4-2007

Program Booklet: 18th Annual James Porter Colloquium

Department of Art

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Migration, Globalization: Developing New Art Historical and Critical Narratives in African American Art and Art of the African Diaspora

APRIL 19-21, 2007 • HOWARD UNIVERSITY

HONORING

Robert Farris Thompson
ART HISTORIAN

Evangeline J. Montgomery
ARTS ADMINISTRATOR & ARTIST
This year's presentation of the Howard University Department of Art’s James A. Porter Colloquium is presented in conjunction with The David C. Driskell Center for the Study of the Visual Arts and Culture of African Americans and the African Diaspora and the Howard University Gallery of Art.

All Colloquium events will be held at the Armour J. Blackburn Center on the campus of Howard University, with the exception of the Thursday evening’s Annual David C. Driskell Lecture to be held on the campus of the University of Maryland, College Park.

Armour J. Blackburn Center
Ballroom and Hilltop Lounge
Howard University Campus
202.806.7047 tel.

The Driskell Center at the University of Maryland, College Park
301.314.2615 tel.

6th Annual Driskell Lecture to be held in Room 2203, Art/Sociology Building on the campus of University of Maryland, College Park
Transportation from Colloquium available. Reception in Atrium of the Art/Sociology Building to precede the lecture. Lecture Seating is limited.

Admission to all Colloquium sessions and lectures is free and open to the public

HOTEL INFORMATION
Holiday Inn Central
1501 Rhode Island Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20005

TRANSPORTATION
TRAIN: Amtrak 1.800.USA.RAIL
Union Station, Washington, DC
AIR: Reagan National and Baltimore Washington International Airports

TAXI SERVICE
Yellow Cab of Washington, DC
202.544.1212 tel.

METRO
Shaw-Howard University Station on Metro’s Green Line
Migration, Globalization:
Developing New Art Historical and Critical Narratives
in African American Art and Art of the African Diaspora

During this year's three-day program art historians, artists, and interdisciplinary scholars will examine the theme, noting the multiple meanings and histories of migration and globalization and their impact on artistic production and reception of the art of African Americans and the art of the African Diaspora. Since its founding in 1990, the Colloquium has dealt with issues in the historiography of African American art and will continue this tradition this year by focusing on developing new strategies of analysis and interpretation that are anti-hegemonic, that reveal the changing realities and the efficacy of new narratives.

The colloquium presenters will interrogate and re-contextualize historical and contemporary developments in art and visual culture production by considering the dynamic process of change in ideas, cultures, values and technologies. What are the tropes of migration, of globalization? What are the expanded meanings of migration and globalization? What strategies might be used to explore traditional concepts of identity, continuity and change, context and chronology? These and many other issues will be examined during the Colloquium.

On behalf of the Department of Art, Division of Fine Arts, College of Arts and Sciences, and the Colloquium Executive Committee, we welcome you and your colleagues to this year's 18th Annual James A. Porter Colloquium on African American Art.

Floyd Coleman
Colloquium Coordinator

Bennie F. Johnson
Assistant Colloquium Coordinator
HOWARD UNIVERSITY • BLACKBURN CENTER
APRIL 19, 20, 21, 2007

**Migration, Globalization:**
Developing New Art Historical and Critical Narratives in African American Art and Art of the African Diaspora

HONORING
EVANGELINE J. MONTGOMERY
ROBERT FARRIS THOMPSON

**COLLOQUIUM**

**Thursday, April 19, 2007**
Howard University Blackburn Center

**REGISTRATION**
**9:30am**
Moderator: Gwendolyn Everett, Howard University

**OPENING REMARKS**
10:00
James Donaldson, Dean, College of Arts and Sciences
Coni Porter Uzelac, Wesport Foundation

**PANEL**
**New Art History, New Artworld Perspectives**
**10:30**
Moderator: Janell Blackmon, Howard University
Phyllis Jackson, Pomona College
Jacqueline Francis, University of Michigan
Mary Ann Calo, Colgate University
Q&A

**12:20-1:30pm**
Lunch

**PANEL**
**Issues in African American Art and Art of the Diaspora**
**1:40-3:30**
Moderator: Dasha Halkin, Howard University
Lyneise Williams, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
John Bowles, Indiana University
Courtney Martin, Yale University
Q&A

**4:00-5:00**
Travel to Opening Reception and David C. Driskell Center Lecture

**5:00**
OPENING RECEPTION

**6:00**
Sixth Annual David C. Driskell Lecture
University of Maryland at College Park
FRIDAY APRIL 20, 2007
Howard University  Blackburn Center

