



*Breaking Ground*

Dear Friends,

I hope you've had a lovely 2014!

As you may have heard by now, Art + Practice is alive and well in Leimert Park, Los Angeles. Conceived and founded by artist Mark Bradford, philanthropist and collector Eileen Harris Norton, and social activist Allan DiCastro, Art + Practice Foundation (A+P) is an arts and education private operating foundation. A+P's mandate is to create a developmental platform that, on the one hand, supports the acquisition of practical skills for foster youth and, on the other, stresses the importance of creative activity within a larger social context.

A+P has four areas of focus, which together support the Foundation's dual goals of empowering foster youth and promoting contemporary art: a technology lab and classrooms, a dedicated film and lecture space, artist studios, and an exhibition space for visual art. These four areas embody the commitment to art and social practice that define the core values of the organization.

Art + Practice occupies a 17,000 sq.ft. campus from which it programs the various programs and activities. Additionally, the foundation will partner with institutions and organizations that share its core values. Currently, those partners include the Hammer Museum and The RightWay Foundation. A+P is also working in collaboration with EsoWon Bookstore.

Through a public engagement partnership supported by the James Irvine Foundation, the Hammer Museum (a leading university-based art institution) will collaborate with A+P to curate exhibitions and public programs on the A+P campus. The RightWay Foundation, whose mission is to deliver mental health services and job readiness training to foster care youth, will oversee all of A+P's foster youth training services. EsoWon Bookstore, a Los Angeles destination housing a selection of African American literary works, will oversee A+P's lecture series.

We are looking forward to seeing you on campus.

Best wishes,



Sophia Belsheim

A+P Partnership Liaison & Senior Program Lead

**DECO WRAP**  
Mark Bradford, his studio assistants, and a group of foster youth prepared plywood barricades with poster prints as construction gets underway on the Art Deco space.







# Putting Down Roots

*A vision of philanthropy and activism*  
Art + Practice



As we come to the end of year one, Art + Practice is proud to present a catalogue of accomplishments and works in progress. With commitments from our Community and Program Partners, A+P is extremely well-positioned to roll out a series of programs in 2015 that expand its vision to make visible the invisible.

by SOPHIA BELSHEIM  
A+P Partnership Liaison & Senior Program lead

*Art + Practice believes in helping foster youth. It also believes in art, which at its most powerful has the potential to transform passive viewers into active agents of social change.*

*A+P's objective is to produce a structured environment for critical reflection in which that transformation, both for the individual and society, is made possible every day.*

*Can you tell me a little about your background?*

Mark Bradford: I grew up in South Los Angeles, in a boarding house, but after fifth grade me, my Mom, and my sister moved to Santa Monica. After school, I started going to dance clubs, working in my mom's hair salon, and traveling back and forth to Europe with whatever money I could make. After doing this for about 15 years, I wanted to keep learning, so I decided to enroll at California Institute of the Arts. I graduated with a master's degree, and I continue to work as a full-time artist.

Allan DiCastro: I grew up in a challenged neighborhood in south Chicago. I was lucky enough to live on the school district dividing line and was able to attend the more prestigious high school. School was difficult at first, but struggling through opened many possibilities, including the idea of going to college. I learned to expect challenges from life, and I learned the value of perseverance.

Later, I applied those same lessons to the Los Angeles neighborhood council system, where I volunteered for more than ten years. Early in my volunteer work, I noticed how there was a lack of knowledge known by the community about how the city worked.

I tried to bridge that gap. Volunteerism became a focus. In time I became President of our neighborhood council. The transition was not unlike my own early experiences in Chicago.

Eileen Harris Norton: My mother worked as a clerk at Thrifty's Drug Store in Compton, but she had a passion for classical music, art, and education. She loved seeking out art and culture, and she took me along. Education was a high priority in my family. My grandfather had a college degree, and my mother and her siblings all had at least some college education. As a child, I understood how education could be a direct line to a better future. I graduated from the University of California, Los Angeles, and I got a master's degree in bilingual education from the University of Southern California. Later, I taught bilingual programs in predominately Latino public schools in South Los Angeles, where I saw first-hand how children with caring and informed teachers were empowered to succeed. Now at this current juncture in my life, I want to lend support to educational mandates that broaden the field of contemporary art and support young and disadvantaged citizens.





**EILEEN HARRIS NORTON, FRANCO VEGA, MARK BRADFORD, AND ALLAN DICASTRO**

Franco Vega is the Founder and Director of the RightWay Foundation (RWF), whose vision is to revolutionize the delivery of mental health services and job readiness training to foster youth and build a strong cycle of Foster Care Transitional Age Youth (TAY) who are self-sufficient and career/college-bound.

As part of its mandate with A+P, RWF serves foster youth in Service Planning Area (SPA) #6, which encompasses the 90008 ZIP code. For more info on SPA #6, see p.17.

The RightWay Foundation is an A+P Program Partner, 2014-2016

**CONSTRUCTION AT ESOWON BOOKSTORE CONTINUES**

Scheduled to open February 1, 2015, EsoWon Bookstore's new location at 4332 Degnan Boulevard will also be home to A+P's Lecture Series, programmed in conjunction with the Hammer Museum.

The Hammer Museum is an A+P Program Partner, 2014-2016

*What initially sparked the idea to start A+P?*

**Allan:** We want to combine two ideas: social services for foster youth, and exposure to contemporary art. We want everyone who visits to enter into a conversation that exceeds a typical daily experience.

**Mark:** I believe contemporary artists have a lot of great ideas, but unlike those working in the field of social service they don't always apply those ideas directly. A+P aspires to be a space where the social aspect of art – the practice of it – puts the art into a context of action.

**Eileen:** My involvement with A+P started as a conversation among the three of us. It fits in naturally with the work I had been doing with the EHN Family Foundation supporting education, families, and the environment. The conversation naturally evolved from our interests and passions.

*What do you want to accomplish?*

**Eileen:** We would like to provide an educational platform that engages foster youth and the neighborhood of Leimert Park in art and culture.

*Why did you feel it was important to have a public presence, particularly in Leimert Park?*

**Mark:** In order to change things and be a part of the conversation, you have to take a vested interest in the neighborhood. You have to be present in the community.

**Allan:** Exposure is a key component of A+P. The exhibition space in particular needs to have its roots in Leimert Park. We also want to have a private space for foster youth to develop the tools needed to become self-sufficient when they exit the foster care system.

**Eileen:** This point is particularly important for me as a past educator. When we talk about foster youth, we are referring to children who do not typically have access to resources like technology, educators, and mental health services. A+P fills the void and levels the playing field – these things all require a footprint.

*What do you see as the benefit for foster youth and Leimert Park?*

**Allan:** We hope to catch foster youth at a turning point in their lives and provide them with tangible

opportunities to positively transform their futures. It's appalling that there are so many foster youth in one area. At the same time, we see the density of these placements as an opportunity for engagement. Our programs will be put to the test, as the need for them is overwhelming and immediate.

*How do you imagine A+P's partnerships will evolve?*

**Eileen:** We are open to growth. We partnered for two years each with both the Hammer Museum and The RightWay Foundation (RWF). We look forward to watching A+P evolve and to developing other partnerships in the future. But it's also important that the organization supports and provides meaningful services on its own.

*Where do you see the organization in five years?*

**Mark:** Allan, Eileen, and I envision the organization as a destination for Los Angeles and for Leimert Park. Both economically and creatively, A+P is joining the community to help revitalize Leimert Park and its local businesses. We hope art, education, and social services can be a catalyst for community development. +



**THE RIGHTWAY FOUNDATION GALA**  
On October 17, 2014, The RightWay Foundation (RWF) hosted its first gala in the newly renovated RWF program spaces at Art + Practice. The gala was attended by over 150 people and raised \$50,000+ for RWF's programs. [therightwayfoundation.org](http://therightwayfoundation.org)

For more information about Art + Practice, our partners, programs, calendar, and foster youth visit: [artandpractice.org](http://artandpractice.org)



*More than 400,000 foster youths currently live in the US, including some 60,000 in California; 30 percent of them live in Los Angeles County. Children in foster care typically come from impoverished families where abuse, neglect, and rejection are commonplace. Once under the jurisdiction of the Children's Court, they can*

*be placed in either a family setting, defined by the court as foster family homes, kinship care, or pre-adoptive homes; or a congregate setting, which the court defines as an institution or group home. Nationally, 80% of foster youth are placed in family settings.*

CAROLE GUILLARD & DANIELLE WRIGHT

# MAKE VISIBLE THE INVISIBLE

Education and stable placement represent the core needs for youth in foster care, who remain at a significant disadvantage due to scarcity of mental health services, tenuous living arrangements, and lack of economic support. More than half experience moderate to severe mental health challenges or have been moved among five or more homes; as a group, they are half as likely to graduate from high school. These factors greatly impact their opportunities to succeed in life, and, as a result, up to 65% of them are likely to become homeless or unemployed.

## A+P: Is there an epidemic in foster care?

**Carole Guillard (CG):** There is, especially in California, and in Los Angeles County in particular. It started in the '80s, with the crack epidemic, but the '90s bore the brunt of it. Children couldn't stay at home because so many people in the community were addicted to crack. The only choice was to remove the child and help the family members get clean so that he or she could return home safely.

A significant majority of these children were African American, and it created a real urgency among agencies in the black community to find homes for them. They were seeking culturally sensitive homes – homes where they'd be safe and where the people looked like them, as opposed to being placed in the home of a Caucasian or some other ethnicity.

## Are things getting better?

**CG:** Compared to the '90s, it's pretty tame right now, though the population of foster care has changed, there's an increase of Hispanic children entering the system.

## It sounds like foster children move around a lot. Is it once a year?

**CG:** It can be many times a year. I once had a nine-year-old who was in his eleventh placement. Some children are very traumatized by being in foster care. Some are born drug-exposed, or have developmental delays and all kinds of other issues that affect their behavior. Foster parents, if there's a problem and they

have their own children at home, may be quick to say, "I don't want this child affecting my children." They may be violent. They may try to resolve problems by being the strongest, the baddest, or by hitting the hardest. In cases like that, we try to move those children out of their foster care to a higher level of care.

**Danielle Wright (DW):** We have some great foster parents who treat the children as if they are their own biological or adopted children. Then you have the other end of the spectrum.

## How does fostering impact education?

**DW:** A lot of children are in situations without a lot of stability. They don't have parental support, and they're at a loss about what to do at school and what to do after school. Their foster mother or foster father will enroll them in school, but often we're not even advised that the child is a foster child. We don't find out until the [foster] parent comes in for a conference. We'll say, "Why has this child been in so many different schools?" And that's when we find out what's going on.

## Are other children more cruel to foster youth?

**DW:** It's not the stigma it once was. Foster care is so prevalent in California; it's commonplace for students to be living with someone else for whatever reason. We're in an urban area, and have a lot of students whose parents are incarcerated. We have immigrant students whose parents are in another country. In our particular school setting, a lot of students may not necessarily be in foster care, but

Art + Practice's campus is located within Service Planning Area (SPA) #6, a specific geographic region within Los Angeles County, as defined by the Department of Public Health to develop and provide more relevant public health and clinical services targeted to the specific health needs of its residents. 40% of the city's foster youth attend either Crenshaw or Dorsey High Schools nearby A+P.

Despite their concentration, foster youth inside SPA #6 still suffer from a scarcity of services. To reverse this trend, A+P has partnered with the RightWay Foundation (RWF), a local nonprofit striving to help current and emancipated foster youth move from pain and disappointment towards power, productivity, and self-sufficiency.

Using a holistic approach, RWF seeks to incorporate more opportunities for personal fulfillment and economic empowerment. Its programs address transitional housing, therapy, job placement, financial literacy, career counseling, and education for foster youth living within SPA #6, with emphasis placed on the 90008 ZIP code.

they're in kinship care – living with a grandparent or an aunt.

**CG:** Fostering is so prevalent in California. There was a time, [administrators] asked us to stop sending social workers into the school for visits because some of the [foster] youth were saying, "Every time I get called out of class, everybody knows why." That's not the case anymore. In some school districts, almost everybody is being called out of class. It's not a big deal.

## What happens to these students at school?

**DW:** A lot of them end up in special education because of their behavior, though some have cognitive challenges as well. They might have ADHD, for example, so they get placed in special ed. That's another issue, because sometimes the SPED class may include various levels of ability and behavioral issues. Or a child may have problems outside of school, gets brought to school, but gets kicked out. There may be disciplinary issues, and a foster parent who's like, "I don't want to deal with this." Then the child is either placed in another home or ends up going to a different school. The situation becomes cyclic. It feeds off itself.

## Is there ever any conversation between the foster parents, the social worker, and the teacher?

**CG:** From my perspective, there's not enough. The only time they interact is when something's gone very wrong. (DW: Exactly!) But by then it's usually too late. Sometimes you have a foster parent who's willing to come to the school and work with the

teacher and the student, but it's rare. Let me give you an example: A foster child I work with, a ninth grader, has been with her foster mother for a long time. But [the girl] has some issues, emotional issues. She has a tendency to tell a lot of lies. The foster mother is like, "I'm done." She wants the child to be put in an SED [serious emotional disturbances] situation because she feels like she can't deal with the school; she's asking for assistance. Clearly she has been through a lot with this child, but, I mean, the girl's only 14 years old. She's crying out for attention. It's negative attention, unfortunately, but it's affecting everything else. And I don't think the school site has enough systems in place to help someone like her.

## Do you think the whole program should be overhauled?

**DW:** There needs to be an understanding of a child's history. We just get a packet and a transcript. There's no history of what this child is like, where they've been, the placement, what their situation is. Some of that is confidential, of course, but you don't know the whole scope of what's going on.

## Would schools benefit from more openness?

**DW:** Maybe. It's a fine line, though, because you can't divulge too much about a student's past, because if it's really not relevant to what's going on, then everyone doesn't need to know about it. You can't breach confidentiality. On the school's end, we need to provide more emotional support for children who do need it. We have referrals, and do refer children out for counseling, but in terms of on-site, we don't really offer support as strongly as we could.



**DANIELLE WRIGHT**  
English Language Development  
Curriculum Specialist for the  
Compton Unified School District

Wright has been an educator since 2000 with a Single Subject Teaching Credential in English, an Administrative Credential and a Master's Degree in Education: Instructional Leadership. She has taught high school English (grades 9-12), English Language Development for non-native English speakers, and Advanced Placement Psychology. In addition, Wright has been a curriculum specialist training teachers on the best practices for student achievement and success.

Wright is a member of the California Association of Bilingual Educators (CABE) and the Association of California School Administrators (ASCA). She lives with her two teenage children in South Los Angeles.



**CAROLE GUILLARD**  
Director of Operations, California  
Institute of Health and Social  
Services, DBA Children's Way  
Foster Family and Adoptions  
Agency, and Alafia Mental Health,  
Member of the Art + Practice Board  
of Trustees

Guillard's passionate advocacy for improving the lives of at-risk children and families began more than 20 years ago. Since then, she has partnered with CIHSS in serving Los Angeles, Riverside, and San Bernardino Counties through the development and administration of programs designed to enrich communities. In her tenure at CIHSS, Guillard has been instrumental in expanding the agency's scope of services to include mental health care and adoptions.





1



2



3

**WHAT IS A GROUP HOME?**

A group home is a licensed private residence for children or young people within the foster care system. Group homes provide a placement option for children who cannot live with their families, do not have families, or are people with emotional or behavioral problems who require more restrictive environments. Group homes provide 24-hour nonmedical care and supervision to youth with services provided by staff employed by the licensee. Homes are referred to as 'residential treatment centers' and 'small home environments'. Typically there can be no more than six residences present in a home.

**THE RIGHTWAY FOUNDATION JOB LAB (1)**

**RWF'S OPERATION EMANCIPATION (2)**  
8-week class in session

**RWF INSTRUCTOR KEITH JOHNSON (3)**  
Mentoring youth at RWF's new facility in A+P

**FACING PAGE**  
In conversation Danielle Wright, Carole Guillard, Kayla Wright (A+P Foster Youth Advisor) and Eileen Harris Norton (A+P Co-Founder)

**How can A+P help?**

CG: A+P could fill some gaps that students may have because they aren't in a consistent situation. They might have been at one school for a couple of months, then get moved to another one. A+P could come in and provide them some support.

DW: I think education is a key component, because it gives students something to strive for, regardless of the circumstances outside of school and regardless of their home environment. They can still be successful. I had one student who had been in foster care since she was four or five. By the time she got to high school, she was living in a group home. Still, she graduated and went to college. She did really well with the support.

**What does the future of foster care look like?**

CG: I think it looks better. The bottom line is this: Our job is to find the child another family. Even though you've had to take this kid from his family, find him another one. Find him another connection. That's your job.

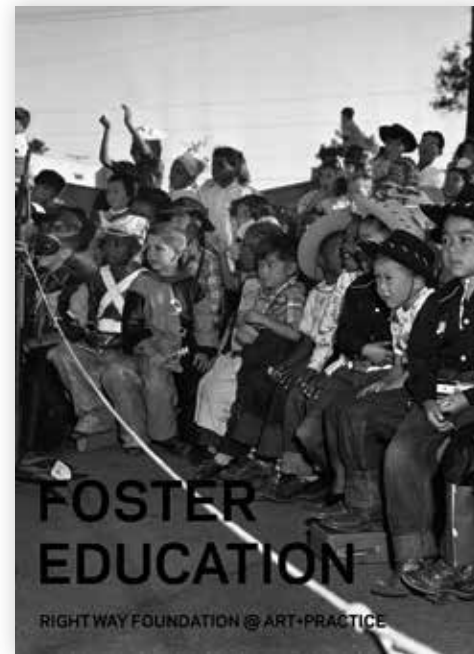
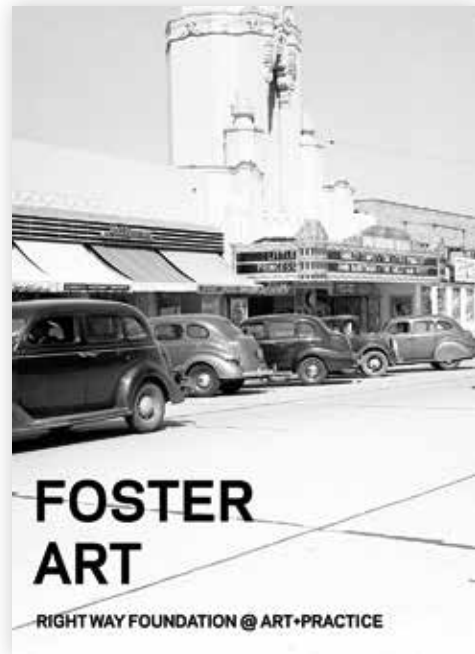
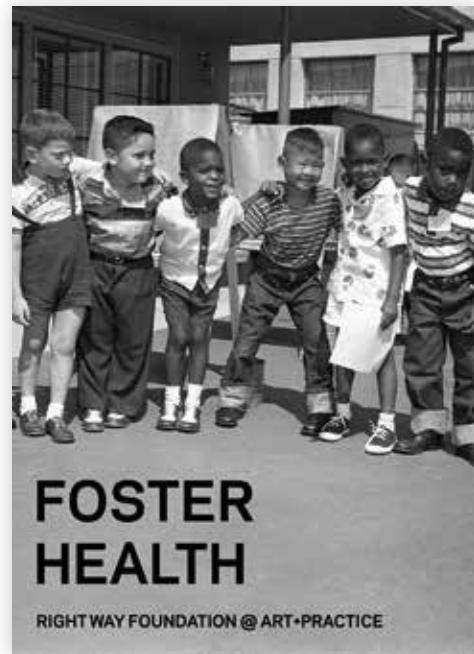
In the '90s, when a small child would leave their home and come into foster care, it was just: "Get them out and get them to a safe place." Often without a permanency plan. In the last ten to fifteen

years, it became: "Don't remove them unless you have a plan. Or when you remove them, if you must, you'd better put a plan in place."

Of course children will always be removed from their home for dangerous situations – physical abuse, neglect, substance abuse, and domestic violence – but we have plans in place now on the biological family side. If biological parents are unable to provide a healthy environment, they've got a very specific amount of time to follow a program and create a safe and stable home environment. After that period, if that doesn't happen, [the agency] will search within the family to see if anybody's willing and capable to adopt or take on guardianship. If that's not the case, then they start trying to find a foster family. Hopefully they do, and usually it works out.

Lately it's become easier for family members to take custody of relative children. Back in the '90s, in a lot of minorities' homes, the relatives had a police history. If relatives or other adults in their home couldn't pass a background check, they were likely disqualified. Now we're learning that just because you've been arrested doesn't mean you're not a good parent, or that you won't be a good parent. Unless it's something obvious like child abuse, or domestic violence, there's more support for making sure these children don't languish and grow up inside the foster care system.





*So fragmentation of a family means even more fragmentation.*

CG: That's exactly what happens.

DW: Everyone wants to belong and be connected to somebody. If you don't have that at home, you're going to seek it out elsewhere. You have to have somewhere to be safe. That's why it's imperative that a school or somewhere offers that cushion for children where, regardless of what happens to them outside of there, once they get to a particular place, they're safe and cared for. A+P could provide that for these children.

*A neutral space.*

DW: Somewhere they can go, knowing that people care about them and want to help them.

CG: That's right. A safe place where they can go and be vulnerable. Having someone they can just be with and not feel judged. Not their psychiatrist, not their therapist, in this case, but maybe just a friend. Someone who cares about them.

*And you're saying a variety of people can serve in this role?*

DW: I think we all serve different purposes. Because even when you're a teacher, you end up being a therapist. You end up being a parent. You just have to make yourself available, because if a child feels comfortable, they'll come and talk to you. And yes, it's good to have [therapists], but you can train people how to talk, how to guide the situation, how to counsel. It's a skill that can be taught.

And there's such a need, too, because so many of our children don't have that nurturing. People are always talking at them, telling them what to do, coming at them aggressively. When they're small, hopefully they get that coddling, but they still need it as they grow. They need that assurance, like you said: that safe place where they feel like they can just be themselves.

*All of this sounds like a new definition of 'family.'*

CG: What I'm saying is, we know [many] parents need parenting classes. A lot of times, it's children having children. There's substance abuse. There's domestic violence. The challenge is to get in there and surround that family and keep them together before foster care is necessary. It's called family support, and we need a lot more of it.

*So it's not necessarily a negative story.*

CG: No, it's not.

DW: There are plenty of people who have benefited because their biological family wasn't equipped to take care of them. I personally know children who've been in kinship care because their parent wasn't capable. So their grandmother took over. Or their aunt. The child's life was so much better because they had support.

CG: That's how I was raised. Back then, though, it wasn't called anything. It was just 'extended family.' There wasn't anything unusual about it. +

[dcfs.co.la.ca.us](http://dcfs.co.la.ca.us)  
[artandpractice.org/partners](http://artandpractice.org/partners)

**FOSTER POSTERS**

PSA concept posters designed by Mark Bradford

**WHAT IS ILP?**

A federally funded program that offers supplemental services and/or funds for eligible DCFS/Probation foster youth and former foster youth between 16 and 21 years old.

**FOSTER YOUTH CHECK LIST**

By 16 years old – Foster youth should obtain his/her picture ID, open a savings account, develop a long-term plan with his/her social worker, receive a copy of the TILP (Transitional Independent Living Plan) and receive resources from social worker to achieve TILP, participate in ILP classes, apply for a work permit with his/her school, work with a Life Skills group on job readiness, and obtain a social security card.

By 17 years old – Foster youth should obtain and maintain employment, and obtain a copy of his/her birth certificate.

By 18 years old – Foster youth should apply to continue medical coverage, apply for transitional housing or apartment, register to vote and select a college or trade school.

**CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE**

SOURCE:  
The Conrad N. Hilton Foundation  
"Children and Youth in Foster Care  
Strategy Development Landscape  
Research Findings," 2012.



**SERVICE PLANNING AREA**  
A Service Planning Area, or SPA, is simply a specific geographic region within Los Angeles County.

