

**Rashida Bumbray**

Nominee for Appointment as Member – Public Art Commission



Brandon M. Scott  
Mayor  
City Hall  
Room 250  
Baltimore, MD 21202

## MAYOR'S REQUEST TO CITY COUNCIL FOR CONFIRMATION OF MUNICIPAL OFFICER

Pursuant to Article IV, §§6(a) and (b) of the Baltimore City Charter 1996 Edition, Mayor Brandon M. Scott hereby requests the City Council of Baltimore City to confirm the appointment of **Rashida Bumbray** serve as a municipal officer on the **Public Art Commission**. In support of this request, information concerning the mayoral appointee is provided below and in the attached resume.

*The information set forth in both the document and the attached resume have been distributed to authorized persons for use in the City Council confirmation process.*

**Name:** **Rashida Bumbray**

**Email:** **rashidabumbray@gmail.com**

**Appointed to:** **Public Art Commission**

**Succeeds:** **N/A**

**Term Expiration Date:** **December 5, 2028**

**Previous Terms Served (if none, write N/A):** N/A

**Party Affiliation:** **Democrat**

**Specific Position Requirements:** **1 must be a curator or art historian from an established Baltimore arts or educational institution**

**Council District:** **11**

**Current Occupation:** **Curator**

**Current Employer:** **Self-Employed**

**Employer's Address:** **1508 Park Avenue Baltimore, MD 21217**

**Other Relevant Employment:** **See attached resume.**

**Undergraduate Institution:** **Oberlin College**

**Graduate Institution:** **New York University, Master of Arts**

**Civic and Professional Affiliations:** **See attached resume.**

**Signature:** 

### **Distribution:**

Honorable Isaac "Yitzy" Schleifer, Chair, Legislative Investigations Committee

Nina Themelis, Director, Mayor's Office of Government Relations

Ty'lor Schnella, Mayor's Office of Government Relations

Shamoyia Gardiner, Legislative Director, Office of the Council President

Ethan Hasiuk, Deputy Legislative Director, Office of the Council President

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#### DIRECTOR AND CURATOR

With over twenty years of commitment to and expertise in working with rising and established artists and institutions, I have a proven track record of successful collaborations to realize ambitious and generative initiatives across media and in widely divergent institutions and contexts internationally.

#### EDUCATION:

New York University, Masters of Arts, New York, NY, Graduate School of Arts & Sciences, September 2010  
Africana Studies Program; Focus: Contemporary Art, Performance Studies and Comparative Literature

Oberlin College, Bachelor of Arts, Oberlin, OH, College of Arts & Sciences, May 2000  
Major: African American Studies; Concentration: Fine Arts; Minor: Theater & Dance

#### AWARDS & HONORS:

2024 Tate Infinities Commission: Research & Development Award  
2024 Rubys Artist Award  
2024 Duke University Artistic Research Initiative Fellow  
2019 United States Artist Award  
2018 Alchemist Award for Socially Engaged Art: A Blade of Grass  
2018 Metropolitan Museum of Art Honoree: The MET Honors Women  
2016 Independent Curators International Curatorial Vision Nominee  
2014 Bessies: NY Dance and Performance Awards Nominee: Most Outstanding Emerging Choreographer  
2000 Oberlin College African American Studies Department Honors  
1999 Mellon Undergraduate Fellowship  
1997 State of Ohio Humanities Scholar  
1996 Carl Rowan Project Excellence Scholar; Nissan Scholar

#### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

- Curator, *Loophole of Retreat*: Venice, Simone Leigh Studio & ICA Boston, Venice, Italy 2021-Present
- Curated [\*Loophole of Retreat: Venice\*](#), a symposium for Simone Leigh's exhibition *Sovereignty* for the U.S. Pavilion at the 59th International Art Exhibition, La Biennale Venezia
  - Brought together an intergenerational and interdisciplinary group of scholars, artists, and activists from around the world: the US, Canada, and the Caribbean—including Jamaica, Haiti, Puerto Rico, and St. Croix, as well as Brazil; participants from the UK, and countries across Europe including Italy; and participants from countries throughout Africa, including, Nigeria, South Africa, Morocco, Mali, and San Tome & Principe'
  - Fundraised and organized three days of dialogue, performances, and presentations centered on Black women's intellectual and creative labor and contributions to the arts and academia for an audience of 700 in person and 3K+ Livestream
  - Co-editing forthcoming publication, *Loophole of Retreat*
- Director, Culture & Art, Open Society Foundations, New York, New York 2019-2022
- Spearheaded the development of Open Society Foundations' (OSF) [\*Culture & Art Program\*](#), first global program dedicated to advancing diverse artistic practices and locally-led cultural spaces around the world, leading it to become one of the leading global arts funders, with a focus on diverse disciplines and underfunded communities