9:00am  REGISTRATION
Tritobia Hayes Benjamin, Associate Dean, Division of Fine Arts, College of Arts and Sciences

9:40  PANEL
Migration, Diaspora, Globalization and Art Historical and Critical Discourse
MODERATOR: Nana Mtendaji, Howard University
Pamela Franco, Tulane University
Cheryl McKay Dixon, Curator and formerly at Dillard University
Nkiru Nzegwu, State University of New York at Binghamton
Q&A

10:00-11:30  PANEL
Investigations: Recent Research in African American Art and the African Diaspora
MODERATOR: Carol Ann Duncan, Howard University
Leland Swanson, Jackson State University
Tess Schwab, University of Delaware
Raymond G. Dobard, Howard University
Q&A

12:00-1:30pm  LUNCH

1:40-2:40  INTRODUCTION OF KEYNOTE SPEAKER
Cheryl Finley, Cornell University

KEYNOTE
Robert Farris Thompson, Yale University
Q & A

3:00-5:00  PANEL
Making the Contemporary Visible: Identity, Memory and Commodity
MODERATOR: Bennie F. Johnson, Scholar
Jefferson Pinder, University of Maryland, College Park
Iona Rozeal Brown, Artist
Zoe Charlton, American University
Mark Bradford, Artist
Q&A

3:00-4:00  ROUND TABLE
Allan Gordon, Sacramento State University, Retired
Jeffreen Hayes, Hampton University
Teresia Bush, Howard University and formerly Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden

4:30-6:00  EXHIBITION
Howard University Gallery Of Art

6:00-8:00  COCKTAILS
Hilltop Lounge, Blackburn Center

6:00-9:00  BENEFIT GALA
Award Presentation & Tributes Honorees
Music

SATURDAY, APRIL 21, 2007
Howard University  Blackburn Center

9:00am  REGISTRATION

9:30am  PANEL
Investigations: Recent Research in African American Art and the African Diaspora
MODERATOR: Carol Ann Duncan, Howard University
Leland Swanson, Jackson State University
Tess Schwab, University of Delaware
Raymond G. Dobard, Howard University
Q&A

10:30-12:00pm  PANEL
African American Art and the Diaspora: Artist-Scholar Perspectives
MODERATOR: Wendell Brown, Howard University
Arthur Monroe, Oakland Museum
Shirley Woodson Reid, Artist and Art Administrator
Frank Smith, Howard University, Emeritus

12:15-1:25  LUNCH

1:40-2:50  PANEL
African American Art and the Diaspora: Artist-Scholar Perspectives
MODERATOR: Wendell Brown, Howard University
Arthur Monroe, Oakland Museum
Shirley Woodson Reid, Artist and Art Administrator
Frank Smith, Howard University, Emeritus

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Hilltop Lounge, Blackburn Center

8:00-11:00  BENEFIT GALA
Award Presentation & Tributes Honorees
Music

MIGRATION, GLOBALIZATION: APRIL 19-21, 2007
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James a. Porter

A pioneer in establishing the field of African American art history, James A. Porter was instrumental as the first scholar to provide a systematic, critical analysis of African American artists and their works of art. An artist himself, he provided a unique and critical approach to the analysis of the work. Dedicated to educating and writing about African American artists, Porter set the foundation for artists and art historians to probe and unearth the necessary skills essential to their artistic and scholarly endeavors. The canon is borne from Porter’s determination to document and view African American art in the context of American art.

Born December 22, 1905 in Baltimore, MD, Porter had a long, illustrious career in the visual arts, as an artist and historian. Under the direction and encouragement from James V. Herring, head of the Art Department at Howard University, Porter studied painting, drawing, and art history. Upon graduating with a bachelor of science in 1927, he accepted a position as instructor of painting and drawing at Howard. Being an educator did not keep Porter from honing his artistic skill and creating art. Throughout his academic professional career, Porter painted and exhibited nationally and internationally. This dedication was acknowledged in 1933 when he received the Schomburg Portrait Prize, from the Harmon Foundation, for the painting entitled, Woman Holding a Jug (1930). Porter was highly regarded for his finely rendered portraits, as exemplified in his award.

While Porter never stopped nurturing his artistic ability, he also did not stop educating himself. After he completed undergraduate work, Porter attended the Art Institute in New York. He also studied in Paris at the Institute of Art and Archeology at the Sorbonne, in which he received a Certificat de Presence in 1935. When Porter returned to the United States, he pursued a master of arts in art history from New York University in 1937. Porter’s thesis, which would later become the foundation for Modern Negro Art, focused on African American artists and artisans.