Due to the large size of LA County (4,300 square miles), it has been divided into 8 geographic areas. These distinct regions allow the Department of Public Health to develop and provide more relevant public health and clinical services targeted to the specific health needs of the residents in these different areas.

**SERVICE PLANNING AREA #6 ZIP CODES**

Southwest Health District  
90016, 90018, 90007, 90008, 90043, 90062, 90037, 90044, and 90047

Southeast Health District  
90011 and 90001

South Health District  
90003, 90002, and 90059

Compton Health District  
90061, 90222, 90262, 90248, 90220, 90746, 90221, and 90723

Cities:  
Athens, Compton, Crenshaw, Florence, Hyde Park, Lynwood, Paramount, and Watts

[publichealth.lacounty.gov/chs/SPA6/](http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/chs/SPA6/)

In the spring of 2014, Art + Practice wrote and administered an informal survey of 300 foster youth between the ages of 14 and 20. The survey was prepared in consultation with social workers, educators, artists, law enforcement, and lawyers, and was meant to address four major concerns: access to digital communication tools, education, financial ability, and family circumstance. The data shown on subsequent pages are highlights from the results. The data collected were anonymous and entirely untraceable.

The informal survey was conducted between May 1 and July 14, 2014 by former foster youth, Ashley Alvarez. Alvarez was also a participant in the Brandeis University roundtable discussions (see page 88 for more information).

At the outset of A+P, it was clear that a clarion vantage-point of the landscape foster youth faced was harder to find than we initially thought. This was for many reasons that became more obvious the more we researched.

Primarily foster youth are naturally and appropriately protected by the state. To overcome the access to information hurdle, A+P worked with CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate) Samuel Herod, who coordinated a schedule for the survey around public events for foster

youth in SPA #6 as well as site visits to group homes. Herod's support in the process was invaluable.

Another early challenge for the survey was its format. Initial presentations focused on a digital version, initially on an iPad and subsequently on laptops. Both proved ineffective because participants did not have the patience to sit and wait for others to take the survey before doing it themselves. When we moved to a printed version, multiple participants could simultaneously answer questions and our response rate drastically went up. Unfortunately, this created an enormous amount of work on the back-end, inputting data and driving up the cost of the project altogether.

The surveyor was herself a young woman (19 years of age) of Latin

American descent. Though A+P feels very confident that the data collected is accurate and original, Alvarez was paid per survey completed, which could have incentivized forged responses. Furthermore, the transcription process from hand-written answers to the digital database created room for error. Our population sampling was not pre-meditated: greater emphasis was placed on the volume of responses than on ensuring that the response pool matched the demographics of the foster youth population.

This informal survey is only the first of many that A+P intends to conduct to better serve its constituents.

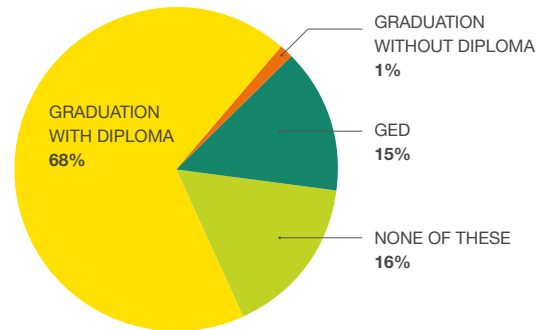
# Less than 13% of foster youth will graduate from high-school

SOURCE: unitedfriends.org/about-ufc/faq

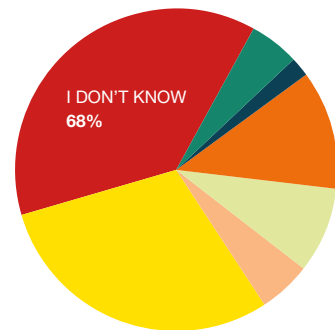
# Less than 1% of foster youth will graduate from college

SOURCE: unitedfriends.org/about-ufc/faq

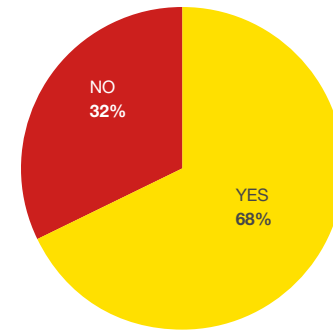
Have you (or will you) achieve one of these accreditations from high-school:



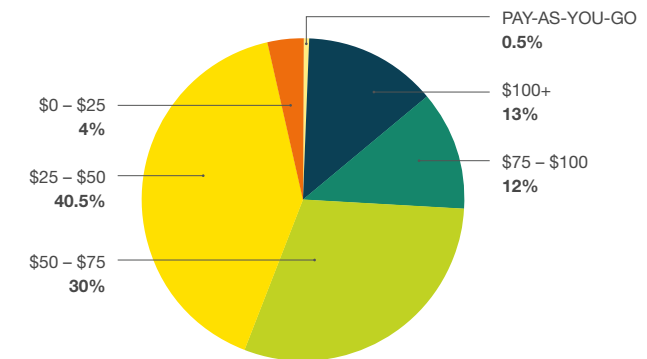
How many course credits do you have?



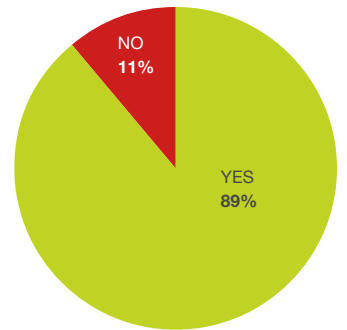
Do you own a cell phone?



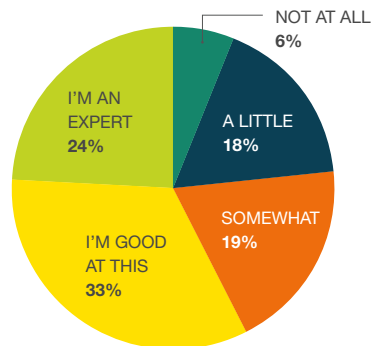
Please estimate your monthly phone bill:



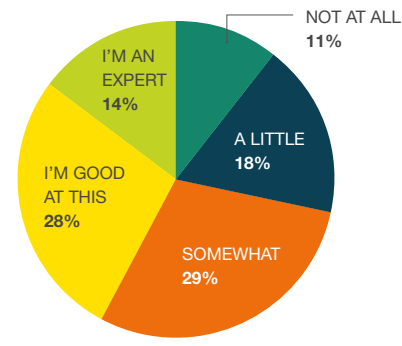
Is your cell phone currently connected?



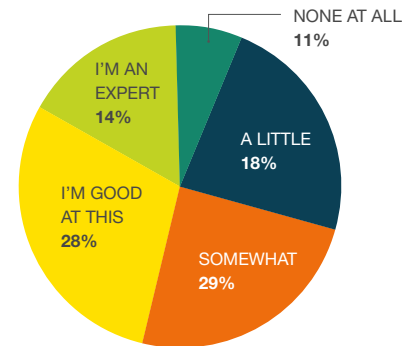
How comfortable are you with reading?



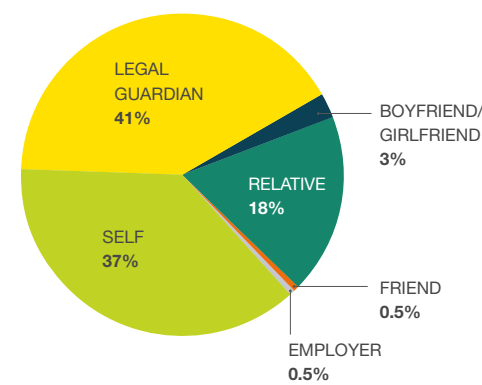
How comfortable are you with math?



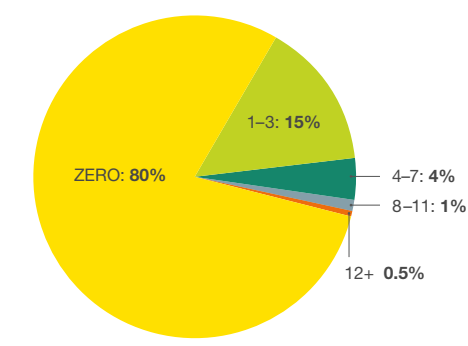
What is your ability typing on a keyboard (not a phone or tablet)?



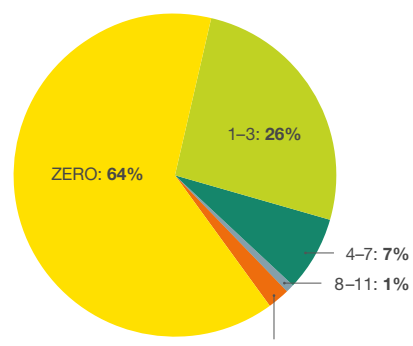
Who pays your monthly phone bill?



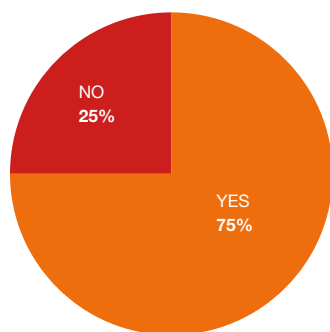
How many times in the past 12 months have you let someone borrow your phone overnight?



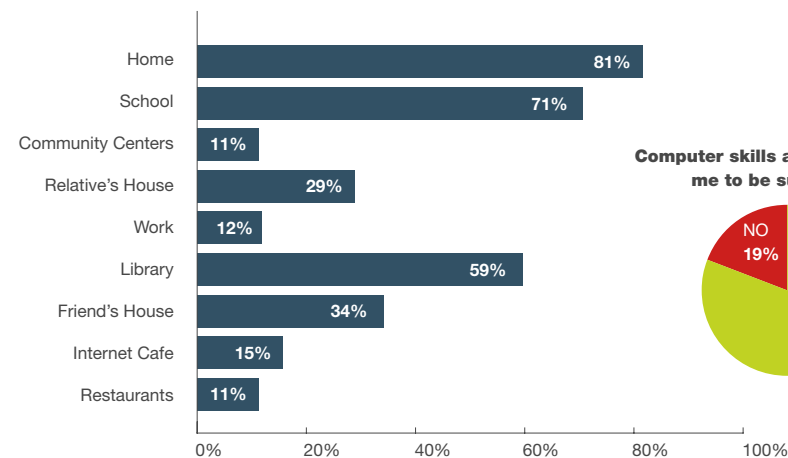
How many times in the past 12 months has your phone been disconnected?



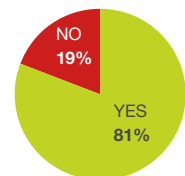
Is there a computer at your primary location?



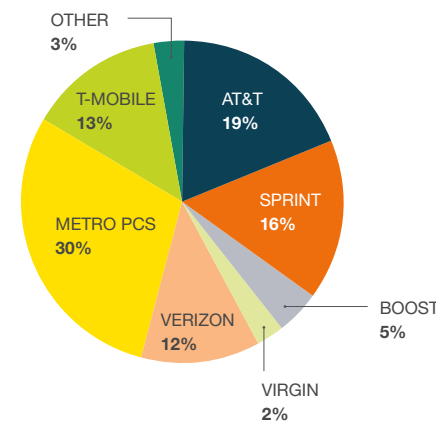
Please indicate ALL the places you go to access the internet:



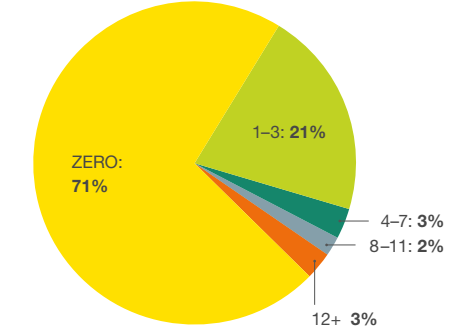
Computer skills are necessary for me to be successful?



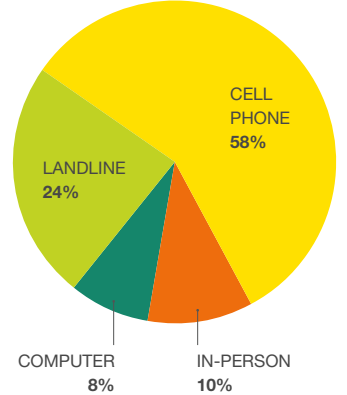
Who is your cell phone provider?



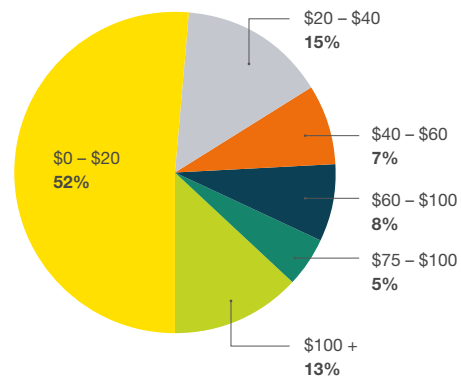
How many times in the past 12 months has your phone number been changed?



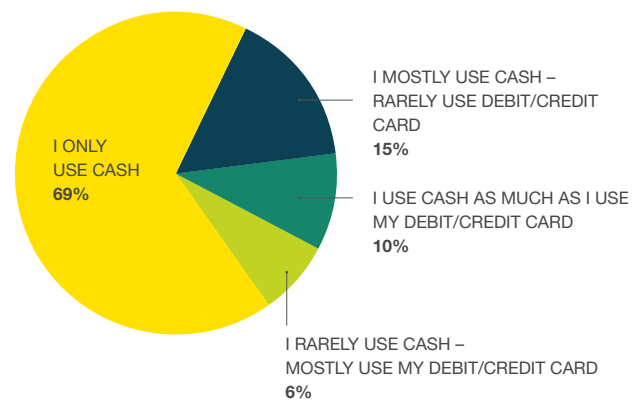
What is your primary communication tool?



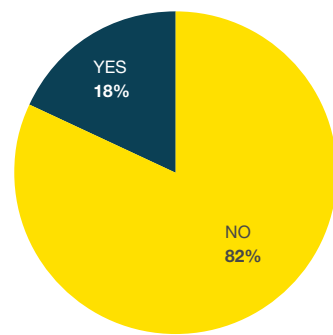
**On an average week, how much money do you make/receive?**



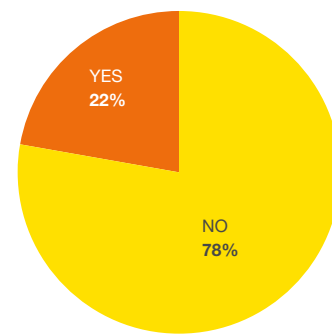
**How do you make purchases?**



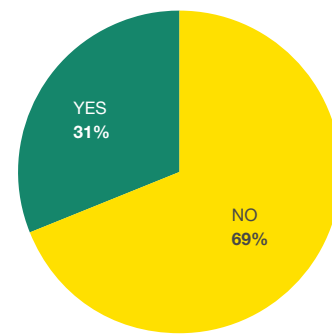
**Do you use pre-paid debit cards?**



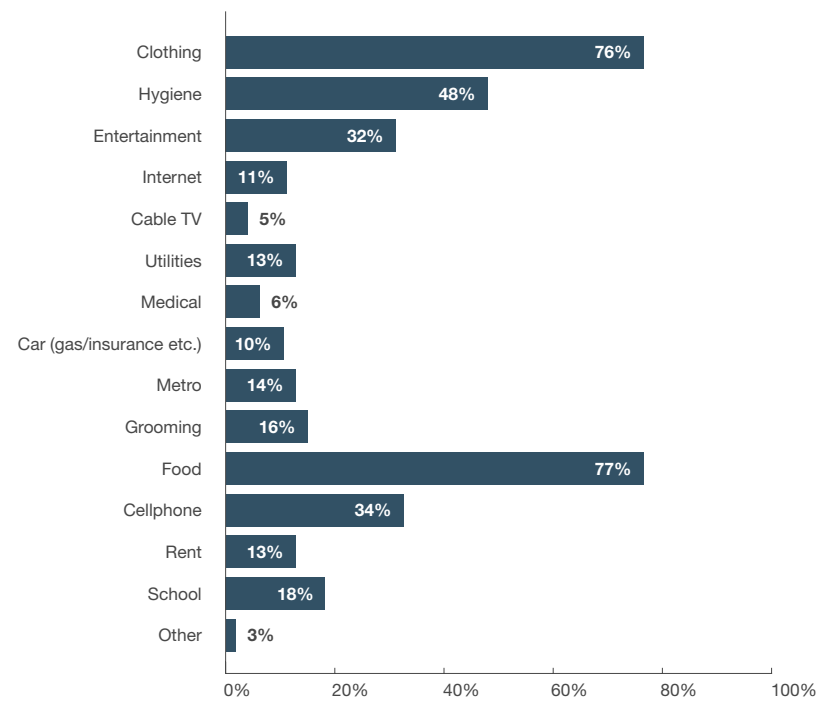
**Do you have a job?**



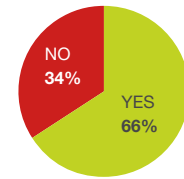
**Do you have a checking or savings account?**



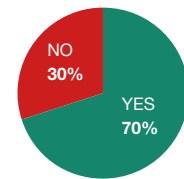
**Please indicate ALL the ways you spend your money:**



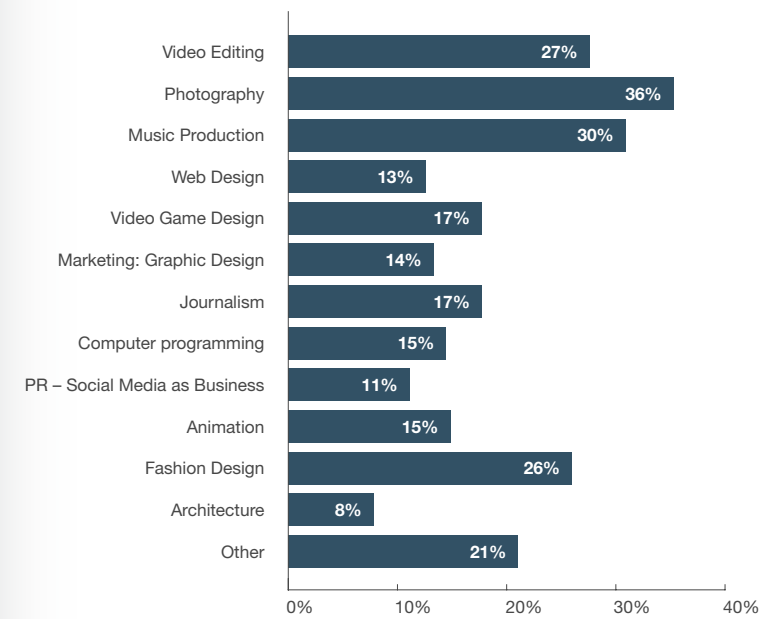
**Do you know where your original social security card is (not a photocopy)?**



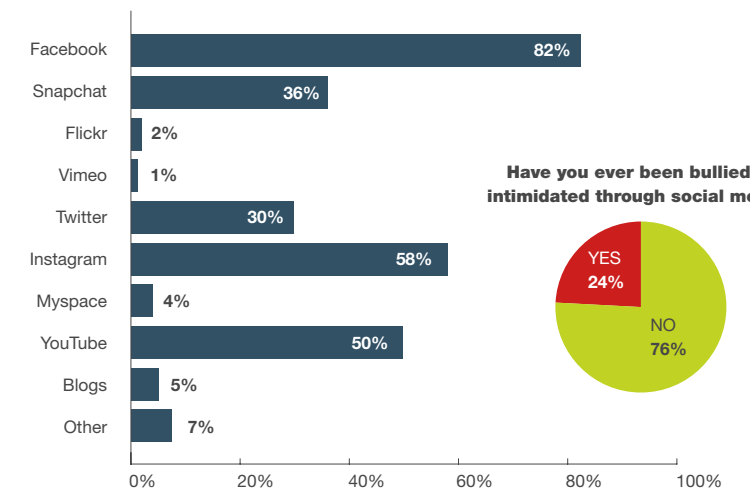
**Do you know where your original birth certificate is (not a photocopy)?**



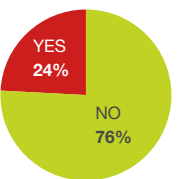
**Please indicate ALL the skills you'd like to learn:**



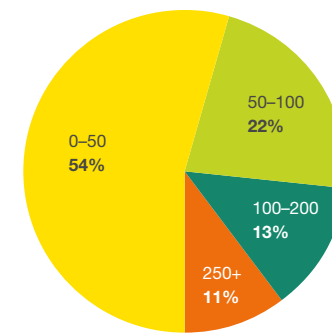
**Please indicate ALL the social media that you use:**



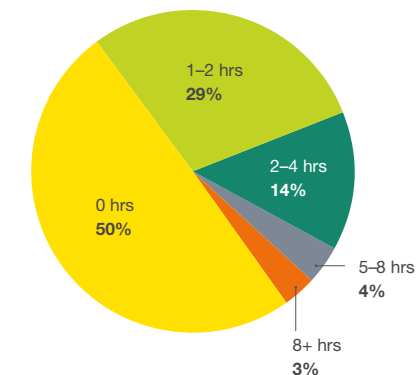
**Have you ever been bullied or intimidated through social media?**



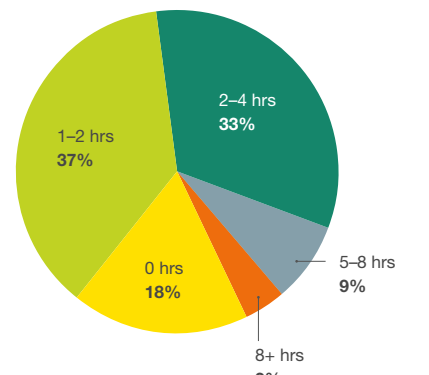
**How many text messages do you send a day?**



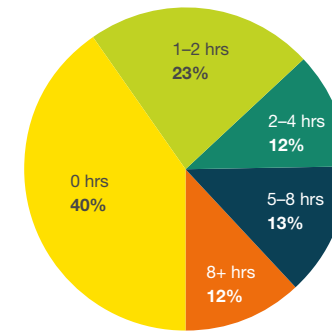
**How many hours a day do you play video games?**



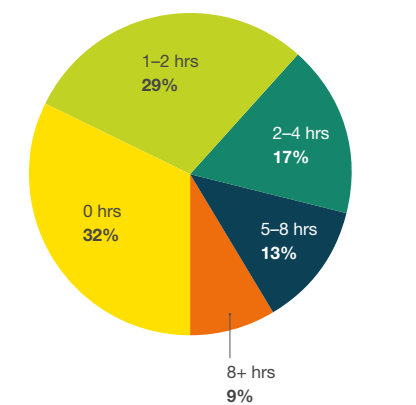
**How many hours a day do you use a computer?**



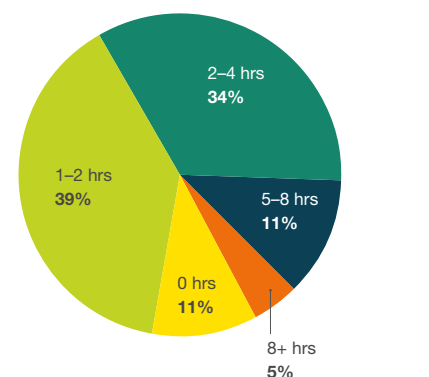
**How many hours a day do you use Instagram?**

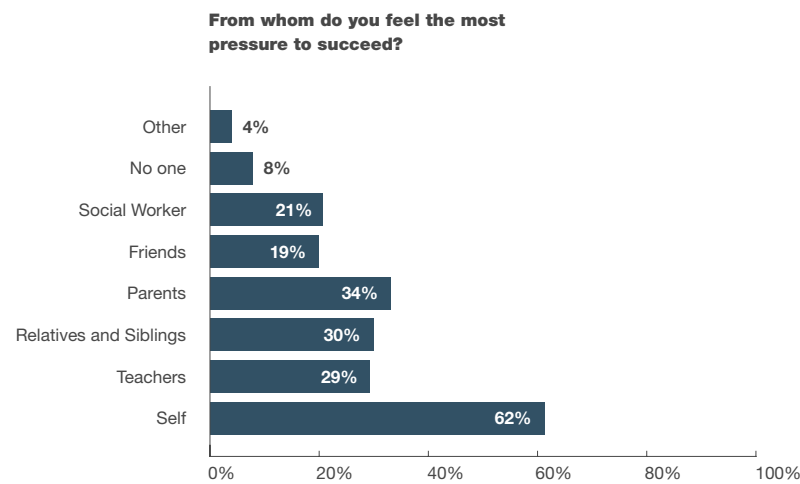
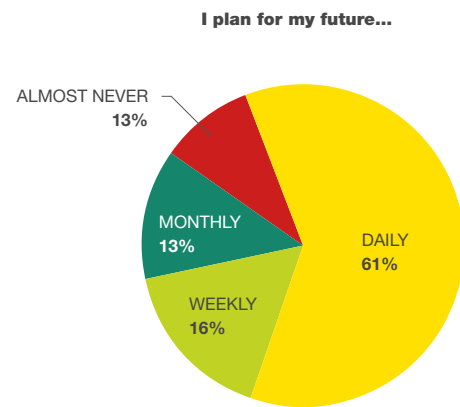


**How many hours a day do you use Facebook?**



**How many hours a day do you watch TV?**





**Very briefly, give an example of how you pursued your career goal in the last month:**

I hope one day  
To be another Black  
President of the United States

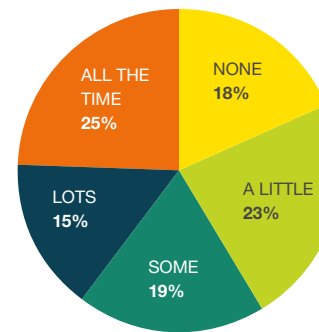
I always play video games to make  
me better at it.

