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CALLALOO
Texas A&M University
College Station, Texas

The Emory University Creative Writing Program
Emory University
Atlanta, Georgia

present

MAKING ART
Writing, Authorship, and Critique
THE 2014 CALLALOO CONFERENCE

October 15-18, 2014
Dear Colleagues and Friends,

Welcome to the 2014 CALLALOO CONFERENCE, our seventh annual gathering, which focuses on “Making Art: Writing, Authorship, and Critique,” a subject that seldom, if ever, receives significant headliner attention at academic conferences today.

For the 2014 CALLALOO CONFERENCE, we have invited distinguished intellectuals and artists to help us return to subjects that we, at our inaugural meeting in New Orleans in March 2008, partially addressed. I say “partially” because at our first meeting we attempted to answer the following questions: What do we do? How do we do it? Why do we do it? That is, “we” as academics and artists. Our aim then was—and it remains so—to bring together our colleagues, creative and critical voices, in open conversation with each other about the work, in written form, in which each of us is engaged. Ultimately, the aim is to foster understanding, appreciation, and respect for the kind of work that is required and expected of us in the academy.

While “Making Art” is in some few ways similar to our New Orleans “summit,” we, during this conference here at Emory University, want to take additional and meaningful steps forward. We want to acknowledge that what we write, invent, create—as literary and cultural criticism, as fiction or poetry or drama, as painting or performance art, as music composition or dance—should be equally valued, supported, appreciated, and respected by our colleagues and by the administrators whose watch maintains the values and boundaries imposed by the current organizational structures of contemporary universities.

What we say and do here at Emory University this week should ultimately be read as a message to our colleagues across the United States, as an unmitigated statement intended especially for our colleagues in literary and cultural studies and for those in the multiple disciplines in Africana and related studies. Our message is a simple three-part statement that argues for positive changes in the academic departments or programs that house these disciplines:

- An end to the actions that divide creative and critical/academic voices; an effort to develop and establish means that perpetuate mutual respect; and mutual support for teaching and for the work, its production and publication
- An end to behavior, actions, or words that devalue, denigrate, or privilege one discipline at the disadvantage or expense of another
- An aggressive support of excellence in the production of writing and performance that is creative, critical, and archival

A Letter from the Editor of Callaloo

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- An aggressive support of excellence in the production of writing and performance that is creative, critical, and archival
I am certain that faculty members in Africana studies departments and programs must realize their need to expand in academic disciplines beyond the boundaries of their origins set some fifty years ago as black studies, to extend beyond courses in literature, history, and the social sciences and to include in their curricula courses in the fine arts, such as film, creative writing, visual art, music (its history, composition, and performance), theater, etc. Then, too, I am convinced that a number of forward-looking faculty members in literary studies and cultural studies in English departments would gladly promote our recognition that, instead of engaging in the traditional myopic behavior of devaluing creative writing and privileging the critical voice over the creative, we should try to bring the two groups together in mutual respect and departmental support, an effort which is the origin of the CALLALOO CONFERENCE.

It is our hope that our colleagues back home will observe and critique what we are doing here and set an agenda, in terms of their own college or university needs, that equitably supports and promotes their faculty members: what they do, how they do it, and why they do it. That is, if English departments and Africana studies departments and programs take seriously our vision here, our institutions of higher education will broadly serve our nation and become stronger for having done so.

Finally, we invite you to join us as auditors of our two keynote speakers and to visit the panel presentations and join in the discussions, which are offered for your benefit as well as ours. The conference program that follows indicates that we have also organized evenings of poetry and fiction readings as well as a final morning gathering to hear original musical compositions. We hope that you will continue to visit with us for each of these activities and engage our presenters in what they offer us.

Again, welcome to the 2014 CALLALOO CONFERENCE.

Yours truly,

Charles Henry Rowell
Editor of Callaloo
Professor of English
Texas A&M University
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2014

6:00 PM - 8:30 PM
OPENING NIGHT
Oxford Road Building Presentation Room
Emory University

Welcome
CLAIRE E. STERK
Provost & Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs
Emory University

Comment
NATASHA TRETHEWEY
Robert W. Woodruff Professor of English & Creative Writing
Emory University

Significance of the Occasion
CHARLES HENRY ROWELL
Editor of Callaloo & Professor of English
Texas A&M University, College Station

A Dramatic Reading by the Author
Excerpts from The Ballad of Emmett Till
IFA BAYEZA
Distinguished Artist in Residence and Senior Visiting Lecturer
Brown University

Respondents
JERRIOD AVANT
Graduate Student
New York University

JAMES T. GILLAM
Professor of History
Spelman College

CLAUDRENA HAROLD
Associate Professor of History
University of Virginia

RAVI HOWARD
Professor of Creative Writing
Atlanta Metropolitan State College

CHANA KAI LEE
Associate Professor of History
University of Georgia

KATHLEEN PHILLIPS LEWIS
Associate Professor & History Department Chair
Spelman College

Moderator
KORITHA MITCHELL
Associate Professor of English
The Ohio State University

W. E. B. Du Bois
(1868 - 1963)
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2014

9:00 AM - 10:30 AM
THE FINE ARTS & AFRICANA STUDIES
Mathematics and Science Center, E 208
Emory University

Speakers

COURTNEY BRYAN
Postdoctoral Research Fellow
Center for African American Studies
Princeton University

KEVIN JEROME EVERSON
Associate Professor of Art
University of Virginia

ERIC J. HENDERSON
Fine Art Photographer & Writer
The Huffington Post

JOHN MCCLUSKEY, JR.
Professor Emeritus of African American & African Diaspora Studies
Indiana University