During his educational pursuits, Porter met Dorothy Burnett, a librarian at the Harlem branch, where he researched neglected black artists. On December 27, 1929, Porter and Dorothy were married. They had a one daughter, Constance Porter. This union would prove to be important, not only personally but also professionally. Dorothy worked with Porter, as she provided bibliographic information critical to his investigations. Dorothy, along with Porter, has a rich relationship with Howard University. She was the director of Moorland Spingarn Research Center where she catalogued information about African American artists.

Porter’s interest in nearly forgotten and often ignored artists of African descent came from reading a brief article on African American landscape artist Robert Scott Duncanson. Due to the brevity of the account, Porter was inspired to research Duncanson and other artists of African descent. Were it not for this
article, *Modern Negro Art* may have not come to be.

Porter, a devout educator, taught at Howard for more than forty years, heading the Art Department and the Art Gallery. Because of his dedication to the teaching profession, the National Gallery of Art selected him as one of the best art teachers in the nation. An honor he received with twenty-four others, he was presented the award by Lady Bird Johnson in 1965.

James A. Porter left a cultural and educational legacy to those passionately involved in the area of African American art. The drive to explore and firmly document artists of the Diaspora continues today. Porter's artistic and historical work provides a solid foundation upon which current and future scholars can build. Many scholars owe Porter for the inspiration to probe the depths of African American visual culture and attest to its significance to American culture.
Robert Farris Thompson
ART HISTORIAN

Robert Farris Thompson's work on African art and the art of African Diaspora has been no less than encyclopedic. His publications have examined African aesthetics and criticism, philosophy of African and African diasporic art and practices, examinations of the oeuvres of single artists, interdisciplinary investigations of the plastic and auditory arts, and the ideas and belief systems that shape artistic production and reception through out the Black world. His work has profoundly influenced the discourse on African art and the art of the Diaspora.

Beginning with “African Influence on the Art of the United States,” an essay that appeared in the anthology, Black Studies in the University, edited by A. Robinson, C. Foster and D. Ogilivie (1969), Robert Farris Thompson added an important chapter to the discussion of the Black experience by citing exploring African continuities in the art of peoples of African ancestry in the United States. Although not the first to present the idea of African continuities, James A. Porter in Modern Negro Art (1943) had called attention to some African-like elements in the decorative appointments on a 19th Century structure in up-state New York. Thompson, with an extensive background in African art, began to look at early artistic productions by works of enslaved Africans and noted stylistic affinities between selected African and African American cultural productions.

This was timely. Many young African American artists, scholars and cultural workers had grown weary of trying to connect their work to that of a disinterested Euro-American mainstream, seized upon Thompson’s work to maintain that African captives were not empty vessels as some had claimed. In a word, Africans did not leave their aesthetic sensibilities or their knowledge of the plastic arts on the shores of West Africa when they began to be forced aboard European slave ships in the early 16th century.

Known as “T” by his devoted students, Robert Farris Thompson is a protean figure in American arts and letters. As a curator and scholar, he has explored traditional African art, contemporary African art, and the multimedia and interdisciplinarity of the arts of West and Central African art in particular. By focusing on foundational philosophical and psychological influenced concepts he provided the frame to under gird issues important to developing historiographies of African art.

In Flash of the Spirit: African and Afro-American Art and Philosophy (1984), we see the tectonics of Thompson's of scholarship, how he crafts and carefully supports his arguments with evidence of the dynamics of visual- ity and the word. Other publications such as “An Aesthetic of the Cool,” African Arts (1973), were highly influential.

Thompson’s work as a curator has been groundbreaking and helped to change the direction of the field. His exhibition “African Art in Motion” as it was installed at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., in 1974 did
much to move African art from the anthropological museums to the art museums and the scholarship from a kind of archeological positivism to eloquent art historical prose.

Thompson has received many grants and awards to support and acknowledge his research and scholarship. He has received research grants from the Ford Foundation (1962-1964), the Yale Concilium on International and Area Studies (1965), The National Institute of Medicine and Science (1975), the National Institute of Museums of Zaire (1976), and the National Gallery of Art (1977, 1979, 1980), among others.

He has served as visiting curator at UCLA's Museum of Ethnic Arts (1970) and at the National Gallery of Art (1974). From 1966 to 1973, Professor Thompson served on the Joint Committee on African Studies of the Social Science Research Council, the American Council of Learned Societies, and as Chairman of the Humanities Committee of the African Studies Association from 1966 to 1970. His academic degrees were earned at Yale, including the Ph.D. in 1965. Thompson has taught at Yale since 1961.