I Love to help  
old people. That is why  
I want to be in the nursing  
career. I want to help everyone

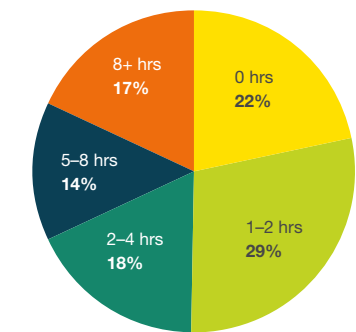
I work for a clothing store  
that is why I like fashion

I want to be a Journalist  
I write story all the time

**On an average day, how much do you get to be creative?**



**On an average day, how many hours do you get to be creative?**



**Very briefly, give an example of how you were creative in the last month:**

I don't think I am creative

I wish I could be  
creative I don't have  
the time to be creative

I go to church and  
help feed the homeless

I wrote new poems and stories for  
The Book I plan to publish  
I also came up with a  
new kind of photo editor.

I never thought of nothing  
creative

I STARTED FILLING OUT  
JOB APPLICATION ONLINE.

I have attended a college  
readiness program for the  
past few months. I've also have  
been keeping up with my credits  
in school.

I was able to talk to a  
professor of Journalism  
and Literature in San Diego.  
He was able to help me  
pursue my dream job

I researched online on how  
to start a small business and  
made a list of reasonable goals  
I can reach within the next year.

I would one day want to BE A L.A.P.D  
I admire how they go about upkeeping  
the laws of the city

I admire the skills  
of being a teacher  
one day I will be a teacher

I MADE A NICE SLIDE SHOW  
OF FAMILY PICTURES

I have designed posters to  
put up on my door and  
all around my room.

I watched Transformers in theaters,  
I know its not really a lot but it  
inspires me to be a good movie director  
one day.

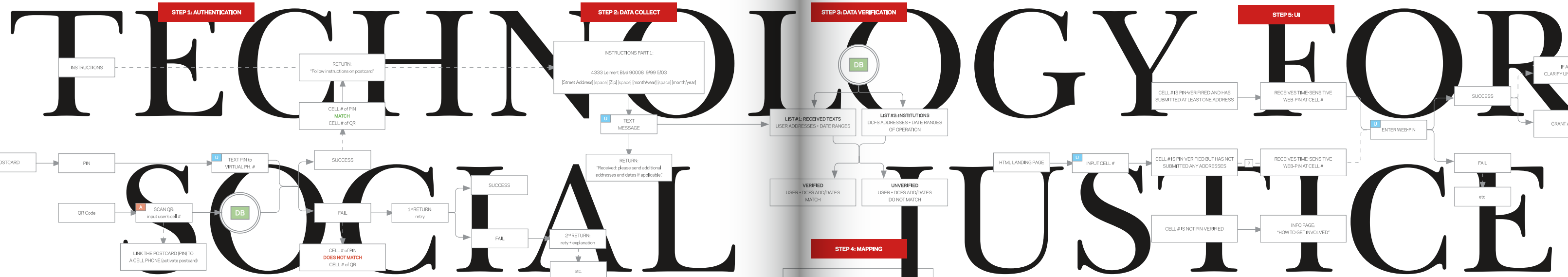
I was creative in the last  
month I help an older person  
carrying her bags

I am very creative not  
with my hands with my  
voice I sing for my church

I like to draw when I am free.  
it releases stress.

I did nothing creative

I like writing  
so I wrote a poem  
about myself.



## SYBLINGS app beta

SEAN SHIM-BOYLE  
Application Author  
User Experience (UX) Lead

MARK BRADFORD  
Application Co-Author  
A+P Co-Founder

JUSTIN REIDY  
Application Architect  
Lead Developer

CHRISTY LEE ZILKA  
User Interface (UI) Lead

TROY CARTER  
Advisor  
A+P Board of Trustees

RHAZES SPELL  
Advisor

Full bios for team  
members can be found at:  
[syblings.artandpractice.org/team](http://syblings.artandpractice.org/team)

More information on Safaricom,  
M-PESA, and the Kenyan banking  
system can be found at:  
[brookings.edu/blogs/up-front/  
posts/2013/03/12-mobile-money-chandy](http://brookings.edu/blogs/up-front/posts/2013/03/12-mobile-money-chandy)

SYBLINGS is an app developed by Art + Practice designed to connect siblings who have lost contact with each other while in foster care. The application leverages SMS text message technology to populate a database of users' movements and then visualizes this on a map.

A generation ago, most among us immigrated from an analog state to a digital one, essentially becoming digital citizens or émigrés. Coming of age now is the first generation of digital natives whose first language is uninhibited by and even ignorant of traditional notions of proximal community, consumption, education, and activism. Foster youth and young people from disatvanged backgrounds are foreigners in this state, unable to participate on a level playing field and effect those changes that will most help them, their families, and their communities.

SYBLINGS actively pushes back against this disparity, bringing together a team of leaders from a wide range of fields. The app draws inspiration from Safaricom, M-PESA, and the Kenyan banking system, which dramatically altered the financial landscape of that country, lifting millions out of poverty by creating a safe, efficient, and mobile way for friends, families, and businesses to send and receive money by text message. The four primary factors in the wide adoption of M-PESA are remarkably similar to the circumstances facing foster youth in Los Angeles County: constant domestic migration, a cash-based economy, cell phone saturation, and a single telecom provider.

### HOW IT WORKS:

1. In person, a foster child is given a card with a barcode and a PIN. At that time of hand-off, the administrator scans the barcode and requests the child's cell phone number, which is associated with the card.
2. SYBLINGS' server immediately sends a text message to that cell phone number requesting the PIN (located on the card) as a reply.
3. If the server validates that the PIN sent back in reply is correct, a second message is sent requesting an address and date range associated with a child's past placements.\*
4. Once the user has submitted at least one address and date range, he or she can login to [syblings.artandpractice.org](http://syblings.artandpractice.org), entering their cell phone number as a user name. An additional time-sensistive password PIN is sent from the server to the cell phone as a text message.

5. The user is then taken to their map:

**THE BLUE LINE** indicates the user's movements over time between locations (blue dots).

**YELLOW LINES** indicate the paths of everyone that the user came into contact with at a placement (was at the same place at the same time *and* has logged in with SYBLINGS).

**GREEN LINE(S)** indicate SYBLINGS' best guess at the user's sibling(s).

*SYBLINGS Beta has no internal messaging system in place for users to contact each other. Specific challenges that exist in this function have to do with protecting the anonymity of users and discouraging bullying or other kinds of abuse.*

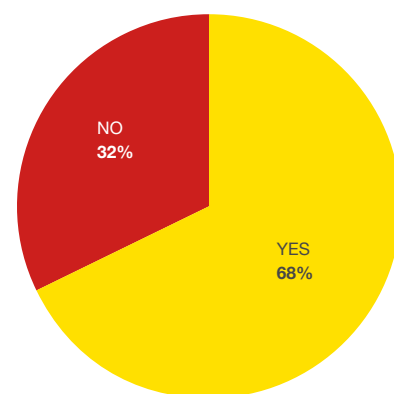
Above:  
**USER EXPERIENCE (UX)  
DIAGRAMS**

A sketch developed at the earliest stages of Syblings' development outlines the security measures employed by Syblings to protect, anonymize, and keep non-foster children out of the system. Syblings uses two-factor security measures at three different stages of the registration and login process.  
Sean Shim-Boyle, 2013

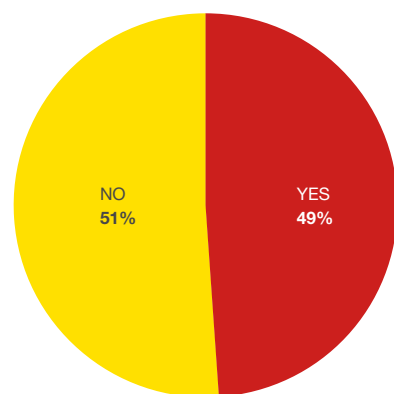
\* **PLACEMENT (n)**

The name given to the home or facility where a foster child resides while in foster care.

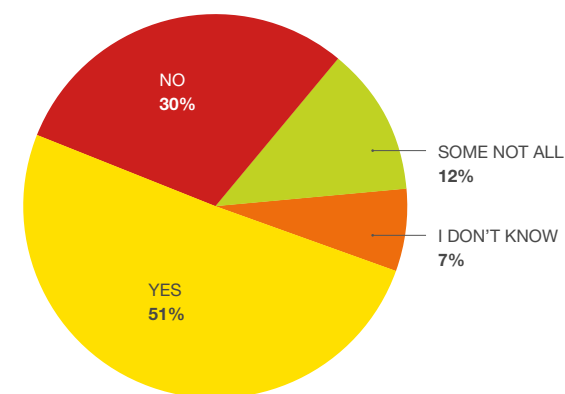
**Do you own a cell phone?**



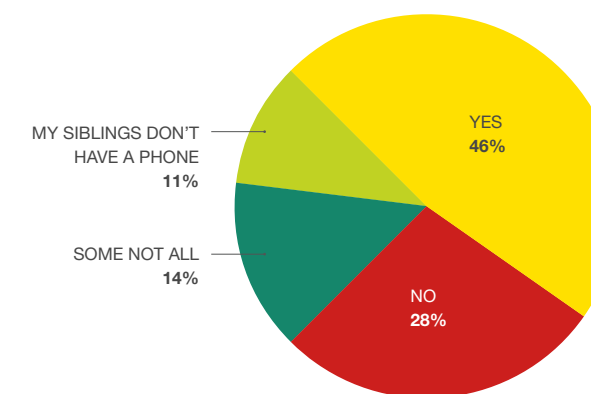
**Do you have sibling(s) in: Foster Care, Incarceration (criminal justice), or Probation (juvenile justice)?**



**Does your sibling(s) own a cell phone?**



**Do you know your sibling(s)' cell number?**



**Troy:**  
Can we start with where SYBLINGS comes from?

**Sean:** SYBLINGS is truly a product of Art + Practice's vision to make visible the invisible. The idea to 'map' foster care is also very much in keeping with Mark's painting practice and my concerns with typography and site-specific sculpture. In many ways these things are connected as containers of context: for Mark, the memory-laden nature of his materials and the powerful social gestures of his mark-making; for me, that typography and in-situ interventions must, if nothing else, act as crystalline goblets, revealing more about their contents than themselves.

In many ways, the seeds of SYBLINGS were sewn in New Orleans in 2007 when I first joined Mark's studio. We were preparing *Mithra* [an immense "ark" made from shipping containers and sited on a vacant plot in the Lower Ninth Ward] for the Prospect.1 Biennial only a few years after Katrina. It began with a lot of listening. Mark insisted that we sit afternoon after afternoon in peoples' living rooms and hear their stories – and that he support other organizations, building momentum around the idea that art, particularly in that place and moment, could be a vessel of good.

The contrast of responding versus imposing informs SYBLINGS. We didn't jump into iOS. We didn't jump into Android. A flashy, fashionable roll-out wouldn't have helped those who needed it most. We took the time to survey potential users and concluded that an OS-specific deployment would be exclusionary. So we went with text messages.

SYBLINGS is nascent but stands firmly in its convictions. It has a growing mass of authors behind it – a coalition of builders and makers, all contributing to

its creation. And it's not just developers or artists or social workers, board members or venture capitalists, either: 300 foster kids told us, 'Because you're listening, we'll take the time to tell you who we are and give you the information you need to build this thing.'

**Mark:** Both Sean and I are artists. When he brought this idea to me, I was really excited, but I couldn't picture the framework. I instinctively knew that some things made sense, but I didn't... there's no way that I could have had the roadmap.

**Sean:** I felt comfortable that our process and our research up to development had been solid – the survey in particular – but converting the idea into something tangible and beginning development was much harder. I knew we needed a particular kind of person to help translate the idea. Luckily, through Rhazes, we were introduced to Justin and from the get-go it felt like a perfect fit.

**Rhazes:** It was an obvious introduction – Justin's software skills are beyond reproach. Although developers with Justin's expertise are in short supply, my recommendation of him for this project wasn't just based on his technical skill. Process is central to artistic practice, and I see SYBLINGS as a socially engaged artistic endeavor that leverages technology for distribution. As such I thought that it would be important to have a technologist whose considered approach was more expansive than, 'let's just get it done.' My friendship with Justin grew out of our frequent discussions on the cultural implications of technological trends and how unprecedented global connectivity could yield social progress. Some

of our work as colleagues at Accenture touched on this potential, and we were both keen on advancing these ideas further.

Software architecture skills are still critical to the project because we are committed to making SYBLINGS a reality and not just provocative conceptual 'vaporware.' Justin is active in technological communities such as Nodejs, which are extending the Internet as a software platform. His experience is a key to making SYBLINGS an application that is innovative from a social deployment standpoint as well as robust and innovative technologically.

**Justin:** Sean's first instinct was a good one. He reached out to me not with the question of 'Do you want to work on this?' but 'Is this doable?' He wasn't just blindly going in. I saw it as reaching out for resources to better evaluate the project.

SYBLINGS manifests as an idea in technology, which becomes part of its context as a communication tool. It is an idea contained in some manner, structured, and then reproduced back into the communities and the physical realities in which we live.

The foster care system operates in a fundamentally different reality than that of a consumption-based application like, say, Uber or Yelp. These are amazing tools, but they're tools that help me do something I'm *choosing* to do: I want to get from point A to point B. It used to be hard because I couldn't get a cab. Now I've got Uber, and it's here immediately. It's awesome. It's frictionless. But it's something I'm choosing to do.

I think using technology to address real issues – issues that are not voluntary actions – is creating new and important challenges for technologists.

**Mark:** Everyone's saying that we're moving towards technology, yet at the same time, you hear that schools are failing or that the gap between the rich and poor is widening. It's like we're moving towards something. At the same time, we're saying that many of our citizens are absolutely unequipped and falling farther and farther behind.

**Justin:** It's interesting that we keep using the term 'technology,' because technology could be...a hammer. It's really any tool that's used.

**Troy:** That's true. It's funny, I only associate it with the computer now.

**Justin:** I think everyone feels that way. The question is, at what point did our tools transition from something that anyone could pick up and build something with to something that you need a degree to understand? Can we change how we use computational technology so that it's as simple as using a hammer and nails to build something?

I think curiosity and openness are the core characteristics of a good programmer. No matter what tool you use, as a programmer, it's not going to last. There will be a new one you'll need to learn about, a new innovation you'll need to integrate.

Plus, you're constantly talking to others and seeing how they're doing it, and having the humility to be able to look at your old code and realize that what you

**DATA ABOVE**  
From A+P's informal survey of 300 foster youth, summer 2014. Please see pages 18-25 for more information.

This article was developed from a conversation recorded on November 20, 2014 at Atom Factory in Los Angeles, hosted by Troy Carter.



wrote six months ago was terrible. Programmers joke about how bad code is the code you wrote a week ago. It's always painful when you open a project you haven't looked at in a while, see what you did, and think, 'Why did I possibly think that was a good idea?' You didn't do anything wrong; it's just that programming is a constant education of learning a better way of doing things.

Troy: Does that kind of thinking apply to the process of making art as well? A certain amount of innovation that has to go into it?

Mark: For me as an artist, absolutely. The way I can see the relationship between developing this app and my practice is that I take basic materials – social, public-sphere materials – and demand they have a conversation about art history.

Troy: What do you mean?

Mark: If you look at the history of abstraction in this country, circa 1950, the Jackson Pollock moment, the big moment, it's very limited, racially. White, big, powerful men, very few women, very few people of color. Our ideas around abstraction were solidified in that moment.

Being an African American who decided to be an abstract painter, using what you would call non-art materials – I don't even use paint – but demanding that I actually have a say, it's the same thing. It's saying...it's *demanding* that I have access to history. I shouldn't be closed out from history, not because of my race and not because of the materials I use.

SYBLINGS is about demanding access and making people aware of inequalities. When Sean came to me with the idea, I responded to it because I like the idea of sharing. We need to share in addressing this thing that has gone horribly wrong. We need to share in figuring it out. We need to ride-share the foster care system in this country get into the car that people have told us is scary and figure it out.

There are only 400,000 [foster] children [in the US], but how the media has portrayed foster youth in this country has been terrible. And it's always been someone else's problem. I don't look at it that way: I look at it as something that's gone horribly wrong for innocent citizens. One of the most visually compelling things was the first time Sean and Justin populated a screen for me [with the app]. I could see where these people lived, and watch them migrate.

Sean: Then you sent in a text and saw it appear on the map.

Mark: It became real to me. It became a person's story being written as movement. If you look at the fluidity of the Internet and how things cross and re-direct, it's almost like some of those children's lives.

Sean: We've talked before about how the migration of foster youth makes them unique, and how their ability to pick up, move, and settle is admirable.

Troy: That was me growing up as a kid. I think we probably moved seven or eight times. It gave me the ability to adapt, because I had to make friends wherever I went. We had this thing: When we moved into a place, by the next day you would think we'd lived there for three years. There were no boxes or anything sitting around. It was always home immediately, and I'm still that way to this day. On tour, I moved from place to place, but I always had some sort of consistency. My office is the same everywhere I go. The office, the tour bus – it's fixed and fluid at the same time.

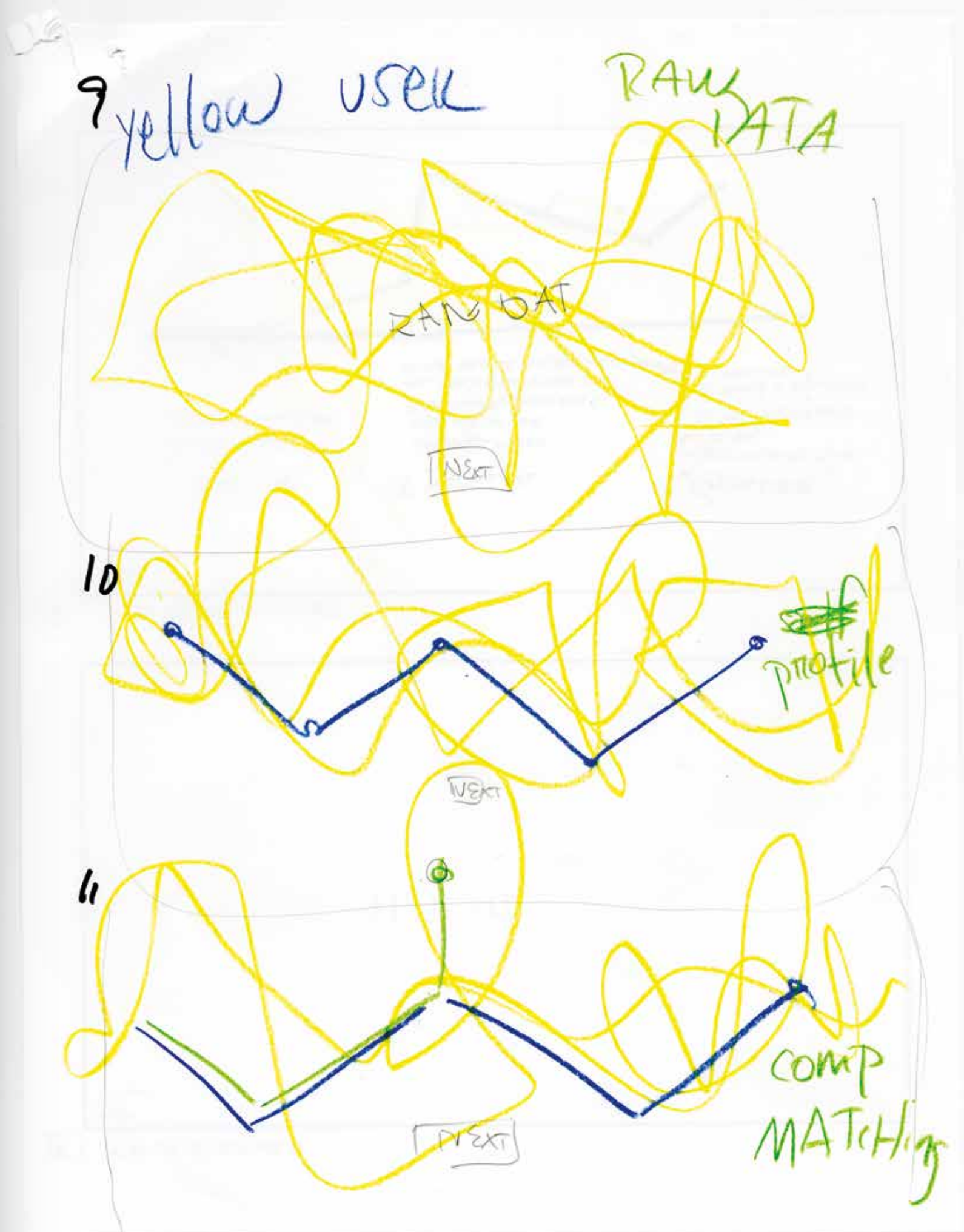
Mark: That's what we're trying to create with SYBLINGS: that fixed-and-fluid or static-and-dynamic quality. I think foster youths' lives are naturally dynamic and fluid. They have no choice about it. With SYBLINGS, they have some guideposts. That's your brother. That's your sister. That's your home. It creates a kind of structure, something fixed to build on.

These children are leading a very fluid, post-modern existence, and I think that one of my hopes is that the app will help them move away from feeling ashamed about being nontraditional and embrace it as a form of power.

Also, SYBLINGS is responding to a condition. The idea that 50 to 60 percent of [foster] siblings lose complete touch with each other – that's heart-wrenching. It's like slavery, back in the day when they used to separate families. A brother would go to one plantation and the sister to another, and they never saw each other again. I see the app as an innovative way to address that, to involve all of us and make us all part of the solution.

Troy: I thought the problem in Los Angeles was much bigger than it really is. We're only talking about 400,000 children nationally and 33,000 children in LA county.