Respondents

MARCELLUS C. BARKSDALE
Professor & Director of African-American Studies
Morehouse College

DANIEL BLACK
Professor of African American Studies & History
Clark Atlanta University

JOHN P. BOWLES
Associate Professor & Director of Graduate Studies for Art History
University of North Carolina

MARGO NATALIE CRAWFORD
Associate Professor of English
Cornell University

CARTER MATHES
Associate Professor of English
Rutgers University

SHARAN STRANGE
Senior Lecturer of English
Spelman College

Moderator

ERICA EDWARDS
Associate Professor of English
University of California, Riverside

Zora Neale Hurston
(1891 - 1960)
## Archiving Africana

### Keynote Speaker

**Howard Dodson**  
Director, Moorland-Spingarn Research Center & Emeritus, Schomburg Center  
Howard University

### Respondents

**Soyica Diggs Colbert**  
Associate Professor of African American Studies & Theater and Performance Studies  
Georgetown University

**Rachel Harding**  
Assistant Professor of Indigenous Spiritual Traditions  
University of Colorado, Denver

**Edwin C. Hill**  
Assistant Professor of French & Italian  
University of Southern California

**Nafees Khan**  
Visiting Scholar  
Emory University

**Pellom McDaniel III**  
Curator of African American Collections, MARBL  
Emory University

### Moderator

**Régine Michelle Jean-Charles**  
Assistant Professor of French  
Boston College

## Fiction Readings

### Speakers

**John Holman**  
Professor of Creative Writing  
Georgia State University

**Ravi Howard**  
Professor of Creative Writing  
Atlanta Metropolitan State College

**Tayari Jones**  
Associate Professor of Creative Writing  
Rutgers University, Newark

### Respondents

**Fred D’Aguiar**  
Gloria D. Smith Professor of Africana Studies  
Virginia Tech University

**Julius B. Fleming, Jr.**  
Assistant Professor of English  
University of Maryland

**Nicole Brittingham Furlonge**  
Chair, English Department  
Princeton Day School

**Tyehimba Jess**  
Assistant Professor of English  
College of Staten Island

**Hermine Pinson**  
Associate Professor of English  
College of William & Mary

**Phillip B. Williams**  
Poetry Editor  
Vinyl Poetry

### Moderator

**Vievee Francis**  
Visiting Professor of Creative Writing  
Warren Wilson College
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2014

9:00 AM - 10:30 AM

AUTHORSHIP IN AFRICANA STUDIES
Mathematics and Science Center, E 208
Emory University

Speakers

JOAN ANIM-ADDO
Professor of Caribbean Literature & Culture
Goldsmiths, University of London

ARTURO LINDSAY
Professor of Art and Art History
Spelman College

ROBERT F. REID-PHARR
Distinguished Professor of English & American Studies
Graduate Center, CUNY

MARTHA SOUTHGATE
Visiting Faculty, Fiction
Vermont College of Fine Arts

Respondents

JOSHUA BENNETT
Graduate Student
Princeton University

Z'ÉTOILE IMMA
Assistant Professor of English
University of Notre Dame

VALÉRIE LOICHOT
Professor of French & English
Emory University

ROBERT J. PATTERSON
Associate Professor of English & African American Studies
Georgetown University

Moderator

ELIZABETH NUNEZ
Distinguished Professor of English
Hunter College, CUNY

Marian Anderson (1897 - 1993)
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2014

2:00 PM - 3:30 PM

WRITING/CREATING FROM THE ARCHIVE
Mathematics and Science Center, E 208
Emory University

Speakers

MELISSA BARTON
Curator, Drama and Prose, Yale
Collection of American Literature
Beinecke Rare Book &
Manuscript Library
Yale University

ERICA MOIAH JAMES
Assistant Professor of History of
Art & African American Studies
Yale University

TAYARI JONES
Associate Professor of Creative
Writing
Rutgers University

Respondents

SCOTT HEATH
Assistant Professor of English
Georgia State University

FREDERICK KNIGHT
Associate Professor of History
Morehouse College

JARVIS C. MCINNIS
Graduate Student
Columbia University

KORITHA MITCHELL
Associate Professor of English
The Ohio State University

IMAOBONG UMOREN
Graduate Student
University of Oxford

Moderator

GERI AUGUSTO
Visiting Associate Professor of
Africana Studies
Brown University

John Hope Franklin
(1915 - 2009)
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2014

6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

PHILLIS WHEATLEY READING
Joseph W. Jones Room, 311 Woodruff Library
Emory University

Speakers

JERICHO BROWN
Assistant Professor of English & Creative Writing
Emory University

KEVIN YOUNG
Atticus Haygood Professor of English & Creative Writing, Curator, Literary Collections & Raymond Danowski Poetry Library, MARBL
Emory University

Introductions

LYRAE VAN CLIEF-STErfANOu
Associate Professor of English
Cornell University

Moderator

NATASHA TRETHERWEY
Robert W. Woodruff Professor of English & Creative Writing
Emory University

A book signing and reception will close this session.