He is currently Colonel John Trumbull Professor of the History of Art and Master of Timothy Dwight College at Yale University.
Mary Schmidt Campbell
SIXTH ANNUAL DAVID C. DRISKELL LECTURE

Mary Schmidt Campbell, Dean of the Tisch School of the Arts at New York University, Chair and Professor, Art and Public Policy, has distinguished herself as an educator and prominent advocate of the arts.


From 1977 to 1987, Campbell served as executive director of the Studio Museum in Harlem, a fine arts museum that exhibits, collects and interprets the work of black artists. During this time, she earned a Ph.D. from Syracuse University. She then served as commissioner of cultural affairs for the city of New York until 1991, managing an agency that funds New York cultural institutions and organizations.

After establishing herself as a leader in the field of arts and public policy, Campbell became dean of New York University's Tisch School of the Arts, a preeminent center of theater and film. Many of the country's leading film directors, Broadway producers, actors, writers, and theater historians and critics have matriculated from the school, and recent graduates have won major awards at festivals around the world. Campbell has dramatically improved enrollment, funding and programs. She established and chairs the Department of Art and Public Policy.

Campbell lectures nationally on arts policy issues and American cultural history, is professionally associated with various institutes and academies, and has won several awards for her work.
The Porter Colloquium wishes to express our sincere gratitude for the generous efforts and contributions of the following individuals and organizations to this year's Colloquium:

Akili Ron Anderson
Mark Bartley
Mark Becker
Tritobia Hayes Benjamin
Teresia Bush
Kathryn Clay
Anthony Coleman
Kathryn Coney
Deirdre Cross
Raymond Dobard
David C. Driskell
Allan Edmunds
Sharon Farmer
Cheryl Finley
Aziza Claudia Gibson-Hunter
Sam Gilliam
Peter Hanning
Jennifer Hardy
Juanita & Mel Hardy
Jeffreen Hayes
Brian Hodge
Kera Johnson
Eileen Johnston
Reiss Joseph
Gina M. Lewis
Wally Lumpkin
Tatiana Nelson
Oggi Ogburn
Dr. & Mrs. Robert E. Steele
Malia Salaam-Steeple
Gloria Sulton

Lynn Sylvester
Coni Porter Uzelac
Joyce Wellman
Dorit Yaron

Armour J. Blackburn Center and Personnel
Brandywine Workshop
Calabash & Co.
David C. Driskell Center for the Study of the African Diaspora
Homes of Color Magazine
Howard University College of Arts & Sciences
Howard University Department of Art
Howard University Gallery of Art
IBM
International Review of African American Art, Hampton University
JP Morgan Chase
Reginald F. Lewis Museum of Maryland
African American History and Culture
Pepco
PNC Bank
Pomegranate Books
Carl T. Rowan Chapter of Blacks in Government
University of Maryland Art Gallery
The Word Express, Inc.

An additional note of special gratitude to the artists, collectors and organizations who generously contributed items for this year's Colloquium Art Benefit Event Series.

Akili Ron Anderson
James Brown
Lilian Burwell
Floyd Coleman
Terry deBardelaben
David C. Driskell
Bonnie & Larry Frazier
Brian Hodge
International Review of African American Art, Hampton University
Kera & Bennie F. Johnson
The Family of Norman Lewis
Frank Smith
Joyce Wellman

As of April, 2007
"...Hard-won and very substantial progress...studded with original and enduring achievement."

The James A. Porter Colloquium is the leading forum for scholars, artists, curators and others in the field of African American Art and Visual Culture. Established at Howard University in 1990, the annual Colloquium is named in honor of James A. Porter, the pioneering Art Historian and Professor, whose 1943 publication Modern Negro Art laid the foundation for the field of study. The Colloquium continues his legacy through dynamic programming, scholarly research and artistic leadership. Past Colloquium presenters have included such leading scholars and artists as David Driskell, Edmund Gaither, Ann Gibson, Leslie King Hammond, Patricia Hills, Samella Lewis, Richard Long, E.J. Montgomery, John Scott, Lowery Stokes Sims, Deborah Willis and Judith Wilson.

Porter Colloquium Endowment Fund
We sincerely thank you for and encourage you to continue your generous support of the colloquium, your contributions help to ensure the Colloquium's scholarship, program, and activities for years to come. Contributions may be made throughout the year to Porter Colloquium, Howard University Department of Art, 2455 Sixth Street, NW Washington, DC 20059. ATTN: Floyd Coleman. Contributions are tax-deductible to the fullest extent allowable by law.

19th Annual James A. Porter Colloquium
Join us next year for the 19th Annual Porter Colloquium, April, 2008
Howard University, Washington, DC
Visit us at Portercolloquium.org