Sean: Absolutely. And that's why this discussion can actually include the pragmatic, rather than being entirely in the abstract. For instance, phone number stability is one of the driving ideas behind SYBLINGS. It may be an overstatement, but can we all agree that in the First World, in dealing with a public health crisis like this, that a stable phone



Facing Page:  
Early User Interface (UI) sketches  
by Sean Shim-Boyle and Mark  
Bradford. The drawing details  
how users would interact with  
the mapping visualization and  
how data from text messages  
will be mapped.



## FLUXY

The unflagging pace of technological change is no surprise to anyone who's purchased a smart phone: Every year marks the release of a new version of your digital companion, transforming the technological wonder of the previous iteration into a quaint relic. This rapid rate of change doesn't just apply to the products we buy, but to the tools that developers use to create software. New programming interfaces, development environments, and even languages – developers must constantly educate themselves to take advantage of the newest computational technologies, balancing the need to use the latest and greatest library or framework with the imperative of building a strong foundation to a piece of software, one that can itself evolve over time. For web developers in particular, the prevalence of open source software has created an ecosystem of both taking (using the results of other developers' labors) and giving (contributing new creations back into the open source community).

The development of SYBLINGS App provides a clear example of both the rapid pace of technological change, and of the vibrant ecosystems in which web developers take part. From the beginning, SYBLINGS was designed to take advantage of the React.js library, a new open source contribution from the engineering team at Facebook and Instagram. React addresses a long term problem in web development – namely, how to programmatically create and manipulate the components of a web

application. While other libraries and frameworks have addressed this problem in the past, React answers it "better" – by improving performance, by reducing the likelihood of bugs, and by speeding developer productivity. The benefits of React, however, also present new questions, specifically surrounding the structuring of data in web applications. It's in this area that SYBLINGS gives back, by both utilizing and contributing to the creation of a new open source creation, Fluxy.

Fluxy refines the architectural concepts that Facebook presented as part of its "Flux" design pattern. Distilled to its core, Fluxy reimagines the traditional MVC approach to client-side webapps, replacing it with the same concept of "one-way data flow" that powers React. Going further, Fluxy relies heavily on immutable data structures, which allows for the creation of more powerful (and less bug-prone) software.

A full description of Fluxy, in addition to the code powering it, is available at <https://github.com/jmreidy/fluxy>

**JUSTIN REIDY**  
*rzsharp.net*

## USER INTERFACE

From the get-go, conversations about SYBLINGS have been dominated by ideas of simplicity and utility. The aesthetic is driven by the logotype, which is illustrative – weaving color threads together. While the app itself is simple and clear to use, I have tried to imbue the interface with a sense of the complexity and intricacy under the hood. I haven't worked on something like this before, something so meaningful or socially useful, and I doubt that many of the users will have interacted with something exactly like this either. As such, I feel it is incredibly important to impart a sense of security and craftsmanship, which I've addressed by removing ornamentation and communicating the goals of each page without any fussiness.

The app will grow, I feel sure of it, so just as Justin has built a strong structure of code that is scalable, my secondary concern here is to build up a set of motifs, a graphic language, for SYBLINGS that is also scalable.

The thumbnails above represent the workflow that a user would experience when arriving at [syblings.artandpractice.org](http://syblings.artandpractice.org). Of course, this is the first step of development, but I feel strongly that the team can build on this success.

**CHRISTY LEE ZILKA**  
*christyleezilka.com*

number should be a human right? SYBLINGS didn't initially set out to do this, but along the way it's also evolved into a tool of persuasion, actively highlighting need and bringing into focus manageable targets for partnerships and, hopefully, trial programs.

Mark: Public awareness of the overarching problem is something I'm interested in, and something A+P is interested in as an organization. With such an urgency to work through the problem, I don't think we should be waiting. I want to be implementing something. I think we should be interfacing with the Department of Social Services, interfacing with social workers, interfacing with all different kinds of users and culture-makers.

Sean: Yes. It is absolutely critical that SYBLINGS not be a single-prong approach. The app is part of A+P's vision and mission and will be one facet of campaigning on behalf of foster care, and changing the culture and the understanding of it. We're shifting conversations at a technological level. We're also going to shift the conversation at a broader cultural level, too.

Mark: Unlike the public's awareness about sexual trafficking and the dangers of smoking, foster care hasn't entered into the popular mainstream. The only people who talk about it are politicians and social service communities. It doesn't have sex appeal.

Sean: For a lack of a better way of putting it, foster care hasn't gone Hollywood.

Mark: It *needs* to go Hollywood. Everyone is very uncomfortable around the foster care issue. Women feel guilty and judged that they've lost their children. Even if it's not their fault, there exists real shame around fostering, because it goes against the narrative of the strong mother protecting her kids.

Justin: It's a mind-blowing problem. When Sean first told me about it, the idea of the system losing track of these kids and not being able to say to someone, 'I know where your sibling is' – that to me is crazy.

Troy: If my car got stolen right now, I could tell you *exactly* where it was.

Mark: Right. It goes back to the idea that we're simply moving people through the system. They term out [of foster care] and move into gangs, prostitution, and incarceration. How do we bridge the gap between a desire for social justice, technology, and the realities of this population?

Justin: I think a lot of developers are aware of the typical prejudices, both real and perceived, of their profession, and uncomfortable about how misogynistic they're portrayed as being and how inaccessible the career appears to be [to others]. There is both the desire to demystify the profession and to find meaningful ways to be agents of change.

Going back to this idea of not understanding how it can be possible to lose siblings within the system, I think for topics like foster care, the average response is, 'Oh, I'm sure it does the best it can.' People think they can't do anything. I think you have to constantly be questioning how things work and looking for opportunities to contribute to solutions. Not make assumptions about what is working or what isn't.

Troy: I'm a problem-solver by nature. I like to work on other people's problems – I do it for a living. Looking at SYBLINGS, I really feel like Art + Practice is going to solve this problem. We're not setting out to solve the root issue; that's much harder. But once these kids get into the system, we can [provide them] a better outcome than if they were living at home in a broken environment.

In my mind, SYBLINGS would be the first app in a suite of life-skills tools, which include classes being provided at the center, and mentorship – all of which give them a platform for a much better outcome.

Mark: SYBLINGS addresses an issue that's solvable. It is about context. I want to take it slowly and sequentially, stacking one brick on top of the next brick. First, I want to create a platform that can be used to solve a personal problem for these citizens. Second, I want to open up this conversation to the public arena so we can talk about these issues.

We are allowing people to be torn apart. We are shaming them into a silence at schools. And even though we've made these citizens invisible, in a weird way, we've made the problem very visible. Foster care is the problem that's visible but the citizens are invisible.

Troy: It should be exactly the opposite: These children should be visible. Their *lives* should be visible. The things they're going through need to be valued. As with technology in its best moments – the apparatus should be in the background.

Mark: That's it. So they can enter into the public conversation. Make visible the invisible. +

*syblings.artandpractice.org*

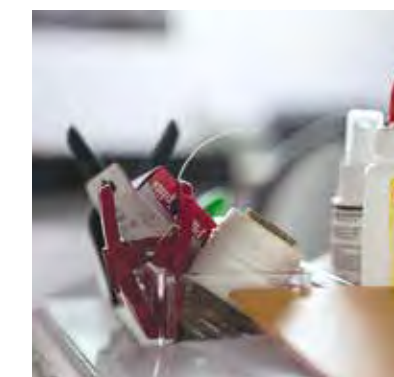
To request access to a live demo or to reach out to the development team, please email: [syblings@artandpractice.org](mailto:syblings@artandpractice.org)

# FILLING IN THE GAPS

## *Dispatches from the Artist-in-Residence Program*

Dale Brockman Davis, along with his brother, Alonzo Davis, founded Brockman Gallery in 1967, and Brockman Productions in 1973, in a storefront on Degnan Boulevard. The gallery was among the first to exhibit now-prominent African American artists, such as John Outterbridge, Betye Saar, David Hammons, Noah Purifoy, Charles White, William Pajaud, and Elizabeth Catlett, among others. The gallery played a critical part in the history of Leimert Park, also impacting 20th century American art history. Dale and Alonzo Davis continue to work as artists today. Since August 2014, Dale Davis has been an artist in residence at Art + Practice, where, with the assistance of archivist Devon Oder, he is in the process of digitizing the history and ephemera of the Brockman Gallery and Brockman Productions.

Jamillah James, assistant curator at the the Hammer Museum, Art + Practice's partner for exhibitions and programs through 2016, sat down with Davis to discuss the founding of the Brockman Gallery, its impact on the community of Leimert Park, and what to expect from his time in residence at Art + Practice.



Read more about James and her involvement with A+P on page 74.



OCTOBER 17, 2014  
Brockman in conversation with  
Jamillah James.



1



2

In conversation with Jacob Lawrence and Agnes Davis, sponsored by California Black Liberation Caucus (1)

Archway mounted above the entrance of Brockman Gallery (2)

Hiroshima concert in Leimert Park (3)



3

*What inspired the founding of the Brockman Gallery?*

The founding of the gallery was based on a great need for artists of color, underrepresented artists in the community, and African American artists in particular to have a place to show.

Traditionally, we had been limited to opportunities for shows in churches, basements, gymnasiums, and in people's homes. Alonzo and I had experiences in college that pointed to the fact that there were no real professional opportunities for black artists. We decided we would try to fill that gap.

[In 1966,] Alonzo and I had gone on a driving tour of the United States. We went across Texas and into Alabama, Mississippi, Georgia, and up the East Coast. We made a point of stopping at major black colleges and visiting their art departments, looking at their collections, and talking with their professors. While in Jackson, Mississippi, we participated in the March Against Fear – I know it as the 'James Meredith March' – which was the march on the capital and a major civil rights demonstration. The major rallying place was Tougaloo College, just outside Jackson.

In New York, we also had the great opportunity to meet Romare Bearden and go to his studio, and to visit The Studio Museum in Harlem. At the time, we were very young. We didn't really have any first-hand knowledge of any of these African American-owned and -operated businesses – we knew they existed, because we knew to go find them, but we didn't realize the real importance of those institutions and the history behind them. That was the part that really caught fire in our spirit and helped make [the Brockman gallery] happen.



1

*How did you choose its location?*

We moved from Second Avenue and Exposition to a new home in Leimert Park. We became familiar with the area because of the Leimert Theater, which is now the Vision Theater Complex. We would walk there as teenagers; it was the community theater. We had a friend from Chicago, David Bradford, who was at UCLA and living in this area at the time. He



2

CHARLES WHITE (1)  
Photograph from memorial program of Charles White

DALE BROCKMAN DAVIS (2)  
Sax Songs Recorded, 2014  
40 x 20 x 18 in  
Assemblage

Photograph of Agnes Davis (3)

Photographs of Alonzo Davis Sr. (4)



4



3



OPENING NIGHT AT  
BROCKMAN GALLERY, 1967



1

MECLENBURG SERIES, 1986  
Romare Beardon (1)  
Serigraph Reproduction  
Exhibition Invitation

Romare Beardon: Watercolor,  
Collage, Print, 1986 (2)  
Exhibition Invitation

Doyle Lane, Al Porter and John  
Ridelle at Brockman Gallery (3)  
Exhibition Invitation

saw the space for rent at 4334 [Degnan Boulevard] and told us about it. We came and looked at it, talked about it, and presented the idea to my mom and my aunt. One of the first things that came out of Mama's mouth was, 'Well, you need to go take some business classes first.' We were mostly silent during that part of the conversation.

We couldn't have done it without the help of our family. We had two working parents that would kick in money for rent as needed. We were young – I was 20, and Alonzo was 24. We learned to work as a team, based on what our parents had done. We were fortunate to have that model for teamwork, which exists even now.



2



3

What was the response to the first Brockman exhibitions, given that they were cited far from other major art institutions?

The gallery was totally embraced by the community. It was a surprise for them because we were the first African American business on the block; the opportunity came because of the whole white-flight situation. And we had a strong middle-class enclave of people in Leimert Park, Baldwin Hills, and View Park that were supportive.

Many of our successes were because we were building something most people in the community were not familiar with: an art gallery that focused on African American people. So the word got out. It was also [during] the period of the Civil Rights Movement, when people were much more curious than they are now – curious in a different kind of way. We were offering them a major opportunity to see things differently. We were at the right place at the right time, with the right product, with a lot of time to spend with the community. And it worked well.

Why do you think there is renewed interest in the neighborhood now? What do you see as the challenges and rewards of Leimert Park resuming a prominent position in the larger creative landscape of Los Angeles?

This is a very interesting time. I've lived in this community pretty much all my life, and I've watched it



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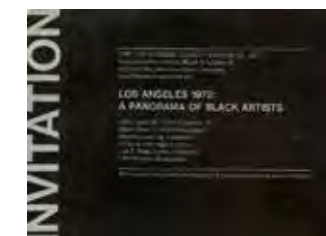
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8



6



7

Brockman Gallery 19th Annual Holiday Exhibit, 1986  
Exhibition Invitation (4)

Brockman Gallery opening Contributing Black  
Artists at Ankrum Gallery (5)

Jacob Lawrence: Recent Works on Paper, 1981  
Exhibition Invitation (6)

Los Angeles 1972: A Panorama of Black Artists,  
1972 at Los Angeles County Museum of Art  
Exhibition Invitation (7)

AL FARROW  
African Man no. 1, 1987 (8)

Eleven from California: Group Exhibition at The  
Studio Museum in Harlem, New York (9)

Noah Purifoy and David Hammons at Brockman  
Gallery, 1969 Exhibition Invitation (10)

Black Art: The Black Experience at Thorne Hall,  
Occidental College, 1971 Exhibition Invitation (11)



CONFRONTATION AT THE BRIDGE, 1981  
Jacob Lawrence  
Serigraph Reproduction  
Exhibition Invitation



Archivist Devon Oder was hired by Art + Practice to support Brockman in the documentation process.

Oder's own work as a photographer can be found at Fourteen30 Contemporary Gallery, in Portland, OR, where she will open a new exhibition, *Vivarium*, in January 2015.

The Brockman Gallery Archive Residency has been generously supported by Angel City Data (A+P Technology Partner) with a custom Filemaker database.  
angelcitydata.com

go through these cycles. I see this moment as a kind of rebirth, a metamorphosis, including the return of whites to the neighborhood.

People are realizing the need for black entrepreneurship and black business ownership. This is not a new concept, but it's a new focus. Based on what has happened to the economy and to the average person, I think people [have begun to] understand how the support of business is critical to the existence and success of communities like this one.

It's wonderful that we have people in place like [Art + Practice Co-Founder] Mark [Bradford], who realize this and have a similar vision, as well as their own personal vision for what can happen here. They are putting their own resources into our community. It's nice to be here watching it, adding to it, and doing whatever I can to make it happen. I'm looking forward to the next decade. It's going to take a while, but [with] the things I see in place, I think we will succeed in a lasting and major way.

*To that end, how did the residency at Art + Practice come to pass?*

I was on a panel with Mark. I had curated part of the [California African American Museum's] 2005 series of exhibitions, *African American Artists in Los Angeles: A Survey*. My job was to focus on artists from the six-

ties through 1979, because I had first-hand working knowledge of many artists in that age group. My exhibition was called *Pathways: 1966-1989*.

Mark came up to me after the panel, and said, 'What you and your brother have done is critically important to me, because you owned your own business. You called the shots. You got to do what you needed to do.'

That was the end of it for a while, but I remembered him because Mark's an unusual kind of guy. He was the second person I ever knew to receive a MacArthur Foundation award – the first being David Hammons – and years later, after Mark had been named a MacArthur winner, I thought, 'I need to put my card in his door.' I had heard he was living in Leimert. I put a card in his door that said 'Congratulations.'

Maybe six months to a year after that, I kept seeing him in the neighborhood. Mark had a history here. He and his mother worked in one of these spaces, when his mom was a cosmetologist. He had seen the [Brockman] gallery as a 12-year-old, looked through the window and realized something was going on here that was really, really different. We had occasional brief conversations. He was always very approachable. And then one day, out of the clear blue, he called me.

He said he had some ideas he'd like to share, and gave me a personal walk-through of some of the spaces [at Art + Practice]. We had a very, very honest stand-up meeting in the parking lot at the end of the tour. It was a perfect opportunity to share ideas freely and honestly. That's when he proposed the idea of an archival project based on Brockman. I finally told Mark, 'There's so much going on here, we need to stop talking. I need to go home and think about this.'

This is one of those things I call magical. It goes beyond that everyday, pragmatic experience we tend to hold dear as the foundation of what goes on in the world. It also gives you an idea of the kind of impact that Brockman had in this community.

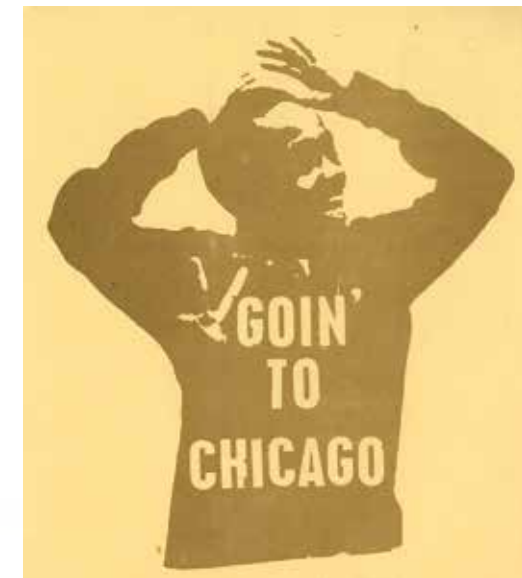
*With the archiving project, what would you project the impact will be on the local community? Scholars have been interested in the gallery since its inception, and have been again with the Hammer Museum's recent exhibition, Now Dig This!: Art and Black Los Angeles 1960–1980.*

I think we have a lot of surprises for the scholars. The scholars have been asleep. The scholars had been looking at everyone else, and now it's catch-up time. There are going to be some revelations. I've already seen the effect of some of them, questions like, 'What? You did that? Oh. Oh, this artist and

this artist – by name – were doing this kind of work, this quality of work, in the sixties and seventies and eighties?' Part of this discussion, and the missing link, is that those of us who are still alive are still working, and we're doing so at a quality level.

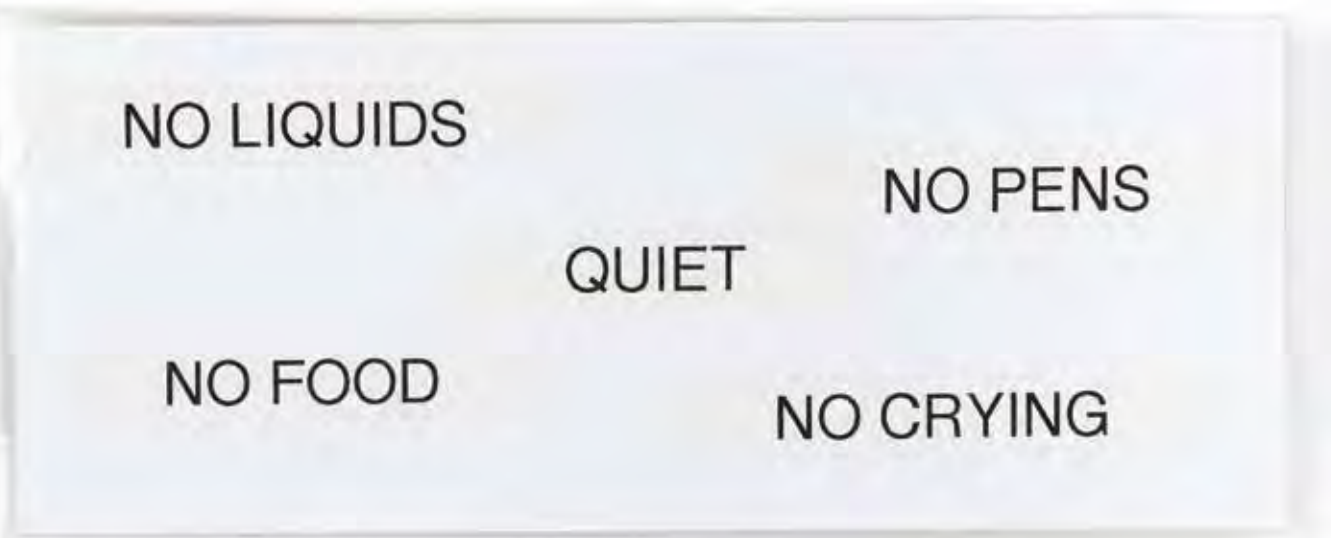
*Now Dig This!* has had a major impact. Reverberations are still being felt. I'm looking beyond these past opportunities to new ones for other artists, younger artists. This archive will be a gift to future generations. There's still a lot to be done. We have a lot of challenges in front of us, but this archive, I hope, will motivate generations of artists and art historians well into the future. +

[artandpractice.org/air](http://artandpractice.org/air)



Goin' To Chicago at The Gallery, Los Angeles (detail)  
Exhibition Invitation

Signage from Brockman Gallery





HAMMER

# Charles Gaines Gridwork 1974–1989

# Charles Gaines

FEBRUARY 7 – MAY 24, 2015

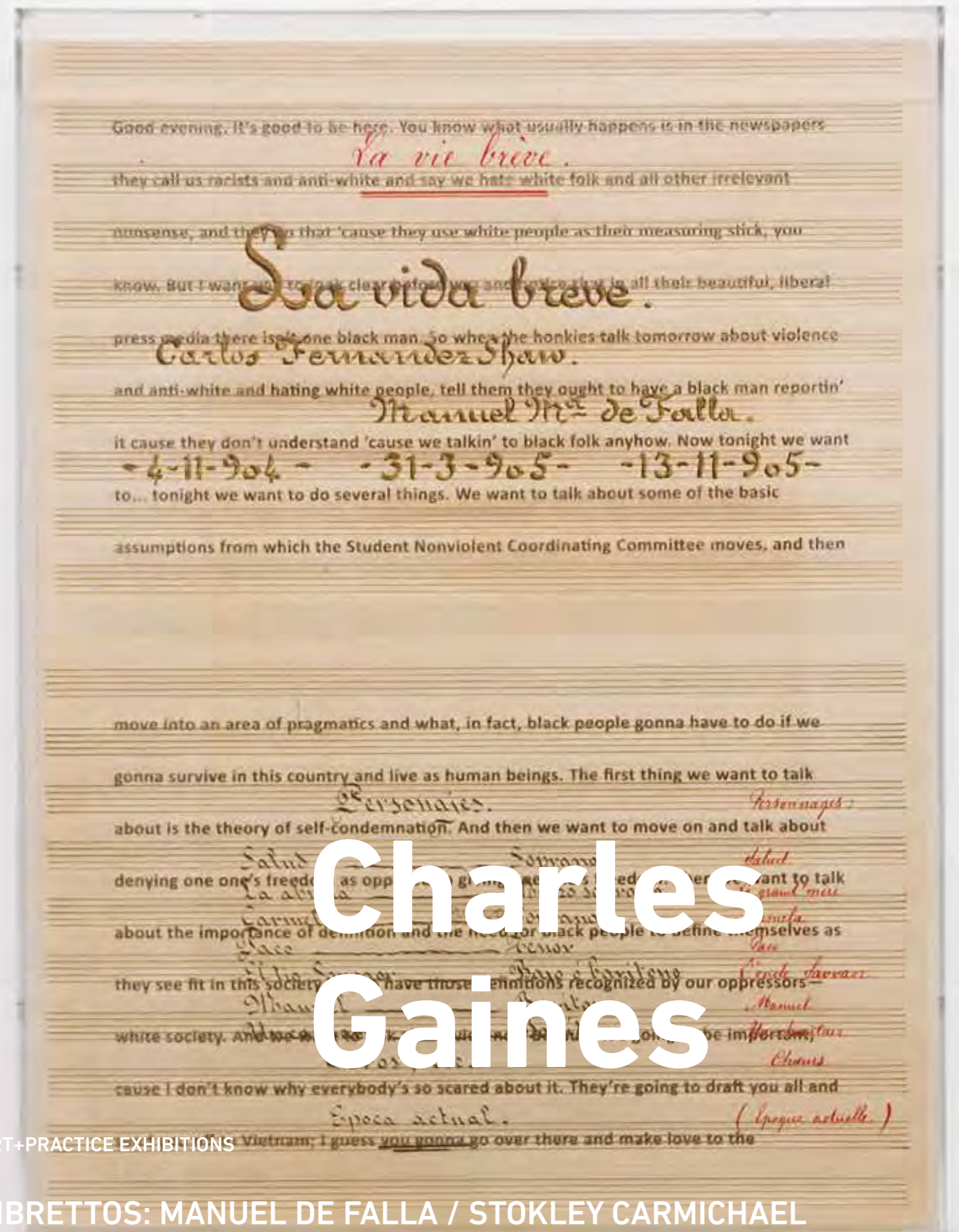
HAMMER MUSEUM Los Angeles hammer.ucla.edu

CHARLES GAINES: GRIDWORK 1974-1989 IS ORGANIZED BY THE STUDIO MUSEUM IN HARLEM AND CURATED BY NAIMA J. KEITH, ASSOCIATE CURATOR. THE HAMMER'S PRESENTATION IS ORGANIZED BY ANNE ELLEGOOD, SENIOR CURATOR, AND JAMILLAH JAMES, ASSISTANT CURATOR.

