

## **Approaching Downtown: Avant-Garde Cultural Production in New York City, 1970s - 1990s, an interdisciplinary symposium**

### **Day 1** (July 11)

9.00 – 9.30: Informal welcome with coffee

9.30 – 9.45: Introduction

**Fiona Anderson** (Newcastle University) and **Tom Day** (The Courtauld Institute of Art)

9.45 – 10.30: Screening of *Guérillère Talks* (1978), with Vivienne Dick

10.35 – 11.35:

**Cyle Metzger** (Bradley University), **Marci Kwon** (Stanford University), 'Approaching Downtown(s): Greer Lankton and Martin Wong'

11.35 – 11.45: Break

11.45 – 13.15:

**Rosa Campbell** (University of St Andrews), **Rona Cran** (University of Birmingham), **Diarmuid Hester** (University of Cambridge), **Daniel Kane** (Uppsala University), 'To Be True to a City?: The New York School of Poets in and out of New York City' (panel)

13.15 – 14.15: Lunch (provided)

14.15 – 15.45: Space and Housing

**Darius Bost** (University of Illinois) (online), 'Toward a (Trans)Atlantic History of the Hudson River Piers'

**Amy Tobin** (University of Cambridge), 'Candace Hill's New York'

**Bentley Brown** (New York University), 'Black Creatives, Loft Living, Abstraction and Music'

15.45 – 16.00: Break

16.00 – 17.00:

**Jennifer Doyle** (University of California Riverside) (online) and **Ricardo Montez** (New School), 'A Geography in Solution: Downtown as a Structure of Feeling' (workshop)

## **Day 2 (July 12)**

9.30 – 10.00: Coffee & informal welcome

10.00 – 11.00: Performance: practice, history, collaboration

**Saisha Grayson** (Smithsonian American Art Museum), 'Downtown Everywhere: Charlotte Moorman's New York Avant Garde Festivals, 1966-73'

**Anne-Grit Becker** (Humboldt University, Berlin), 'Chance-Play or Notes on Oiticica's Collaborative Practice in New York'

11.00 – 11.15: Break

11.15 – 12.15:

**Leah Pires** (University of Chicago) and **Abbe Schriber** (University of South Carolina), 'Appropriation: Double Takes' (workshop)

12.15 – 13.15: Lunch (provided)

13.15 – 14.45: Institutions and institutionalisation

**Andrew Strombeck** (Wright State University) (online), 'New York's 1975 Fiscal Crisis and Downtown Writing'

**Natalie Phillips** (Ball State University), 'Jean-Michel Basquiat's Modes of Resistance'

**Felix Vogel** (University of Kassel), "'Go Marxist or move to Texas": Left-Wing Politics and Conceptual Art in New York City, c. 1976'

14.45 – 15.00: Break

15.00 – 16.00: Performance: practice, history, collaboration

**Catherine Quan Damman** (New York University), 'Hot Sets: Race and Public Access'

**Jeannine Tang** (New School), 'Julie Tolentino: For You'

16.00 – 17.00: Listening party with **Joseph Nechvatal**

18.00 – 20.00: *New York, Our Time* (2020) screening, in-conversation with **Vivienne Dick**, **Claire Pajaczkowska**, **Maria Elena Buszek** (University of Colorado, Denver)

## **Day 3 (July 13)**

9.00 – 9.30: Coffee & informal welcome

9.30 – 11.00: Legality, legislation, enterprise

**Kristen Galvin** (University of Colorado, Colorado Springs), 'Empress-arios and It Girls with Ingenuity: The Enterprising Women of Downtown New York's "New" Creative and Cultural Economy'

**Colby Chamberlain** (Cleveland Institute of Art), 'Being Illegal in America'

**Alan Moore**, 'Occupation Culture – Squatting and Art in Late 20th Century NYC'

11.00 – 11.15: Break

11.15 – 12.15:

**Gavin Butt** (Northumbria University) and **David Getsy** (University of Virginia), 'Staging Downtown: Queer Performance and its Audiences in 1970s New York'

12.15 – 12.30: Break

12.30 – 13.15:

**Cynthia Oliver** (University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign), 'Can you be Black and Avant Garde and (NOT) Read This? OR When and Where We Enter – The Black Avant Garde, the Jazz Aesthetic, AfroFuture and Beyond'

13.15 – 14.00: Lunch (provided)

14.30 – 17.00:

#### **Studio and archive visits**

- Exhibition visit to [In the Black Fantastic](#) at the Hayward Gallery
- Studio visit with photographer Sunil Gupta, focused on his *Christopher Street* series
- Visit to the Eccles Centre for American Studies at the British Library, led by Deputy Director Dr Cara Rodway
- See list of local recommendations for further exhibition suggestions

18.00 – 19.00:

Poetry reading with **Candace Hill - Montgomery**

19.30: **Informal dinner** at Vernon Square campus (provided)

## **Day 4 (July 14)**

9.45 – 11.15: Technologies, materials

**Benjamin Olin** (Hong Kong Shue Yan University) (online), 'Selling Out: The *Willoughby Sharp* Show and the Televisation of the East Village Artworld'

**Gregory Zinman** (Georgia Institute of Technology), 'Fugitive Video: Art in 1980s New York Nightclubs'

**Kara Carmack** (New York Studio School), 'Dispersing Downtown: Rethinking Space and Place through Manhattan Public Access Television'

11.15 – 11.30: Break

11.30 – 12.30:

**James Boaden** (University of York) and **Johanna Gosse** (University of Idaho), 'Poor Relations and Intimate Antagonisms'

12.30 – 13.30: Lunch (provided)

13.30 – 15.00: Archiving and Exhibiting Downtown

**Lynn Gumpert** (Grey Art Gallery, NYU), **Nicholas Martin** (Fales Library and Special Collections, NYU), 'New York University's Grey Art Gallery and Special Collections at NYU Libraries'

**Joan Hawkins** (Indiana University), 'Revisiting Downtown' (online)

15.00 – 15.15: Break

15.15 – 16.15: Closing conversations

## Abstracts and Biographies

**Fiona Anderson** is Senior Lecturer in Art History in the Fine Art department at Newcastle University. Her work explores LGBTQ+ social and sexual cultures and art from the 1970s to the present with a particular interest in gentrification, preservation, HIV/AIDS, and the politics of urban space, mostly in the USA and the UK. She is the author of *Cruising the Dead River: David Wojnarowicz and New York's Ruined Waterfront* (University of Chicago Press, 2019). From 2016-2019, she was UK PI for *Cruising the Seventies: Unearthing Pre-HIV/AIDS Queer Sexual Cultures* (CRUSEV), a collaborative research project which explored LGBTQ+ social and sexual cultures of the 1970s and their significance for LGBTQ+ people and queer art making across Europe in the present.

**Tom Day** is a lecturer in American Art at The Courtauld Institute of Art. He is currently writing a monograph on the influence of television in the East Village art scene of the 1980s, with a particular focus on the role television had as a site of queer affirmation; problematic representation; generational trauma and spectacle. Tentatively titled *TV Generation: The Political Imaginary of Television on the Lower East Side*, artists examined in the project include Jean-Michel Basquiat, Gretchen Bender, Keith Haring, Ann Magnuson and Tom Rubnitz. He has previously published or has work forthcoming in *Art History*, *ASAP/Journal*, *Short Film Studies* and in numerous edited collections, including an anthology he is co-editing on the relationship between Pop art and experimental film, forthcoming from Edinburgh University Press. He convenes the MA Programme, 'Drop Dead New York: Art, Film and Activism Downtown, 1971-1992' at The Courtauld.

### Screening: *Guérillère Talks* (1978)

**Vivienne Dick**

In the thick of New York City's "downtown scene" of the late 1970s, Irish filmmaker Vivienne Dick and English artist and scholar Claire Pajaczkowska were part of a salon of international punk feminists who called themselves the *Guérillères*, in homage to Monique Wittig's 1969 novel of the same name. Dick's 1978 short film *Guérillère Talks* is a group portrait of some of its members—such as musicians Adele Bertei, Lydia Lunch, and Ikue Mori, and artists Beate Nilsen and Anya Phillips—which is often held up as a time capsule of the "No Wave" community from which they all emerged, and to which Dick recently returned in her 2020 documentary *New York Our Time*, which will be screened at the end of the second day of the workshop.

### Approaching Downtown(s): Greer Lankton and Martin Wong

**Cyle Metzger** (Bradley University), **Marci Kwon** (Stanford University)

This panel presents research on the artists Greer Lankton (1958-96) by Cyle Metzger and Martin Wong (1946-99) by Marci Kwon. Arriving in New York from suburban Chicago and Northern California respectively, their "approaches" to Downtown—how they defined, experienced, and engaged Downtown—were shaped by the places they arrived from.

Lankton graduated from the Pratt Institute and became one of the core artists who showed at the East Village gallery, Civilian Warfare, in the early 1980s. This paper explores how dolls like Sissy made Lankton's experiences as a "transsexual" woman and the child of a suburban Chicago minister come alive on the stoops, street corners, and subway stations of downtown New York.

Wong arrived in New York City in 1978. His early engagement with New York City's Puerto Rican population drew on his work as a portrait painter in Eureka, California, as well as his set designs for the queer performance collective Angels of Light. Kwon's paper will consider the relationship between allegory and stereotype in his paintings of the 1980s.

Arriving in New York from two different locations, each artist approached downtown as a distinctive site of experimentation in which to explore issues of race, gender, queerness, nationality, and self-fashioning. Likewise, their examples allow us to see how these structures have inflected previous narratives of Downtown as a monolithic art scene, rather than a diverse collection of populations, places, and subcultures.

**Cyle Metzger** is Assistant Professor of Art in Residence (Art History) and Coordinator of Campus Exhibitions, Galleries, and Collections at Bradley University. He received his PhD from Stanford University in Art History in 2021 with a minor in Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies and a focus on queer and transgender histories of art. His article "Envisioning Non-binary Gender: The Art of Forrest Bess" is featured in the Spring 2022 issue of the Archives of American Art Journal. He is the co-editor of the August 2020 issue of the Journal of Visual Culture dedicated to Transgender Visual Culture, and his work on Chris E. Vargas's Museum of Transgender Hirstory and art appears in the February 2019 issue of Transgender Studies Quarterly. A proposal for his current book project, *Deep Cuts: Transgender History in US-American Art since WWII*, was solicited by Dr. Susan Stryker, senior editor for the Duke University Press series ASTERISK: Gender, Trans, and All That Comes After. This book charts a history of gender variance and transformation in US-American art from the mid-twentieth century onward through distinct case studies of artists who have been part of some of the most recognized moments and collections of modern and contemporary art in the United States.

**Marci Kwon** is Assistant Professor of Art History at Stanford University, and co-director of the Cantor Art Center's Asian American Art Initiative. At Stanford, she is a faculty affiliate of Modern Thought and Literature, the Center for Comparative Studies in Race and Ethnicity, Asian American Studies, American Studies, and Feminist and Gender Studies. She is the author of *Enchantments: Joseph Cornell and American Modernism* (Princeton, 2021), and her work has appeared in *Third Text*, *Modernism/Modernity Print +*, *Panorama: Journal of the Association of Historians of American Art*, and edited volumes on social art history, self-taught art, race and representation, and the early history of the Museum of Modern Art. She is presently working on a book-length project about art in San Francisco Chinatown, and co-editing a digital catalogue raisonné of the work of Martin Wong. She is the recipient of Stanford's Asian American Teaching Prize, CCSRE Teaching Prize, Phi Beta Kappa Teaching Award, and the Women's Faculty Forum Inspiring Early Career Academic Award. She received a PhD from the Institute of Fine Arts in 2016.