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- Built and executed a robust strategy based on the specific needs of the arts ecosystem in the Global South, its diasporas, and other authoritarian contexts with critical buy-in and support from OSF leadership, the OSF Global Board of Directors and the Soros Family, the founders of OSF
- Oversaw and committed over \$70 million in support to artists, museums, organizations, and projects working at the forefront of social justice and human rights in the Global South and historically underfunded communities, including Belarus and the Western Balkans
- Collaborated with over 45 OSF units: regional, thematic, and national foundations focused on the issues of our time, including corruption, climate justice, defending public space, racial justice, migration, decriminalizing sex work, drug policy, artists as human rights defenders, reproductive justice, LGBTQ+ rights and narratives, pop culture, land back, reparations and restitution
- Launched and developed OSF's [Global Initiative on the Restitution of African Cultural Heritage](#) together with OSF-Africa, Open Society Institute for Western Africa, collaborating with leading scholars, activists, philanthropic partners, and museum leaders globally
- Launched and seeded [Caribbean Cultural Fund](#) with FOKAL in Haiti, OSF's Puerto Rico Project, and the OSF Executive Office
- Repurposed the entire 2020 \$12 million annual budget of the Culture and Art program as well as a presidential reserve fund to attend to COVID-19 relief in the form of stipends to existing grantees and emergency funds to the field
- Developed the Memorial Justice Initiative with colleagues in OS-US in response to the global racial justice movement to support the creation of alternative monuments by Black, Indigenous, and people of color artists around the United States, including Simone Leigh and Nicholas Galanin

Senior Program Manager, Arts Exchange, Open Society Foundations, New York, New York

2015-2019

- Led the Open Society Foundations' (OSF) Global Arts for Social Justice Initiative, collaborating with grantmakers and advocates around the Foundations' global network to incorporate artists and arts organizations into human rights and social justice strategies
- Created the [Soros Arts Fellowship](#), an \$100K individual grant for innovative mid-career artists and cultural producers advancing social change around the world, designed to address the political, aesthetic, and capacity needs of these practitioners, focused on themes including public space, closing societies, migration, land, climate, and public narratives, which continues to support many influential socially engaged practitioners working in contemporary art, performance, theater, choreography, film, curation, archives, and design
- Designed and hosted OSF Arts Forum: Art, Public Space and Closing Societies in Marrakech, Morocco, an interactive forum for 80 artists, arts leaders, and donors from over 40 countries to discuss what it means to make and support cultural work in the increasingly closed, authoritarian societies where the Open Society Foundations work
- Co-designed and hosted The School of Creative Activism—one-week intensive trainings with the Center for Artistic Activism for artists, activists, and grant-makers at the MET Museum, the Brooklyn Museum, New York; La Muse, Guinea; and CCA, Macedonia
- Designed, implemented, and managed the Arts Exchange programmatic strategy and its \$2.3 million budget
- Engaged over 25 Regional Foundations and Thematic Programs to collaborate and commit over \$950,000 in co-funding with 14 OSF foundations and programs
- Hosted Brownbag Lecture Series on Socially Engaged Art featuring lectures by Regina Galindo, Omar Berrada, Pedro Lasch, Diana Taylor, and Belarus Free Theatre, among others
- Collaborated with grantmakers to support arts initiatives for OSF Regional and Thematic Programs, including in Belarus, Brazil, Colombia, Croatia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ghana, Haiti, Macedonia, Mexico, Nigeria, Ukraine, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somaliland, South Sudan, South Africa, Serbia, and Venezuela, among others

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Artist-in-Residence, Civic Practice Partnership (CPP), Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY 2017-2021