THE ORGANIZATION OF CHARLES GAINES: GRIDWORK 1974-1989 IS MADE POSSIBLE BY A GRANT FROM THE ANDY WARHOL FOUNDATION FOR THE VISUAL ARTS. THE HAMMER MUSEUM'S PRESENTATION IS GENEROUSLY SUPPORTED BY HEIDI AND ERIK MURKOFF.

CHARLES GAINES: GRIDWORK 1974-1989 IS PRESENTED IN CONJUNCTION WITH CHARLES GAINES: LIBRETTOS: MANUEL DE FALLA/STOKELY CARMICHAEL AT ART + PRACTICE, A NEW ART AND SOCIAL SERVICES NON-PROFIT IN LEIMERT PARK.

NUMBERS AND TREES IV, LANDSCAPE #4, 1989. ACRYLIC SHEET, ACRYLIC PAINT, WATERCOLOR, SILVER GREEN. PHOTOGRAPH. 46 7/8 x 37 7/8 IN. (122.2 x 94.3 CM). COURTESY THE HAMMER MUSEUM, LOS ANGELES. PURCHASE.



ART+PRACTICE EXHIBITIONS

LIBRETTOS: MANUEL DE FALLA / STOKLEY CARMICHAEL

FEBRUARY 28 – MAY 31, 2015

4333 LEIMERT BOULEVARD  
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ARTANDPRACTICE.ORG/EXHIBITIONS

# Meeting of the Minds

## *Convening Consciousness and Culture at EsoWon Books*

Like a good book, a good bookstore's lifeblood is its stories – stacks and stacks of them. Stitch together those stray, day-to-day anecdotes with a clever plot, vivid recurring characters and some unexpected twists, and you just might have something solid, something with real longevity.

LYNELL GEORGE

As the tale of brick-and-mortar retail goes, EsoWon Books' ongoing story is about as twisty as a plot can get. In its 25 years in the trade, despite a wildly inclement business climate rocked by urban unrest, earthquakes, industry shifts, multiple re-locations and recessions, the Southwest L.A. bookstore remains a community hub in the heart of Leimert Park. While its long roster of visiting authors – Toni Morrison, John Edgar Wideman, Octavia Butler, Walter Mosley among them – offers a snapshot and time capsule of African American letters, it isn't only marquee names that hold great import to the bookselling life. As any bookseller would attest, there is an encyclopedia of other crucial factors at play that make a shop not just a "stop," but an essential destination.

If they're moved to, EsoWon's co-proprietors, James Fugate and Tom Hamilton, might run down a list of the shifting series of players who find their way inside the store on any given day: the regulars who wander in to talk politics; the neighbors who pop by perhaps to get the 411 on the Metro project to be built just down the boulevard. There too are local merchants who may race in to make quick change, or even the intermittent drifter who might peek inside the doorway looking to borrow a spoon. Many, they both know, are just in the habit of ducking in to eavesdrop on a spiky on-going conversation, one that can often ricochet from African folklore to international film to breaking news. And too, there's a loyal, core stream of customers who still stop by to discuss, order and buy books – for which both Fugate and Hamilton are deeply grateful.

In an ever-shifting bookselling landscape, creative survival has been crucial to EsoWon's longevity; much of that has come from providing a range of titles, along with a deep knowledge in both the stock itself and their customers' range of interests. The idea though isn't just to ring up a sale and pass back the change; it is to engage and cultivate relationships. And while people far and wide know that both men speak their minds and don't suffer fools, Hamilton and Fugate see their role simply and clearly. "People need a place to come," says Hamilton, "one that feels like their own."

### OCTOBER 2014

James Fugate and Thomas Hamilton at work in EsoWon Bookstore

### CREDITS:

*Meeting of the Minds: Convening Consciousness and Culture at EsoWon Books* was first published by Lynell George and KCET Departures on March 19, 2014.

<http://www.kcet.org/socal/departures/leimert-park/meeting-of-the-minds-convening-consciousness-and-culture-at-esowon-books.html>

The text of the story is reprinted in its entirety with the permission of the author.





James Fulgate, Wynton Marsalis, and Thomas Hamilton at book signing of *Sweet Swing Blues On The Road*  
Photo: Courtesy of EsoWon Bookstore

Wandering into EsoWon, in the middle of a quiet block on Degnan Avenue, in the middle of a quiet afternoon, often feels like entering a story midway. This overcast winter's afternoon is no different: Both Hamilton and Fulgate trade off behind the counter – handselling, as it's called in the trade – talking about books they've read, connecting a customer to something new. Both are avid readers – the deep diving sort – with their varying passions and expertise. "You have to be," says Hamilton, finishing up a transaction of special-order titles, "to do this right, you have to read books and talk about the books."

Scattered around the store, browsers hover over stacks of sale books – jazz, history, fine art, African Studies, biographies, general interest titles that peaked high on newspaper bestseller lists. A man in the corner thumbs through recent arrivals, chanting the name "Keith Sweat" over and over under his breath. Another customer inquires about a book she's special ordered, but instead of just paying and moving on to the next errand, she pulls up a chair to listen in to the conversation.

Over tucked-away speakers bebop soars, and floating against the wall behind the front counter

hangs a brilliantly-hued quilt featuring jazz bassist Esperanza Spalding, handmade by a local artist Ramsess. Next to the register a smiling President Obama bobblehead vigorously nods with the cash drawer's vibration, as if he's offering his own personal "thank you for your business."

Leapfrogging from location to location around Southwest L.A. as their business grew, EsoWon has amassed its own trove of stories – both celebratory and controversial. "People know about us from the newspapers," says Fulgate, meaning both for the big names they've landed for such a small neighborhood venue – President Bill Clinton, Berry Gordy, Muhammad Ali and the late Johnnie Cochran among them – but as well as for their share of public tangles. A 1996 business dispute gathered some momentum in the local news when Fulgate and Hamilton, after signing a lease, lost a slot in Ladera Heights' Ladera Center when it was sold to a partnership that included Magic Johnson. When word floated that the group was looking to bring in a large chain bookstore instead, this David went after Goliath and found its power in the press. (The mega-chain rumor never came to fruition.)

Then too there's a still-talked about 2002 dust-up that grew out of newspaper literary flap: the late L.A. poet Wanda Coleman was sent word that she



2



1



3

Nikki Giovanni (1)

Neely Fuller, Jr. at book signing of *The Code* (2)

Annette Gordon Reed and Vernon Jordan at the book signing of *Vernon Can Read! A Memoir* (3)

All photos: Courtesy of EsoWon Bookstore



Randell Robinson at the book signing of *The Debt*

Ruby Dee at the book signing of *My One Good Nerve*

Facing Page:  
Spike Lee at the book signing of *Do the Right Thing*  
All photos: Courtesy of EsoWon Bookstore



was “not welcome” to take part in a group reading event at the bookstore after a negative review she’d written about a collection of Maya Angelou’s poems appeared in the *Los Angeles Times*. Word of EsoWon’s decision didn’t just make the local rounds, but circled the globe. People took sides. Opinions were polarized. The proprietors held their ground: “We just felt it was a personal attack,” Fugate reflects. “And,” adds Hamilton, “we felt strongly: there are consequences.” Keep thumbing through, there are other chapters: counter-narratives, flip sides. For many authors who routinely stop in to lecture, read, or sign, EsoWon’s draw is both its personal touch and the powerful symbolism the shop represents: an independent black-owned bookstore dedicated, but not exclusive, to the stories of people of the African diaspora. Its role within and connection to the community’s pulse is one of its fundamental draws.

Case in point: you’d be hard pressed to find another spot in Los Angeles where a standard book signing might feature Wynton Marsalis toting his trumpet, and a customer, on a whim, bringing by a pot of gumbo to help the hours-long line of customers pass the time. Or an indelible afternoon with Muhammad Ali who, as Fugate recalls, was also in it for the long haul. “He sat here, from one to six, and said, ‘I’m going to sign every book.’ There were about 300 of them. And he did.” This loyalty, both Hamilton and Fugate have come





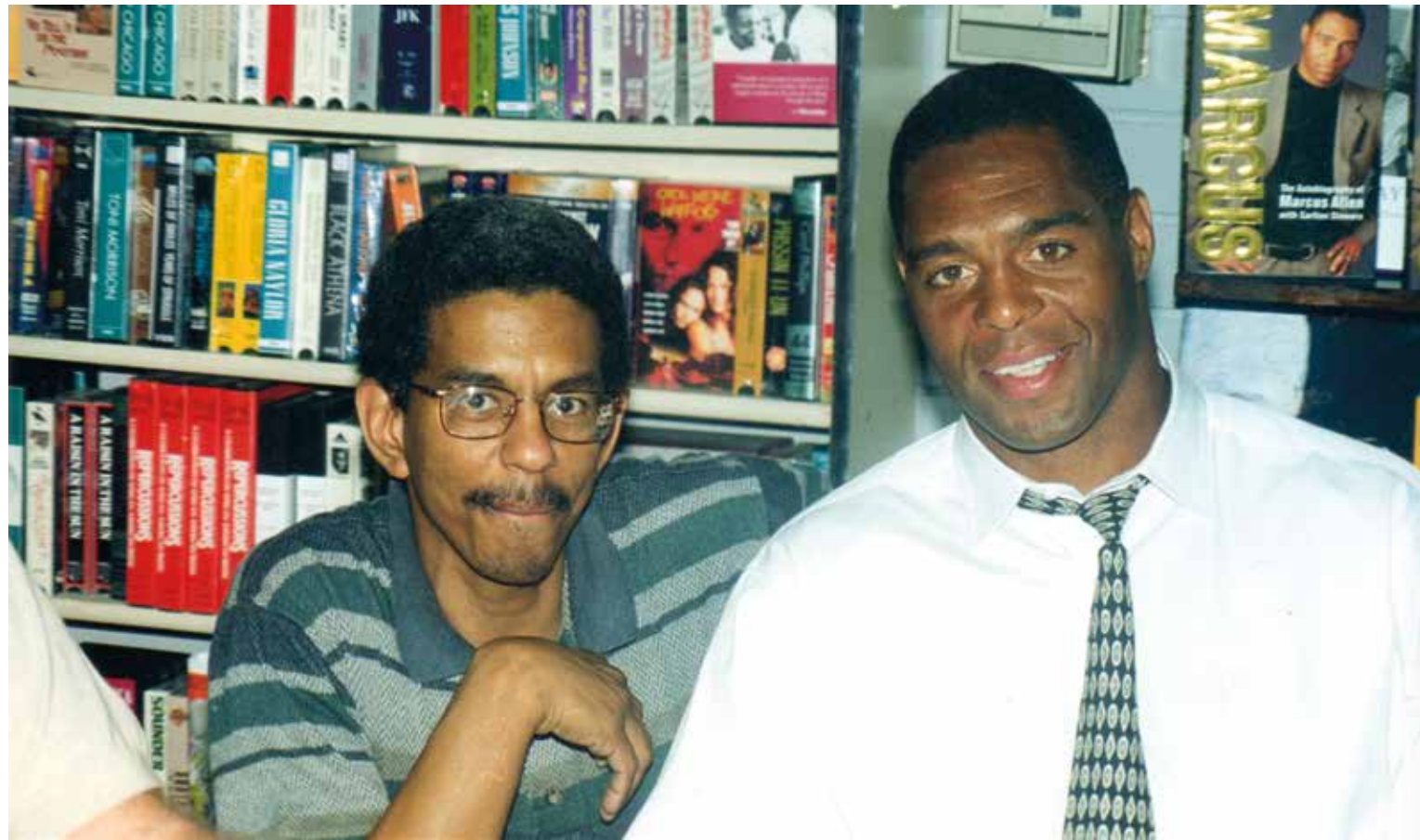
**NINE LIVES  
OF A  
BLACK  
PANTHER**  
WAYNE PHARR

*Howling Monk*  
**EsoWon**  
NOW AT ESOWON BOOKS!

OCTOBER 2014  
James Fulgate and Thomas Hamilton  
at work at EsoWon Bookstore



FEBRUARY 2015  
EsoWon Bookstore's new retail location and lecture space will open at 4332 Degnan Blvd. (across the street from their current location)



James Fulgate and Marcus Allen at the book signing of *Marcus with Carlton Stowers*  
All photos: Courtesy of EsoWon Bookstore



EsoWon Book Store Logo, drawn circa 1993

**WHAT DOES ESOWON MEAN?**  
"It's the African name for Aswan, Egypt. Asamo, who was our third partner liked the idea that [the store] was called Aswan, Egypt. But it was also the Valley of the Kings, because they have all of these pyramids that are under the Aswan Dam. When it was built, they were submerged under there."

We came up with this slogan, "As water flows over rocks, so does knowledge."

to know, isn't empty symbolism; the emotional associations also run deep. Writer Walter Mosley, born in Los Angeles but East Coast-based, routinely carves out time to appear at the store. Not for the crowds, which can be quite large, but for sentimental reasons. "He said it was the last place that his father saw him read," says Fugate. In Mosley's estimation, EsoWon is not simply a business but a building block of a deep memory. This is a significant detail, a key to understanding the psyche of the city and its dwellers. Angelenos often talk about how swiftly and radically the city physically changes – through out-migration, re-development or gentrification – but what's not often voiced, expansively and with nuance, is what happens to a sense of community when there is a dramatic shift in demographics. Particularly for African-American Angelenos (whose population county-wide, according to 2012 census stats, dipped below 10%) the concept of community has become a much more diffused notion. Having a physical gathering spot that feels like home felt like a rare, if not vanishing, possibility.

Providing just that sort of community touchstone was the impetus behind EsoWon. Back in the late '80s, Fugate, who had been managing a college bookstore in Detroit, decided to make a leap and move west to work at the company's Compton College outlet. Not long after, a curious Hamilton happened to wander in. "I was looking specifically for some books by Dr.

Ben – Yosef A. A. ben-Jochannan – "Black Man of the Nile and His Family," Hamilton recalls, "and also books by J. A. Rogers. Some people told me that they had them up there." That afternoon while Hamilton was perusing the stacks, his backpack slung across his shoulders, one of the clerks alerted Fugate. "He said, 'There's a brother in the black book section with a backpack,'" Fugate remembers. "I walked by, took a look and said, 'You don't have to worry about that guy at all. He's one of us. He's sitting up there smiling at the books. He's just as nuts as we are.'"

After a while Fugate and Hamilton got talking about books, but also, more importantly, about ideas. Fugate had been carting the campus store's books out to events around greater Los Angeles and gathering attention for all the difficult-to-find titles he was selling – titles few local bookstores (with the exception of the venerable Aquarian Books, L.A.'s then-longstanding, destination black bookstore) might carry. But it was more than a full-time job – five days of the week in the store, plus weekends selling for no overtime pay. As it turned out, Hamilton and a friend, Asoma Nkwanta, had been piecing out a plan to open a bookstore, and so they invited Fugate in to consult – a meeting that, over time, evolved into the sketches of a plan for the three to partner.

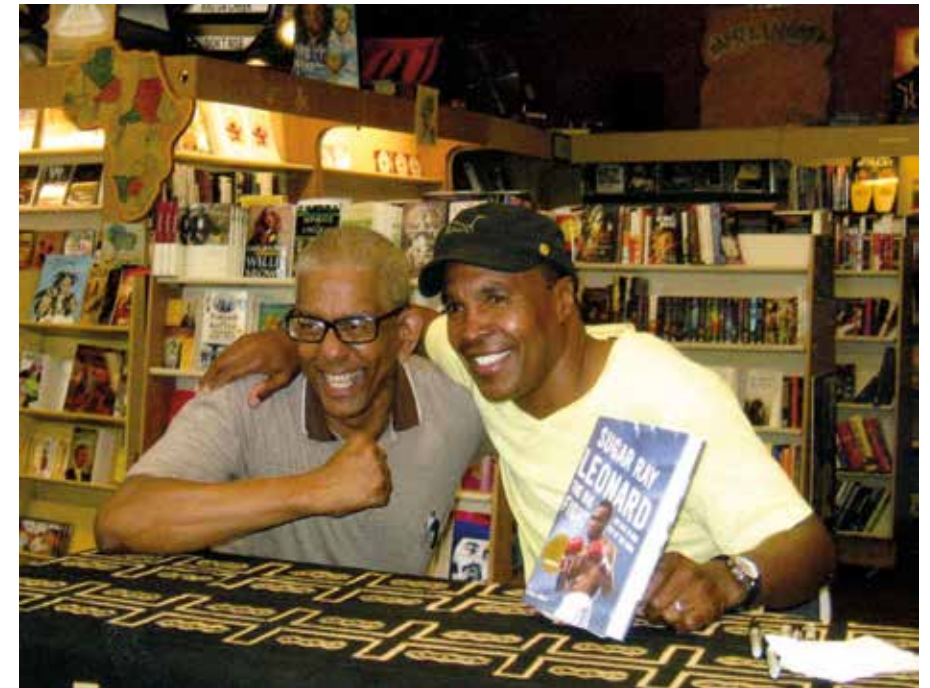
In October 1988, they collectively began implementing the plan in stages. First selling at festivals

or events on weekends, building a reputation; after that the venture began to take on a life of its own. "We had so many books, we couldn't even get to them," says Hamilton. "We were forever going into crates, trying to find things people were looking for. We needed a place. We wanted stacks for books. We needed shelves to put them on."

They decided to make the next leap. "We were throwing possible names around – put three in the hat," Fugate recalls. They wanted a name that reflected their mission. The slip they pulled from the hat read "EsoWon." As Hamilton remembers it, it was a place that his friend Nkwana had traveled to, a place along the Nile. "He was struck by its quiet. Its peacefulness. Almost like a library." It seemed fitting.

Locating a small storefront on Slauson near Plymouth in Inglewood, they signed a lease, began unpacking their crates, and prepared for business. All three kept their full-time jobs but traded off covering late afternoon, post-day-job shifts and weekends. But, as Fugate remembers it, "It became obvious pretty soon, from the demand," that it was time to just jump in – all the way.

Putting themselves on the map – literally – was key to fixing them in customers' consciousness. It was crucial to have a spot where patrons could stop by in a pinch or on a whim. The range of titles and depth of the stock were important, but even more so was the message that there was a place to go to find books that didn't just entertain, but helped to engage and educate and perhaps – most crucially – contextualize. For patrons, the side-benefit of four walls and a roof symbolized a safe haven, a place where discussion



James Fulgate and Sugar Ray Leonard at the book signing of *The Big Fight: My Life In and Out of the Ring* (1)

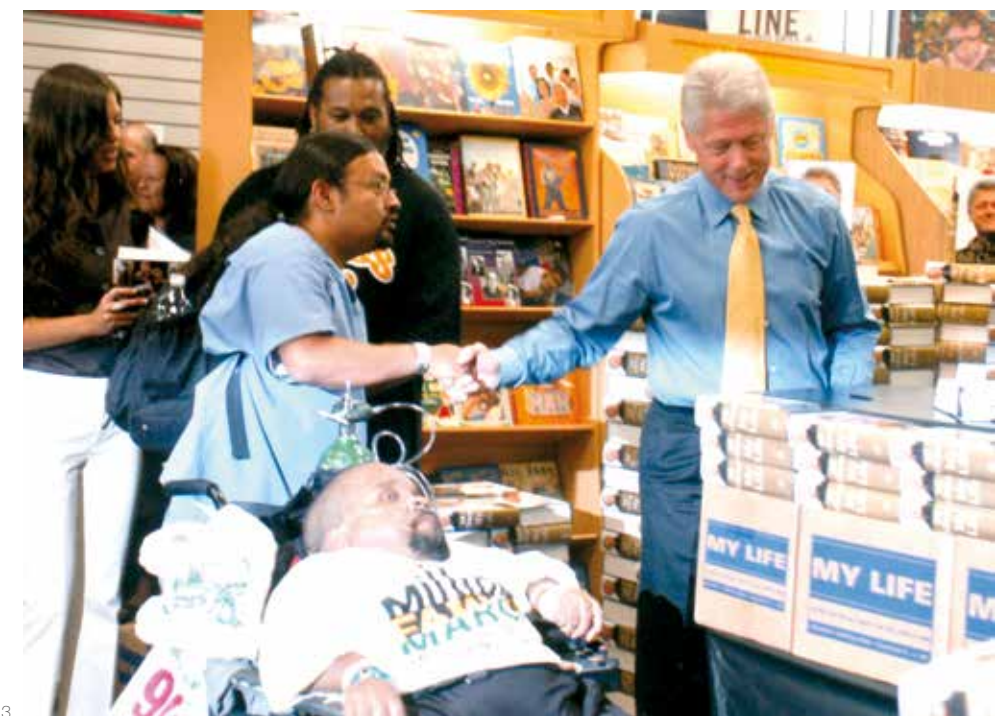
Little Jimmy Scott at book signing of *Faith in Time: The Life of Jimmy Scott* (2)

Bill Clinton and Rodney Murray at book signing of *My Life* (3)

and debate could flow freely in the aisles, not just after a provocative in-store reading but even following the big headline news of the day. "One guy," says Hamilton, "came up to to me recently and said that we're like a barber shop. Except we don't cut hair." The little village of shops on Degnan Boulevard in Leimert Park had long been on their radar – in fact, says Fugate, since the very beginning. Back in the late '80s the block was alive with art galleries, jazz, and late-night cafes, and organic meeting spots where



2



3

L.A.'s black art and intellectual life was in full bloom; it seemed a perfect fit for a black bookstore. But the timing was off. Early on, they lost out on one spot. Later, there weren't any properties available that had the space they might need for their growing stock. That would change after their rent spiked at their third location on La Brea near Coliseum – Fugate and Hamilton looped back to Leimert Park and took over the storefront that used to house Brian Breye's curio-rich Museum in Black. (And, two years ago, they once again relocated to a storefront a few feet down the block.)

But after 1992's civil unrest, Leimert Park Village took a nasty hit economically, and that lively, easy vibe was difficult to sustain. To be sure, there are long-standing businesses with loyal followings dotted along the avenue – Gallery Plus and Sika among them. And while there have been some neighborhood cultural or performance stalwarts, like Ben Caldwell at KAOS Network, Fernando Pullum Community Art Center, or the struggling but still present World Stage, Leimert Park has had trouble regaining that momentum and seemed to be receding deeply into a shadow of a dream.

The move to Leimert in 2006 has been tough on EsoWon as a business for a complex set of reasons. "While you get folks who make it a point to stop in when they are travelling from New York or Atlanta, you also have some [local] customers who won't make that trip with you – even if it is just a few miles away," says Hamilton. Also, Fugate explains, the surrounding businesses are not all in sync in terms of dedicated operating days and hours, so there isn't always a regular flow of customer traffic coming through. "When we were back on La Brea we got a lot of walk, in traffic and other businesses were at least open until 8 p.m." The quiet street and

intermittent hours, in terms of customer expectation and retention, all takes its toll on the till.