SAMELLA LEWIS, born in New Orleans, Louisiana, in 1924, is author of African American Art and Artists (1978), which was revised and expanded, and republished by the University of California Press in Berkeley, 2003. She is also author of Art: African American (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1976), and The Art of Elizabeth Catlett (Museum of African American Art and Hancraft Studios, 1984). She is the founding editor of the International Review of African American Art, an academic journal which began publication in 1976, the same year that she became a co-founder of Los Angeles's Museum of African American Art, where she served as its curator from 1976 to 1986. It is impossible to measure the scope or the indelible positive impacts she made on American artists and arts communities through these two venues. Earlier in 1969, she founded Contemporary Crafts, a necessary black-owned publishing house, through which she published her Black Artists on Art. She is not only an author of a number of books and an editor; she is also a visual artist—a painter and a print-maker—who has also worked as an educator. She has taught at Hampton University (1946-47), Morgan State University (1948-53), Florida A&M University (1953-58), State University of New York at Plattsburgh (1958-68), Los Angeles County Museum of Art (as education coordinator, 1968-69), and Scripps College of Claremont Colleges (1969-84), where she is Art Professor Emerita. As an artist, she has exhibited her paintings, drawings, lithographs, linocuts, and serigraphs in a number of galleries and museums across the United States, including the Ruth Chandler Williamson Gallery of Scripps College, the California African American Museum, Louis Stern Gallery in West Hollywood, The Museum of African American Art, and Los Angeles's Hammer Museum. For her academic work, The Getty Center for the History of Art and Humanities named her a Distinguished Scholar (1996 to 1997). The Alumni Association Award from The Ohio State University (2005), Special Day Recognition Award for Outstanding Contributions from the City of New Orleans (2004), The History Maker Award (2003), Legend in Our Time Tribute, Essence Magazine (1990), and a Fulbright Fellowship (1962)—these are but a few of the honors that have been bestowed upon Samella Lewis. In addition to studying for two years at Dillard University in New Orleans, she graduated from Hampton University in Virginia, and from there she went on to The Ohio State University, where she received the PhD in art and art history in 1951. Her greatest accomplishment, however, is her looking at white racism, racial and gender discrimination directly in the eyes, and—with dedication and perseverance—stared them down and triumphed over their pernicious intentions by contributing immensely to the intellectual lives of innumerable students and to countless practicing artists. She lives in Los Angeles, CA.
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2014

10:30 AM - 12:00 PM
MUSICAL PERFORMANCE
& AWARD CEREMONY
Performing Arts Studio
Emory University

Musical Performance
COURTNEY BRYAN
Postdoctoral Research Fellow,
Center for African American
Studies
Princeton University

A ROUNDTABLE AS TRIBUTE:
Samella Lewis as a Cultural Worker
VIEVEE FRANCIS
Visiting Professor of Creative
Writing
Warren Wilson College
CAMARA HOLLOWAY
Assistant Professor of Art History
University of Delaware
JOSEPH T. SKERRETT, JR.
Professor Emeritus of English
University of Massachusetts
Amherst

Award Presentation
CHARLES HENRY ROWELL
Editor of Callaloo &
Professor of English
Texas A&M University
SEDICK HUCKABY
Assistant Professor of Painting
University of Texas at Arlington

Moderator
SALAMISHAH TILLET
Associate Professor of English
University of Pennsylvania

Samella Lewis

© 2006 Robert Hale, courtesy of Claude Lewis
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2014

2:00 PM - 3:30 PM

THE MAKING OF ART—THE WOMAN WHO BEGAN AT THE END
Mathematics and Science Center, E 208
Emory University

Welcome

PELLOM MCDANIELS, III
Curator of African American Collections, MARBL, Emory University

Keynote Conversation

BARBARA CHASE-RIBOUD
Sculptor, Poet, Novelist

Moderators

SALAMISHAH TILLET
Associate Professor of English
University of Pennsylvania

DAGMAWI WOUBSHET
Associate Professor of English
Cornell University

Closing Remarks

CHARLES HENRY ROWELL
Editor of Callaloo & Professor of English
Texas A&M University

A book signing will close this session.

Katherine Dunham (1909 - 2006)
Speakers, Readers, and Performers

JOAN ANIM-ADDO, who was born in Grenada in the Caribbean, is a professor of Caribbean literature and culture and Director of the Centre for Caribbean Studies at Goldsmiths, University of London, where she also teaches courses in other African Diaspora literatures and cultures. She is founding editor of Mango Season, the journal of Caribbean women’s writing. Her publications include Touching the Body: History, Language, and African Caribbean Women’s Writing, Framing the World: Gender and Genre, and other critical books in the field, as well as volumes of her creative writing, Imoinda, Haunted by History, and Janie Cricketing Lady. She is co-editor of I Am Black, White, Yellow: An Introduction to the Black Body in Europe, Interculturality and Gender, and “Affect and Gendered Creolisation,” a special issue of The Feminist Review 104:1-4.

MELISSA BARTON is Curator of Drama and Prose in the Yale Collection of American Literature at the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. She holds a PhD in English from the University of Chicago.

IFA BAYEZA is author of numerous plays, including Amistad Voices, Club Harlem, Kid Zero, Homer G & the Rhapsodies, for which she received a Kennedy Center Fund for New American Plays fellowship. Her latest work is Welcome to Wanda-land! For her play The Ballad of Emmett Till, a version of which was published in the summer 2012 issue of Callaloo (35.3), she received a 2007 Eugene O’Neill Playwrights Center Fellowship, the 2008 Edgar Award for Best Play, and in 2010, four Ovation Awards, four Drama Desk Critics Circle Awards, and six Backstage Garland Awards including Best Playwriting. She is also a lyricist, composer, director, and novelist. With her sister Ntozake Shange, Bayeza co-authored the novel Some Sing, Some Cry (2010), which she adapted as a musical, Charlestown Olio, in 2011. She is a visiting senior lecturer in the Department of Africana Studies and an artist-in-residence with Rites and Reason Theatre at Brown University in Providence, RI.