- Developed and presented new socially engaged artworks and collaborations: films, performances, and lectures inspired by a dialogue with the Met Museum's collections, curators, and education staff to engage diverse museum audiences across New York and in my neighborhood, Bedford Stuyvesant, Brooklyn
- Performed *Braiding and Singing (a point)*, 2019, a live performance in the African Art galleries for MetFridays; Directed *Braiding and Singing (a point)*, 2020, a film for the Armory's 100 Years/100 Women exhibition; and Directed *Untitled (How High the Moon)*, 2024, a film

Director of Artistic Affairs (Dean of Arts), Duke Ellington School of the Arts, Washington, DC 2014-2015

- Recruited by the founder of the school and Board Chair, Peggy Cooper Cafritz, to serve as dean of arts, directing the arts vision for the 40-year-old, award-winning arts high school during a time of transition to new leadership, a new building, new partnerships, new rigor
- Directed and supervised Arts Chairs for eight disciplines: Museum Studies, Literary Media & Communications, Visual Art, Theater, Dance, Vocal Music, Instrumental Music, and Technical Design & Production
- Collaborated with Ellington partners, The John F. Kennedy Center for Performing Arts, George Washington University, Corcoran College of Art & Design, and District of Columbia Public Schools, to create opportunities for learning and presenting for Ellington students
- Developed arts education evaluation and assessment tools, rubrics, and metrics

Guest Curator, Creative Time, New York, NY 2012-2014

- Co-Curated *Funk, God, Jazz, and Medicine: Black Radical Brooklyn*, a walkable public art exhibition in collaboration with Creative Time and Weeksville Heritage Center
- Commissioned four site-specific community-based art projects by Xenobia Bailey, Simone Leigh, Otabenga Jones & Associates, and Bradford Young using the history of Weeksville, a Brooklyn community established in 1838 by free and formerly enslaved Black citizens, as a point of departure
- Established and cultivated partnerships between community institutions and commissioned artists for the development of the four interactive projects: a free health clinic, a film installation, a community radio station, and a sculptural installation inside Weeksville's historic houses
- Wrote curatorial texts, didactics, and grant proposals

Associate Curator & Education Curator, The Kitchen, New York, NY 2006-2012

- Curated exhibitions including Simone Leigh: *You Don't Know Where Her Mouth Has Been*; Lauren Kelley: *FrouFrou Conclusions*; Cauleen Smith: *REMOTE VIEWING*; Adam Pendleton: *BAND*; Leslie Hewitt: *On Beauty, Objects, and Dissonance*; Jamal Cyrus: *Winners Have Yet To Be Announced*; Elodie Pong: *After The Empire*; Mai-Thu Perrett: *An Evening of The Book; The Future As Disruption*; Rodney McMillian: *Untitled*
- Coordinated exhibitions, including Jose Alvarez: *The Visitors*, Ralph Lemon: *The Efflorescence of Walter*, Alix Pearlstein: *After The Fall*
- Curated film screenings, including the premiere of Cauleen Smith's *The Fullness of Time* in collaboration with Creative Time
- Curated literature events including *An Evening With Chimurenga*; *An Evening With Bidoun*; *Akashic Books: Amiri Baraka*; *An Evening with CoonBidness*; Greg Tate and LaTasha N. Nevada Diggs, eds., among others
- Commissioned performances by visual artists, including *Kalup Linzy: Comedy, Tragedy, Sketches of Me*, Rashaad Newsome: *Shade Compositions*; Sanford Biggers: *Cosmic Conundrums*, Mendi & Keith Obadike: *Four Electric Ghosts*; and Derrick Adams: *Go Stand Next To The Mountain*, among others