Of course, the publishing landscape has also dramatically re-made itself since the late '80s. "Publishers have stopped sending people on tour as regularly. And Bebe [Moore Campbell] and E. Lynn [Harris] dying, who both had huge followings, had an effect. These were authors who did really well here in the store," says Fugate. "And an author like Eric Jerome Dickey, who has 10 or 15 books, doesn't need to tour necessarily." Each shift, small and large, they both agree, has to be factored in, a subtraction or concession made.

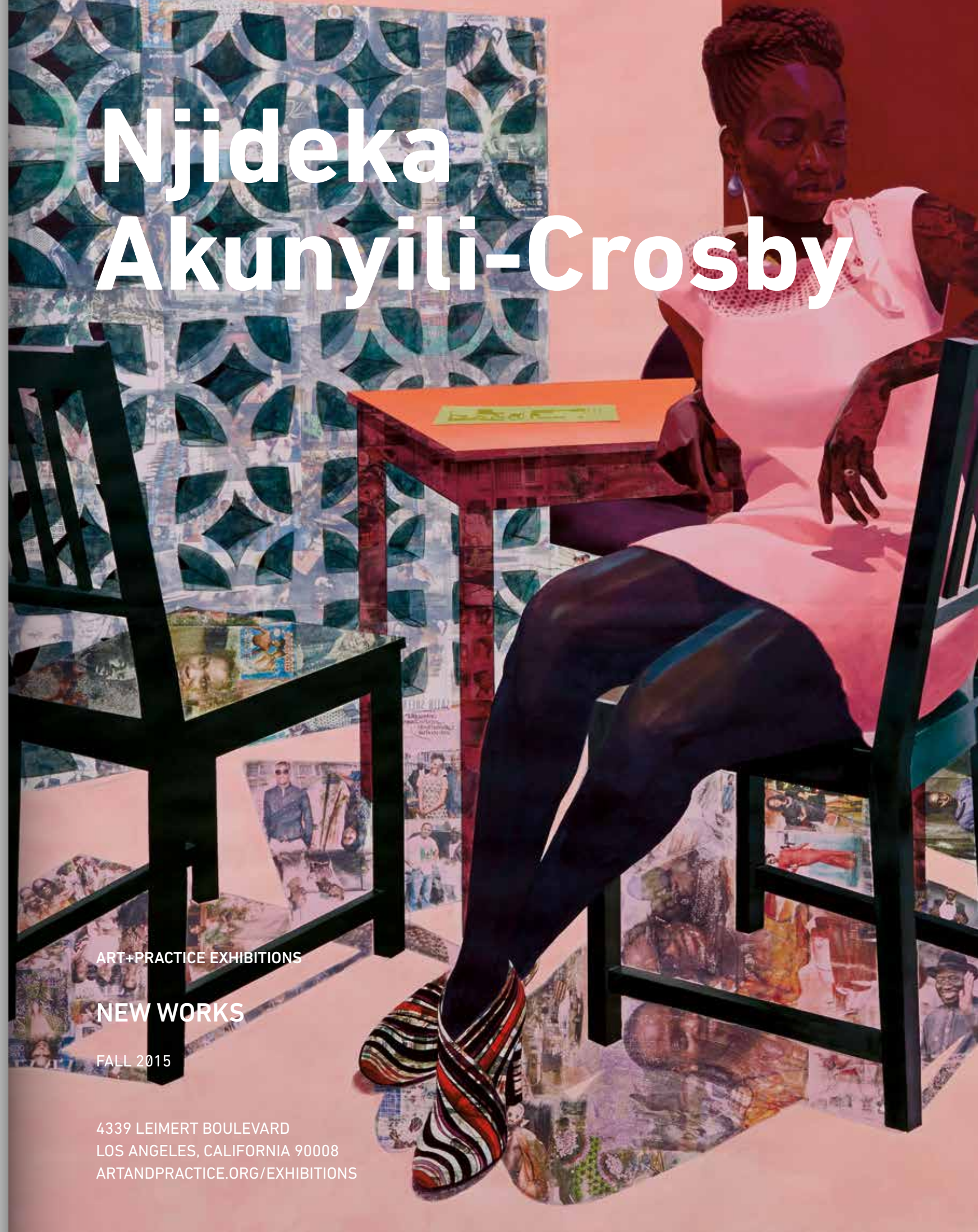
Despite it, they still bring in solid crowds with a full event calendar. A recent appearance by professor Gerald Horne packed in more than 100 people, and *Atlantic* magazine senior editor and columnist, Ta-Nehisi Coates, via his blog and other social media, brought in a lively book-buying crowd. Both are guardedly hopeful about the recent signs of regeneration blooming both along Degnan and Leimert Boulevard. Not long ago singer Barbara Morrison began booking acts at her Performing Arts Center, and even more recently, a new contemporary fine art gallery, Papillion, opened up across the way on Degnan. Just a stone's throw away, on Leimert Boulevard, long-time tenant, artist Mark Bradford, has been at work re-interpreting a necklace of quaint storefronts into an arts complex.

Hamilton and Fugate are considering the possibilities about what the addition of Metro portals might do – who it could bring and what it might mean for a re-interpretation of this block, how this little stretch of businesses might change, for better or worse. But that doesn't mean altering their master plan. If anything, in all this time unpacking, shelving and selling books, they've learned whatever's tucked around the corner is just another plot twist; another turn of the page. In uncertain waters, as in uncertain times, people are looking for a point of reference, some metaphorical anchor: "People need something familiar, sometimes they need a place to come," echoes Hamilton. "People need to know and feel, no matter what, 'This is still our store.'" +

[esowonbookstore.com](http://esowonbookstore.com)  
[artandpractice.org/partners](http://artandpractice.org/partners)



Lisa Jones at the book signing of *Bulletproof Diva* Courtesy of EsoWon Bookstore



# Njideka Akunyili-Crosby

ART+PRACTICE EXHIBITIONS

NEW WORKS

FALL 2015

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# DALE BROCKMAN DAVIS AALIA BROWN SANDY RODRIGUEZ

## ART+PRACTICE ARTISTS-IN-RESIDENCE EXHIBITION

CURATED BY JAMILLAH JAMES, HAMMER MUSEUM  
APRIL 21 – DECEMBER 09, 2015

4339 LEIMERT BOULEVARD  
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# ARTISTS IN RESIDENCE PROGRAM '14

The Artists-in-Residence program is a 14-month residency program offered to professional artists living and working in Los Angeles. Artists receive free, non-living studio space for development of new work. The residency will culminate in an exhibition of residents' work. For more information about the program and to learn more about the artists, visit [artandpractice.org/air](http://artandpractice.org/air).



AALIA BROWN

Sculptor Aalia Brown was born in Pakistan and raised in Poland, Russia, and the United States. She received her MFA in sculpture from University of California, Los Angeles, BFA in photography and BA in Art History from the University of Washington. Living and working in Los Angeles, Brown roots her artistic practice in a scavenging, nomadic mode of collecting, sorting, and discarding.



DALE BROCKMAN DAVIS

Multidisciplinary artist Dale Brockman Davis is an artist, teacher, community arts activist, and curator. Co-founder with brother Alonzo Brockman Davis of the Brockman Gallery, Davis' multimedia work centers around the use of color, texture, and form to capture histories of the past. Davis has exhibited in numerous exhibitions, galleries, and contemporary art forums including The Hammer Museum, Roberts & Tilton Gallery, San Luis Obispo Museum of Art, Watts Towers Art Center, and California African American Museum. Dale has been awarded Outstanding Cultural Contributions by Los Angeles Councilmember Bernard Parks in 2012, Outstanding Cultural Contributions by former Los Angeles Mayor Villaraigosa in 2009, and received an acknowledgement for his cultural contributions to the community from the California State Senate in 1997.

Brockman is featured in *Filling in the Gaps*, pp.36-43



SANDY RODRIGUEZ

Painter and museum educator Sandy Rodriguez has a passion for contributing to the cultural vitality of the communities in which she lives and works. As a painter, Rodriguez focuses her work on the Los Angeles urban landscape, capturing moments of transformation. In her social practice, Rodriguez collaborates with communities, artists, and collections by designing and implementing interdisciplinary art education projects for Los Angeles museums, schools, and community-based nonprofits. Rodriguez has participated in many public projects, solo exhibitions, and selected museum and gallery exhibitions at institutions such as the Museum of Contemporary San Diego, Skirball Cultural Center, Pacific Design Center, and Barnsdall Art Park. She received her BFA from the California Institute of the Arts.



## Aalia Brown

I use the studio as a space not unlike a lab, where language, history, and narratives of power get taken apart, reduced, expanded, and aggregated to engage the distance between the viewer and the artist, and how we make meaning. My process is rooted in a scavenging, nomadic mode of collecting, sorting and discarding. Materials are collected and organized long before they are used in sculpture and paintings. In a similar way, my work builds up slowly over time. Over the past year, this slow process has shifted my focus from figurative sculpture to a performance-based working method.

Whereas in previous bodies of work I drew from the history of art, *TENT SHOW QUEEN* marks a shift in the way I come to my subjects. I will be considering the intersection of British, 60s rock n' roll and its appropriation of American Blues, alongside East African kangas and its lineage via the iconic batik (itself a process of appropriation and adoption).

I believe that meaning can be made under conditions of uncertainty and ambivalence. I want to be clear – I am not really sure what this point of intersection means. I am more interested in the language produced under these considerations. What hasn't worked for me in the past is hanging my process on the history of art. While I think working through what others have made was a good way to get a language of my own fired up – a language which questions power structures and our interpretations and appropriations of them – now I turn to larger, more complicated situations and considerations that exist in the larger world we live in.

EQUESTRIAN STATUE OF DAN FLAVIN (TO TELL SOMEONE THE TRUTH MIGHT BE TO THINK THAT YOU KNOW BETTER (INCOMPLETE OPEN CUBE)), 2013  
 Courtesy of the Artist

Facing Page:  
 MONOCHROME GALOMANIAC, 2013  
 Courtesy of the Artist





DEGNAN AND  
W.41ST STREET, 2014 (in progress)  
Oil on canvas  
36 x 48 inches  
Courtesy of the Artist



SANDY RODRIGUEZ  
at work in AIR studio #2

W.43RD STREET, 2014 (in progress)  
Oil on canvas  
36 x 48 in  
Courtesy of the Artist

## Sandy Rodriguez

My work examines Los Angeles urban landscapes in moments of transformation. My painted subjects include: working class communities in redevelopment, raging wildfires, smog-induced Technicolor sunsets, foggy views of coastal communities, and aerial views of Los Angeles at night.

In 2013, my painting *Fire Tornado* was featured in *Freeway Studies #1* in *This Side of the 405 Billboard Project* for Ben Maltz Gallery. *Fire Tornado* is a loosely painted view of a charred Los Angeles hillside in silhouette with palms and disintegrating eucalyptus trees that stand in sharp contrast with swirling cadmium orange and yellow flames set against the smoky twilight sky. The billboard was situated above a Starbucks and located at a very busy intersection

near the 405 and 90 freeway entrances. At dawn and dusk it disappeared into the silhouette of telephone poles, cable lines, palm trees, and neighboring lots under construction; thus, *Fire Tornado* became part of the landscape in which it was set. Currently a mural print of my work is on view in Pershing Square with Art-Square Gallery. This outdoor exhibition features a 8.5' x 8.5' vinyl print of my *Downtown Muse No.1*. This painting is a view of the downtown skyline from a rooftop in the redeveloped Arts District. The installation is viewable from the corner of Sixth and Hill Streets. Witnessing my work interacting with the built environment has inspired me to pursue site-specific projects in Los Angeles in this year ahead.



KAOS NETWORK, 2014 (in progress)  
 Oil on Canvas  
 36 x 48 inches  
 Courtesy of the Artist



ART + PRACTICE  
 FOUNDATION, 2014 (in progress)  
 Oil on Canvas  
 24 x 36 in  
 Courtesy of the Artist

Venice Fishing Pier No. 1, 2013  
 Oil on Canvas  
 15 x 15 in  
 Courtesy of the Artist

# HAMMER MUSEUM

## Program Partner

The Hammer Museum is a free university art museum committed to exploring the art of both the past and the present through its collections, exhibitions, and programs. Through its dynamic exhibitions, the Museum is committed to promoting cultural understanding, to introducing the work of underrepresented artists, and to championing the art and artists who challenge us to see the world in a new light. In its role as a cultural center, the Museum endeavors to be a vibrant intellectual forum for the exploration of cultural, political, and social issues. In March 2014, the Hammer Museum was awarded a two-year grant from the James Irvine Foundation to create a Public Engagement Partnership with A+P, and to support a series of exhibitions and public programs on the A+P campus.



I met Mark Bradford in 2001 when his work was in *Snapshot: New Art from Los Angeles*, an exhibition at the Hammer Museum. I knew almost immediately that he was destined to have a great future, and also to be a great friend. I've followed his work closely since then and have seen it develop in extraordinary ways. Though Mark has been rightfully showered with accolades and has led a truly international career, he has always remained committed to his community, and in particular Leimert Park, where he spent a great deal of time as a child.

A few years ago, Mark told me he wanted to create a place for foster youth that combined practical skill-building with a space for the presentation of world-class art. This new project, to be realized in Leimert Park, seemed so naturally aligned with his artistic practice and so deeply meaningful that I couldn't imagine it being anything less than a monumental success.

Over the course of our many discussions about this project, which we now know as Art + Practice, Mark and I both began to sense that the Hammer could play a pivotal role in creating an exhibition program and in helping develop the new nonprofit more broadly. Simultaneously, at the Hammer, we had been thinking of ways to extend our acclaimed Public Engagement program beyond the museum's walls.

Thanks to a generous grant from the James Irvine Foundation, we were able to do just that, launching our first Public Engagement Partnership with A+P, which kicked off in the planning phases in spring of 2014. Through fall of 2016, the museum will not only curate exhibitions at A+P, but will also serve as a resource to Mark and his team, providing strategic guidance on matters ranging from communications planning to gallery management.

It has been an honor and a pleasure to collaborate with Mark Bradford and his co-founders, Allan DiCastro and Eileen Norton, on Art + Practice. Not only have my team and I appreciated the opportunity to work so closely with a remarkable artist, but we've also very much enjoyed the process of getting to get to know Leimert Park and its residents, which has been an important priority within the Partnership. We look forward to deepening our relationships in this neighborhood and to many years of exchange among, the museum, A+P, and the community.

Ann Philbin  
Director, Hammer Museum



Facing Page:  
Construction of A+P's exhibition space. Once completed, the space will consist of two spaces: the main exhibition space (1,000 sq.ft.) and a projection room (500 sq.ft.)

# JAMILLAH JAMES

*As told to Mark Bradford*



Jamillah James is Assistant Curator at the Hammer Museum in Los Angeles. Her interests include other histories of abstraction, theorizing a queer aesthetic, and comedy in art. She is also deeply committed to exhibition-making as a form of pedagogy and social engagement. Before coming to the Hammer, James held positions at The Studio Museum in Harlem, the Queens Museum, and the Hyde Park Art Center, Chicago, and independently organized exhibitions, performances, and programs in Brooklyn, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Chicago. James has been a visiting lecturer and critic at the Rhode Island School of Design, Hunter College, the School of Visual Arts, and the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, among others.

I arrived in Los Angeles four months ago from New York, where I had worked at both The Studio Museum in Harlem and the Queens Museum. I began thinking about being a curator while doing arts administration at Columbia College, a liberal arts college in Chicago. Columbia was in the universe of a number of local schools with a strong visual arts focus, including the School of the Art Institute and the University of Illinois at Chicago. For a while I thought I was going to be an artist myself, which was a complete disaster of epic proportions. I was interested in sculpture, but I was a B student in it, which wasn't quite good enough. It was through the encouragement of a professor at the time that I started to refocus my energies on art history.

At first, I was very committed to working on art theory, immersing myself in critical race theory, feminist theory, and new media from the 1960s to the present. After a certain point, though, I began to realize that working academically may not be the best fit for me, because I always had concerns about the tone of my writing, and wanted it to be accessible and not too academic. It was through my exposure to a few different exhibitions that I began to pivot my thinking towards being a curator. Creating exhibitions was something I found to be a more accessible form than writing about art. Not everyone is going to pick up an issue of *Artforum*; people are more inclined to go to museums if they can.

Even though my mother and I lived close to New York, I didn't go to museums much as a child. Even then, in the 1980s and 1990s, it was cost-prohibitive to attend them with any regularity. I would occasionally go to the Newark Museum in New Jersey, which is an incredible resource, or take field trips to the Metropolitan Museum of Art or the Museum of Modern Art. One day when I was 15 or 16, my mom and I decided to have a 'girls' day' in Soho. At that time, the Guggenheim operated a downtown outpost, the Guggenheim Soho, which has long since closed. That was my first major interaction with modern art that wasn't all painting. That day, I discovered what I now know to be works by Jenny Holzer, Nam June Paik, and Bruce Nauman – artists I would later study as a young art history student. Performance, video, and new media were forms I wasn't really familiar with at that moment. It was an eye-opening experience of the possibilities and different ways that art can be made.

In high school, I was a part of the media production class, and we were always making videos and TV shows for our local public-access channel. Moving image was always interesting to me, and

remains so in both an art-specific and popular context. By virtue of what our daily lives are like now, we're always looking at a screen, whether on our phone, on a computer, or on TV. It's important to get younger people interested in art and in thinking of art as a viable option for work. One way of doing so is by introducing elements of the familiar, which helps redefine what is traditionally understood as 'art.' I appreciate art that is less didactic, where its center and edges are a bit diffused. The quieter or more subversive gestures, which challenge our ability to form language to describe them, are most potent. Abstraction for me is an entryway – a point of departure.

My mother studied to be a musician, which, as a profession, is variably lucrative. When I told her I wanted to do visual art, first as an artist, then as an art historian/theorist, and later as a curator, she had to make a number of leaps before lending her full support. I think the transformational moment came during a visit to The Studio Museum in 2005, while the exhibition *Frequency* was on view. Bringing her to a black-founded institution in Harlem and showing her art made by black artists helped her reconsider my desire to enter into this field. When organizations like Art + Practice start up in historically black neighborhoods, it opens up a whole slew of possibility for an audience that may not be broadly thinking about these things, nor even see a place for themselves within the art world as a participant or practitioner.

Even art history students take specialty classes, like African American Art and feminist art, in order to piece together a view parallel to the Eurocentric, male-dominated art narrative. After I finished school, I stopped looking at art altogether for a while. There were a lot of factors that influenced this; I did other types of work, and had other priorities. There were still moments of exposure that steered me in the direction I find myself in today. Seeing Hammer Museum Chief Curator Connie Butler's *WACK! Art and the Feminist Revolution* show at MoMA PS1 in 2008 was hugely inspirational for me. Shortly afterwards, I moved to Baltimore, where I began working more actively as a curator. There was plenty of space in Baltimore, and enough enthusiasm to sustain a burgeoning independent career. Seeing all of the practices Butler brought together, from all different women, was inspirational for me. I had never heard of performance artist and sculptor Senga Nengudi or filmmaker Barbara Hammer before seeing the show. A whole history was revealed to me in that instance. Butler is committed to showing artists who are under-exhibited or under-recognized, as well as



to poking holes in that grand narrative so others can get inside it.

That's what I hope to do with my own curatorial practice: to open things up whenever possible, and to account for absences along the way. Part of my project as a curator is being an activist of sorts. But if I can effect change from working on the inside of academia, or the institution, that's where I want to be. In my early twenties, I worked with alternative spaces in Chicago, where we booked music, threw parties, and had screenings and exhibitions. We created a scene and formed a community – a safe space for people who didn't feel as if they fit in.

With this partnership between Art + Practice and the Hammer, I'm hoping audiences that visit – be they from Leimert Park or from places further afield – will feel that this is a space for them, a place to belong. A+P is bringing world-class contemporary artists, scholars, and thinkers to the neighborhood, while also promoting new ideas, fresh ways of thinking and looking, and a new model for the art or social service nonprofit. Access to cultural spaces such as

these should be a right, not a privilege of a few. The Hammer and Art + Practice are both free, which is not the case for all institutions. Some folks, if given the choice between using money to cook dinner or going to the museum, will choose the former. It's unfortunate, but thankfully both of our organizations are taking steps to correct this. Our desire is to produce exhibitions and programs that challenge long-held conceptions of what art can be, and who artists are, while re-inscribing this community's significance and historical impact in the larger dialogue happening in Los Angeles. +


# John Outterbridge



ART+PRACTICE EXHIBITIONS

WINTER 2015

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# NEIGHBORHOOD NOTEBOOK: Ben Caldwell

*Echoes of Vietnam*

The first part of an ongoing series of exposés on artists and social workers in Leimert Park, Art + Practice is honored to share a selection of images taken during the War in Vietnam by Ben Caldwell, founder and director of KAOS Network A Family Business.

Arts educator and independent filmmaker Ben Caldwell grew up assisting his grandfather, who projected movies at a small theater in New Mexico. His passion for the visual arts led him to study film at UCLA and reside in the neighborhood of Leimert Park, epicenter for the African American art scene in Los Angeles. After teaching film and video at Howard University in Washington, D.C. from 1981-1984, Caldwell returned to Leimert Park to create an independent studio for video production and experimentation that became the KAOS Network, a community arts center providing digital arts, media arts, and multimedia training. It remains the only organization of its kind in South Central Los Angeles that offers courses in video production, animation, web development, video conferencing, and Internet exploration. Its legendary *Project Blowed*, a weekly open-mic workshop, gave birth to rappers and rap groups such as Aceyalone, Medusa, Busdriver, Freestyle Fellowship, and Jurassic Five.

Caldwell's films often trace historical and cultural connections. *Eyewitness: Reflections of Malcolm X & the O.A.A.U.* (2006) presents the Harlem reunion of ex-members of the Organization of Afro-American Unity. *La Buena Vida (The Good Life)* (2008), filmed over the course of three years while Caldwell taught at CalArts, documents cultural exchanges between a group of L.A. hip hop artists and musicians and their counterparts in Havana, Cuba.