JERICHO BROWN is Assistant Professor of English at the University of San Diego and author of Please (New Issue, 2008), his first collection of poems. He has also published poetry in jubilat, New England Review, The Iowa Review, Oxford American, Callaloo, and a number of other journals. He has held two travel fellowships to the Krakow Poetry Seminar in Poland and a Bunting Fellowship from the Radcliffe Institute at Harvard University. A native of Shreveport, Louisiana, he graduated from Dillard University and received an MFA in creative writing from the University of New Orleans and a PhD degree in literature and creative writing from the University of Houston, where he was the poetry editor of Gulf Coast.

COURTNEY BRYAN, New Orleans native, is “a pianist and composer of panoramic interests,” declares the New York Times. She has performed in the St. Paul’s Chapel Concert Series and at The Blue Note in New York, and her own compositions have been performed by the American Composers Orchestra at the Miller Theatre in New York. Her Sanctum was commissioned and will be performed and recorded by the American Composers Orchestra at the Lincoln Center, New York, 2015. Commissioned by Spektral String Quartet for Mobile Miniatures Project (Chicago) and by Urban Bush Women (New York), respectively, her Rising and Walking with ‘Trane will premiere in 2014. She is currently a Postdoctoral Research Associate in the Center for African American Studies at Princeton Uni-
HOWARD DODSON—author, curator, cultural activist and innovative administrator—is Director of Howard University’s Moorland-Spingarn Research Center and Director of Howard University Libraries. From 1984-2011, he served as Director of New York City’s Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, of which he is now Director Emeritus. Under his leadership, the Schomburg Center developed into the world’s most comprehensive public research library devoted exclusively to documenting and interpreting African Diasporan and African histories and cultures. He is the author of a number of books, including Jubilee: The Emergence of African American Culture (2002), In Motion: The African American Migration Experience (2005), and, most recently, Becoming American: The African American Journey (2009). He has curated more than 25 exhibitions including Censorship and Black America and Lest We Forget: The Triumph Over Slavery, which was adopted by UNESCO and translated into Spanish, French, and Portuguese and exhibited throughout the Americas, the Caribbean, Africa, and Europe. In addition to receiving honorary doctorates for his numerous achievements, he was, in November 2010, designated a New York City “Living Landmark” by the New York Landmarks Conservancy.

KEVIN JEROME EVERSON, a professor of art at the University of Virginia, is an award-winning filmmaker as well as painter, printmaker, sculptor, and photographer, who has made over 100 films, five of which are feature films, including Cinnamon (2006), The Golden Age of Fish (2008), and Quality Control (2011). The Sundance Festival, USA; Huesca International Film Festival in Huesca, Spain; Filmfest München, Munich, Germany; Video and New Media Festival, Ghent, Belgium; Festival du Nouveau Cinema, Montreal, Quebec; and Curta Cinema, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil—these are but a few sites where his films have been screened.

BARBARA CHASE-RIBOUD is a world-renowned visual artist who has exhibited her works of sculpture in many major museums, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Her literary career began in 1974 with the publication by Random House of her first collection of poetry, From Memphis and Peking, edited by Toni Morrison. Her bestselling iconic novel Sally Hemings altered American history by walking this historical figure through the front door of Jeffersonian scholarship. After a 23-year battle with the opposing Jeffersonians, and as a result of DNA testing in 1997, her prize winning, widely translated novel was recognized as fact. Her collected and new poems, Everytime a Knot is Undone, a God is Released, published by Seven Stories (October, 2014), includes her first published collection From Memphis and Peking and her Carl Sandburg prize winning Portrait of a Nude Woman as Cleopatra, as well as four other books. These collected works will be followed by four new volumes illuminating the dual accomplishments of this extraordinary visual artist and writer.

JOHN HOLMAN is the author of Squabble and Other Stories and Luminous Mysteries, a novel. His work has appeared in several publications, including The New Yorker, Oxford American, and Mississippi Review. A Whiting Writers’ Award recipient, he currently teaches at Georgia State University, where he serves as an associate editor of Five Points, a journal on literature and art.

ERIC J. HENDERSON is a photographer and writer. As a writer, he has contributed to The BMW Guggenheim Lab, Advertising Age, and Bill & Melinda Gates. In 2003, he bought a camera from a homeless man at 125th & Park Avenue, NYC, and in 2005 Henderson was noted by The New Yorker magazine as a “standout newcomer.” That same year he assembled his first exhibition in the Studio Museum in Harlem beside those of Gordon Parks, Dawoud Bey, and James Van der Zee. He has also exhibited his photographs in venues in the United Kingdom and in Miami’s Art Basel, and he was the lead artist in the global campaign of Bombay Sapphire and in the annual benefit of Art For Life. As a photographer, he is a contributor to the inaugural issue of Callaloo Art (October, 2014).
RAVI HOWARD was, in 2008, a finalist for The Hemingway Foundation/PEN Award and for the Hurston/Wright Legacy Award for his debut novel, *Like Trees, Walking*. In 2008, he won the Ernest J. Gaines Award for Literary Excellence. He has also published in a number of periodicals, including *Callaloo, Massachusetts Review*, and the *New York Times*. This Montgomery, Alabama, native and Howard University graduate received the MFA degree in creative writing from the University of Virginia, where he served as the Editor-in-Chief of the literary magazine *Meridian*. He is an associate editor of *Callaloo* and teaches in the CALLALOO CREATIVE WRITING WORKSHOP (USA, London, and Barbados). He lives in Atlanta, Georgia, and teaches creative writing at Atlanta Metropolitan State College.

