manly Vision of Racial Advancement,” which is scheduled for publication by The University of North Carolina Press. The project reevaluates the relationship between Black media, the twentieth century Black freedom struggle, and constructions of Black masculinity. He has also released a spoken word/rap compilation on police brutality and vigilantism against Blacks, entitled, “The Ferguson Files: A Sonic Study of Racial Violence in America.” The compilation explores the killings of unarmed Black people in America by police and vigilantes from the shooting of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri to
A New York resident since 1978, Michael Holman has been a creative and cultural force within, as well as ambassador of this great city for over 30 years. As an artist and social observer, Holman captured unforgettable moments on film and video, of a powerful new subculture called Hip Hop, back in the early 1980s that swept the world. Holman worked diligently through his numerous published writings, interviews, film/television productions, and public venue bookings to propel the culture onto the global stage, and was the first writer to officially use the term Hip Hop in a publication (East Village Eye, January, 1982). Holman was responsible for organizing and personally managing two of the most popular Hip Hop dance crews in history, The Rock Steady Crew and The New York City Breakers; created, produced and hosted the first nationally syndicated, Hip Hop television show called, Graffiti Rock (starring Run DMC and Kool Moe Dee); amongst many other Hip Hop Culture accomplishments. Holman, along with artist Jean-Michel Basquiat, formed the experimental band Gray, producing layered avant-garde music in combination with performance art and living, sonic sculpture. Gray performed at such legendary nightclubs, such as CBGB’s, Hurrah’s, Club USA, Tier 3 and The Mudd Club in the early 1980s, and has recently performed at: the Brooklyn Academy of Music with Questlove of the Roots; Corcoran Gallery of Art; the New Museum in Manhattan; screened the film “Gray, Live At The New Museum” at Miami Basel; for the opening of the new Parrish Museum building in Watermill, Long Island; and at the International Beethoven Festival in Chicago. As a filmmaker, Holman wrote the screenplay to Miramax’s Julian Schnabel feature film, Basquiat, wrote, produced and directed children’s programming for Nickelodeon, including the Ace Award winning Blue’s Clues and Eureka’s Kastle, produced and directed numerous, award-winning MTV music videos, and taught screenwriting and filmmaking at Howard University, The New School For Social Research, the School of Visual Arts, City College of New York and other institutions of higher learning. Holman continues to be active as an artist, writer and lecturer in the field of contemporary urban culture, film, theater and art.
Pecou is a visual artist and scholar whose works combine observations on hip-hop, fine art and popular culture. Pecou’s paintings, performance art, and academic work addresses concerns around contemporary representations of Black masculinity and how these images impact both the reading and performance of Black masculinity. Currently a Ph.D. student in Emory University’s Institute of Liberal Arts (ILA), Pecou maintains an active exhibition schedule as well as public lectures and speaking engagements at colleges and museums nationwide. His work is featured in noted private and public national and international collections including; Smithsonian National Museum of African American Art and Culture, Societe Generale (Paris), Nasher Museum at Duke University, The High Museum of Art, Paul R. Jones Collection, Clark Atlanta University Art Collection and Museum of Contemporary Art Georgia.

Mallouk, M.D. is a psychiatrist, writer and artist living in New York City. Her life, with the artist Jean-Michel Basquiat, has been written about in the book, Widow Basquiat. She was also interviewed for the documentary, Jean-Michel Basquiat: The Radiant Child and the French documentary, Basquiat Une Vie.

Suzanne Mallouk

Fahamu Pecou

Panel three explores the economic value, individuals, corporations and cultural institutions have placed on Basquiat’s brand. Basquiat will be investigated as a commodified subject and entity as his image and artwork is exported through museums, multimedia outlets, and a variety of consumer spaces, such as Uniqlo. To what extent can art be transgressive in a society that ultimately commodifies it? Does this change essential message of Basquiat’s work? This panel will also pay particular attention to how Basuiat’s genius has influenced his peers, such as Andy Warhol, and young artists working today.