ON DETAIL GOING BETWEEN  
CAMP ENARI AND KON TUM,  
VIETNAM, 1968  
35mm Film Color Print  
5 x 3.5 in



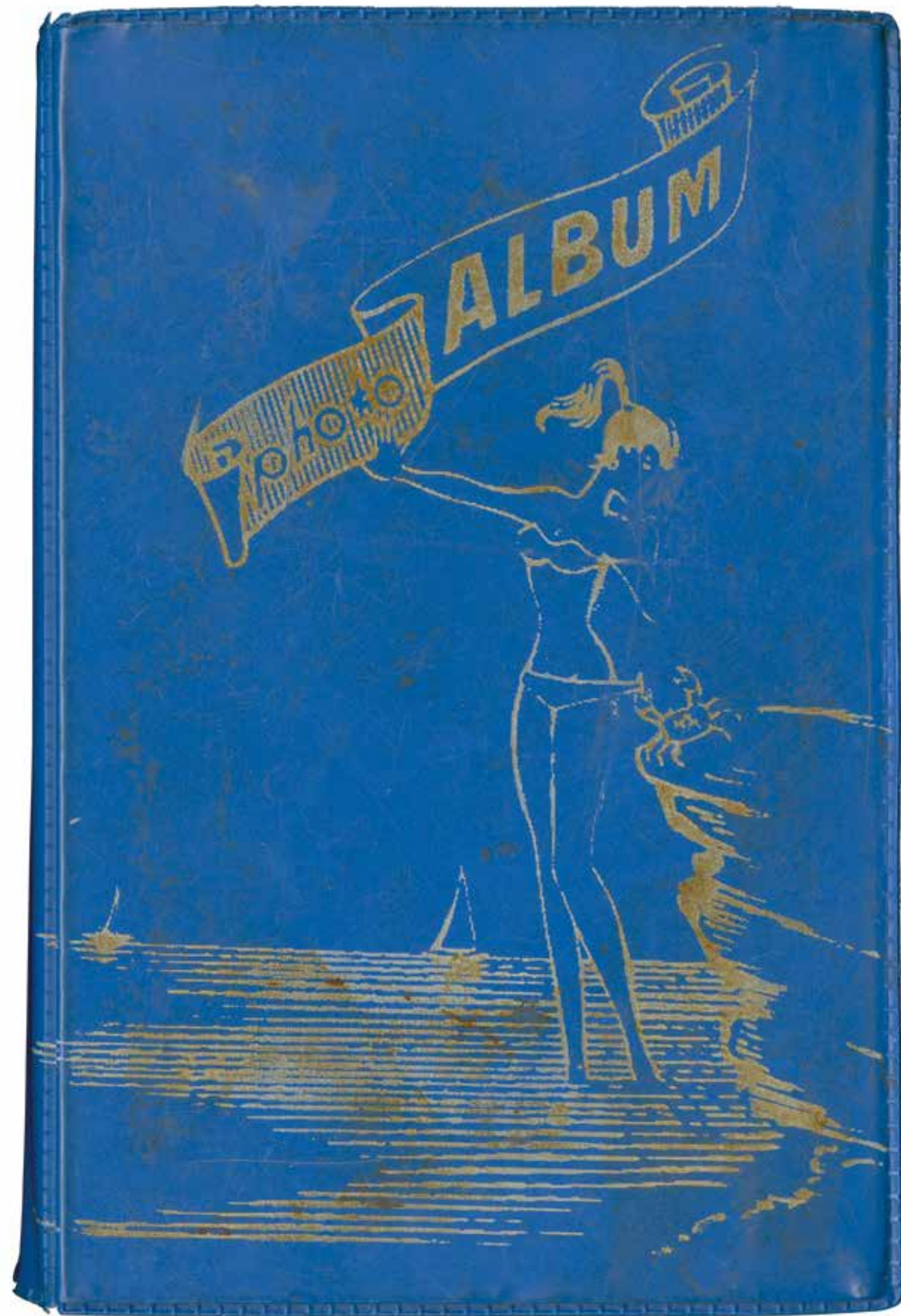


Photo album with impressions of clay dirt that was embossed in Vietnam, 1967–1968



Album  
Counter-clockwise from top left:

**ARTILLERY SOLDIER WITH SHIRT OFF, 1968**  
Black and White Polaroid  
3.25 x 2.5 in

**BEN CALDWELL, 1968**  
Photographer unknown  
Black and White Polaroid  
3.25 x 2.5 in

**VIETNAM POLICE, KON TUM, VIETNAM, 1968**  
Black and White Polaroid  
3.25 x 2.5 in

**KIDS PLAYING AROUND ICE, KON TUM, VIETNAM, 1968**  
Black and White Polaroid  
3.25 x 2.5 in

**UNTITLED, 1968**  
Black and White Polaroid  
3.25 x 2.5 in





PHOTOGRAPH FROM A  
CHINOOK HELICOPTER, 1968  
35mm Film Color Print  
5 x 3.5 in



3 MONTAGNARDS (KIDS), 1967  
35mm Film Black and White Print  
2.5 x 3.5 in



Counter-clockwise from top left:

KIDS PLAYING AROUND ICE,  
KON TUM, VIETNAM, 1967  
35mm Film Black and White Print  
3.5 x 2.5 in



HOSPITAL EVACUATION AIR-  
PLANE EN ROUTE TO MANILA,  
PHILIPPINES, 1967  
35mm Film Color Print  
3.5 x 2.5 in



ON MANEUVERS WITH UNIT  
WITH C TROOP OF THE 2ND AND  
THE 1ST CAVALRY, 1967  
35mm Film Black and White Print  
3.5 x 2.5 in



VIETNAMESE WOMAN CARRY-  
ING WOOD MIX WITH MILITARY  
UNIT, 1967  
35mm Film Black and White Print  
3.5 x 2.5 in



MILITARY AIRPORT IN CAM  
RANH BAY, VIETNAM, 1967  
35mm Film Color Print  
3.5 x 2.5 in



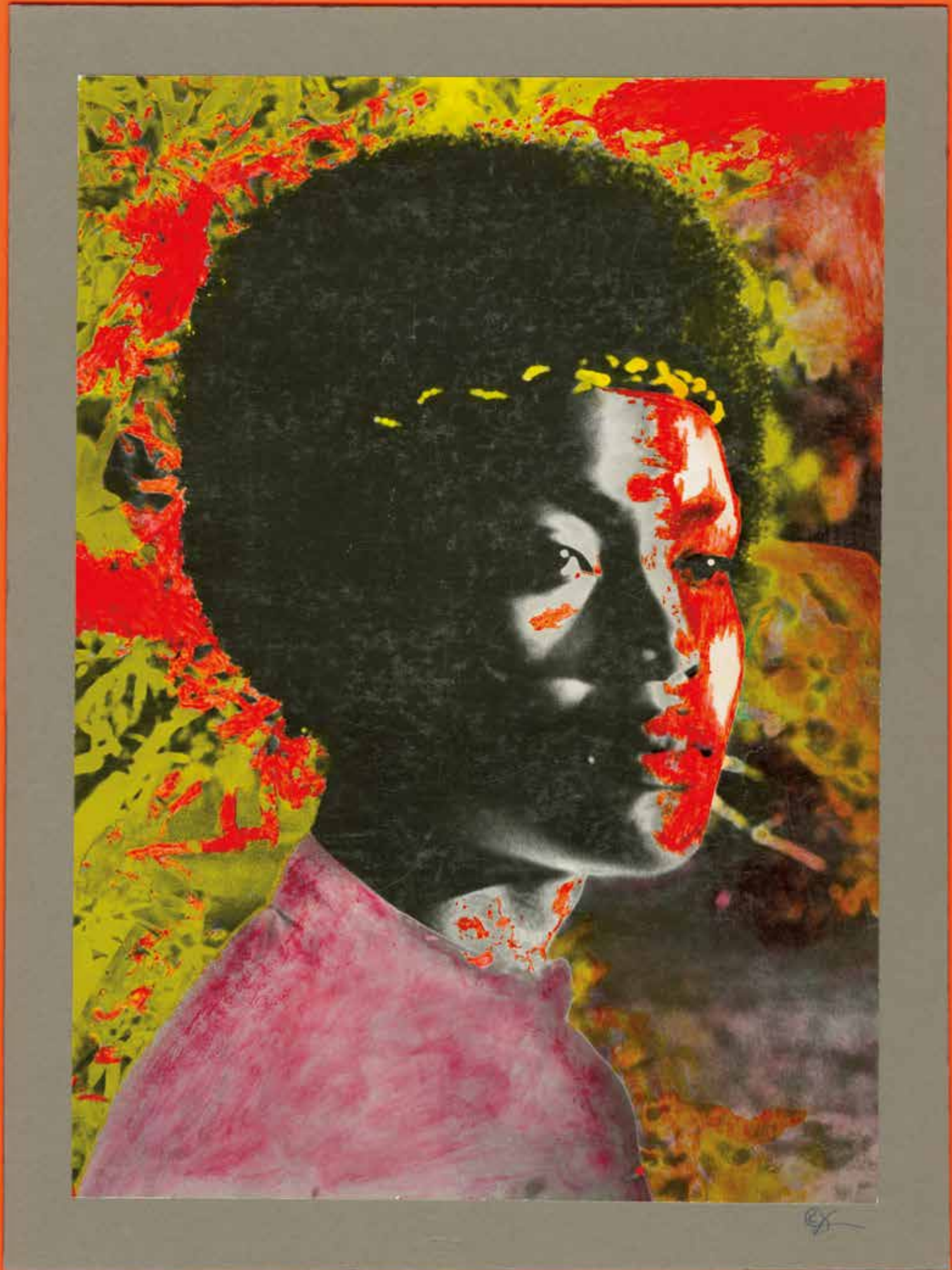
REPLENISHING AND CLEANING  
APCS' TRACKS, 1967  
35mm Film Black and White Print  
3.5 x 2.5 in

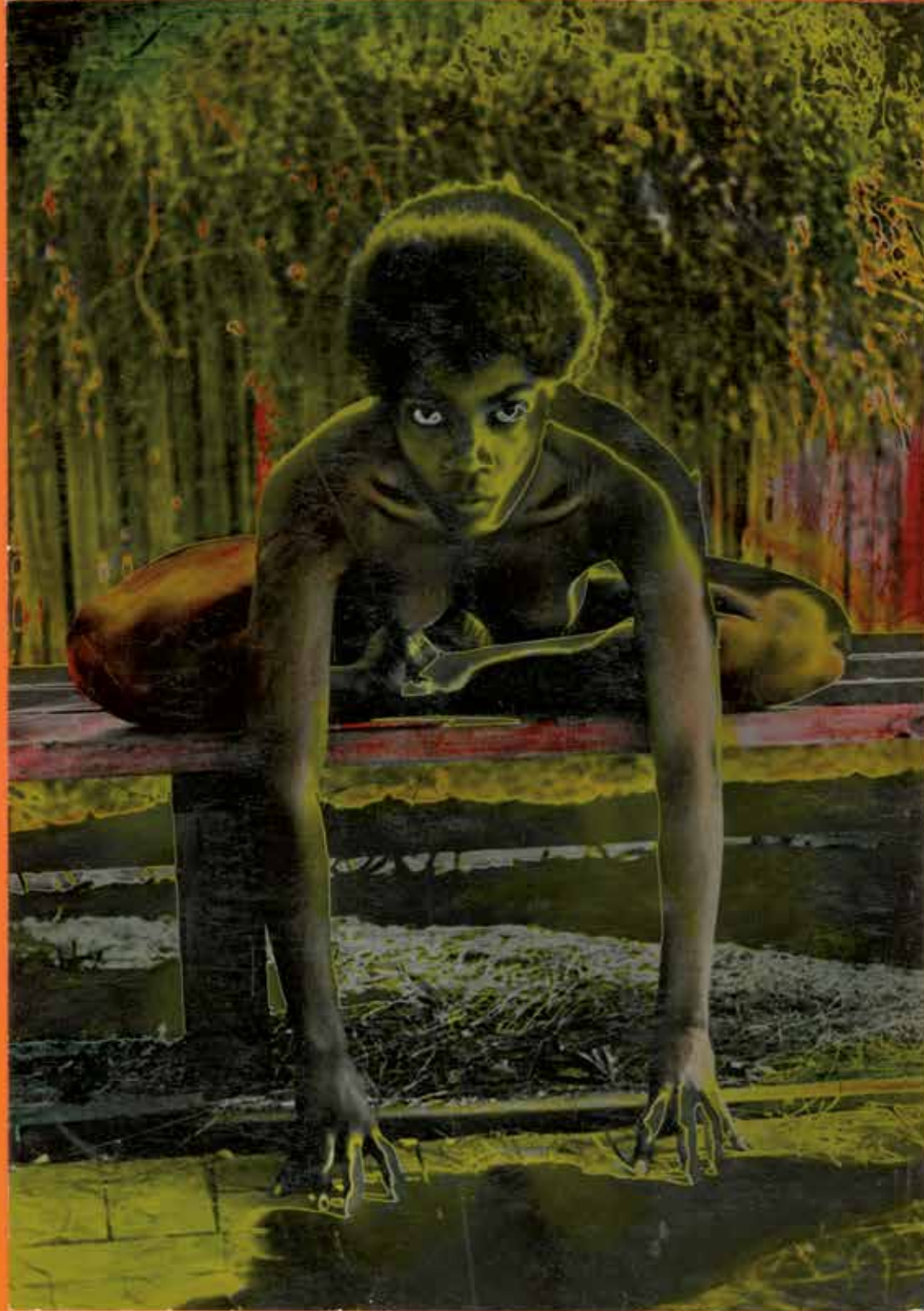


BEN CALDWELL RESTING AFTER  
CLEARING AN AREA, 1967  
Photographer unknown  
Black and White Polaroid  
3.25 x 2.5 in



ON APC AT END OF THE DAY ON  
MANEUVERS IN VIETNAM, 1967  
Black and White Polaroid  
3.25 x 2.5 in





## LAST THOUGHTS

I was drafted in 1966 and went to Ft. Bliss in El Paso, then flew to the center of Texas for my first airplane ride. It was an unpressurized plane, and I felt like my head was exploding. I got off the plane and couldn't hear for a week. From that moment on, I was military property. The next day they sized us up for our clothes, then gave us a haircut to remove any cultural identification. I went to Vietnam in August of 1967, and was there until Thanksgiving. My job was trying to flesh people out of the jungle in Kon Tum, Vietnam in the central highlands.

I came to Los Angeles for the first time in 1967. I was so impressed with how beautiful it was. The hippies were selling flowers on the islands of the streets. They would say, 'Peace, brother. Pass on the love.' The town seemed to have a real belief in love as a principle. People had an openness I haven't seen since.

From 1971 to 1974, I counseled Vietnam Vets at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). I had some of the same problems as they did, but I dealt with them through my art rather than deductive reasoning. It was like a flower opening. In the army, I had always tried to figure out how the system worked and thus wasn't subjected to the same kind of tyranny of the spirit as the other guys. I saw positivity where most people saw the negative. I have a mind that tries to make something out of nothing, a way out of no way.

Once I got to UCLA, I didn't want to tell narrative stories because they irritated me. It was like talking heads. I dug Don McLaughlin and Pat O'Neil. I thought I was going to do animation, so I took video, film, animation and still photography; I wanted to be a master of all. I took some classes with Robert Heinecken, but he and I didn't see eye to eye. I ended up working with Edmund Teske at UCLA Extension. I studied with him for two years.

I started looking at jazz and wanted to copy it structurally. The first story I told was called *Madea*, and it was done with a poem by Leroy Jones, also known as Amiri Baraka, called *Raise the Nigger* from *Part of the Doctrine*. It repeated those words as almost a chant. I put pictures to that cadence and I dealt with all the information that goes into a baby before it's born, like a hologram. I used animation to do a frame at a time.

I did animations using life numbers to see how much breath could be put into the work because the use of numbers. The whole thing is the use of numbers – 24 frames a second, 30 frames a second. It uses the idea of latent image and retention of our eyes. It was science I was playing with and enjoying it.

John Outterbridge was really important to me, and others were, too: Kamal Daood and Barbara O. Organizations such as The Gathering, which was like a co-op; the Performing Arts Society of Los Angeles Workshop was started by Van Whitfield, who like me was a UCLA grad. I threw myself into the middle of all of these emerging movements. They were connected to Watts, but Brockman Gallery was where things were happening in Leimert Park. Being from New Mexico and Arizona, I felt culturally starved; I had been hunting for others like myself. David Hammond and Alonzo Davis introduced me to a lot of the black artists.

I worked at Brockman Gallery while getting my second degree, in ethnographic films and international business. I did *Babylon is Falling*, the story of the triangular slave trade, how they were suppressed and what did they do to fight it. It was made with found footage. I felt it was right for me to appropriate the material – images that once were documenting our oppression. I wanted to appropriate it and use it in a way to make us stronger. +



**BEN CALDWELL**  
Photographed at KAOS Network,  
December 2014

More information and an event calendar for KAOS NETWORK can be found here:  
[facebook.com/KAOSNETWORK](https://facebook.com/KAOSNETWORK)

Previous Pages:  
**AMKA SERIES, 1970 (details)**  
Photographs with Hand-Painted Dye  
pg. 78 – 11 x 14 in  
pg. 79 – 14 x 19.5 in  
pg. 80 – 14 x 18 in

# PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Community Events at A+P support the organization's exhibitions, residency program, and lecture series. A+P seeks to engage a culturally, economically, and socially diverse audience to draw awareness about A+P's programs by participating in community events. To date, A+P has taken part in the annual Leimert Park Book Fair at the Baldwin Hills Crenshaw Plaza, and CicLAvia – a catalyst for closing Los Angeles' streets to motor vehicles and open for the public to walk, bike, and skate through the open streets – in Leimert Park.

## LEIMERT PARK BOOK FAIR

On August 9, A+P joined its local community to celebrate the literary arts at the Baldwin Hills Crenshaw Plaza. A+P, along with collaborator EsoWon Boostore and partners The RightWay Foundation (RWF) and Hammer Museum, held a table at the fair to draw awareness about the organization and its programs. Thousands of book enthusiasts, families and fans of all ages converged to experience book signings, writing workshops, panel discussions, poetry readings, and musical performances.

## BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY (IN-PERSON WORKSHOP AT A+P)

The in-person workshop was a collaborative project between A+P and Brandeis University. The project, which emerged from conversations between Mark Bradford, and members of the faculty and staff at Brandeis during the spring of 2013, sought to undertake research and program development to help launch A+P's foster youth program. Bradford's visit to the campus was in conjunction with the first public exhibition of Bradford's work at Brandeis' Rose Art Museum, and served as a prospect to explore opportunities for further engagement.

The workshop took place in A+P's exhibition space from April 14 – 17. Organized and designed by Brandeis faculty members Daniel Terris, Director of International Center for Ethics, Justice and Public Life, and Cynthia Cohen, Director of Peacebuilding and the Arts, the workshop involved two graduates and one undergraduate from the university. Together, along with A+P's staff, the team created a set of questions and interactive activities that explored foster youth's connection to art and technology, biographical information, connections to their community, future plans, and programmatic suggestions for A+P. Three former foster youths facilitated each workshop, and 40 foster youths participated over a two-day period.

The findings gathered during the workshop gave understanding to the youths' interest and knowledge about art, technology and their con-

nection to community. The desire to try something different was a recurring theme articulated by the youth with many interested in pursuing multiple disciplines and artistic practices. In addition, the youth voiced an enthusiastic interest in and need for building a community for foster youth. They expressed wanting a space that would provide opportunities for creative activity. As A+P further develops its educational programs, the staff looks to the workshop's findings to help clarify the organization's mission and goals for its foster youth programs.

## CICLAVIA

On December 7, A+P participated in Los Angeles' CicLAvia – an event whose mission is to make the streets of Los Angeles safe for people to walk, skate, play and ride a bike – in Leimert Park. Along with A+P's partners and collaborators including the Hammer Museum, The RightWay Foundation and EsoWon Bookstore, A+P handed out water and snacks to local participants. A+P stationed itself outside the Art Deco building.

## THE RIGHTWAY FOUNDATION GALA

On October 17, A+P's partner The RightWay Foundation celebrated its grand opening on A+P's campus. RWF hosted 150+ guests at the event and raised over \$50,000. On view was RWF's foster youth's computer lab and newly installed maps of Los Angeles County and the City of Los Angeles by ZIP codes. Major donors, the community, A+P's partners and collaborators, artists in residence at A+P, and board members attended the event in support of opening RWF's new facility.

## HAMMER GALA

On October 11, A+P joined the Hammer Museum in honoring Mark Bradford and Joni Mitchell at the Hammer's annual Gala in the Garden. The event honored two artists whose accomplishments have shaped and broken the boundaries of their fields. Co-Founder of A+P Mark Bradford spoke about his long history with the Hammer, which began in 2001 when he first showed his work as part of *Snapshot*:

*New Art from Los Angeles* and again in 2007 in *Eden's Edge: Fifteen L.A. Artists*, and now in 2014 with establishing a partnership with the Hammer and A+P. Grammy Award-winning artist Joni Mitchell touched upon her journey from being a musician and composer to becoming an accomplished visual artist. Tributes to the artists were made by cultural historian Sarah Lewis and award-winning filmmaker Cameron Crowe.

Featured at the event was an immersive digital installation by Refik Anadol, a Los Angeles-based artist whose multimedia projections create a hybrid relationship between architecture and media arts. The event was co-chaired by actors Emily Blunt and John Krasinski, artists Ed Ruscha and his wife, Dana, as well as fashion designer Tomas Maier.

## GRAPHIC DESIGN SURVEY

In the spring of 2014, A+P invited a group of foster youths to Mark Bradford's studio to partake in an afternoon of creativity activity. They ranged in age and ethnicity. All were currently enrolled in The RightWay Foundation's (RWF) program *Operation Emancipation*.

A+P organized the workshop in two parts. In the first phase, A+P provided the youths with individual Chromebook computers, a printer, and stacks of paper. A+P asked them to search the Internet for inspirational images that gaged their interests, passions, and values. A+P then pinned the images to a blank wall for the youths to review and arrange into categories. At an aesthetic level, the wall captured the cultural temperature and consumption of the participating youths.

In the second phase, A+P presented designs from graphic designers ranging from Miami to New York and Los Angeles. A+P asked the youths to comment on the designs, giving their honest opinion about what they liked or thought worked well graphically.



Jamillah James, Hammer Museum



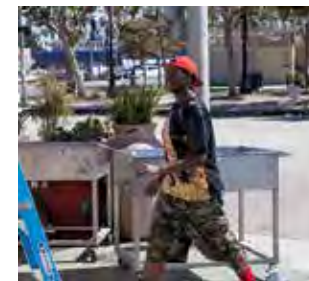
Alison Agsten, Hammer Museum



Franco Vega, The RightWay Foundation



Anne Ellegood, Hammer Museum



Jose Lopez, Studio of Mark Bradford



Ann Philbin, Hammer Museum



Bettye Bryant and Allan DiCastro, Art + Practice



Sade Moore, The RightWay Foundation

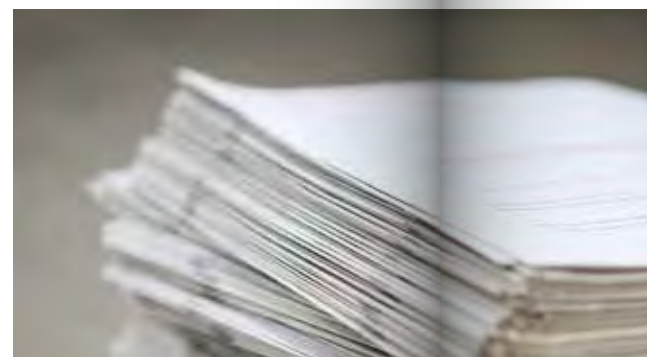


Connie Butler, Hammer Museum



Hon. Sherri Sobel, The RightWay Foundation









## ART + PRACTICE FOUNDERS



### Mark Bradford

A+P Co-Founder  
Visual Artist  
Los Angeles, CA

Mark Bradford was born in 1961 in Los Angeles, where he continues to live and work. In 2010, *You're Nobody (Til Somebody Kills You)*, a large-scale survey of Bradford's work, was presented at the Wexner Center for the Arts in Columbus. This retrospective traveled to the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago, the Dallas Museum of Art, and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. Bradford has exhibited widely and has participated in many important group shows including, notably, the Gwanju Biennale (2012), the 12th Istanbul Biennial (2011), the Seoul Biennial (2010), the Carnegie International (2008), the São Paulo Biennial (2006), and the Whitney Biennial (2006). Solo museum exhibitions include the Aspen Art Museum (2011); *Maps and Manifests* at the Cincinnati Museum of Art (2008); and *Neither New Nor Correct* at the Whitney Museum of American Art (2007). He was elected to the National Academy in 2013 and was awarded the MacArthur Foundation Fellowship in 2009. In 2014, Bradford will receive the State Department's Medal of the Arts.

At Brandeis University in September 2014, Bradford opened a solo exhibition at the Rose Art Museum. The exhibition, titled *Sea Monsters*, will subsequently travel to the Gemeentemuseum in The Hague next year. *Bell Tower*, a large-scale multimedia installation commissioned by the City of Los Angeles for the Tom Bradley International Terminal at LAX, will debut in February of next year. Also in 2015, Bradford will have separate solo museum shows at the Rockbund Art Museum in Shanghai (January), the Hammer Museum in Los Angeles (March), and the Wadsworth Atheneum in Hartford (June).