SEDICK HUCKABY, a professor of art at the University of Texas in Arlington, lives in Fort Worth, Texas, the city in which he was born. In 1997, he was awarded the BFA from Boston University and, in 1999, the MFA from Yale University. His work is included in such visual art collections as the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston and the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York City. In addition to receiving the Lewis Comfort Tiffany Award and the Imagination Celebration Spirit of the Future Award, he has also been honored by fellowships at Fine Arts Work Center in Provincetown and the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, and he has been a Kate Neal Kinley Memorial Fellow at the University of Illinois, a Brandeis Mortimer Hays Traveling Fellow in Europe, and a Guggenheim Fellow.

ERICA MOIAH JAMES, author of *Love and Responsibility: The Collection of Dawn Davies* (2012), is an assistant professor in the Departments of the History of Art and African American Studies at Yale University. Before arriving at Yale she was the founding Director and Chief Curator of the National Art Gallery of The Bahamas. She is an associate editor of *Callaloo Art*, and she is currently guest editing a special issue of *Transition* devoted to the work of Caribbean women artists and institutional leaders.

TAYARI JONES is the author of three novels, including *Leaving Atlanta, The Untelling*, and *Silver Sparrow*. She is the recipient of fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, Radcliffe Institute, and the United States Artists Foundation. An Associate Professor of English at Rutgers University-Newark, she holds degrees from Spelman College, University of Iowa, and Arizona State University. Her work has appeared in numerous journals, including *McSweeney's, Tin Howe*, and *Callaloo*.

JOHN MCCLUSKEY, JR. is Professor Emeritus, African American and African Diaspora Studies, Indiana University-Bloomington, where he also taught fiction writing. He is the author of two novels, *Look What They Done to My Song* and *Mr. America's Last Season Blues*. His short fiction has appeared in numerous journals and collections, including *Southern Review, Ploughshares, Ancestral House: The Black Short Story in the Americas and Europe, Best American Short Stories*, and *Calling the Wind*. As one of its founding co-editors, he is an Editor Emeritus of the Blacks in the Diaspora series at Indiana University Press, a project that has published over fifty titles in the humanities and social sciences.

ROBERT F. REID-PHARR is Distinguished and Presidential Professor of English and American Studies at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. A specialist in African American culture, he is author of *Conjugal Union: The Body, the House, and the Black American, Black, Gay, Man: Essays, and Once You Go Black: Choice, Desire, and the Black American Intellectual*. His essays have appeared in a number of periodicals, including *American Literature, American Literary History, Callaloo, Social Text, Transition, and Studies in the Novel*. He lives in Brooklyn, NY.
CLAIRe E. SterK is Provost, Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, and Charles Howard Candler Professor of Public Health at Emory University. A member of the Emory faculty since 1995, she blends her administrative and academic roles. Her primary research interests are addiction, mental health, and HIV/AIDS, and she is the author of three books and more than 100 articles and book chapters. She serves as a trustee of the Hambridge Center for Creative Arts and Sciences as well as the Woodruff Arts Center. She is a native of the Netherlands, where she studied at Erasmus University in Rotterdam and the University of Utrecht.

Martha southGate is the author of four novels, the newest of which, The Taste of Salt (2011), was described as one of the best novels of the year by the San Francisco Chronicle and the Boston Globe. She has received fellowships from the MacDowell Colony, the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, and the Bread Loaf Writers Conference. Her highly acclaimed and provocative essay, “Writers Like Me,” was published in the New York Times Book Review and reprinted in Best African-American Essays 2009.

Kevin young is the Atticus Haygood Professor of Creative Writing & English, Curator of the Raymond Danowski Poetry Library, and Curator of Literary Collections at Emory University. He is author of ten volumes of poems and prose, most recently Book of Hours, The Grey Album: On the Blackness of Blackness (winner, PEN Open Award, Summer 2013, Graywolf Press Nonfiction Prize, 2010), Ardency: A Chronicle of the Amistad Rebellion (winner of the American Book Award, 2012), For the Confederate Dead (winner of the Quill Award in Poetry, 2007; and the Paterson Award for Sustained Literary Achievement, 2008), Black Maria, and To Repel Ghosts: The Remix. In addition to having received numerous other awards and honors such as winner of the National Poetry Series (1993) and a Paterson Poetry Prize (2004), he has been featured on a number of radio and television programs discussing his work and the work of other contemporary writers.

Members on the CALLALOO CONFERENCE—and the Journal

“The CALLALOO CONFERENCE group is a motley crew, more diverse than Chaucer’s Canterbury pilgrims. The retreat continually searches for universities that will host our activities. The two previous sites—Tulane University and Washington University [at St. Louis]—feted participants, inspired us, and provided faculty to participate on panels. One of the more important aspects of the retreat is that we scholars and writers enjoy visiting universities and spending quality time with faculty we may not meet otherwise. Rather than seeing the CALLALOO CONFERENCES as disruptions to my overwhelming number of commitments, they are a vortex that extends what I see as my creative possibilities. At the center of this vortex are colleagues from Africa, the Caribbean, Canada, and, of course, the United States, who riff and wail as we attempt to re-create ourselves at the same time that the Western academy questions the very notion of what it means to be human.”