PANEL 3:
THE ECONOMY OF BASQUIAT
Sara Jane Boyers

Boyers is a California-based writer/editor and fine art photographer. Her literary focus has been on books for youth about contemporary art and poetry, critical thinking, and political activism, starting with the award-winning *Life Doesn’t Frighten Me*, in which she married the expressive artwork of Jean-Michel Basquiat to a stirring 1978 poem by Dr. Maya Angelou. *O Beautiful For Spacious Skies*, pairs Wayne Thiebaud’s paintings with the unofficial anthem, “America The Beautiful,” written by one of our first suffragettes, Katharine Lee Bates. In-your-face civic and political activism was the topic of *Teen Power Polities: Make Yourself Heard*. In 2000, after successful music and book publishing careers, Boyers returned to a serious focus on her photography where she searches for that iconic element of ordinary experience that defines the whole, choosing to render it with a sense of provocative beauty. *Finding Chinatown: An American Story* is Boyers’ decade+ photographic project on the US & Canadian Chinatowns. *Gridlock*, photographs shot from her driver’s seat while stuck in traffic, was recently exhibited at Leica Gallery/LA. *Go Fly A Kite: Saturdays At the Beach with Tyrus Wong*, Boyers’ photographic “story” of the 105 year-old artist’s 40 years of retirement spent creating and flying his hand-made kites was included in his traveling retrospective, most recently exhibited at NYC’s Museum of Chinese in America. *Detroit:Definition*, Boyers’ current long-term project on Detroit, the city of her birth, was exhibited last year in Europe and will be featured as part of the prestigious 2016 Venice Architecture Biennale. Boyers contributes to print journals and websites, makes keynotes and maintains occasional blogs at SaraJaneBoyersAloud Blog, Detroit:DefinitionBlog, FindingChinatownBlog & TeenPowerPolitics.com. Her photographs are in public and private collections.

Tanisha C. Ford

Ford is the author of *Liberated Threads: Black Women, Style, and the Global Politics of Soul* (UNC Press, 2015). She is an assistant professor of Women, Gender, Sexuality Studies at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Her research centers on black style and

Phoebe Hoban

Jackson-Dumont is the Frederick P. and Sandra P. Rose Chairman of Education at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, where she is responsible for the vision and management of education, public programs, the live arts/performance, audience development and academic programs. She was formerly the Deputy Director for Education + Public Programs and Adjunct Curator of Modern & Contemporary Art at the Seattle Art Museum (SAM). Prior to her appointment at SAM, Jackson-Dumont worked at the Studio Museum in Harlem and the Whitney Museum of American Art among other cultural organizations. Known for her ability to blur the lines between academia, popular culture and non-traditional art-going communities, Jackson-Dumont is invested in curating experiences that foster dynamic exchanges between art/artists, past/present,
public/private and people/places. She has organized numerous exhibitions, lectures, performances, symposia and education initiatives and she has contributed essays to a host of publications and worked with numerous artists. Project have included: Brenna Youngblood: Abstracted Realities currently on view at the Seattle Art Museum; LaToya Ruby Frazier: Born By a River in 2014; machupicchu after dark, a site specific installation by contemporary Afro-Peruvian artist William Cordova in 2013/14; We Will Blow the Roof Off The Mother a site-specific installation for the Seattle Art Museum Olympic Sculpture Park in 2013; Theaster Gates: The Listening Room; and Record Store, a roving social practice project initially installed in an urban store front in partnership with Olson Kundig Architects; and countless more. Jackson-Dumont currently serves on the board of Seattle’s Friends of the Waterfront Project, the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs’ Advisory Commission and the National Guild for Community Arts Education. She is a recipient of the Creative Leadership Award from the Paul G. Allen Family Foundation, the Distinguished Alumni Award 2015 from Sonoma State University, and the Medal for Distinguished Service 2016 from Columbia University’s Teachers College. She was named in Seattle Magazine’s Most Influential People 2010, The Smartest People in Seattle’s Politics 2013, and Twenty-five Influential Black Women in Business for The Network Journal 2015. She is also an independent curator/writer and programming consultant working across communities, disciplines and sectors.

Viktor is a conceptual artist and painter. She lives and works itinerantly between New York, London, and Geneva. Raised in London to Liberian parents, she traveled extensively in her youth also living in Johannesburg, South Africa for many years. Her multi-disciplinary approach to her work is informed by a background in film which she studied at Sarah Lawrence College, and her continued studies within photography & design at The School of Visual Arts, along with years of performance as a teenager. Viktor creates her own mythology as a painter, sculptor, photographer, and performance artist. Viktor has exhibited alongside works by Andy Warhol, Takashi Murakami, Jean-Michel Basquiat, Tom Sachs, Ryan McGinley, & Peter Beard.