### Allan DiCastro

A+P Co-Founder  
Social Activist  
Los Angeles, CA

Allan DiCastro is a co-founder of Art + Practice Foundation. Born and raised in the south suburbs of Chicago, Allan currently lives in Los Angeles, where he has primarily worked as a Vice-President in banking on finance, accounting, and project management. As a volunteer and social activist, DiCastro made considerable contributions to the Mid-City Neighborhood Council (MINC), a local volunteer-run neighborhood council funded by the City of Los Angeles, for nearly a decade. He served as Vice-President (2006-2008) as well as President (2008-2012); during his presidency, MINC won the first annual EmpowerLA Award from the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners for its outstanding achievements. His duties included direct community engagement, shepherding policy initiatives through various levels of government, and leading community improvement projects. DiCastro serves as the Interim Executive Director as well as Treasurer of the Board of the Art + Practice Foundation.



### Eileen Harris Norton

A+P Co-Founder  
President, EHN Foundation  
Los Angeles, CA

Eileen Harris Norton is the President of the EHN Foundation. The Foundation's program areas are Education, Family and the Environment with a strong focus on low-income children of color.

Eileen has long-standing interests in contemporary art, early childhood education, parenting, child welfare and women's issues. Previously, she was the Vice President of the Peter Norton Family Foundation, which conducts strategic grant making in the areas of contemporary art and social services.

She served on the boards of the Hammer Museum at UCLA, The Studio Museum in Harlem, the New Museum of Contemporary Art, the Children's Defense Fund, and the Hollywood Policy Center. She was the creator and director of the Forum on Children's Issues, an organization committed to analyzing the policies that shape the physical, emotional, and intellectual needs of children today. The Forum was established as a place where those sharing similar concerns could meet and exchange ideas.

Eileen is also an avid art collector with a strong interest in work by artists of color (particularly artists of the African diaspora), women artists, and artists of Southern California.

Born and raised in Los Angeles, Eileen holds a Master of Science in Bilingual Education from the University of Southern California. She graduated Cum Laude with a BA from the University of California, Los Angeles. Following her graduation from USC, she spent several years as an elementary school teacher in the Los Angeles Unified School District where she taught English as a second language and worked as a bilingual coordinator. Eileen left teaching to become the first employee of Peter Norton Computing, Inc., helping her then-husband grow the company, eventually serving as its office manager.

## ART + PRACTICE STAFF



### Sophia Belsheim

Partnership Liaison  
Senior Program Lead

With a background in art history and public art administration, Belsheim joined the staff of A+P in January 2014. Previously, she worked as Program Officer for United States Artists (USA) and as an Artist Relations Specialist for USA Projects, an independent nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting the work of living American artists by granting cash fellowship awards. Belsheim's work in Los Angeles was preceded by working for 4Culture, a cultural service agency in King County, Washington. Born and raised in Seattle, she attended Wesleyan University in Middletown, Connecticut, and received a bachelor's degree in art history in 2011.



### Bettye Bryant

Administrative Assistant

Bettye Bryant attended Mount St. Mary's College, earning a degree in gerontology and a minor in sociology. Bettye has worked for ten years in support of her community for the Mid-City Neighborhood Council, serving as Treasurer on the budget committee and Region 1 Representative. Bettye is also a dedicated advocate for seniors through her promotion of their well-being. Bryant has organized community events such as *National Night Out on Crime* and community cleanups. She has received certificates for her commitment to the community including recognition from Department of Aging, City Attorney's Office, Council District 10, Senator Curren Price, LAPD, Victoria Park Association, Department of Neighborhood Empowerment and the Apartment Association of Greater Los Angeles. Bettye joined A+P in August 2014.

## STUDIO OF MARK BRADFORD



### Sean Shim-Boyle

Senior Artist Assistant; Graphic Design  
A+P Technology Committee, Chair

Sean Shim-Boyle is a Canadian-born artist living and working in Los Angeles. In 2008, he graduated from the California Institute of the Arts with a bachelor's degree in graphic design, with focuses in typography and interdisciplinary work with theatre and animation. Subsequently, Boyle was selected as a Getty Intern and shortly afterwards joined Mark Bradford's studio to manage his *Mithra* installation in New Orleans. In 2012, he received an MFA in sculpture from the University of California, Los Angeles. Recent solo exhibitions include shows at Project Rowhouses, TX (2013); LAXART, Los Angeles (2013); and Signal, NY (2014). In 2015, Boyle will open solo exhibitions at the Santa Monica Museum of Art and Various Small Fires Gallery, both in Los Angeles. Boyle serves as the Chair of Art + Practice's Technology Committee and is a 2013 recipient of the Joan Mitchell Foundation's Painters and Sculptors Grant.



### Nicole Braucher

Production Manager  
Studio Scheduler

Nicole Braucher is a Los Angeles native with a degree in technical theatre and design from San Francisco State University (SFSU). She specializes in scenery and props. Some of her recent designs include the sets for *Three Days of Rain* at Jewel Theatre Company, *A Chorus Line* at SFSU, *Grounded and Inevitable* at the San Francisco Playhouse, and *The Last Five Years* and *Metamorphoses* for SFSU's Brown Bag Theatre Company. Braucher joined Bradford's studio in 2014.

## ART + PRACTICE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

### Jennifer Arceneaux

Director of External Relations,  
Sundance Institute  
Los Angeles, CA

Jennifer Arceneaux is the Director of External Relations for the Sundance Institute overseeing the Institute's fundraising, marketing and communications efforts. Prior to joining Sundance, Arceneaux served as Director of Development for the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles raising more than \$70 million in operating and endowment support. Further associations include the RAND Corporation, Inner-City Arts, CityLife, A.R.T.S Inc., The Housing Rights Center and the Accelerated School in Los Angeles where she executed a \$60 million expansion as Director of Development. She holds a B.A. degree in Political Science from California State University at Fullerton and an M.A. in Public Administration from the University of Southern California School of Policy Planning and Development.

### Christopher Bedford

Henry and Lois Foster Director,  
Rose Art Museum  
Waltham, MA

Christopher Bedford is the Henry and Lois Foster Director of the Rose Art Museum at Brandeis University. A native of Scotland who grew up in England and the United States, Bedford has risen rapidly through the ranks at the J. Paul Getty Museum, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) and, most recently, the Wexner Center for the Arts at Ohio State University where he served as Chief Curator of Exhibitions.

### Deborah Brener

Beverly Hills, CA

Mrs. Deborah Brener was born in Chicago, Illinois in 1958. She currently resides in Los Angeles with her family.

Mrs. Brener worked as a model for 20 years. She was on the board of LA Zoo from 2003 to 2005 and founded a Therapeutic Riding Center for disabled children in 2008.

She's supporting her husband Gabriel with the Brener Family Foundation.

The Brener family is very active in school and community affairs in Los Angeles as well as in Aspen, Colorado. Some of the organizations the Brener family is or has been involved with are: D.A.R.E. (Drug Abuse Resistance Education), L.A.S.S.O. (Los Angeles Sheriffs Star Organization), Cedar Sinai Medical Center (Los Angeles), the World Affairs Council (Los Angeles), and the National Council of the Aspen Music Festival.

The Brener family has made substantial philanthropic contributions to Jewish communities throughout the world, including charitable contributions to The Weitzman Institute, The Israel Philharmonic, Jerusalem Museum, Tel Aviv University, and especially to Karen Kayemet.

Deborah and Gabriel have raised four children: Jennifer, Jay, Nathaniel and Philippe. They have two grandkids: Jackson and Hunter.

### Gabriel Brener

Chairman and Chief Executive Officer,  
Brener International Group LLC  
Director, Hemisphere Media Group Inc.  
Beverly Hills, CA

Mr. Gabriel Brener has been Chairman and Chief Executive Officer at Brener International Group LLC since 1998.

Brener is also a Director of Hemisphere Media Group, Inc. from April 2013. At Brener International Group, Mr. Brener coordinates deal sourcing, manages daily operations and determines all major investment decisions. He is the President, Chief Executive Officer, and Chairman of the Board of Directors of Azteca Acquisition Holdings, LLC. Mr. Brener has been the Chief Executive Officer, President and Chairman of Azteca Acquisition Corporation since April 15, 2011. He has been Chief Executive Officer of Galco, Inc. since 1989. He formed and manages Brener Sports & Entertainment, LLC. He has over 20 years of deal sourcing, investment management and operations experience. He has managed Brener family investments since 1987 through Brener International Group, LLC and its predecessor or affiliated entities. He plays an active role and stays in regular contact with senior management of entities Brener International Group and the Brener family control or in which they have significant minority positions, offering financial, operating, marketing and structuring advice. Mr. Brener serves as the Chairman of Talon Composites, Inc. From 1987 to 1989, he served as the Vice Chairman of the Board of The Boys Markets, Inc. He serves as a Director of Sorteio Games, Inc. He serves as a Director of Golden Boy Promotions, Inc. He has been a Director of Azteca Acquisition Corporation since April 15, 2011. He holds Board memberships in various Brener family investments, including Major League Soccer in the United States; and Apoyo Integral Inmobiliario, S.A. de C.V., SO-FOM, E.N.R., Hipotecaria Casa Mexicana and Tequilera Hacienda La Capilla in Mexico. Mr. Brener also served on the Board of Directors or Advisory Boards of Merisant Corporation; Classic Media, Inc.; First National Bank; Westin Hotels and Resorts; Colt Defense, LLC; and Danskin, Inc. He is active in community affairs in Los Angeles and Aspen, Colorado. He was a Board Member for the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA); D.A.R.E. (Drug Abuse Resistance Education); L.A.S.S.O. (Los Angeles Sheriffs Star Organization); Cedar Sinai Medical Center; the Los Angeles World Affairs Council and the National Council of the Aspen Music Festival. He graduated from Woodbury University with a B.A. in Business Administration and received Woodbury's Alumni of the Year Award in 2008. Mr. Brener has also completed Units I and II of the Harvard Business School Owner/President Management (OPM) Program.

### Troy Carter

CEO & Founder, Atom Factory  
Los Angeles, CA

Renowned music manager Troy Carter is the Founder, Chairman, and CEO of Atom Factory, a pioneering entertainment and music management company. Carter has established the careers of numerous recording artists, including multi-platinum Grammy-Award winner Lady Gaga. Carter began his career in Philadelphia working for Will Smith and James Lassiter's Overbrook Entertainment, and joined Bad Boy Entertainment in 1995 where he worked with groundbreaking artists such as Notorious B.I.G. In 1999, Carter formed the boutique talent management company, Erving Wonder. The brand quickly became one of the preeminent artist management firms and was acquired by the Sanctuary Group in 2004.

After founding Atom Factory in 2010, Carter has continued his disruptive approach with the creation of various entities. In 2011, he co-founded The Backplane, a Silicon Valley based startup that redefines social media by allowing celebrities and brands to connect with fans, foster community, and cultivate brand loyalty. The following year, he created A \ IDEA, a product development and branding agency, as well as AF Square, an angel fund and technology consultancy. Today, the AF Square portfolio holds interest in more than 40 technology companies at various stages of growth.

This year, Carter has launched a new record label, Atom Factory Music, as well as a new beverage company, Pop Water. Pop Water, fully conceived, produced, and funded as an internal project at Atom Factory, has already proven itself to be one of the hottest new low calorie sparkling flavored waters.

### Carole Guillard

Director of Operations for the California Institute of Health and Social Services, DBA Children's Way Foster Family and Adoptions Agency, and Alafia Mental Health  
San Bernardino, CA

Carole F. Guillard is the Director of Operations for California Institute of Health and Social Services, DBA Children's Way Foster Family and Adoptions Agency, and Alafia Mental Health. Her passionate advocacy for improving the lives of at risk children and families began over 20 years ago. Since that time she has partnered with CIHSS in serving Los Angeles, Riverside, and San Bernardino Counties through the development and administration of several programs designed to enrich communities. Carole was instrumental in expanding the CIHSS scope of service to include mental health care and adoptions. Carole currently resides in San Bernardino, California where she leads the San Bernardino team of CIHSS.

## ART + PRACTICE BOARD OF TRUSTEES (continued)

### Ari Emanuel

Founding Partner and Co-CEO, William Morris Endeavor Entertainment  
Beverly Hills, CA

Ari Emanuel is the founding partner and Co-CEO of William Morris Endeavor Entertainment. Clients include writers/directors Michael Moore (Capitalism: A Love Story), Martin Scorsese (The Departed), Matthew Vaughn (Kick Ass), Peter Berg (Hancock), Steve Zaillian (American Gangster), Aaron Sorkin (The Social Network) and Larry David (Curb Your Enthusiasm); live event providers World Wrestling Entertainment and Ultimate Fighting Championship; and actors Michael Douglas (Wall Street 2), Charlize Theron (Hancock), Mark Wahlberg (The Departed) and Sacha Baron Cohen (Bruno).

Emanuel is a member of the Board of Trustees of the American Film Institute and is active in P.S. Arts, a non-profit agency bringing arts education to public school students in Southern California. An environmental and political activist, he also served as co-chair of the Earth to L.A. fund-raising event for the Natural Resources Defense Council. Emanuel began his entertainment industry career as an agent trainee at Creative Artists Agency.

Raised in the suburbs of Chicago, he graduated from Macalester College in St Paul, MN and lives with his wife Sarah and their three children in Los Angeles.

### Joanne Heyler

Founding Director, The Broad  
Los Angeles, CA

Joanne Heyler is director/chief curator of The Broad Art Foundation. She has curated the Broad Collections and directed the Foundation's "lending library" program for museums and university galleries since 1995, and started working at The Broad Art Foundation in 1989. Under Ms. Heyler's direction, the Foundation's collection has grown by 65 percent, with the addition of more than 60 artists, including deep representations of work by crucial postwar figures such as Andy Warhol and Joseph Beuys, as well as work by more recent figures like Damien Hirst, Sharon Lockhart, Kara Walker, and others. The Foundation's lending program has doubled in size, with nearly 8,000 loans to 485 museums around the world since its founding in 1984.

As adviser to Eli and Edythe Broad, Ms. Heyler is closely involved with the Broads' major philanthropic investments in the visual arts, such as the Broad Contemporary Art Museum at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, exhibitions at the Museum of Contemporary Art, and the forthcoming Zaha Hadid-designed Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum at Michigan State University. She has been named the director of the new contemporary art museum on Grand Avenue that the Broads are currently building. Ms. Heyler is leading the team charged with planning the institution and building the iconic Diller Scofidio + Renfro-designed museum, which will be home to the 2,000-work Broad Collections. Ms. Heyler received her bachelor's

degree in art history from Scripps College and a master's degree in the history of art from the Courtauld Institute of London University.

She resides in Los Angeles.

### Pamela Joyner

Founder, Avid Partners, LLC  
San Francisco, CA

Pamela J. Joyner has nearly 30 years of experience in the investment industry. She is the Founder of Avid Partners, LLC where her expertise has been advising investment managers and private investment groups in developing and implementing investment and branding strategies in the alternative investment arena. Currently, Ms. Joyner is focused on her philanthropic interests in the arts and education arenas. Prior to founding Avid Partners in 2000, Ms. Joyner was a Partner at Bowman Capital Management, LLC and a Senior Executive at Capital Guardian Trust Company. Ms. Joyner's other investment history includes positions at Fidelity Management Trust Company, Kidder Peabody and Merrill Lynch. Ms. Joyner is a Director of First Republic Bank, where she serves as Chair of the Investment and Compensation Committees. Her civic interests include the activities of the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities, on which she serves as a Member. Additionally, Ms. Joyner is currently a Trustee of the New York City Ballet and a member of the International Council and the North American Acquisitions Committee at Tate Modern. Ms. Joyner's previous philanthropic involvements include serving as a Trustee of Dartmouth College and Chair of the Investment Committee, a Board Member of the School of American Ballet, a Trustee and Co-Chair of the San Francisco Ballet Association, a Board Member of the MacDowell Colony, a Trustee of the Asian Art Museum, a Board Member of the Making Waves Foundation, as well as other arts and educational organizations. She has also served as a Director of The Sharper Image Corporation.

Ms. Joyner received an AB and Honorary AM degree from Dartmouth College as well as an MBA from Harvard University.

### Rick Lowe

Founder, Project Row Houses  
Houston, TX

Rick Lowe lives in Houston. His exhibitions include; Phoenix Art Museum, Contemporary arts Museum, Houston, Museum of Contemporary Arts, Los Angeles, Neuberger Museum, Purchase, New York, Kwangji Biennale, Kwangji, Korea, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Glassell School, Indianapolis Museum of Art, the Kumamoto State Museum, Kumamoto, Japan, Venice Architecture Biennale, Cittadellarte, Biella, Italy, Nasher Sculpture Center, Dallas, TX, Community building projects include; Project Row Houses, Houston, Texas; Watts House Project, Los Angeles, CA; Arts Plan for Rem Koolhaas designed Seattle Public Library with Jessica Cusick; Borough Project for Spoleto Festival with Suzanne Lacy, Charleston, SC; Delray

Beach Cultural Loop, Delray Beach, Florida, a project for the Seattle Art Museum in their new Olympic Sculpture Park with David Adjaye.

Among Rick's honors are; Rudy Bruner Awards in Urban Excellence; AIA Keystone Award, the Heinz Award in the arts and humanities; Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture Governors Award; Loeb Fellow at Harvard University, Mel King Fellow at MIT; Skandalaris Award for Excellence in Art Architecture, U.S. Artists Booth Fellow, and the Creative Time Annenberg Prize for Art and Social Change.

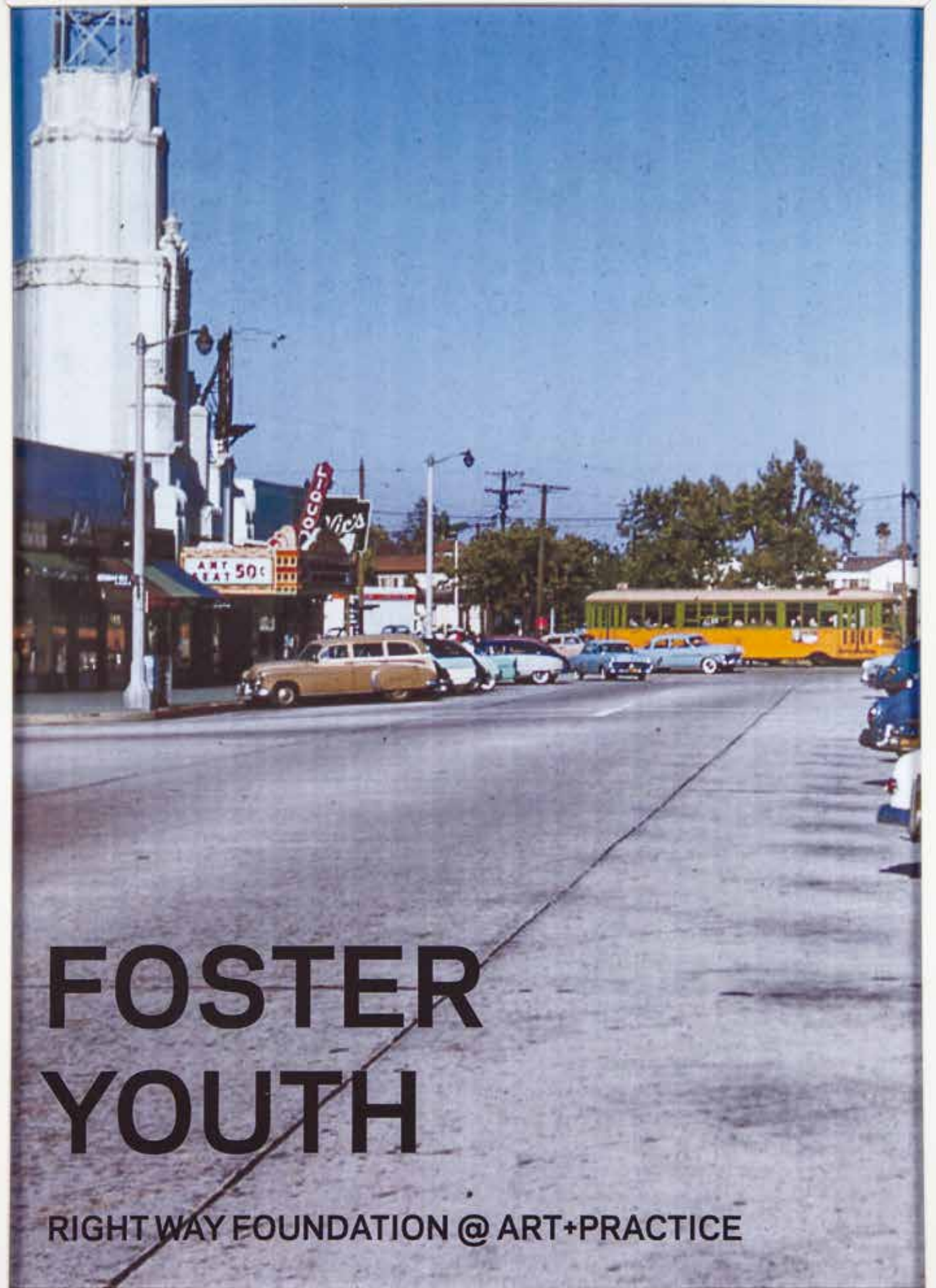
President Barack Obama appointed Rick to the National Council on the Arts in 2013.

### Brenda Shockley

President, Community Build, Inc.  
Los Angeles, CA

Brenda Shockley is President of Community Build, Inc., a California nonprofit community development corporation organized in response to the conditions that led to the civil disturbance of April, 1992. She is the past President and Vice-President for Finance and Administration/ Operations of the Drew Economic Development Corporation (Drew EDC) and the Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science (Drew University), respectively, in Los Angeles. Before Drew, she was a partner in a private law practice, an assistant to Congresswoman Yvonne Burke, a consultant to the Assembly Committee on Criminal Justice, and a Deputy City Attorney in the Los Angeles City Attorney's Office.

Ms. Shockley was a member of the Los Angeles City Community Redevelopment Commission (CRA) from October 2005 through September 2007. She is a past board member of the Los Angeles Neighborhood Land Trust, Planned Parenthood Los Angeles, National Economic Development Law Center, Kazi House Residential Drug Treatment Center, Avalon Carver Neighborhood Center, and the Drew Child Development Corporation. She also has served as a member of the Los Angeles City Affordable Housing Commission, Fannie Mae National Advisory Council and the California State Personnel Board. Ms. Shockley is a graduate of Occidental College and Loyola Law School in Los Angeles.



**ART + PRACTICE FOUNDATION**

4336 Degnan Boulevard  
Los Angeles, California  
90008 USA

[artandpractice.org](http://artandpractice.org)

+1 (323) 337-6887

[info@artandpractice.org](mailto:info@artandpractice.org)

*Program Partners*

**HAMMER MUSEUM**

10899 Wilshire Boulevard  
Los Angeles, California  
90024 USA

[hammer.ucla.edu](http://hammer.ucla.edu)

+1 (310) 443-7000

[info@hammer.ucla.edu](mailto:info@hammer.ucla.edu)

**THE RIGHTWAY FOUNDATION**

4333 Leimert Boulevard  
Los Angeles, California  
90008 USA

[therightwayfoundation.org](http://therightwayfoundation.org)

+1 (323) 903-5021

[franco@therightwayfoundation.org](mailto:franco@therightwayfoundation.org)

*Community Partner*

**ESOWON BOOKSTORE**

4327 Degnan Boulevard  
(4332 Degnan Boulevard as of Feb. 2015)  
Los Angeles, California  
90008 USA

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[esowonbooks@yahoo.com](mailto:esowonbooks@yahoo.com)

Concept, Design, and Layout:  
Sean Shim-Boyle

Editorial Coordinator:  
Sophia Belsheim

Copy Editor:  
Colin Berry

Unless otherwise indicated, photography by:  
Sean Shim-Boyle

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Attn: Tate Dougherty  
[tate@hauserwirth.com](mailto:tate@hauserwirth.com)  
+1 (212) 790-3900

Attn: Sorcha Richardson  
[sorcha@whitecube.com](mailto:sorcha@whitecube.com)  
+44 20 7749 8093