Joyce Ann Joyce

“One issue that, for me, the CALLALOO retreat helped clarify was the idea of a necessarily vexed relation between black Canadian and African American scholarship. Some black critics based in Canada have gone so far as to liken African America to an imperial power able to suffocate debates emerging from other parts of the diaspora. There is a small measure of truth to this. . . . When my novel Souvouyant first came out, and well before it began receiving some encouraging attention at home and abroad, it had already been selected to be prominently featured in CALLALOO, an elite American-based journal that was willing to profile extensively the work of a new black writer when no Canadian-based literary or scholarly journal at the time would ever have dared of doing likewise. . . . In the midst of a nation that has a reputation for reacting to crises by closing ranks and proclaiming its exceptionalism, CALLALOO has opted to move in a different direction and actively sought connections with other lands and spaces—an act of reaching out that was matched by each of the delegates whom I encountered at the retreat [in New Orleans].”

David Chariandy

“For me, the 2010 CALLALOO CONFERENCE [at Addis Ababa University in Ethiopia] offered up yet another definition of Black Movement: it is the ability to move between poetics and praxis, between generations, between traditions tenaciously and with seamless virtuosity and without being bound by preconceived conventional boundaries. Black movement is about constant motion—creative and intellectual dynamism that embodies the flow of ideas and knows no bounds.”

RéGIne michelle jean-Charles
“One of the principle aims of the CALLALOO CONFERENCE is to provide opportunities for exchange between scholars and creative writers, and this intention was decidedly met at the 2011 CALLALOO CONFERENCE. I was invited as a creative writer, with an interest in criticism and commentary concerning poetics at large. . . . The things I discovered at the 2011 CALLALOO CONFERENCE have changed the way I look at scholars, creative writers, and the possibilities between us.”

VIEVEE FRANCIS

“The 2011 Translations Conference [at Texas A&M University, College Station] was a brilliant collaboration among writers, poets, and scholars. What further emerged was a Kaleidoscope of Interpretations, response papers, poetry, and Energy. More importantly, what we learned was, indeed, that we were One and had begun a dialogue that was passionately spun from our singular contributions, but manifested itself, as a whole, into an incredibly sharp, brilliantly diverse setting that opened doors upon doors of fascinating, enthralling conversation.”

OLYMPIA VERNON

“I, for one, left the retreat [conference] in New Orleans knowing that each of the colleagues in attendance had given me a tremendous gift by encouraging me to push myself toward greater clarity. As I interact with them in the coming years—whether in person, by phone, or by simply reading their work—I know that my thinking will evolve and sharpen as a result. These critics and creators have positioned themselves in perfect cooperation with me by offering productive opposition. Put another way, our conversations stayed with me precisely because CALLALOO once again did what it does best. It put the complexity and diversity of the African Diaspora center stage so that its thinkers could challenge each other to discover and extend our potential. Such rigorous intellectual engagement is possible precisely because we offer each other no easy conflation, no hallucination of unanimity.”

KORITHA MITCHELL

“If I learned anything at this conference it is that we, as women, should trespass on each other’s lives with more frequency. Trespass into each others’ homes and lives when we know the other is in need of help, and trespass when we ourselves need more help. This is how a true community can be built.”

ANGIE CRUZ

“It was at the CALLALOO CONFERENCE that I began to understand more clearly the power of stories and ideas to provide us small moments of clarity in a spinning, changing world.”

MAAZA MENGISTE

“I emerge from New Orleans [site of the first CALLALOO CONFERENCE] happy and quite calm, having reached a brand new conclusion: literary analyst and writer? We’re both bastards, really, both ridiculously human and both sites for inspiration and comic relief. I know we’ve only scratched the surface; Charles [Rowell] won’t be happy until there is a little bit of blood on the dance floor, but for this first engagement we leave still talking, and that is all that is required.”

MICHELLE WRIGHT

“. . . the St. Louis retreat [conference] was my first time being invited and it was actually an absolutely unique experience for me. But I would argue this in two ways: one, both in interacting with and connecting with junior and with senior scholars, as well as interacting with and connecting directly with artists. And I would say that as someone who attends and presents at a fair amount of conferences year in and year out, no other experience has been as successful or as productive along those lines, and I mean that sincerely, and also in these two ways, both socially and academically. So the ability to see senior scholars’ work and junior scholars’ work, to hear poets and to hear artists, but also the ability to break bread with them and connect with them was a fairly unique experience for me personally, and it is part of the reason why I’m even more committed to work on the process of making sure that we can continue to do it.”

JAMES PETERSON

“Since Callaloo is a major institution in our field, I am wondering how conferences like these enable us to make broader interventions in literary studies. . . . I know personally this community of scholars and artists has become indispensable to me. These conferences have enabled me to develop relationships and intellectual networks outside of my home institution, so that I am not solely dependent on my university for intellectual sustenance. To put it more plainly, as a junior scholar, I feel more empowered that I have the backing of Callaloo and access to senior scholars and artists in the field on whom I can draw for advice about a range of issues—how, particularly as a black scholar, one navigates white institutions; how one remains politically committed; how one advocates for the work that we do . . .”

DAGMAWI WOUBSHET

Six Years of CALLALOO CONFERENCES


“Notes from the 2010 CALLALOO CONFERENCE,” Callaloo, 34.3 (Summer 2011): 811-876.


Recent & Forthcoming Book Publications by CALLALOO CONFERENCE Participants


CHASE-RIBOUD, BARBARA. *Everytime a Knot is Undone, a God is Released*. New York: Seven Stories Press, 2014.


MATHES, CARTER. *Imagine the Sound: Experimental African American Literature After Civil Rights*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, Forthcoming.