**Panel 4: Migratory Myths and Island Sensibilities**

Panel four sheds light on the familial heritage of Basquiat as a descendant of a Haitian father and a first-generation Puerto Rican-American mother and how his heritage affected his artistic and personal development. This panel will contextualize the life of Caribbean migrants from the 1950’s-1980’s in
New York and how class, race, identity, and language shapes identity within immigrant communities. Additional topics to be covered include: Basquiat’s work as a graffiti artist in New York City (and the attempts made to prohibit graffiti) as well as his collaborative work to create the pseudonym name, SAMO with Nuyorican artist, Al Diaz. The SAMO “street stamp” worked to support a commentary on social, economic, and political life in New York. What does it mean to be Haitian and/or Puerto Rican in New York City during this time? How does family heritage play a role in the work of an artist? The discussion will also speak on the ways in which one can find alternative methods of decoding Basquiat’s work, within its overt and covert affirmations to Vodou, Yoruba, and religious ideas.

PANELISTS

Jana Braziel

Braziel earned her Ph.D. in Comparative Literature at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst and later held the Five College Post-Doctoral Fellowship in the Center for Crossroads in the Study of the Americas (CISA) and was Visiting Assistant Professor of Black Studies and English at Amherst College. Before joining the faculty at Miami University, where she is the Western College Endowed Professor and Department Chair of Global and Intercultural Studies, Braziel was Professor of Africana Studies at the University of Cincinnati. Braziel’s scholarly and pedagogical interests are American hemispheric literatures and cultures, Caribbean studies, Haitian studies, and the intersections of diaspora, transnational activism, and globalization. Braziel is author of four books: Duvalier’s Ghosts: Race, Diaspora, and U.S. Imperialism in Haitian Literatures (2010); Caribbean Genesis: Jamaica Kincaid and the Writing of New Worlds (2009); Artists, Performers, and Black Masculinity in the Haitian Diaspora (2008); and Diaspora: An Introduction (2008). Braziel’s fifth book “Riding with Death”: Vodou Art and Urban Ecology in the Streets of Port-au-Prince is currently under review for publication; and she is also completing a new manuscript entitled All Too Human? Haiti and Human Rights since Aristide. She has also co-edited five peer-reviewed volumes and published scores of articles and book chapters.

Staceyann Chin

Chin is the recipient of the 2007 Power of the Voice Award from The Human Rights Campaign, the 2008 Safe Haven Award from Immigration Equality, the 2008 Honors
Al Diaz

Diaz is best known for his collaboration with Jean Michel Basquiat on SAMO(c), graffiti that appeared in lower Manhattan from 1977 to 1979. SAMO(c) initially known for its wit and sarcastic humor, became a globally recognized graffito after Basquiat’s rise to fame. An influential, first generation NYC graffiti artist, who later became a text oriented street artist, Al Diaz’s career spans 5 decades. He currently works with the WET PAINT & Service Change Alert signs used throughout the New York City subway system -- cutting out individual letters from multiple signs to create clever, surreal and sometimes poignant anagrams. The reworked signage is then posted back onto subway walls. His earlier WET PAINT work is featured in Nicholas Ganz’s new book “Street Messages”. His most recent exhibitions include 2 solo shows, a 2 man show (along with Carlos Pinto) and 3 group shows in the past year. He has been a featured speaker on a variety of panel discussions, including at The New School, The Museum of the City of New York, NOLA Arts Festival in New Orleans, and The New York Public Library as part of a discussion panel on the Basquiat Notebooks. Al Diaz presently lives and works in Brooklyn, NY.
Polyné is an Associate Professor and Associate Dean of Faculty and Academic Affairs at New York University’s Gallatin School of Individualized Study. Graduate of Morehouse College and the University of Michigan with a PhD in History, Millery is the author of *From Douglass to Duvalier: U.S. African Americans, Haiti and Pan Americanism, 1870-1964* (University Press of Florida, 2010), the editor of *The Idea of Haiti: Rethinking Crisis and Development* (University of Minnesota Press, 2013) and The Haiti Reader, forthcoming on Duke University Press. Millery’s teaching and research interests examine the intellectual history of African Americans and Afro-Caribbeans in the 19th and 20th centuries; sports, photography and urban memory; aviation and infrastructure, the history of human rights discourse in the Americas; and black popular music and public culture.