**“To Be True to a City?”: The New York School of Poets in and out of New York City’**  
**Rosa Campbell** (University of St Andrews), **Rona Cran** (University of Birmingham), **Diarmuid Hester** (University of Cambridge), **Daniel Kane** (Uppsala University)

*“Peace! to be true to a city”* (Frank O’Hara, from “For James Dean”)

In the early 1950s John Bernard Myers, director of New York City’s famed Tibor de Nagy gallery, bestowed the name the “New York School of poets” on poets John Ashbery, Barbara Guest, Kenneth Koch, James Schuyler, and Frank O’Hara. Linking an otherwise disparate group of writers into a category associated with Abstract Expressionist artists, “the New York School” label also invited future readers and critics to think about the form and content of the poets’ writing as informed by the textures of New York City itself. Indeed, recent terms such as “urban poetics” and “urban pastoral” have emerged to further define New York School-affiliated writing.

But how “true” was the poetry to the city? This panel will present a series of short papers on the New York School poets, taking special care to identify how New York City was employed as a practically mobile signifier that proved applicable well outside the city’s boundaries. Diarmuid Hester will consider the print culture and interpersonal networks that facilitated the spread of O’Hara, Ashbery, Berrigan et al. beyond the limited confines of Lower Manhattan in the 1970s and 1980s to poetry communities in Los Angeles and Washington DC. Rona Cran will discuss how poems by AIDS-era New York School writers form counter-narratives about the disease and its effects/affects, offering a form of alternate documentary of the lives and deaths of individuals and communities in and outside New York City. Rosa Campbell will reflect on women in the culture and infrastructure of little magazines in the New York School, considering the role artistic, administrative, and domestic labor played in the 1970s mimeograph revolution. Daniel Kane will outline how the poetry of the New York School informed punk rock style and sound internationally.

**Rosa Campbell** is Associate Lecturer in Modern and Contemporary Literature at the University of St Andrews, where she specialises in the work of twentieth and twenty-first century women and queer poets. Alongside revising her monograph, a feminist revision of the New York School, her current research focus is the American poet and playwright V.R. “Bunny” Lang. She is also a poet, and the author of *Pothos* (Broken Sleep Books, 2021), a lyric memoir-essay on grief and houseplants.

**Rona Cran** is Associate Professor in Twentieth-Century American Literature at the University of Birmingham, UK, and Director of the University’s Centre for the Study of North America. Their research centres on the literature and culture of New York City, queer writing, and modern American poetry. They are the author of *Collage in Twentieth-Century Art, Literature, and Culture: Joseph Cornell, William Burroughs, Frank O’Hara, and Bob Dylan* (Ashgate/Routledge, 2014), and the creator of the website [www.makeyourownbrainard.com](http://www.makeyourownbrainard.com), a DIY-collage composition tool celebrating the collages of artist and writer Joe Brainard. They are currently working on two books: *Everyday Rebellion: Poetry and Resistance in New York, 1960-1995*, and an oral history

of the New York School of poetry. In 2021, along with Yasmine Shamma, Rona co-founded the Network for New York School Studies.

**Diarmuid Hester** is a research associate of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, and the author of *Wrong: A Critical Biography of Dennis Cooper* (University of Iowa Press, 2020).

**Daniel Kane** is professor of American literature at Uppsala University, Sweden. He is the author of three critical studies: *All Poets Welcome: The Lower East Side Poetry Scene in the 1960s* (2003); *We Saw the Light: Conversations Between the New American Cinema and Poetry* (2009); and *“Do You Have a Band?: Poetry and Punk Rock in New York City* (2017). He is currently at work editing *Love, Joe: The Selected Letters of Joe Brainard*.

### **Toward a (Trans)Atlantic History of the Hudson River Piers**

**Darius Bost** (University of Illinois, Chicago)

Tourmaline’s short film *Atlantic is a Sea of Bones*—commissioned by Visual AIDS for ALTERNATIVE ENDINGS, RADICAL BEGINNINGS, Day Without Art, 2017—begins with a talking head interview of ballroom performer Egyptt LaBeija, as she looks down at the Pier from a window in the Whitney Museum of American Art. LaBeija tearfully recalls living on the Piers decades ago when she was homeless. Tourmaline’s film was inspired by Egyptt’s discovery of *West Side Rendezvous*, a recently released catalogue of Japanese photographer Katsu Naito’s images of the trans sex workers in the Meatpacking District in the 1990s before it was gentrified. LaBeija, who was included in this series, shared with Tourmaline how many of Naito’s subjects were lost to AIDS and other forms of anti-black and anti-trans violence. As she recalls her experiences and tells the interviewer, “People should never forget where they came from,” the camera pans across the Hudson River, which flows into the Atlantic Ocean. Drawing her title from Lucille Clifton’s eponymous poem—which alludes to the traumatic history of the transatlantic slave trade that has marked the Atlantic Ocean as a mass grave—Tourmaline’s short film shows how the losses of the Middle Passage, HIV/AIDS, and gentrification continue to haunt New York City’s urban landscape. The presentation will demonstrate how the film confronts these overlapping histories by reimagining the Piers as a crossroads of human and non-human intimacy.

**Darius Bost** Darius Bost is Associate Professor of Black Studies and Gender & Women’s Studies at University of Illinois, Chicago and the co-principal investigator of the Provost’s Initiative on the Racialized Body. He is also co-editor of *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies*. His research focuses in the areas of black literary and visual cultures; feminist, gender, and sexuality studies; African American and LGBTQ histories; and medical humanities. Bost is the author of the award-winning book, *Evidence of Being: The Black Gay Cultural Renaissance and the Politics of Violence* (University of Chicago Press, 2019). Related research has been published in *Criticism*, *Frontiers*, *Journal of American History*, *Journal of West Indian Literature*, *Occasion*, *Palimpsest*, *Souls*, *The Black Scholar*, and several edited collections. His research has been supported by the Hutchins Center for African And African American Research at Harvard University, the Eccles Centre for American Studies at the British Library, the Woodrow Wilson Foundation, the Center for the Study of Race, Ethnicity, and Gender in the Social Sciences at Duke University, the President’s Office and the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs at San Francisco State University,



the Martin Duberman Visiting Scholars Program at the New York Public Library, and the Provost's Office at the University of Pennsylvania. Bost is currently at work on two book projects: 1) an interdisciplinary study of queer visual cultures of the black Atlantic from the 1970s to the present 2) a black queer history of the United States (co-authored with C. Riley Snorton) for the ReVisioning History series at Beacon Press.

### **'Candace Hill's New York'**

**Amy Tobin** (University of Cambridge)

Candace Hill, also known as Candace Hill-Montgomery, is a multi-disciplinary artist who grew up in Queens, and now resides in Sag Harbour. Between the mid-1970s and until the mid-1990s Hill lived and worked in New York, exhibiting in alternative spaces from Harlem to SoHo, making public installations across the city and publishing artist books of poetry, photography, and other texts in important publications like *Wedge* and *Heresies*. Hill's practice focused on racialised politics in the US and more intimately in New York, at times, as in her 1979 installation for Artists Space explicating tensions between neighbourhoods. In this way, New York, and more specifically Downtown New York, was the subject matter of her work. For Hill, the city telegraphed issues in the nation at large, but was also a stage upon which to bring events elsewhere and recent histories into view. This was central to her contribution to The Times Square Show, *Remembering Fred Hampton*, an installation based on the murder of the Black Panther in 1969, 12 years before, but exhibited when the ongoing lawsuit against the State's violation of the Panthers' rights during this raid was being heard in the Supreme Court. Hill's presence in The Times Square Show complicates the existing narratives of that exhibition, just as attention to her work of the 1980s uncovers different histories of avant-garde cultural production in Downtown New York.

**Amy Tobin** is Lecturer in Department of History of Art, University of Cambridge / Curator, Kettle's Yard, University of Cambridge. She has published her research in *Tate Papers*, *MIRAJ*, *Women: A Cultural Review* and *Feminist Review*, along with books chapters in numerous edited books. She is the co-editor of *London Art Worlds: Mobile, Contingent and Ephemeral Networks 1960–1980* (Penn State University Press, 2018) with Jo Applin and Catherine Spencer and *The Art of Feminism* (Chronicle and Tate, 2018) with Lucy Gosling, Helena Reckitt and Hilary Robinson.

For more information on publications, see: <https://www.hoart.cam.ac.uk/people/dr-amy-tobin>. In 2019, Tobin organised exhibitions of Louise Bourgeois, Julie Mehretu and Rose Garrard, followed by a retrospective of Linder Sterling in 2020, she is currently working on exhibitions of the work of Sutapa Biswas (autumn 2021), Howardena Pindell (summer 2022) and Li Yuan-chia and the LYC Art Centre with Hammad Nasar and Sarah Victoria Turner (winter 2022–3) all at Kettle's Yard. In 2019–20 Tobin was the Terra-PMC Fellow, in 2021–2 she has a Leverhulme Research Fellowship to work on a new project on art and feminist sisterhood.

### **'Black Creatives, Loft Living, Abstraction and Music'**

**Bentley Brown** (New York University)

This session will examine “the loft” as a mechanism of “space-making” that was crucial particularly for Black creatives active in the downtown scene as they resisted androcentric paradigms of “the avant-garde” and “Contemporary Art.” I will consider the raw potential of space lofts provided, offering both a refuge and a platform for Black creatives to explore and rupture the boundaries of abstraction and place, in the process curating interdisciplinary, intercultural creative laboratories. To illustrate the influence of Black creatives and the loft spaces they created within the downtown scene, I will highlight the loft spaces of jazz musician Ornette Coleman at 131 Prince Street and painter Frederick J. Brown at 120 Wooster Street, positioning both as social and artistic epicenters of the Downtown avant-garde. Through the examples of Brown and Coleman, I will demonstrate that Black creatives, as facilitators of space, were not only present in the Downtown scene but were aesthetic pioneers. Together, I believe the restorative narratives present at “Approaching Downtown” will demonstrate that the dreams dreamt and lived out in Downtown New York were immensely powerful as they foregrounded plurality and intersectionality. Further, these narratives illuminate that the individual creative spirit was indeed (and continues at its best to be) molded by collective action and thought.

**Bentley Brown** is a multidisciplinary artist, curator, and doctoral candidate at The Institute of Fine Arts, NYU and is based in the Bronx, New York and Phoenix, Arizona. His research and curatorial practice explore the pioneering role of Black artists and Black creative spaces within New York City’s contemporary art movements of the late 1960s through the mid-1980s. In his artistic practice, inspired by African American cultural production, abstract and figurative expressionist approaches to artistic process and the desert landscape of his native Phoenix, Brown uses the mediums of canvas, found objects, photo-collage and film to explore themes of Black identity, cosmology, and American interculturalism.