Callaloo: Its History and Projects

Founded in 1976 by its editor, Charles Henry Rowell, Callaloo is a quarterly journal sponsored by Texas A&M University (College Station, TX) and published by the Johns Hopkins University Press (Baltimore, MD). It began as a small journal devoted to the literature of the Black South, but during its thirty-plus years of continuous publication, Callaloo has become the premier journal focusing on the literature and culture of the African Diaspora. Although the journal publishes poetry, fiction, creative nonfiction, visual art, interviews, and literary and cultural criticism, Callaloo is, says its editor, “more than a literary journal. It is a de facto literary and cultural center, organizing and coordinating a variety of activities that serve to exhibit, preserve, critique, and promote African Diaspora literary and visual culture.”

As a literary journal, Callaloo has received positive national attention, including a commendation from Every Writer’s Resource, which recently ranked Callaloo as one of the top fifteen literary magazines in the United States. The journal has long been—and continues to be referred to as—“the premier literary and cultural journal of the African Diaspora.” With that commendation and others has come, says its editor, “Callaloo’s continuing responsibility of identifying, recording, and promoting the literature and visual culture of the Diaspora, as well as publishing the engaging and provocative commentaries on its myriad artistic and other cultural forms.”

Although it is a literary and cultural journal, Callaloo, for a number of years, has offered annual creative writing workshops and hosted retreats, readings, symposia, performances, scholars, and creative writers together at the institutions and in the communities where the office of the journal is housed. Callaloo has also sponsored lectures, literary readings, and conferences across the United States and in such countries as Brazil, England, Cuba, Mexico, and Ethiopia.

In 1997, the Editor of Callaloo founded the CALLALOO CREATIVE WRITING WORKSHOP as an outreach program to historically black colleges and universities—for example, to Morehouse College, Morgan State University, North Carolina Central University, Spelman College, Fisk University, Xavier University of New Orleans, and others. And as the national need for creative writing workshops increased, the editor expanded and opened the CALLALOO CREATIVE WRITING WORKSHOP to a number of new and emerging writers from across the United States. With now growing international interest in the workshops, as well, Callaloo has expanded the reach of this program even wider, offering the first CALLALOO CREATIVE WRITING WORKSHOP at Goldsmiths, University of London, in 2013, for new
and emerging writers from the United Kingdom and, in 2014, the inaugural workshop in Barbados, hosted by the University of the West Indies at Cave Hill. Offering sessions in poetry writing and in fiction writing, the workshop now admits, on a competitive basis, participants from the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, and the Caribbean. A number of distinguished poets and fiction writers have led sessions of the workshop on the craft of poetry and fiction—e.g., John Edgar Wideman, Mat Johnson, Thomas Glave, Tayari Jones, Lucille Clifton, Terrance Hayes, Percival Everett, Toi Derricotte, A. Van Jordan, Yusef Komunyakaa, Edwidge Danticat, Natasha Trethewey, and Tracy K. Smith.

When the Editor of Callaloo founded the CALLALOO CONFERENCE in 2007, he stated its purpose as a contemporary necessity: to bring together creative writers and academics to discuss issues about the work they produce, and the environs in and concerns under which they work. Since then, the scope of the conference has expanded to consider a variety of issues from Pan-Africanism (at Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia, in 2010) to translation, the theme of the 2011 CALLALOO has expanded to consider a variety of issues from Pan-Africanism (at Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia, in 2010) to translation, the theme of the 2011 CALLALOO Conference held at Texas A&M University (College Station) and at the Melfi Collection in Houston. The 2012 CALLALOO CONFERENCE, which focused on LOVE (sacred, profane, etc.), convened at Princeton University in New Jersey. In 2013 The Oxford Research Centre in the Humanities at Oxford University hosted the CALLALOO CONFERENCE, whose theme was “The Transatlantic, Africa, and Its Diaspora.” On October 15-18, 2014, the Creative Writing Program at Emory University will host the 2014 CALLALOO CONFERENCE, where attendees will consider the theme “Making Art: Writing, Authorship, and Critique.”

The Editor of Callaloo has also initiated two other publication projects with the Johns Hopkins University Press: an annual publication, called Callaloo Art, that will be devoted to African Diaspora visual art and culture; and an academic series of books, The Callaloo African Diaspora Series, which will publish critical commentaries, by a variety of scholars, that rigorously address significant facets of the literature and culture of the Diaspora. The first book in this series, Black Soundscapes White Stages: The Meaning of Francophone Sound in the Black Atlantic by Edwin C. Hill Jr., was published in 2013.

The “literary and cultural center” called Callaloo attempts to provide a number of services to marginalized communities—services that include not only identifying and encouraging new writers and scholars, but also nurturing and promoting them. While extending and expanding the scope of African American literary and cultural studies, Callaloo is, in other words, a recorder, arbiter, and enabler of the literary culture of the African Diaspora.

What They Say about Callaloo

“Over the years Callaloo has remained among the most interesting magazines in the country, publishing established and emerging writers—many for the first time. Founder and editor Charles Rowell has a gift for recognizing writers early in their careers and continuing to publish them as they go on to prominence. I have benefitted from the support of Callaloo my entire career—beginning with the first poem I ever published!”

NATASHA TRETHEWEY, Poet Laureate (of the USA 2012-2014), Emory University

“Callaloo has been an indispensable force in my life ever since its editor, Charles Rowell, published my first book of fiction in 1985. The embracing vision of Callaloo has encouraged me to stretch my literary muscles, so that I have continued to explore other genres besides poetry in the quest to plumb the ever unfolding complexities of the human soul.”