**PANEL 5: “CUZ I FELT LIKE IT”**

This panel analyzes the role of representation in the life of Basquiat and the ways in which Basquiat responded to the media. Using the infamous interview of Basquiat and Art Historian Marc Miller, panelists will debate how the media constructs and reconstructs Basquiat’s narrative and life for better or for worse. Part of this conversation is also inspired by Oukwui Enwezor’s 1997 critique of Julian Schanble’s movie, *Basquiat*, in Frieze Magazine in which he argues Basquiat is infantilized and de-legitimized by the media networks.
in the art world. This conversation will conclude with discussing the ways in which Basquiat and his art are still relevant today. How can artists, scholars, and cultural critics change the conversations around race, art, and identity? What is at stake in having conversations about Basquiat today as a genius and icon versus a trendy persona?

PANELISTS

Ja’Tovia Gary

Ja’Tovia Gary (Dallas, TX. 1984) lives and works as an artist and filmmaker in Brooklyn, New York. Gary’s work disrupts traditional notions of representation, race, gender, sexuality, and power. She is interested in cultural retentions, ritual, the archive, and how raced and gendered bodies navigate media. She earned her MFA in Social Documentary Filmmaking from the School of Visual Arts in New York. Her work has screened at festivals worldwide including Frameline LGBTQ Film Festival, Toronto Inside Out Festival, Atlanta Film Festival, and Ann Arbor Film Festival. Gary has presented and spoken about her work at educational and cultural institutions including the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, BAM, NYU Florence, Chicago’s Black Cinema House, the Museum of Contemporary Art LA, ICA Boston, Indiana University Cinema, and MoMA PS1. Gary is a founding member of the New Negress Film Society, a core collective of Black women filmmakers whose priority is to create community and spaces of support, consciousness raising, and exhibition for Black women filmmakers. She is the recipient of the Sundance Documentary Fund Production Grant and the Jerome Foundation Film and Video Grant.

*Michael Ralph

Ralph is an Associate Professor of Social and Cultural Analysis and the author of *Forensics of Capital*. In addition, he is the Director of the Metropolitan Studies program and teaches within the Departments of Gender and Sexuality Studies, Metropolitan Studies, Africana Studies, and American Studies. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago in Anthropology.
Poet and critic Stackhouse’s books include *Seismosis* (1913 press), featuring his drawings with text by writer/translator John Keene; and, a volume of poems, *Plural* (Counterpath press.) His writing has been published in numerous journals, periodicals, and anthologies including *Der Pfeil* (Hamburg, DE), American Poet The Journal of The Academy of American Poets, Modern Painters, Art in America, BOMB Magazine, The Brooklyn Rail, Infiltration: An Anthology of Innovative Poetry from the Hudson River Valley, and, A Best of Fence: The First Nine Years, Volume 1 Poetry and Nonfiction. His contributions to artist monographs include Kara Walker’s *Dust Jackets for The Niggerati* (Gregory R. Miller & Co.); and, *Basquiat – The Unknown Notebooks* (Skira Rizzoli). He is co-founder of This Red Door, a collaborative experiment in art, social practice, interventional curation, and alternative exhibition sites. He has taught at the New York Center for Art & Media Studies, Bethel University; at Naropa University; at Ohio State University; Azusa Pacific University; and the Leroy E. Hoffberger School of Painting. He currently teaches in the Curatorial Practice MFA program at the Maryland Institute College of Art.

Christopher Stackhouse

A Staff Writer at The Village Voice from 1987-2005, his writings on culture and politics have also been published in The New York Times, The Washington Post, Artforum and Rolling Stone, He most recently taught at Brown University in Africana Studies, where he led the seminar course ‘The History of Astro Black Futurism and Black Science-Fiction. He also taught at Columbia University at Yale’s Graduate Art Department. His books include *Everything But The Burden, What White People Are Taking From Black Culture* (Harlem Moon/Random House, 2003), *Midnight Lightning: Jimi Hendrix and The Black Experience* (Acapella/Lawrence Hill, 2003); *Flyboy In The Buttermilk, Essays on American Culture* (Simon and Shuster, 1993). Tate is musical director for the umpteen member conducted-improvisation ensemble Burnt Sugar, The Arkestra Chamber who deploy Butch Morris’s patented ‘Conduction System’. Burnt Sugar has released 15 albums on their own Avant Groidd and truGROID imprintS since 1999. In September, Duke University Press will publish *Flyboy2 The Greg Tate Reader*, and reprint Tate’s 1993 classic *Flyboy In The Buttermilk*. 