### **‘A Geography in Solution: Downtown as a Structure of Feeling’**

**Jennifer Doyle** (University of California Riverside) and **Ricardo Montez** (New School)

Raymond Williams, who coined the term “structure of feeling,” understood art and literature as having the capacity to illuminate forms of evidence that have precipitated out of the “solution” of cultural life and claimed that these forms should be investigated to reveal the shared emotional sensibilities of historical moments. While Downtown New York City might often be defined by a set of coordinates, locating a scene of cultural production and artistic synergies within a physical geography, those of us who research this area often find that “downtown” exceeds and resists any kind of empirical grounding in place. This workshop session thinks through downtown as a structure of feeling, an aesthetic field of affects and creative energies, that we as researchers produce in our attempts to define downtown as an object of study. Circulating a set of shared readings prior to the workshop, Ricardo Montez and Jennifer Doyle will lead the conversation and invite attendees to share materials that pose challenges to geographical placement. Whether in the form of archival objects, documentary evidence, or art work, these materials will be considered in their illumination of a structure of feeling while also providing an opportunity to examine the productive tensions in conflicting ideas of what signifies as downtown.

**Jennifer Doyle** is Professor of English at University of California Riverside. She is the author of *Hold It Against Me: Difficulty and Emotion in Contemporary Art* (2013) and *Sex Objects: Art and the Dialectics of Desire* (2007), *Sex/Campus Security* (2015) and co-editor of *Pop Out: Queer Warhol* (1996).

**Ricardo Montez** is Associate Professor of Performance Studies at The New School. He is the author of *Keith Haring's Line: Race and the Performance of Desire*, which published by Duke University Press in 2020.

**'Downtown Everywhere: Charlotte Moorman's New York Avant Garde Festivals, 1966-73'**  
**Saisha Grayson** (Smithsonian American Art Museum)

This presentation will make the case that the New York Avant Garde Festivals, organized by cellist and cultural catalyst Charlotte Moorman from 1963 to 1980 are an essential bridge between the 1960s SoHo/Fluxus interdisciplinary underground loft performances, and the spectacularized visibility of downtown artist communities in the 1970s and 80s, whose creative interventions and alternative institutions reshaped expectations of where and how art might appear (and be usefully leveraged) across the city. From 1966, when the Festival landed in Central Park, Moorman brought the edgiest of downtown art into surprising public spaces all over New York—a park, street, ferry, train station or baseball stadium. The free eruption of artist happenings wove diverse and global strands of the intermedia avant-garde into the very fabric of the world's new cultural capital, infusing this energy into the everyday expectations of what one might encounter in New York. Resilient, flexible and yet consistently delivering on a clear and unique mission, the Festivals functioned as early forerunners of the alternative art institutions that reshaped the city in the 1970s. Yet the fact that they have remained overlooked in the recent reevaluation of New York's downtown and alternative scenes speaks volumes about the institutionalization and instrumentalization of the arts that followed quickly on its heels. The Festival's failure to conform, in this transition period, to shifting expectations of non-profit professionalization throws into relief the influence that new funding opportunities, from the NEA's alternative space grants to real estate partnerships, had on once-scrappy artist-run ventures. In 1978, Moorman protested "The Festival cannot run like a machine or an oil company," encouraging a critical look at the subtle recalibrations and allegiances the next generation of organizations had to make to survive. As anarchic, underfunded collectivities become neoliberal cultural institutions, what interests are oiled, what machines fed, and what ideals of downtown and community remain possible?

**Saisha Grayson** is the curator of time-based media at the Smithsonian American Art Museum, joining the museum in 2018. Her responsibilities include research, exhibitions and acquisitions related to its distinguished holdings of time-based media arts, and as part of the curatorial team coordinating a building-wide reinstallation of SAAM's national collection. Starting 2019, she established SAAM's annual Women Filmmakers Festival; in July 2020, she co-organized a livestream of Arthur Jafa's *Love is the Message, The Message is Death*; and throughout 2021, she co-led a monthly virtual screening series, *Viewfinder: Women's Film and Video from the Smithsonian*. She is currently working on the contemporary survey *Musical Thinking: New Video Art and Sonic Strategies*, which opens summer 2023.

From 2011 to 2016, Grayson was the assistant curator at the Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art at the Brooklyn Museum, where she worked on exhibitions featuring Judy Chicago, Chitra Ganesh, Lucy Lippard, Wangechi Mutu and more. Grayson earned a master's degree from Columbia University (2008) and her doctorate at the Graduate Center, CUNY (2018) with the dissertation "Cellist, Catalyst, Collaborator: The Work of Charlotte Moorman." Her writings on contemporary media and performance have appeared in numerous journals and catalogs.

### **'Chance-Play or Notes on Oiticica's Collaborative Practice in New York'**

**Anne-Grit Becker** (Humboldt University, Berlin)

In 1970 Brazilian artist Hélio Oiticica left his home country, ruled by a military dictatorship, and moved to New York City. Equipped with a grant from the Guggenheim Foundation, he settled in a loft on Second Avenue in Manhattan's East Village and after four years moved to an apartment in the West Village where he stayed until 1978. During this time abroad the course of his multi-media production underwent a significant change. Inextricably bound to the experience of his new environment Oiticica's practice turned in seemingly opposite directions: while it continued to explore a sphere of collective activity, in which the participation of the audience was key, it increasingly withdrew from the public domain expanding instead into a secluded space of experimentation. This paper addresses this tension by examining Oiticica's situatedness in Downtown New York as both an enabling and impeding condition for his undertaking. By focusing on two instances of "collaboration"—with Mario Montez (one of Warhol's "superstars") and Neville d'Almeida (a Brazilian filmmaker visiting New York)—I further revise and complicate the often-used notion of "collaboration." Drawing on works in different media, super 8 film, photography and writing, I will show that "collaboration" in Oiticica's practice and thinking means, first of all, searching for the right partner and concomitantly searching for affinities between self and others. Secondly, it encompasses a radical critique of the capitalist model of production and questions the temporal regimes of labor and leisure. Third, and as an alternative to the US-based model of production, Oiticica proposes a different way of making things together for which he coins the term "chance-play." It is this compound word that shall be analyzed in its implication. By doing so light will be shed on what Oiticica envisioned as a process of transformation starting within each individual and leading to a sense of permanent "becoming" in which the idea of any stable "I" ceases to exist just as much as it opens up to the flux of multiple others.

**Anne-Grit Becker** received a PhD in Art History from Freie Universität Berlin in 2018. Her book, *Cy Twombly und Robert Rauschenberg. Bilder im Prozess*, has been published in 2020 (Munich: Edition Metzler) and was sponsored by the Gerda Henkel Foundation. Following a research stay at New York University and teaching at the University of the Arts in Berlin, she was Research Associate at the FU Berlin, Lecturer for modern and contemporary art history and theory at the University of Graz until 2022, and is currently teaching at the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin. In her post-doc project, she focuses on artists' writings since the 1960s as instances of theory production across different media and identities.

## **'Appropriation: Double Takes'**

**Leah Pires** (University of Chicago) and **Abbe Schriber** (University of South Carolina)

Appropriation: on a basic level, it's the act of taking something and using it without permission—often along unequal lines of power. In histories of modern and contemporary art, the term appropriation is perhaps most closely linked to a network of New York artists known as the Pictures Generation, who mined mass media and pop culture as visual source material amidst the emergence of postmodernism in the late 1970s. But art historians' focus on appropriation as a formal strategy too often sidesteps its deep ties to power, private property, cultural identity, and white supremacy—structuring dynamics of the New York art world from the 1970s through the 1990s.

This workshop seeks to develop a more robust understanding of appropriation as it relates to downtown art production during this period, expanding and redefining the term as it is habitually taught and used. The hour-long session will consist of three parts of equal length: framing remarks by the session chairs; breakout groups that will collaboratively map various trajectories of appropriation and appropriation-adjacent work; and a concluding discussion that will synthesize takeaways and identify pathways for further inquiry.

We move away from familiar, and traumatic, examples of white Pictures artists who engage what South African critic Athi Joja has called “appropriation as racialized license” through the reenactment of racist epithets and blackface mimicry—from Cindy Sherman's 1976 “Bus Riders” series to Donald Newman's 1979 *The N——— Drawings*—which have more recently begun to be addressed in scholarship on appropriation. Instead, this session seeks to reframe the conversation. We zero in on the dynamics of ownership and viewership in work by queer and BIPOC artists in order to build toward a multinational, multiracial view of the period. How does appropriation's dependence on the notion of prior ownership interact with the complexities of cultural ancestry and exchange, for example in Black American artists' exploration of roots and African aesthetics? And how does the subject position of the artist or viewer shape whether appropriation is read as exploitative, liberatory, or something in between—for example in Glenn Ligon's *Notes on the Margin of the 'Black Book,'* (1991-93)? Our opening remarks will offer an initial framework of downtown exchanges, cross-pollinations, and messy desires through case studies including Lorraine O'Grady's performance *Nefertiti/Devonia Evangeline* and related photo series *Miscegenated Family Album* and the cut-and-paste zine aesthetics of feminist publications such as *Heresies* and *Eau de Cologne*. The ambition of this collaborative session is to open up the term appropriation—in all its complexity and ambivalence—for collective reappraisal, and to develop a more robust understanding that acts as a resource for participants' future scholarship.

**Abbe Schriber** is an art historian of American art as a hemispheric and migratory project. Her work analyzes the unconventional, genre-blurring practices of Afro-diasporic artists in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries and asks how diaspora—along with its attendant dynamics of retention and loss—is integral to encouraging visual innovation. Her current book project is a study of David Hammons amid a network of artists, alternative spaces, and legacies of the Black Arts Movement in 1970s-80s New York. Recent writing includes peer-reviewed publications in *ARTS* and *Women & performance: a journal of feminist theory*, and contributions to catalogs for

the Museum of Modern Art and The Studio Museum in Harlem. Currently, she is a John W. Kluge Fellow at the Library of Congress for the summers of 2022 and 2023, and she starts as Assistant Professor of Art History and African American Studies at University of South Carolina in fall 2022.

**Leah Pires** is an art historian whose research analyzes the politics of representation in modern and contemporary art. Her current book project, *Finessing the Frame: Louise Lawler's Pictures*, examines how the conceptual photographer Louise Lawler and her Pictures peers reimaged critique in the postmodern period in New York. She has published scholarship on politics and gender in art of the 1980s in *Brand New: Art and Commodity in the 1980s* (Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, 2018) and *Vikky Alexander: Extreme Beauty* (Vancouver: Vancouver Art Gallery, 2019). Currently teaching at the University of Chicago, she holds a PhD in Art History from Columbia University and is a graduate of the Whitney Independent Study Program.

### **'New York's 1975 Fiscal Crisis and Downtown Writing'**

**Andrew Strombeck** (Wright State University)

New York City's 1975 fiscal crisis, now recognized as a template for the austerity politics of the past four decades, transformed the city, pushing the city's priorities away from neighborhood services and into the financialization and inequality that would characterize the city after the 1980s. But this transformation was long and uneven: the initial moment of the crisis produced a city of plummeting rents and abandoned buildings. As is well known, these conditions attracted scores of artists and writers to the Lower East Side, a neighborhood reputed to be a lawless "frontier," but which was very much occupied by a largely Puerto Rican working-class population. The resulting tensions, augmented by art galleries' role in gentrifying the neighborhood, shaped the aesthetic productions of the era.