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- Commissioned music and dance performances, including *The AACM Festival* with George Lewis, *Hoofers' House*, *Shim Sham*, Jason Samuels-Smith: *Charlie's Angels*, Camille A. Brown: *Mr. Tol E. Rance*, Kyle Abraham: *Live! The Realist MC*, Pheeroan akLaff, Alicia Hall Moran, LaTasha N. Nevada Diggs, Vijay Iyer, Matthew Shipp, George Lewis, Nicole Mitchell, Amina Claudine Myers, Muhal Richard Abrams, Roscoe Mitchell, Wadada Leo Smith, Min-Xiao Fen, Guillermo E. Brown, Gordon Voidwell, Burnt Sugar The Arkestra Chamber, Sparlha Swa, Samita Sinha and Marc Cary, among others
- Organized *The Kitchen Highline Block Party*, a bi-annual community street fair with unique artist-run booths and performances in 2007, 2009, and 2011
- Organize and manage The Kitchen's Education Program with Hudson Guild & Liberty High School for New Arrivals

Exhibition Coordinator & Curatorial Assistant, The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York, NY 2001-2006

- Co-curated exhibitions, including *HRLM: Pictures*, *African Queen & Seeds and Roots: Selections from the Permanent Collection* with Thelma Golden;
- Coordinated exhibitions including *Freestyle*; *Frequency*, *Africa Comics*, *Energy/Experimentation: Black Artists and Abstraction 1964-1980* (with guest curator Kellie Jones), *harlemworld: metropolis as metaphor*; *Black Romantic: The Figurative Impulse in African-American Art*; *Kerry James Marshall: One True Thing: Meditations on Black Aesthetics*; *Chris Ofili: Afro Muses*; *Yinka Shonibare*; *Gary Simmons*; *Challenge of the Modern: African American Artists 1925-1945 & Collection in Context* exhibition series
- Coordinated and implemented exhibition planning calendar for installation, didactic materials: wall texts, object labels, title designs; and publications: submission deadlines, copy editing, and graphic design
- Organized editing and layout of exhibition catalogs including *Frequency*; *harlemworld: metropolis as metaphor*; *Challenge of the Modern: African American Artists 1925-1945*; *Black Romantic*; *Yinka Shonibare*
- Organized traveling exhibition of SMH Permanent Collection for NY State Museum, Albany, *Represent: Selections from the Studio Museum in Harlem*
- Administered annual Artist-In-Residence selection process & ongoing review process
- Led administrative operation of the curatorial department
- Supervised & managed curatorial interns, research assistants, and consultants
- Facilitated collaborations with guest curators, exhibition designers, and graphic designers
- Conceived & produced performance series *Hoofers' House*, *Sunday Salon & Vital Expressions* with Sandra Jackson, Education Curator
- Directed & performed choreography and performance art for program series, including *Books & Authors: The Black Female Body*, *A Photographic History*; *Sunday Salon: Freestyle*, *Challenge of the Modern*, *Fred Brown: Please Baby Please*, and *The Children's Book Festival*
- Organized special projects including *Harlem Postcards & StudioSound* (SMH lobby commissioned sound project) featuring Daniel Bernard Roumain (DBR) "Black Man Singing"; DJ Scientific (Chris Davis) "Harlem Sounds"; Chris Ofili and Blacktronica's "Freeness"; Charlie Dark's "The Black Atlantic Project: a hip hop chain letter"
- Created and conceptualized features for *Studio* magazine, including check out, 3 Questions, Dakar Biennale

#### CONSULTANCIES:

Researcher, Artists at Risk Connection (ARC), PEN America, New York, NY 2023-2024

- Developed research tools and conducted interviews with twenty-five U.S. Artists and Cultural Professionals about the state of artistic freedom and expression
- Organized and Facilitated a virtual gathering with artists and cultural professionals on the state of artistic expression
- Authored the report: "State of Artistic Expression for U.S. Artists," including significant barriers to freedom of expression for marginalized artists and cultural professionals, as well as recommendations for ARC/ PEN America, philanthropy, and arts organizations on mitigating these barriers

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Strategy Consultant, Apple Values, New York, NY

2023-2024

- Consulted on conceptual and creative strategy direction for Apple's Black History Month & Juneteenth approaches & features across their platforms
- Curated [Apple TV True to Tone Black History Month Feature "Eye to Eye"](#)
- Curated [Apple Maps Rashida Bumbray's Top Black Art Spaces](#), featuring Black cultural incubation spaces worldwide from Washington, DC to Port Au Prince, Haiti, and Tangiers, Morocco.