RITA DOVE, Poet Laureate (of the USA 1995-1995), University of Virginia

“Callaloo has created and preserved the finest tradition of intellectual work over a quarter of a century. Rarely has a journal had more integrity in keeping to its profound cultural and political agenda. A generation of humanistic scholars owe Callaloo an unaccountable debt, and, in this time of national struggle, wherever we can find Americans, they owe Callaloo the debts of enlightenment, knowledge, and understanding. We know that Callaloo’s next quarter of a century will be even more important than its first.”

PAUL A. BOVÉ, University of Pittsburgh, Editor of boundary 2

“Charles Rowell has made Callaloo into an intellectual and artistic achievement. Devoted primarily to post-colonial and African American literature and the arts, it has added considerably to our knowledge of these fields. Each number of Callaloo is in its own right designed as a work of art. Callaloo deserves our congratulations and our admiration.”

RALPH COHEN, University of Virginia, Founding Editor of New Literary History

“(Callaloo) is where young writers find support and a place to begin and where older writers return for comfort and a serious audience. And Callaloo has actively sought work from the Caribbean, South America, and Africa, seeking voices that have no place to sound, serving writers who might otherwise have been forever silenced by circumstance.”

PERCIVAL EVERETT, fiction writer, University of Southern California

“In an age where literary journals increasingly resemble stables that the same horses never leave, Callaloo makes clear that contemporary African American poetry has as much range as does—and should—poetry of any kind; and that, if there is a single responsibility for a literary journal, it’s surely to showcase, as best it can, all that it can. Rather than a record of what has been done, Callaloo continues to be a gauge of what is being done and—just as inspiring—of what can be done.”

CARL PHILLIPS, poet & essayist, Washington University at St. Louis
As Editor of Callaloo, I want to acknowledge and express my gratitude to the following individuals and groups who, in one way or another, helped to make possible the 2014 Callaloo Conference here at Emory University.

I thank my dear friend and colleague, Professor Natasha Trethewey, and her dedicated assistant, Sarita Alami, for graciously hosting this our seventh conference. My staff and I have found it an honor and a pleasure to work with them both. With patience and generosity, Natasha and Sarita have been selfless in their continuing support of each facet of this gathering.

I thank the Conference Committee—Professor K. Ian Grandison, Professor Claudrena Harold, Professor Scott Heath, Professor Marlon Ross, Attorney Melvin White, and Professor Dagmawi Woubshet—for their assistance in the initial planning of this conference, and for traveling at their own expense to do so.

The Callaloo Staff (in house, College Station) has worked tirelessly in helping to plan this conference. I am especially grateful to Jackson Brown, who, last February, joined the staff as Managing Editor. As each of you has already discerned, he has done a splendid job overseeing the day-to-day operations of the office and, orderly and tirelessly, managing its staff and its various projects and other activities. With his superior education and writing skills, his administrative experience, and his ranging knowledge of literature, art, and culture, Jackson Brown has helped to make my work as Editor less a twenty-four-hour siege and more a pleasant daily activity of reading, writing, learning, and engaging the African Diaspora.

Finally, but most importantly, I thank Professor Michael Benedik, Dean of Faculties, and his staff at Texas A&M University for their continuing support of Callaloo and its various projects.

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ANNOUNCING

CALLALOO ART
an annual of the journal Callaloo
devoted to African Diaspora Art & Culture
Available in October 2014

Callaloo Art is an annual publication devoted to African Diaspora art and other forms of visual culture, including painting, photography, performance, sculpture, installation, collage, drawing, mixed media, video, etc., as well as critical and other academic studies of them.

The purpose of the annual is to locate, critique, chronicle, and promote visual art, and to inform and educate readers around the globe about the visual art people of African descent have been producing from the different periods of enslavement to the present times.

Focusing on 32 artists born after 1959, the inaugural issue of Callaloo Art features the work of African Diaspora visual artists from the USA, Brazil, United Kingdom, Jamaica, France, Martinique, Haiti, Cuba, Trinidad, and elsewhere. Mequitta Ahuja, Alexandre Arrechea, Belkis Ayón, Mark Bradford, Kevin Everson, Rodrigue Glombard, Trenton Doyle Hancock, Rashid Johnson, Isaac Julien, Julie Mehretu, Wangechi Mutu, Clifford Owens, Rosana Paulino, Hank Willis Thomas, Phillip Thomas, Nari Ward, and Lynette Yiadom-Boakye are among the artists represented with portfolios in this inaugural number.

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JEAN LACY graduated from Southern University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and she also studied at New York’s Art Students League, Otis Art Institute (Los Angeles), Southern Methodist University (Dallas), and North Texas State University (Denton). Her work has been reprinted in various periodicals and books, including *Myth Making and Metaphor in Black Women’s Fiction* (cover design), *American Visions*, *The Harlem Renaissance in Black and White* (cover art), *Creating Their Own Image*, *Emerge Magazine*, and *Callaloo* (front and back cover art). She has exhibited her work in museums and galleries in Florida, Alabama, Louisiana, Georgia, DC, New York, and Texas. She has also received commissions to design stained glass windows in a number of religious institutions, including 11 windows in Trinity United Methodist Church (Houston, TX), and 53 windows for St. Luke Community United Methodist Church (Dallas, TX). AIA Georgia Legacy Committee, Atlanta, GA; Jacob Lawrence Meadows Award, Southern Methodist University; “I Remember” . . . Thirty Years After the March on Washington: Images of the Civil Rights Movement, 1963-1993 (a group traveling exhibition), Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, DC; Art in Embassies Program, Embassy of the Unites States of America, Bern, Switzerland—these are but a few of the awards, honors, and other points of recognition she has received for her work. She lives in Dallas, Texas.