Delivered as a talk with accompanying images from archives at NYU's Fales Library and the Center for Puerto Rican Studies, this session makes two interventions into discussions of downtown New York's avant-gardes of the 1970s, 80s, and 90s. First, it directly considers the era's aesthetic productions in terms of the crisis, with its accompanying withdrawal of the welfare state and changes to the city's economic base. My research shows that the era's artists and writers were well aware of these changes, and responded to them in their work. Second, it focuses on the era's writers, who, as a group, have been relatively neglected. These writers worked closely with visual artists—when they were not producing art themselves, they worked as art critics, incorporated art into their writing, and wrote about art-driven gentrification. In the spirit of the avant-garde, these writers developed innovative forms that responded to their lived conditions: short typewritten pages, a journal produced on a dot-matrix printer, collage styles that took up strategies pursued by visual artists. Drawing on examples such as David Wojnarowicz's monologues, Kathy Acker's early novels, and Joel Rose/Catherine Texier's *Between C & D*, my session will encourage discussion of the multivalent effects that fiscal crises have on aesthetic production.

**Andrew Strombeck** is Professor of English at Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio, the author of *DIY on the Lower East Side: Books, Buildings, and Art after the 1975 Fiscal Crisis* (SUNY Press,

2020), and the co-editor, with Jean-Thomas Tremblay, of *Avant-Gardes in Crisis: Art and Politics in the Long 1970s* (SUNY Press, 2021). His essays have appeared in journals such as *Post45 Peer Reviewed*, *The Los Angeles Review of Books*, *Contemporary Literature*, *Modern Fiction Studies*, *African American Review*, and *Cultural Critique*.

### **'Jean-Michel Basquiat's Modes of Resistance'**

**Natalie Phillips** (Ball State University)

Jean-Michel Basquiat was one of the key figures of the downtown New York art scene of the 1980s. My presentation will examine how Basquiat's art functions as complex, stratified sites of anti-racist resistance by looking to three key aspects of his artistic production. I will begin with an examination of his unusual obsession with including lists, catalogue excerpts, and indices in his canvases. I argue that these are not mindless recordings of his everyday surroundings, but intentional nods to the theoretical notion of the catalogue itself, which organizes knowledge as a (supposedly) unbiased authority. Basquiat disrupts the nature of the catalogue to demonstrate how marginalized people are left out of these systems, re-inscribing them into the archival record in the process.

I will also explore how Basquiat used the strategies of graffiti as a powerful anti-racist weapon. He borrows from the power dynamics inherent in the graffiti world and applies them to the fine arts as an act of resistance against hegemonic authority. He also dispenses with the traditional figure/ground relationship and linear perspective in favor of floating compositions that treat the canvas like a city wall. Even after abandoning his street art practices, Basquiat intentionally held onto these graffiti roots, hiding them beneath the veneer of acceptable fine art in order to defy the traditional notion of a painter and parody many of the stereotypes leveled against him.

Lastly, I will discuss Basquiat's interest in the Black male body as the location of both oppression and resistance. He takes a cue from the medical textbook *Gray's Anatomy* (which his mother gave him as a gift when he was a child) and represents the Black body in pieces. By doing so, he critiques both the violence imposed upon these bodies as well as how the Black male body has been catalogued and commodified throughout American history.

**Natalie E. Phillips** is Associate Professor of Art History and Affiliate Faculty in Women's and Gender Studies at Ball State University. She received her Ph.D. in Visual Studies from the University of California, Irvine in 2009, and specializes in contemporary art and critical theory. Her primary research interests are in New York artists of the 1980s such as Keith Haring, Kenny Scharf, and Jean-Michel Basquiat. Her other academic interests include feminist art, performance, critical theory, art and the atomic bomb, and the intersections between contemporary art and religion. She has published in journals such as *American Art*, *Religion and the Arts*, and *Woman's Art Journal*, and received the Outstanding Essay Award for the Women's Caucus for Art's "Half the Sky" project. Dr. Phillips is currently writing a book tentatively titled *My Mouth/ Therefore an Error: Jean-Michel Basquiat's Modes of Resistance*.

## **“Go Marxist or move to Texas”: Left-Wing Politics and Conceptual Art in New York City, c. 1976’**

**Felix Vogel** (University of Kassel)

In her article *Critics in Search of Issues*, published in *The SoHo Weekly News* in 1976, Corinne Robins considers the recent trend of New York artists turning to leftist theory. The choice for artists being: “[...] go Marxist or move to Texas.” Polemics aside, for a brief period in the mid-1970s, left-wing radicalism and Marxist jargon were in fact central aspects of New York’s art scene. One of the most important proponents in this context is the New York fraction of the artist collective Art & Language (ALNY). My presentation will deal with the short-lived history of ALNY by looking into their journal *The Fox*, the journal *Red-Herring* (which was published by former members of ALNY after the dissolution in 1976), unrealised plans for a storefront, and the formation of the *Artists Meeting for Cultural Change*. While this history could be told as one of –often soap-opera-like –personal conflicts or the oft-cited “logical” ultimate failure of Conceptual Art, I, on the contrary, believe that this moment can help defining the locally specific relationship between art and politics more accurately. My presentation can be understood as an “annotated” collage of mostly unpublished documents drawn from the archives of ALNY members such as Sarah Charlesworth or Michael Corris, and clips from Zoran Popović’s rarely shown movie *Struggle in New York* (1976).

**Felix Vogel** is professor of Art and Knowledge at the University of Kassel and documenta Institute. He received his PhD in art history from the Université de Fribourg (CH). His current research project is titled *Art & Language: Theory –Practice –Display*. [felix.vogel@uni-kassel.de](mailto:felix.vogel@uni-kassel.de)

## **‘Hot Sets: Race and Public Access’**

**Catherine Quan Damman** (New York University)

My current book project offers an archival account of performance’s constitutive moment, the 1970s, to argue that performance—as both a distinct artistic form and its surrounding discourses—emerged as a consequence of period-specific anxieties about the legibility of affective labor. The decade saw a rapidly expanding service economy conscript the manufacture and management of workers’ feelings and personalities into a greater proportion of waged labor than ever before. Artists at the varied intersections of Blackness, queerness, and femininity were the vanguard, both artistic and political, in theorizing the gendered and racialized dynamics of this shift. Their performance work, the book reveals, gave form to one of contemporary racial capitalism’s most enduring social problems. This talk elucidates the book’s argument by focusing on one work by Anthony Ramos, a Black artist of Cape Verdean descent: his 1977 *About Media*, an essential, but understudied, work of video art. *About Media* takes as source material a televised news interview conducted with Ramos after President Jimmy Carter’s unconditional pardon for evaders of the Vietnam War draft. Ramos, who served an eighteen-month prison sentence as a conscientious objector in 1969, splices acute, often exaggeratedly theatrical insertions into the tape that reveal the disingenuous nature of his polite conversation with the reporter. I trace Ramos’s artistic formation through two competing articulations of the



“avant-garde.” One stemmed from his teacher at CalArts, Allan Kaprow, whose influential theorization of Happenings shaped dominant definitions of “performance” and eventually led to Kaprow’s total refusal of documentation. The other came from an informal, but equally formative education, in the SoHo loft of Ramos’s close friend, Frederick J. Brown, where Ramos encountered such experimental jazz musicians as Ornette Coleman and Anthony Braxton. Attentive to the racialized conditions of visibility, mediation, and improvisation, *About Media* is, I argue, less a “deconstruction” of media systems than a statement of Black authorial power.

**Catherine Quan Damman** is the incoming Linda Nochlin Visiting Assistant Professor at the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University, and a frequent contributor to *Artforum*. She is completing her monograph, *Performance: A Deceptive History* as a 2022–2023 ACLS Fellow.

### ‘Julie Tolentino: For You’

**Jeannine Tang** (New School)

This lecture examines the art and performance of Filipino-Salvadoran artist Julie Tolentino, in New York City between the 1980s-2000’s. A co-founder of the legendary Clit Club sex party, club night and performance venue, Tolentino is a point of reference in art histories of Ron Athey and Franko B’s work, ACT UP’s campaigns for safer lesbian sex, re-performance and abject art of the 1990s. Tolentino’s visual art is instead centered here: in an analysis that loops between her *Sky Remains the Same* (2008-) project that archives the art of her peers, and Tolentino’s early experimental dance and durational performances in downtown New York. This focus troubles the overemphasis on archive fever, blood and cutting in Tolentino’s reception, and dispels feminized readings of her archiving performance and role in nightlife as caregiving.

Instead, I recover Tolentino’s procedural work of the 1980s and 1990s, in which the methodological use of invitation, instruction and duration, produce repetitions and refusals with discernibly social stakes in negotiating interpersonal forms of control and power. These are contextualized within Tolentino’s hosting and organizing methods at the Clit Club, and queer women’s efforts to mainstream S&M practices contemporary art. Through the forms and methods of Tolentino’s production, this lecture weaves an ecology of downtown New York cultural practice: spanning the operations of the Clit Club crew, Tolentino’s relationships and collaborations with artists Lovett/Codagnone, Stanley Love, Sherrie Rose and Bob Flanagan, the companies of Alvin Ailey and David Roussève. Through these queer and queer-of-color practices, we may glimpse and hold uncommon brown entanglements in downtown New York— not only between Black/brown expressionist dance, process art and durational performance, but also between the neo-conceptual turns to the social and queer-of-color AIDS activism, whose temporality, Tolentino’s art makes discernible, is that of a long and elliptical 1990s whose effects persist today.

## **Tellus Audio Cassette Magazine Playback Session** **Joseph Nechvatal**

Launched in 1983 from Ludlow Street on the Lower East Side in Downtown Manhattan as a nonprofit audio art publication project, *Tellus Audio Cassette Magazine* produced cassette tape editions to distribute curated cutting-edge audio tracks. The founders and executive editors of the *Tellus* project—that ran for a decade—were Joseph Nechvatal, Claudia Gould, and Carol Parkinson.

Nechvatal, who originated the concept of the project, chose the name *Tellus* from Tellus Mater, the Roman earth goddess of fecundity. *Tellus Audio Cassette Magazine* published audio art, no wave noise music, electroacoustic music, contemporary classical music, spoken word tracks, tango, sound poetry, post-industrial music, Fluxus sound art pieces, and sound collage. The series included some landmark sound works now regarded as historical: Raoul Hausmann's "Poemes Phonetiques" (*Tellus* #21), Louise Lawler's "Birdcalls" (*Tellus* #5-6), Sonic Youth's "Scream" (*Tellus* #1), Christian Marclay's "Groove" (*Tellus* #8), Rhys Chatham's "Guitar Trio" (*Tellus* #1), Kiki Smith's "Life Wants to Live" (*Tellus* #2), Minóy's "Tango" (*Tellus* #20), Alison Knowles's "Nivea Cream Piece" (*Tellus* #24), La Monte Young's "Poem for Chairs, Tables, Benches, Etc." (*Tellus* #24), and Y Pants's "Magnetic Attraction" (*Tellus* #21), among many others.

In 2007, French music blogger Continuo and Stephen McLaughlin created an online mp3 archive of all of the *Tellus* tracks and accessibly archived them at [Ubuweb](#). Joseph Nechvatal's "Ego Masher" (*Tellus* #1) has been anthologized on *An Anthology of Noise & Electronic Music* #6 CD. In 2011, selections from *Tellus Audio Cassette Magazine* recordings were included in the Museum of Modern Art (NYC) exhibition *Looking at Music 3.0*. On June 24th, 2021, a two-hour *Tellus Audio Cassette Magazine* Special aired on Dublab with *Tellus* co-founders Carol Parkinson and Joseph Nechvatal.