Curatorial Lecturer, Àsìkò 4th CCA, Lagos International Art Programme, Dakar, Senegal

Summer 2014

- Facilitated curatorial and critical studies program with Bisi Silva, "A History of Contemporary Art in Dakar in Five Weeks"
- Gave lectures and led critiques and discussions on methodology, critical strategies, and implementation of conceptual ideas with a group of emerging curators and artists from across the African continent

Program Consultant in Performing Arts, Creative Capital Foundation, NY, NY

2011-2012

- Recommended artists and organizations for the application process; read and scored Letters of Inquiry and Applications for Performing Arts

Guest Curator, Arndt & Partner, Zurich, Switzerland Summer/Fall 2008

- Organized the exhibition *The Fullness of Time: William Cordova, Rashawn Griffin, Leslie Hewitt + Gean Moreno*
- Authored essay for gallery publication and press release

Consultant, Surdna Foundation, New York, NY Fall 2014 Fall 2008

- Advised Thriving Cultures' Program Officers on development, language, outreach, and protocol for their inaugural "Artists Engaging in Social Change" grants

#### SELECTED EXHIBITIONS, FILM SCREENINGS & PERFORMANCES:

2024

*How High the Moon*, film, Flight Into Egypt!, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, curated by Akili Tommasino

*Way Down*, performance, Flight Into Egypt!, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, curated by Akili Tommasino

*RUN MARY RUN (Loose Horse in the Valley)*, performance, Symposium: Surrealism and Us: Caribbean and African Diasporic Artists since 1940, Fort Worth Museum of Modern Art, Fort Worth, TX, curated by Maria Elena Ortiz and Negarra A. Kudumu

*Braiding and Singing (a point)*, film, Black Women Video Artists, Off The Wall, Atlanta, curated Maori Holmes & Gregory Austen Zinman

2023

*Porch Portal*, performance in development, Kennedy Center, The REACH, Office Hours Residency, Washington, DC, invited by Marc Bamuthi Joseph

*RUN MARY RUN*, performance, Walk the Block Festival, Wa Na Wari, Seattle, WA curated by Elisheba Johnson

*Solo interpretation of a score*, performance, Dia: Chelsea, New York, In conjunction with Leslie Hewitt at Dia Bridgehampton, interpretation of a score realized collaboratively by Hewitt and Jamal Cyrus titled *For Solo Piano, Alto Saxophone, or Tambourine...*, curated by Matilde Guidelli-Guidi

2020

*Braiding and Singing (a point)*, film, Black Star Film Festival, curated by Maori Holmes

*Braiding and Singing (a point)*, film, 100 Years 100 Women; MET Museum & Park Avenue Armory, Film: *Braiding and Singing*

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- 2019 *Braiding and Singing (a point)*, performance, MET Fridays, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, curated by Mari Robles
- 2018 *RUN MARY RUN (for Charlottesville)*, performance, Dancing While Black, UVA Charlottesville, VA, curated by Paloma McGregor
- 2017 On the Necessity of Attending to Black Healing, performance lecture, "Kerry James Marshall: A Creative Convening," Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, curated by Sandra Jackson-Dumont
- 2016 *Black America Again*, film, performance & choreography, directed by Bradford Young for Common, produced by Ava Duvernay  
*Motherless Child Set*, performance, Simone Leigh's The Waiting Room, New Museum, NY, curated by Emily Mello  
*Aluminum*, performance, Simone Leigh's Psychic Friends Network, Tate Modern, London, UK
- 2015 *Work Songs* performance by Jason Moran and Alicia Hall Moran, *All The World's Futures*, Venice Biennale, Venice, Italy, curated by Okwui Enwezor  
*RUN MARY RUN & Little Red Rooster in a Red House*, performance, SummerStage, Queensbridge Park, curated by Danni Gee
- 2014 *Little Red Rooster in a Red House*, performance, E-moves, Harlem Stage, curated by Simone Eccleston  
*A Tribute to Louis Armstrong with Wynton Marsalis*, SummerStage, Family Day; Queensbridge Park, curated by Monique Martin
- 2012 *RUN MARY RUN*, performance, *BLEED*, Jason Moran & Alicia Hall Moran, *Whitney Biennial 2012*, Whitney Museum of American Art, NY,  
*RUN MARY RUN (JUBILEE)*, performance, Garden Party with Amel Larrieux, Weeksville Heritage Center, Curated by Elissa Blount Moorhead