Greg Tate
Lee Quiñones

Quiñones is considered the single most influential artist to emerge from the New York City subway art movement. He is a celebrated figure in both the contemporary art world and in popular culture circles, faithfully producing work that is ripe with provocative socio-political content and intricate composition. Lee’s paintings are housed in the permanent collections of the Whitney Museum of Art, the Museum of the City New York, the Groninger Museum (Groningen, Netherlands) and the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen (Rotterdam, Netherlands, and have been exhibited at the New Museum Of Contemporary Art (New York City), the Museum of National Monuments (Paris, France) and the Staatliche Museum (Germany). Born in Ponce, Puerto Rico in 1960, Quinones was raised in New York's Lower East Side in a family that kept close ties to their cultural heritage surrounded by a predominantly Nuyorican community.

FEATURED ARTIST

Derrick Adams

A multidisciplinary New York-based artist working in performance, video, sound and 2D and 3D realms. Adams’ practice focuses on the fragmentation and manipulation of structure and surface, exploring self image and forward projection. A recipient of the 2009 Louis Comfort Tiffany Award, and 2014 S.J. Weiler Award, Adams received his MFA from Columbia, BFA from Pratt Institute, and is a Skowhegan and Marie Walsh Sharpe alum. His exhibition and performance highlights include: Greater New York ‘05, MoMA PS1; Open House: Working In Brooklyn ‘04, Brooklyn Museum of Art; PERFORMA ‘05, ‘13, ‘15; Radical Presence & The Shadows Took Shape, Studio Museum in Harlem; The Channel, Brooklyn Academy of Music; and is in the permanent collections of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Studio Museum in Harlem, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, and the Birmingham Museum of Art. His work can be seen in New York at Tilton Gallery; Rhona Hoffman Gallery, Chicago; Gallerie Anne de Villepoix, Paris.
Ja’nell Nequeva Ajani

Ja’nell Nequeva Ajani is the Co-Curator and Co-Founder of the BASQUIAT: STILL FLY @ 55 project. As an M.A. candidate in Africana Studies at New York University with a concentration in Museum Studies, Ajani’s research interests include branding, contemporary black artists and the commodification of celebrities. Her current thesis project: The Economy of Basquiat analyzes how the artist’s brand has transformed the art world and transcended spaces beyond it. Ajani is a member of the Director’s Circle, Tastemaker and Feminist Art Council at The Brooklyn Museum and is the Technology Peer Group Coordinator for the New York Museum Educators Roundtable (NYCMER). She currently serves as an Adjunct Professor at The College of New Rochelle teaching courses in fashion, film, music and critical race studies. Follow her: @jayNajani.

Ayanna Jessica Legros

Ayanna Jessica Legros is the Co-Curator and Co-Founder of the BASQUIAT: STILL FLY @ 55 project. Legros is a M.A. candidate in Africana Studies and MacCracken Fellow at New York University’s Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. Her research focuses on Afro-Latino/a and Caribbean identity and diaspora within larger questions of racial geopolitics, political activism and migration. She completed her Bachelors of Arts in International Studies and African American Studies at Northwestern University. Upon graduation she worked at the Movement of Dominican-Haitian Women (MUDHA) as a Kathryn W. Davis 100 Projects for Peace fellow. This past summer, Ayanna worked with the Foundation for the Development and Ethno-Cultural Re-vindication of Afro-Descendant Communities in Cali, Colombia through New York University’s Global Fellowship in Human Rights. Legros’ thesis project: Radio Song analyzes how Haitian exiles and migrants in New York City utilized radio, black press and media to garner momentum to overthrow Jean-Claude Duvalier’s dictatorship in Haiti. Follow her: @haitiharlem.
Poetry Reading
Chauvet Bishop

Originally from North Carolina, Chauvet is a licensed massage therapist/healer, poet, singer, student of life, supporter and lover of art and all things beautiful. She has been blessed with opportunities to perform poetry for audiences in New York City, Connecticut, and Montreal. She has hosted Nuyorican Poets Cafe post slam Open Room giving artists space to shine. Chauvet’s passion for healing artists allowed her to serve as the licensed massage therapist for Rivers of Honey featured performers. She continues to be the regular massage therapist for Brooklyn House.

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