[Dr. Joseph Nechvatal](#)'s visual and sound art practice engages in a fragile assimilation of production and resistance. His book of art theory essays *Towards an Immersive Intelligence* was published in 2009 by Edgewise Press. He has also published three books with Punctum Press: *Minóy* (ed.) (2014), *Destroyer of Naivetés* (poetry, 2015) and [Styling Sagaciousness: Oh Great No!](#) (poetry, Fall 2022). The second edition of his book [Immersion Into Noise](#) was published by Open Humanities Press in 2022. His audio works [Selected Sound Works \(1981 - 2021\)](#) and [The Viral Tempest](#) (2022) were published by the experimental music and sound art label [Pentiments](#). Nechvatal is currently exhibiting an a-life animation [Viral Venture](#) in the *Micro Mondes* exhibition at the Musée du quai Branly in Paris.

### **Screening & Conversation: New York, Our Time (2020)**

**Vivienne Dick, Claire Pajackowska, Maria Elena Buszek** (University of Colorado, Denver)

Following this screening of *New York Our Time*, American art historian Maria Elena Buszek will lead a conversation with Dick and Pajackowska about the feminist dimensions of New York's downtown scene, its connections to established, older feminist groups like the Heresies collective,

and the ways in which their generation experienced and contributed to feminism's evolution in a manner that laid the groundwork for strategies of subsequent generations.

**Maria Elena Buszek** is a scholar, critic, curator, and Associate Professor of Art History at the University of Colorado Denver, where she teaches courses on Modern and contemporary art and design.

Her publications include the books *Pin-Up Grrrls: Feminism, Sexuality, Popular Culture and Extra/ordinary: Craft and contemporary art*; contributions to the anthologies *Punkademics: The Basement Show in the Ivory Tower* and *Design History Beyond the Canon*; catalogue essays for numerous international exhibitions; and articles and criticism in such journals as *Flash Art*, *Art Journal*, and *Punk & Post-Punk*, whose editorial board she recently joined. With Hilary Robinson, she edited the 2019 anthology of new writing, *A Companion to Feminist Art*. Her current book project, *Art of Noise*, explores the ties between contemporary feminist art and popular music.

Dr. Buszek is also a prolific independent curator, who has previously worked at the Museum of Modern Art in New York and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. Her most recent exhibitions include *Inner Ear Vision: Sound as Medium* (with Raven Chacon and Robert Aiki Aubrey Lowe) and *Danger Came Smiling: Feminist Artists and Popular Music*. She is currently at work on the exhibition *Sensitive Content* with co-curators Helen Beard and Alayo Akinkugbe, which will open this September at Unit London.

**Vivienne Dick** makes multi-layered, open-ended work framed from a female perspective and with an interest in gender politics, ecology, music and philosophy. Her early work is associated with the 'No Wave' music and film movement of late seventies New York. Her work has shown at many international festivals, museums and galleries including the Whitney, MoMA and IMMA Dublin. Retrospectives include Crawford, Cork (2009), Tate Modern (2010), SEFF Seville (2016), and most recently *Jeu de Paume*, Paris.

Her most recent documentary *New York Our Time* (2020) premiered at DIFF Dublin and has won several awards. She currently lives in Dublin.

**Claire Pajaczkowska** Leaving London in 1976, I went to look for America, and lived in E3rd & Avenue C in Manhattan. I walked into the Bleeker Street bookstore and saw a poster inviting people to join *Heresies*, a feminist journal of art and politics. I joined Issue 6 on Women and Violence. *Heresies* (now in Rutgers archive) was a project started by Lucy Lippard and worked with a new collective for each of its themed issues. As an audit student of French psychoanalyst Julia Kristeva who was then visiting professor at Columbia University, I joined a reading group on psychoanalysis, made a film *Dora : a case of mistaken identity* and translated papers from French to English. In the East Village I met and immediately admired Vivienne and liked her films very much. We were both friends with Nan Goldin, we shared a different sort of idea about how the Avant Garde can be transformative.

I returned to London in 1980 and have taught in art school ever since then. I often show Vivienne's work and introduce Kristeva's idea of the Revolution of Poetic Language.

## **'Empress-arios and It Girls with Ingenuity: The Enterprising Women of Downtown New York's "New" Creative and Cultural Economy'**

**Kristen Galvin** (University of Colorado, Colorado Springs)

Although economic and social conditions in the late 1970s in Lower Manhattan were incredibly bleak—including stagflation, massive disinvestment in public infrastructure, and prevalent crime—surprisingly, creative practices thrived and intersected. This localized cross-pollination of visual arts, performance, various music genres, literature, and fashion were deeply connected to Downtown clubs as a new and “informal” cultural economy of the night. Moreover, such cultural innovation was driven by young women in an oft-overlooked feminist moment that occurred in the wake of the second wave of feminism while paving the way for the major shifts of the third.

Downtown cultural scenes in this historical “inter-wave” of feminism, coinciding with New York’s new and no wave, significantly tell the underserved narrative of how women were involved in creative management, leadership, and entrepreneurship Downtown. Some noteworthy female pioneers that crossed and pushed cultural industries include Ann Magnuson (manager of Club 57), Patti Astor (co-owner of the FUN Gallery), Adele Bertei (musician and performer), and Tish and Snookie Bellomo (owners of Manic Panic). As Downtown’s underground subsequently became popularized in the 1980s, female cultural producers prominently popped “aboveground” and into a highly visible and mediatized mainstream—especially in the (overlapping) fields of fashion, film, television, and music—while also ushering in an art market boom (e.g., as evidenced in the careers of Debbie Harry, Cyndi Lauper, Madonna, Susan Seidelman, Betsey Johnson, Patricia Field, Gracie Mansion, and Mary Boone). Women who carved out Downtown’s cultural landscape, and/or were shaped by it, left indelible marks that were definitive of the “Big 80s,” and with global influence.

Examining post-1960s visual and material culture in the United States, **Kristen Galvin’s** interdisciplinary work explores intersections across film and media, performance, contemporary art, gender and sexuality, memory, popular music, and subcultural studies. She has published in the *Journal of Popular Music Studies*, *Critical Studies in Men’s Fashion*, *Leonardo Electronic Almanac*, *The Australasian Journal of Popular Culture*, *Art Journal Open*, *American Book Review* and in multiple edited collections. She received her PhD in Visual Studies from the University of California, Irvine where she completed her dissertation on Downtown New York’s “art party” scenes in the 1970s–1980s. Her current book project explores “hypernostalgia” and reconfigurations of old and new media in relation to ongoing culture wars and constructions of “Americanness” in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. She is currently an Assistant Professor and Director of the Art History Program in the Department of Visual and Performing Arts at the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs.

## **'Being Illegal in America'**

**Colby Chamberlain** (Cleveland Institute of Art)

When Jeanette Ingberman founded the alternative space Exit Art in 1982, the first exhibition she organized was "Illegal America," a survey of artists whose practices involved deliberately breaking the law. Ingberman argued that artists who manipulated illegality did not expect to be defended by claims of art-for-art's-sake or aesthetic freedom. Rather, they knowingly embraced risk in order to make palpable their vulnerability to larger systems of power. This premise brought together both prominent art-world figures of the 1970s, such as Vito Acconci, Chris Burden, and Dennis Oppenheim, and artists whose practices were informed by their activism and everyday struggles, among them Jean Toche, Ann Messner, George Maciunas, Tehching Hsieh, and Papo Colo. Drawing on Ingberman's extensive research files, this paper shows that the manipulation of illegality was a key strategy in the 1970s for bringing the decade's dominant aesthetic tendencies—e.g. post-minimalist sculpture, site-specificity, body art, and "information"—into alignment with the increasingly precarious lives of immigrants, women, tenants, and the LGBTQ community. "In the end," wrote Ingberman, "the artist gives us only a metaphor of the illegality of life which for some is a determining factor of survival."

**Colby Chamberlain** is Faculty-in-Residence at the Cleveland Institute of Art. His research and criticism have appeared in publications including *Artforum*, *ARTMargins*, *Art Journal*, *Art in America*, *caa.reviews*, *Cabinet*, *Grey Room*, *October*, *Parkett*, and *Triple Canopy*. He is currently writing a history of art and illegality in the 1970s, and his first book, a monograph on the Fluxus artist George Maciunas, is forthcoming from the University of Chicago Press.

## **'Occupation Culture – Squatting and Art in Late 20th Century NYC'**

**Alan Moore**

The creative works and deeds of squatters and the homeless are broadly neglected in accounts of art and culture in late 20th century NYC downtown. Housing and gentrification are well-studied as social problems, but the leading role of artists in activism, and the traditions of resistant culture they continued and built are less known. This presentation questions artist participants and archivists of the squatting movement of the '80s and '90s in the Lower East Side. The conversations will focus specifically on the uses of art and creative activism in the squatting movement, and the arising of autonomous institutions which preserve and represent what MacPhee and Dara Greenwald called "social movement culture".

The squatting and occupation movements have deep histories in Europe (Moore and Alan Smart, eds., *Making Room: Cultural Production in Occupied Spaces*, *Journal of Aesthetics & Protest/Other Forms*, 2015). Europeans participated in the NYC movement, both directly and in the models of organization their work provided, but the links are not clear. Part of this inquiry will be to discover some of these international influences in the NYC LES scene.

**Alan W. Moore** has written on artists' groups, cultural geography and economy, and social movements. He worked with the artists' groups Colab and co-founded the cultural center ABC No Rio in New York City in 1980. Schooled at UC Riverside and CUNY Graduate Center, he

wrote “Art Gangs: Protest and Counterculture in New York City” (Autonomedia, 2011); chapters for Julie Ault, “Alternative Art NY”; Blake Stimson & Gregory Sholette, “Collectivism after Modernism”; and Clayton Patterson, “Resistance: A Political History of the Lower East Side”. He edited the “House Magic: BFC” zine on self-organized occupied social centers (2009-16). He wrote “Occupation Culture: Art & Squatting in the City from Below” (Minor Compositions/Autonomedia, 2015) and co-edited “Making Room: Cultural Production in Occupied Spaces” (JoAAP/Other Forms, 2015). He blogs at Art Gangs, and Occupations & Properties. He lives in Madrid.

### **‘Staging Downtown: Queer Performance and its Audiences in 1970s New York’**

**Gavin Butt** (Northumbria University) and **David Getsy** (University of Virginia)

The economic and political situation of New York City in the 1970s created the conditions for an explosion of performance in disused and sometimes derelict sites throughout the city. The bankrupt city (and associated problems such as white flight) facilitated a rag-tag queer body politic (importantly including queer elements of punk) which was founded in a defiant embrace of queer "lightness", camp, comedy and/or ridiculousness. We will discuss the geographic proximities of (and competitions between) these queer acts of unseriousness and rebellion with the earnestness and urgency of the LGBT rights movement that intersected with it. In both newly established ad-hoc venues and in the streets, queer performers sought new audiences, and this expansion of performance's range and ambitions overlapped with (and was fueled by) the activist and social repercussions of the newly-visible LGBT rights movement in the wake of the Stonewall uprising in 1969. This dialogue will examine the ways in which queer performance occurred (and differed) both indoors and out as outlawed queer constituencies began to represent themselves. Our discussion will address the critical, playful, and defiant actions that energized the Downtown scene, interrogating why these modes of performance have been inadequately narrated in histories of art, music, and theater.