PANELS/JURIES/COMMITTEES:

ArtPrize 2013 Juror for Time-Based Works	Creative Capital Program Selection Panel
Art Matters Nominator	Creative Capital Retreat Consultant
Artists Pension Trust Selection Panel	Dance Theater Workshop: Fresh Tracks
Aljira Contemporary Art Center's Emerge	Nominator
Program Panel	Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts Nominator
Bessie's Committee NY Performance Awards	
Harvestworks Digital Residency Selection	Lower Manhattan Cultural Council Studio Visits
Panel	McDowell Colony Interdisciplinary Panel
Herb Alpert Award Nominator	New York State Council on the Arts Visual Arts
International Studio & Curatorial Program (ISCP)	Panelist New York Committee
Visiting Curator	Parsons MFA Visiting Scholar
Joan Mitchell Foundation Grant Nominator	Philadelphia Exhibitions Initiative 2008
The Laundromat Project: Selection and	The Studio Museum in Harlem Artists-In
Advisory Committee	Residence Program Selection Panel
Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation Nominator	The MAP Fund Panelist



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SELECTED PRESS:

[Artnet News, Op-Ed 'Everyone Became More Powerful': Simone Leigh and Rashida Bumbray on How They Built the Landmark 'Loophole of Retreat' Conference, June 6, 2023](#)  
[Hyperallergic, Discovering How Black Women Might Forge a Path to Freedom, by Seph Rodney, November 13, 2022](#)  
[ARTFORUM, METROPOLITAN MUSEUM CREATES RESIDENCY PROGRAM FOR ARTISTS COMMITTED TO SOCIAL CHANGE, June 8, 2018](#)  
[Art Forum, Art Is Medicine, Helen Molesworth on the work of Simone Leigh, March 2018](#)  
Time Out New York, Most Interesting New Yorkers, *In Character: Rashida Bumbray*, Jan 17-30, 2018  
[Vogue, Female Artists that Have Shaped the Cultural Landscape; photos by Lorna Simpson, March 8, 2017](#)  
[New York Times, Dance Review: 'Run Mary Run' and Rashida Bumbray at SummerStage, by Brian Seibert, July 20, 2015](#)  
[New York Times, Pop's Big Nights: The Best Concerts of 2012 as Seen by Times Critics, "Run Mary Run," Dec 26, 2012](#)  
[New York Times, Music: Critic's Notebook: Art, Ancestry, Africa: Letting It All BLEED, by Ben Ratliff, May 14, 2012](#)  
TRACE Magazine, *Fearless: A Talk with New York Curator Rashida Bumbray*, by Stephen Greco, Spring 2009

SELECTED PUBLIC LECTURES & CONVERSATIONS:

*Visionaries: dream hampton in Conversation with Rashida Bumbray & Jon Gray*, New Museum, NY, 2024  
*My Black DC: Rashida Bumbray and Elissa Blount Moorhead*, Apple Carnegie Library, DC, 2024  
*Performance and Tradition: A Conversation with Valerie Cassel Oliver*, Picturing The Black Racial Imaginary, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, VA, 2024  
*Podcast, The Art World: What If...?! with Rashida Bumbray*, by Charlotte Burns, 2023  
*Critical Conversations with Rashida Bumbray*, The Ford Family Foundation Visual Arts Program, University of Oregon in 2011 & Pacific Northwest College of Art, Portland, 2023  
*The Artist's Voice: Simone Leigh with Rashida Bumbray*, ICA Boston, Boston, MA, 2023

REFERENCES:

Patrick Gaspard, President and Chief Executive Officer, Center for American Progress,  
Patrick.gaspard2@gmail.com, 202 367 8680  
Sandra Jackson-Dumont, Director and CEO, Lucas Museum of Narrative Art,  
sjd@lucasmuseum.org, 206 852 0972  
Thelma Golden, Director & Chief Curator, The Studio Museum in Harlem,  
tgolden@studiomuseum.org, 212 864 4630  
Ruby Lerner, Founder and President Emeritus, Creative Capital Foundation,  
ruby@rubylerner.com, 917-749-7912