The format will consist of two short position papers on queer performance in the streets and in the clubs, followed by a conversation about how the infrastructural, political, economic, and social upheaval of 1970s New York enabled them. We will do this through discussion of case studies that directly represented the queer life of the city (focusing on themes of cruising, sex work, itinerant life, and transgender experience). At present, we propose to compare two productions. First, we will discuss the 1973 adaptation of *Alice in Wonderland* by the Hot Peaches in which the performance troupe thematized the street life of New York city by celebrating its economically disenfranchised, racially marginalized, and gender outlawed participants. The Hot Peaches' *Alice* showcased queer counterpublics, and it was performed in the streets of Greenwich Village in order to reach audiences of street kids, sex workers, bar goers, and other nighttime denizens. Second, through a consideration of Jayne/Wayne County's one-off 1974 rock theatrical *Wayne at the Trucks*, we will ask how Downtown queer life worlds fared when presented to the corporate music industry. Staged in part for invited press and record company representatives, and referencing an urban site of gay cruising in its title, we will consider the show's melding of genderqueer performance, glam, punkrock, and gay sex as constitutive of its bold—but ultimately failed—attempt to take New York performance from the city to the international world of Pop Superstardom.

Our ensuing conversation will include some consideration of the significance of these works for understanding the political value and reach of Downtown art, and we will examine how such productions sought to represent the unrepresentable constituencies of New York City.

**Gavin Butt** is a cultural historian of visual art and its connectedness to popular music, queer culture, and performance. He is author of *No Machos or Pop Stars: When the Leeds Art Experiment Went Punk* (Duke 2022) and *Between You and Me: Queer Disclosures in the New York Art World 1948-1963* (Duke 2005). He is co-editor of *Post-Punk Then and Now* (Repeater 2016) and of an issue of *GLQ* on “The Queer Commons” (2018). He is currently undertaking new research exploring the fate of New York underground performers in the 1970s rock industry. He is Professor of Fine Art at Northumbria University, Newcastle.

**David J. Getsy** is the Eleanor Shea Professor of Art History at the University of Virginia. His current research focuses on queer and transgender histories of performance and art in 1970s and 80s New York City. He has three publications forthcoming on this topic in September 2022: the book *Queer Behavior: Scott Burton and Performance Art* (University of Chicago Press), an article “The Spectacle of Privacy: Geoffrey Hendricks’s *Ring Piece* and the Ambivalence of Queer Visibility” for *Art Bulletin*, and an essay “Bricks and Jails: On Martin Wong’s Queer Fantasies” for the artist’s European retrospective. As well, he is currently writing a book based on his exhibitions *Rubbish and Dreams: The Genderqueer Performance Art of Stephen Varble in 1970s New York* (Leslie-Lohman Museum) and *The Gutter Art of Stephen Varble* (most recently Schwules Museum Berlin in 2022).

**Can you be Black and Avant Garde and (NOT) Read This? OR When and Where We Enter – The Black Avant Garde, the Jazz Aesthetic, AfroFuture and Beyond’**  
**Cynthia Oliver** (University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign)

In this experimental spoken word essay, Cynthia Oliver expresses the experiential as a black artist performing in Downtown New York in the early 1980s through the late 1990s. As an artist moving through both dance and experimental theatre environments, Oliver notes the “fly in the buttermilk” phenomenon of being a black artist in the field at that time. *Can you Be Black and Avant Garde* examines the geographic and aesthetic boundaries of the early post modern dance and performance movement identified with New York City, and black folx involvement in it from the late 1980s through the 2010s. Experimental dance is no longer – and has never been - the sole terrain of white artists or white identified and presumed black aesthetic eschewing black artists. While there were pockets of black artists, a la Laurie Carlos, Dianne McIntyre, and Urban Bush Women’s Jawole Willa Jo Zollar making groundbreaking work at the time, they were sidelined by the mainstream. This performative text centers their work. And while the current political moment has recognized and sought out black makers for a variety of reasons, Oliver queries: What has shepherded the current acknowledgement and shift? And what will COVID-19 offer black movement practices in a post pandemic era? This performative essay identifies a national and international movement and looks at how black artists have participated, embraced and or rejected and been divided over the movement and its terms, practices and conditions all along and at once anew.

**Cynthia Oliver** is a St. Croix, Virgin Island reared dance maker, performer and scholar. Her work incorporates textures of Caribbean performance with African and American aesthetic sensibilities. She has toured the globe as a featured dancer with contemporary companies David Gordon Pick Up Co., Ronald K. Brown/Evidence, Bebe Miller Company, and Tere O'Connor Dance and as an actor in works by Laurie Carlos, Greg Tate, Ione, Ntozake Shange, and Deke Weaver. She earned a PhD in performance studies from New York University, is a New York Dance and Performance (Bessie) Award winning choreographer, a 2021 United States Artist Fellow, a 2016 Maggie Allesee National Center for Choreography Mellon Fellow, a 2017 University of Illinois Center for Advanced Studies Associate (and now CAS Professor), a 2007 University Scholar awardee. She is currently serving as Associate Vice Chancellor for Research and Innovation in the Humanities, Arts and Related Fields at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, where she is a professor in the dance department with affiliations in African American Studies and Gender and Women's Studies. She is a widely published author with articles in a variety of journals and edited volumes. Her single authored book is titled, *Queen of the Virgins: Pageantry and Black Womanhood in the Caribbean* (2009). Her most recent evening-length performance work, "Virago-Man Dem" premiered at BAM's Next Wave Festival 2017 and toured the country. [www.cynthiaoliver.com](http://www.cynthiaoliver.com)

Born 1945, Queens, NY, **Candace Hill-Montgomery's** great-grandfather was a metalsmith and wrought iron forms the support for many of her pieces. Her work links to an age-old tradition of weaving in African art, and a feminist connection. Candace Hill is 60 percent African but tempers that background with a totally American way of looking at a story in a new way. Humor is a key element in her titles, which reflect her poetry and a love of words inherited from her mother, a professor of literature. Human equality and environmentalism are central themes.

**'Selling Out: The Willoughby Sharp Show and the Televisation of the East Village Artworld'**  
**Benjamin Olin** (Hong Kong Shue Yan University)

This paper reconstructs the history of the *Willoughby Sharp Show*, a cable-TV show hosted by the artist Willoughby Sharp from 1985-1986. Produced by Sharp and video artist Susan Britton, the show was fully funded by Time Inc., who—in an attempt to get an insider scoop on the burgeoning East Village art scene—provided state of the art equipment, a full production team, and sponsored lavish screening parties at downtown clubs. Following the format of a commercial chat show, the show documented the mutually entangled worlds of storefront galleries, underground film, nightclubs, and fashion, featuring in-studio interviews with East Village luminaries, alongside in-the-field bulletins presented by a team of specialized correspondents from the local magazine *East Village Eye*. Carlo McCormick reported on art, Cookie Mueller on health, Tessa Hughes-Freeland on film, Stephen Saban on nightlife, Tim Goslin on fashion, while noise artist Boris Policeband provided off-beat musical accompaniment.

Drawing on close analysis of episodes, and personal interviews conducted with members of the cast and crew, this paper will contend that the production and exhibition of this show constituted a vital—and currently obscure—feature of the East Village art scene. It will argue that not only



did the *Willoughby Sharp Show* play an important role in defining local counterculture, but that there was something inherently televisual about the art scene which it documented. I will explore how, in terms of both form and content, the codes and conventions of commercial television suffused East Village art—influencing performance, film, music and painting, and shaping models of stardom and artistic personae. Reading key scenes from the show alongside editorials from the local underground press, this paper will argue that the discourse of “selling out” and becoming a small screen celebrity was integral to the collective imaginary of the mid-1980s East Village artworld. I will explore how a purported eagerness to produce populist, bankable art and to eschew local grassroots community in return for—largely elusive—global fame and fortune served as a shared structure of feeling which (perhaps paradoxically) bolstered the independent East Village art scene of the period.

**Benjamin Olin** is assistant professor in the Department of English Language and Literature at Hong Kong Shue Yan University. He received his Ph.D. in Cinema Studies from New York University. He previously served as assistant professor in the cinema and television program at Beijing Normal University-Hong Kong Baptist University UIC, and as a postdoctoral fellow at NYU. His research has been published in *Art Journal*; *Framework: The Journal of Cinema and Media*; *Millennium Film Journal*; *Jacket 2*; and *Downtown Film and TV Culture, 1975-2001*, ed. Joan Hawkins (Intellect, 2015). His current book project, “Underground Networks: Artists’ Television in New York,” examines cable-TV shows produced by downtown artists during the 1970s and 1980s.

### **‘Fugitive Video: Art in 1980s New York Nightclubs’**

**Gregory Zinman** (Georgia Institute of Technology)

This paper and screening present the untold history of video art in New York City nightclubs of the 1980s. Shaped by communal practice, fueled by narcotics, and backed by the mob, clubs provided a radically different milieu than the art world for the making, exhibition, and reception of video art. This history allows us to shift our attention from media objects to an examination of publics, contexts, spaces, and bodies where art-making takes place; that asks us to consider histories of experience, pleasure, intoxication, and sociality at society’s margins; and that demands that we write histories of vibrant and broad communities, and not just heroic individuals.

8 hours a night, 7 nights a week: A tremendous amount of video art was being produced at NYC clubs, in parallel with, but also in contradistinction to, the work that was being exhibited in galleries and museums. This history limns the parallel developments of video art, expanded cinema, and music video, and identifies this form of live moving image performance as an unexamined wellspring of contemporary remix culture. It also provides a rich example of the social and political aspects of creative labor—in terms of how these artists shared resources, developed their craft, and spent time together.

NYC nightclub culture—multiracial and queer spaces animated by intoxication—presented challenges to social norms and class distinctions, and represented a crucial intersection of urbanism and media art that operated independently from the gallery system. The work shown

in these spaces was not for sale, could not be editioned, was scarcely preserved and served a social function, acting as backdrop for, and, at times, comment on, the ecstatic dancing and musical performance taken place on stage as well as outside the club doors.

Combining an illustrated lecture with short screenings of surviving examples of video art made for the clubs by pioneering video artists and VJs such as Dean Winkler, Shalom Gorewitz, Maureen Nappi, and Merrill Aldighieri, “Fugitive Video” seeks to unearth this buried history.

**Gregory Zinman** is Associate Chair of and Associate Professor in the School of Literature, Media, and Communication at the Georgia Institute of Technology. His writing on film and media has appeared in *The New Yorker*, *The Atlantic*, and *October*, among other publications. Starting in September, he will be the curator of 725 Ponce, a public program of moving image art projected on the side of a eight-story building in Atlanta. He has also programmed film and media art at the Film-makers’ Co-op, the Museum of the Moving Image, Asia Society New York, the Smithsonian American Art Museum, and the Ann Arbor Film Festival. He recently served as a technical consultant for *Ad Astra* (James Gray, 20th Century Fox, 2019), and is currently an archival producer for *Universe in a Grain of Sand*, a documentary about the future of computing for IBM. He is the author of *Making Images Move: Handmade Cinema and the Other Arts* (University of California Press, 2020) and co-editor, with John Hanhardt and Edith Decker-Phillips, of *We Are in Open Circuits: Writings by Nam June Paik* (The MIT Press, 2019).

### **‘Dispersing Downtown: Rethinking Space and Place through Manhattan Public Access Television’**

**Kara Carmack** (New York Studio School)

The advent of Manhattan public access television in July 1971 meant unprecedented access to the otherwise tightly controlled hegemonic medium of television. It was not only embraced by community, religious, and educational leaders, but also by known and lesser-known artists, writers, fashion designers, and musicians, among others. So how have art history and the history of “downtown” Manhattan almost entirely overlooked fifty years of artists’ use of public access television? Such projects intersect with a range of art historical discourses: video and performance, alternative modes of distribution, access and marginalized communities, interdisciplinary and collaborative practices, activism, and archives, to name a few. Yet, scant scholarly attention has been paid to artistic experimentation that took advantage of the free access to the local airwaves.

I explore this historical and disciplinary oversight through an examination of how public access television complicates our understanding of time and place in downtown Manhattan. The story of “downtown” is frequently told through and defined by the walls of brick-and-mortar sites. Names of legendary social establishments, such as Warhol’s Factory, Max’s Kansas City, CBGB, the Mudd Club, and Club 57 are regularly used as metonyms to define and reinscribe social circles, often in ways that tend to generalize and simplify complex relationships and shifting dynamics. In a similar way, “underground,” “subcultural,” “bohemian,” and “alternative” elide the complex nature of everyday life and New York’s creative communities. Public access television, on the other hand, became a semiprivate place for these participants to party and

extend their interdisciplinary, collaborative, and creative social networks beyond the clubs, bars, and lofts in New York by broadcasting themselves and their work across the city and into people's homes. These shows offer a more complex and permeable understanding of what "downtown" might mean by untethering it from physical sites and aligning it more with a dispersed sensibility rooted in the social.

**Kara Carmack** is the Exhibitions and Public Programs Officer at the New York Studio School. She received her PhD from the University of Texas at Austin in modern and contemporary art and visual culture, with a particular emphasis on creative communities, gender and sexuality, and archives. Her current book project, *Marginal Centers: Parties on, off, and through Manhattan Public Access Television, 1972-1983*, focuses on public access television shows produced by Anton Perich, Glenn O'Brien, and Andy Warhol. Her research has most recently been supported by the American Association of University Women and the Association of Historians of American Art.

### **'Poor Relations and Intimate Antagonisms'**

**James Boaden** (University of York) and **Johanna Gosse** (University of Idaho)

In this session, Johanna Gosse and James Boaden will use examples from their own recent research on Ray Johnson's New York Correspondence School and early video practice in New York City respectively as a starting point for thinking about the role of intimate antagonism, disidentification, and ambivalence within the artistic community of the period covered by the event.

These negative affects are not difficult to find within the downtown scene – broken romantic relationships which divide the community, political and ideological feuds, and just plain dislike litter the anecdotal and biographical accounts of fields as diverse as street art, conceptual practice, HIV/AIDS activism, and the women's art movement – however they are a distinct challenge for the art historian. For example, when looking at the dynamics of a social group rather than the practice of an individual, how might the art historian tackle the uneven access to archives and individuals posed when some within the group are deceased while others are alive?

**Johanna Gosse** is a historian of modern and contemporary art and Assistant Professor of Art History & Visual Culture at the University of Idaho. She co-edited (with Timothy Stott, Trinity College Dublin) *Nervous Systems: Art, Systems, and Politics since the 1960s* (Duke University Press, 2022), and is Executive Editor of *Media-N: Journal of the New Media Caucus*. Johanna's publications appear in journals including *Journal of Cinema and Media Studies*, *Camera Obscura*, *Millennium Film Journal*, *Art Journal*, *Moving Image Review and Art Journal*, and *Oxford Art Journal*, and in multiple edited collections and exhibition catalogues. She is currently working on a book about Ray Johnson, which received an Arts Writers Grant from the Andy Warhol Foundation.

**James Boaden** is Senior Lecturer in Modern and Contemporary Art at the University of Art, with a focus on American art from the mid-twentieth century to the present. He is particularly interested in the way in which both experimental film and video have intersected with more

traditional artistic mediums throughout the twentieth century. His work often focusses on the way in which personal narratives are mediated by moving image technologies. James has published essays in journals including *Oxford Art Journal*, *Art History*, and *Tate Papers*. He has organised film screenings at BFI Bankside, Tate Modern, Nottingham Contemporary, and The Hepworth Wakefield.

### **'New York University's Grey Art Gallery and Special Collections at NYU Libraries'**

**Lynn Gumpert** (Grey Art Gallery, NYU) and **Nicholas Martin** (Fales Library and Special Collections, NYU)

As evidenced in collaborative projects such as *The Downtown Show: The New York Art Scene, 1974–1984* (2006), *Downtown Pix: Mining the Fales Archives, 1961–1991* (2010), and *Inventing Downtown: Artist-Run Galleries in New York City, 1952–1965* (2017), the Grey and NYU Libraries share a mission to preserve the artistic heritage of Lower Manhattan and to support new scholarship. NYU colleagues Lynn Gumpert, Director, Grey Art Gallery, and Nicholas Martin, Curator for the Arts and Humanities, NYU Special Collections will hold a live conversation on the topic of collaborations between museums and archives.

Archives and special collections provide critical social and cultural contexts for works made by the artists, writers, and performers of postwar downtown New York. The NYU Art Collection—which the Grey Art Gallery stewards—is particularly strong in New York School artworks. Fales Library's Downtown Collection focuses on the scene from the 1970s onwards. Its holdings include over 12,000 printed items and 10,000 linear feet of archives comprising paper, film, video, photographs, and digital records. The Downtown Collection has been a crucial resource for the Grey, providing primary sources for the study of its collection and for co-organized exhibitions, publications, and programs. This workshop session, in the form of a discussion, will examine key Grey Art Gallery/NYU Special Collections projects to highlight the importance of partnerships between museums and archives (particularly those situated within colleges and universities), some of the various forms these collaborations may take, challenges that can arise, and, most importantly, the opportunities for impactful, interdisciplinary scholarship on the 1970s–90s New York artistic scene.

**Lynn Gumpert** has been Director of the Grey Art Gallery, New York University's fine arts museum, since 1997. Among the more than seventy-five exhibitions she has overseen at the Grey are *Modernisms: Iranian, Turkish, and Indian Highlights from NYU's Abby Weed Grey Collection* (2019); *The Beautiful Brain: The Drawings of Santiago Ramón y Cajal* (2018); *Inventing Downtown: Artist-Run Galleries in New York City, 1952–1965* (2017); *Tseng Kwong Chi: Performing for the Camera* (2015); *The Downtown Show: The New York Art Scene, 1974–1984* (2006); and *Mapping Sitting: On Portraiture and Photography, A Project by Walid Raad and Akram Zaatari* (2005). She previously worked as a writer, consultant, and independent curator, organizing shows in New York, Japan, and France. From 1980 to 1988 she was curator and senior curator at the New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York. She authored the first major monograph on French artist Christian Boltanski (Flammarion, 1992) and has contributed essays to numerous publications. Most recently, she edited the translation of the 1933 memoir of the first dealer to promote emerging artists, Berthe Weill's *Pow! Right in the Eye! Thirty Years behind the Scenes of Modern French Painting* (University of Chicago Press, 2022). In June 1999 Ms.

Gumpert was honored by the French government with the distinction of Chevalier of the Order of Arts and Letters.

**Nicholas Martin** is the Curator for the Arts & Humanities at NYU Special Collections, where he oversees archives held in the Downtown Collection, the Riot Grrrl Collection, and the Special Collections of New York University. Prior to joining NYU Special Collections, he was the Librarian for Archives and Special Collections at New York University Abu Dhabi. He is the current President of the Archivists Round Table of Metropolitan New York, and was most recently the curator of *The Process is the Romance: The Mabou Mines Archive* (PS122 Gallery, New York, June 10-26, 2022). His current research topics include the preservation of three-dimensional objects in archival collections, approaches to grief and grieving in archival curatorial practice, and the pervasive influence of Arthur Rimbaud on the Downtown New York scene in the 1970s and 80s.

### **'Revisiting Downtown'**

**Joan Hawkins** (Indiana University)

When Downtown filmmaker Beth B presented her 2013 film *Exposed* at the Indiana University Cinema, she talked about returning to her Downtown roots. Beth B had made a number of Downtown films, both as an independent filmmaker and in collaboration with her then-husband Scott B. during the historical Downtown era. Since that time, she had gone on to make largely commercial television documentaries about true crime. *Exposed* was the first independent feature she'd made since 1996. Documenting eight cutting-edge burlesque performers who use their art to question the idea of "normal," the film is in indeed a return to Downtown roots, even though none of its stars participated in the historic Downtown scene and few of the venues where it was shot are located in Downtown Manhattan. The film is Downtown, then, in attitude, and in its approach to the body, to gender and sexuality, to illness and to questions of "normalcy."

Since that film, Beth B has gone on to make two more provocative, edgy documentaries- -this time dealing with subjects who indeed were part of the original Downtown scene: her mother Ida Applebroog (*Call Her Applebroog*, 2017) and Lydia Lunch (*Lydia Lunch: The War is Never Over*, 2021).

These films join a growing body of work that revisit the Downtown scene I describe in my book, *Downtown Film and TV 1975-2001*. The reissues of Constance De Jong's *Modern Love* (Ugly Duckling Press, 2017) and most of Kathy Acker's novels, the film *Blank City* (Celine Danhier, 2010), Sarah Driver's recent film on Basquiat (*Boom for Real*- 2017) Chris Kraus' *After Kathy Acker*, Tony Conrad's remaster of *Blue Tape* (the film Acker made with Alan Sondheim,), the reissues of Glenn O'Brien's show *TV Party*. Olivia Lang's 2018 *Crudo* (a novel about Kathy Acker), and Downtown novelist Dennis Cooper's new novel *I Wished* (2021), McKenzie Wark's *Philosophy for Spiders: On the Low Theory of Kathy Acker* (2021), as well as countless exhibits and performances.

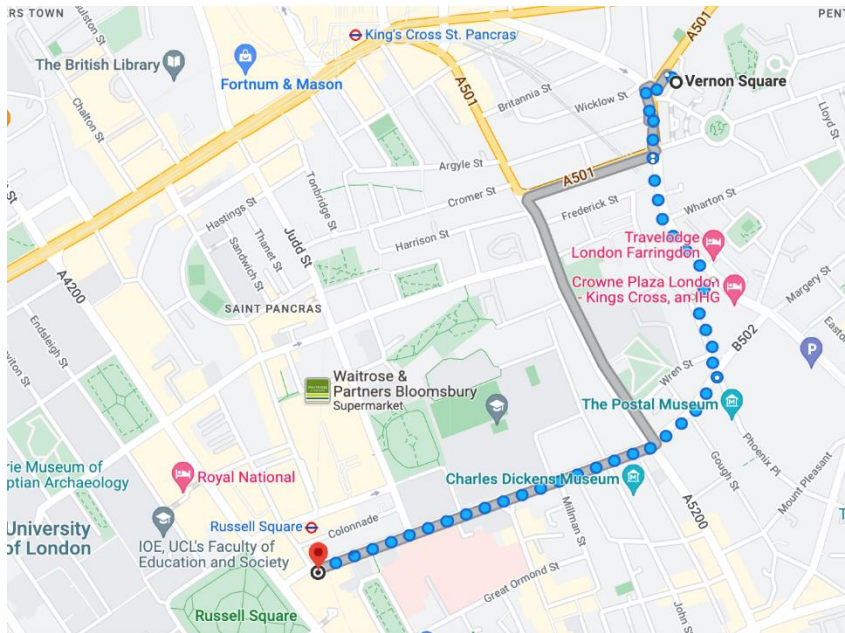
In this workshop, participants will discuss the importance of this work, not only for understanding what the Downtown scene was but also why its concerns, theory, and aesthetics are re-emerging now (by which I mean how they are being used to challenge contemporary progressive politico-

art and models of engagement, and how they invite us to reframe certain debates). We will be discussing what Downtown, as it is currently refracted through a contemporary lens, has to say about our current particular moment in time. We will ask: how can something be 'downtown,' even if it does not directly address time or space?

**Joan Hawkins** is a Professor in Cinema and Media Studies at Indiana University Bloomington. She is the author of *Downtown Film and TV 1975-2001* and has written extensively on the Downtown scene.

## **Introduction to the Area**

The President Hotel (56-60 Guilford St, London WC1N 1DB) is located by Russell Square, which is approximately 20 minutes' walk from the Courtauld campus at Vernon Square. Please note that the workshop is taking place at this location, not at Somerset House.



## **Helpful Insights — Public Transportation**

The easiest way to pay for public transportation is via contactless/Apple Pay, but you can also purchase an Oyster Card at a kiosk inside the station if you prefer. The closest tube station to Vernon Square is King's Cross St. Pancras, and the closest station to the President Hotel is Russell Square, both of which are on the Piccadilly line. A useful tool for navigating London is [Citymapper](#), an app which provides a detailed outline of all transportation options between two given locations.

## **COVID Information**

Guidance for mask wearing during the workshop is in line with UK Government advice: masks are not required, but they are encouraged, particularly in crowded and/or poorly ventilated spaces and when meeting with vulnerable people. As a courtesy, we ask that you take a lateral flow test upon arrival in the UK and, if possible, on each morning of the workshop. A pack of five lateral flow tests can be purchased for approximately £10 from the pharmacies listed below:

- Boots, Kings Cross Railway Station, London N1C 4AP
- Boots, 40-42 Brunswick Square, London WC1N 1AE

## **Phone Contacts:**

Fiona and Tom will be contactable throughout the event via phone, SMS and WhatsApp:

**Tom: + 44 7906205139**

**Fiona: + 44 7791900312**

## **Vernon Square**

Please be mindful of other groups also using the building, as we have a Summer School series happening at the same time. We would ask you to be aware of this when moving between spaces, and to only use those spaces we have designated for the workshop during the week (Seminar Room 1, Seminar Room 2, the Research Forum Seminar Room).

The building is accessible by lift or by stairs throughout. Other groups are using the building throughout the week so if you are able to move through the building using the stairs, we would recommend this.

Lunch will be served each day in Seminar Room 2 on the second floor. You are welcome to take food and drink out into the seated area at the front of the building, but we would ask that you clear away any rubbish when you leave.

Water bottles can be refilled in the common room (third floor) or at the water fountain (first floor by the bathrooms). We will also make water available in the Research Forum Seminar Room.

Toilets are available on each floor. Men's and women's bathrooms can be found on ground, first, and third floors. Single stall, unisex, accessible bathrooms are available on each floor.

Should you need any help, student staff (yellow lanyards) will be in the room with you, or the Research Forum office is next door to the Research Forum Seminar Room, where panels and talks will be taking place. In an emergency, please see a member of Courtauld staff (teal lanyard) or go to Security at the front desk.

For those checking out of hotels on Thursday, please be aware that we only have space to store small bags in the office, so you will need to arrange storage at your hotel for larger bags, or there are left luggage facilities at King's Cross. Please do ask the Research Forum team if you need any support with this.

We need to keep track of who is on site throughout the week – there will be a sign in point in the area in front of the building each day. If you arrive late, please do sign in with Tom, Fiona, or one of the student staff (yellow lanyards) when you arrive.

## **Quiet Room**

Seminar Room 1, on the first floor, has been set aside as a quiet room for all participants for rest, relaxation, and as a respite from busier spaces. Please do not use this space for work or for taking phone calls.

## **Recommendations in the Vernon Square & Bloomsbury Area**

### **COFFEE SHOPS**

- [Frequency](#)
  - 121 King's Cross Rd, London WC1X 9NH
  - MON-FRI 8:00-16:00
- [Noxy Brothers](#)
  - 9 Russell Square, London W1CB 5EG



- MON-FRI 7:00-18:00; SAT 7:30-18:00; SUN 8:00-17:00
- [Tutti's](#)
  - 68 Lamb's Conduit St, London WC1N 3LW
  - MON-FRI 7:00-18:00; SAT-SUN 8:00-16:00
- [Redemption Roasters](#)
  - Bloomsbury— 84b Lamb's Conduit St, London WC1N 3LR
  - Islington High Street— 96-98 Islington High St, London N1 8EG
  - MON-FRI 7:00-17:00; SAT-SUN 8:00-17:00
- [The Observatory](#)
  - 64 Marchmont St, London WC1N 1AB
  - MON-SAT 9:00-18:00
- [Aux Pains de Papy](#)
  - 279 Grays Inn Rd, London WC1X 8QF
  - MON-FRI 7:00-16:00; SAT 8:00-12:00
- [London Review Bookshop Cafe](#)
  - 14-16 Bury Pl, London WC1A 2JL
  - MON-SAT 10:00-18:30; SUN 12:00-18:00

## FOOD & DRINK

- [WC Wine & Charcuterie Bloomsbury](#)
  - Former Public Convenience, Guilford Pl, London WC1N 1EA
  - MON-FRI 17:00-23:00; SAT 17:00-00:00; SUN 17:00-22:00
  - Wine, cocktails, and small plates
- [Ciao Bella](#)
  - 86-90 Lamb's Conduit St, London WC1N 3LZ
  - MON-SAT 12:00-22:45; SUN 12:00-22:30
  - Italian
- [Noble Rot](#)
  - 51 Lamb's Conduit St, London WC1N 3NB
  - MON-SAT 12:00-23:00
  - Wine bar
- [Half Cup](#)
  - 100-102 Judd St, London WC1H 9NT
  - MON-FRI 8:00-16:00; SAT-SUN 9:00-16:00
  - Brunch
- [Burr & Co.](#)
  - 1 Russell Square, London WC1B 5BE
  - MON-FRI 7:00-23:00; SAT-SUN 8:00-23:00
  - Cafe by day, bar by night. All day food menu.
- [Mildred's](#)

- 200 Pentonville Rd, London N1 9JP
- MON-SAT 9:00-23:00; SUN 9:00-22:00
- Vegan
- [Coal Drops Yard](#)
  - Stable St, London N1C 4DQ
  - RESTAURANT RECOMMENDATIONS: [Dishoom](#), [Caravan](#), [The Lighterman](#), [Parrillan](#)
  - Canal-side complex filled with shopping and restaurant options.
- [Flat Iron](#)
  - 47-51 Caledonian Road, London N1 9BU
  - SUN-TUES 12:00-22:00; WED-THURS 12:00-22:30; FRI-SAT 12:00-23:00
  - Steak house
- [Westerns Laundry](#)
  - 34 Drayton Park, London N5 1PB
  - MON-FRI 17:30-22:30; SAT-SUN 12:00-14:30, 17:30-22:30
  - Seafood
- [Terra Rossa](#)
  - 139 Upper St, London N1 1QP
  - MON-SAT 11:30-22:30; SUN 11:30-21:30
  - Italian
- [Le Sacre Coeur](#)
  - 18 Theberton St, London N1 0QX
  - SUN-THURS 12:00-21:30; FRI-SAT 12:00-22:00
  - French
- [NEM NEM](#)
  - 279 Upper St, London N1 2TZ
  - MON-FRI 12:00-15:00, 17:00-23:00; SAT 12:00-23:00; SUN 12:00-22:30
  - Vietnamese
- [Tofu Vegan](#)
  - 105 Upper St, London N1 1QN
  - MON-THURS 12:00-22:30; FRI-SAT 12:00-22:45; SUN 12:00-21:15
  - Vegan Chinese
- [Humble Grape](#)
  - 11-13 Theberton St, London N1 0QY
  - MON-FRI 15:00-23:00; SAT 12:00-23:00; SUN 12:00-22:00
  - Wine bar

## BOOKSHOPS

- [Gay's the Word](#)
  - 66 Marchmont St, London WC1N 1AB

- TUES-SAT 11:00-18:00; SUN 13:00-18:00
- [Housmans Bookshop](#)
  - 5 Caledonian Rd, London N1 9DY
  - MON-SAT 11:00-18:30; SUN 12:00-18:00
- [Judd Books](#)
  - 82 Marchmont St, London WC1N 1AG
  - MON-SAT 11:00-19:00; SUN 12:00-18:00
- [London Review Bookshop](#)
  - 14-16 Bury Pl, London WC1A 2JL
  - MON-SAT 10:00-18:30; SUN 12:00-18:00
- [Daunt Books](#)
  - 84 Marylebone High St, London W1U 4QW
  - MON-SAT 9:00-19:30; SUN 11:00-18:00
- [Word on the Water](#)
  - Regent's Canal Towpath, London N1C 4LW
  - 7:00-19:00 DAILY
- [Skoob Books](#)
  - 66 The Brunswick Centre, off Marchmont St, London WC1N 1AE
  - MON-SAT 11:00-19:30; SUN 11:00-18:00

## LIBRARIES

- [British Library](#)
  - 96 Euston Rd, London NW1 2DB
  - MON-FRI 9:30-20:00; SAT 9:30-17:00; SUN 11:00-17:00
- [National Art Library at the Victoria and Albert Museum](#)
  - Cromwell Rd, London SW7 2RL
  - TUES-WED 11:00-17:00
- [The Library at the Wellcome Collection](#)
  - 183 Euston Road, London NW1 2BEUK
  - MON-WED & FRI 10:00- 6:00, THURS 10:00-8:00, SAT 10:00-4:00

## GALLERIES / EXHIBITIONS

- Victoria and Albert Museum — [Fashioning Masculinities: The Art of Menswear](#)
  - Cromwell Rd, London SW7 2RL
  - 10:00-17:45 DAILY; OPEN UNTIL 22:00 FRIDAYS
  - Tickets £20.00
- Whitechapel Gallery — [We Get to Choose Our Families](#) & [The London Open 2022](#)
  - 77-82 Whitechapel High St, London E1 7QX
  - TUES-SUN 11:00-18:00; OPEN UNTIL 21:00 THURSDAYS
  - Free admission
- Tate Modern — [Set and Reset by Trisha Brown](#)
  - Bankside, London SE1 9TG

- 10:00-18:00 DAILY
  - Free admission
- Tate Britain — [Walter Sickert](#)
  - Millbank, London SW1P 4RG
  - 10:00-18:00 DAILY
  - Price varies
- [Queer Britain](#)
  - 2 Granary Square, London N1C 4BH
  - WED-SUN 12:00-18:00
  - Free admission
- The Mayor Gallery — [Billy Apple®: Rainbows 1965](#)
  - 21 Cork Street, First Floor, London W1S 3LZ
  - MON-FRI 10:00-17:30
  - Free Admission
- Thomas Dane Gallery— [Catherine Opie: To What We Think We Remember](#)
  - 11 Duke Street, St James's, London SW1Y 6BN
  - TUES-SAT 11:00-18:00
  - Free admission
- Institute of Contemporary Arts— [Penny World](#) (Penny Goring)
  - The Mall, St. James's, London SW1Y 5AH
  - TUES-SUN 12:00-21:00
  - Tickets £5.00, free on Tuesdays
- Hayward Gallery— *In the Black Fantastic*
  - Hayward Gallery, Southbank Centre, Belvedere Rd, London SE1 8XX
  - WEDS – SUN, 11:00 – 19:00
  - £13.50