

[RISD Museum Anti-Racist Work](#) RISD Museum active plan for addressing institutional racism and coloniality.

Note: All exhibitions, programs, publications, acquisitions and initiatives are funded through the museum development department and existing endowments by individual, corporate, and foundation/government financial support.

Exhibitions Fall 2020

[Defying the Shadow](#) curated by Anita Bateman, Former Mellon Curatorial Fellow

Presents images by Black artists and of Black figures that resist the consumptive impulses of looking. As anti-portraits or visages that challenge the impulse to be known, comprehended, categorized, or easily identified, these works oppose a historical narrative of dispossession and domination that continues to violate the humanity of Other-ed bodies.

[Black Flyyy](#) curated by Anita Bateman, former Mellon Curatorial Fellow

Six short films and videos by artists including Sophia Nahli Allison, Bree Newsome Bass, and Charles Burnett explore self-revelation, craft, legacy, and ancestral knowledge(s) in ways that center Black narratives and challenge white cultural hegemony.

[It Comes in Many Forms: Islamic Art from the Collection](#) curated by Tayana Fincher, Nancy Prophet Fellow

Presents textiles, decorative arts, and works on paper that attest to the pluralism of Islam and its expressions. From an Egyptian textile fragment dating to the 1100s to a contemporary woman's top by the Paris-based designer Azzedine Alaïa, 30 objects offer explorations into migration, diasporas, and exchange and suggest the difficulty of defining arts from a transnational religious viewpoint.

[Text, Paratext, and Images](#) curated by Kuan-Hung Liu (Brown PhD 2023, History of Art and Architecture) and Kimia Rahnavardi (RISD MDes 2020, Interior Architecture, Adaptive Reuse).

Featuring almost [20 works](#) of art from different parts of Asia, from Qur'an manuscripts to historical Japanese prints to contemporary works, this exhibition explores the relationships between text, paratext, and image, examining how choice of material influences texts; how different manipulations of texts and images signal social class, education, and other cultural hierarchies and norms; and how intercultural exchange can take place through circulation and interpretation.

[Raid the Icebox Now with Simone Leigh: The Chorus](#)

The Chorus reflects artist Simone Leigh’s commitment to sculpturally shaping and defining the presence and voices of women of color throughout history. A sound installation plays in each gallery the exhibition occupies. In it, artists, writers, curators, and historians read texts written by women of color: Saidiya Hartman’s essay “Manual for General Housework” (2019), sculptor Nancy Elizabeth Prophet’s diaries from her time in Paris (1922–1934), and new text created for this project by historian Sharifa Rhodes-Pitts.

[Raid the Icebox Now with Pablo Helguera: Inventarios / Inventories](#)

Inventarios/Inventories explores the personal and domestic contexts of artworks, particularly as they exist in artists’ personal lives and working environments and the homes of their close family and collaborators. Drawing upon the RISD Museum’s Nancy Sayles Day Collection of Latin American art, Pablo Helguera has collaborated with living Latin American artists and the families, close friends, and collaborators of those no longer alive to provide a view of the domestic lives of artworks.

[Raid the Icebox Now with Nicole Eisenman: Tonight We Are Going Out And We Are All Getting Hammered](#)

Inside Kiki’s Backdoor, works from the RISD Museum’s collection, ranging from medieval to contemporary, are arranged to draw attention to their humanity. These bold creatures stare at us with frank gazes: we cruise them and they cruise us. This installation plucks these works from the chronology of art history and gives them space to step forward and claim their seats in sonder with us, helping us to realize that each one has a life as vivid and complex as our own.

[Raid the Icebox with Triple Canopy and CFGNY: Can I Leave You?](#)

This installation considers the role of early American decorative arts in the formation of a common identity. How do artworks and decor—as well as fictions and fashions—give rise to nations and nationalities? What do they tell viewers about how to look and act, and what and whom to value? How has the United States been shaped through the consumption and display of such goods, as well as the subjugation of the people whose labor or likenesses mark them? *Can I Leave You?* centers on the efforts of Americans to define themselves through products and portrayals of China, whether porcelain bowls or travelogues, whether out of admiration or animus.

Collection exhibitions featuring BIPOC artists and themes in the past 5 years

[Repair and Design Futures](#)

[The Art and Design of Spider Silk](#)

[Lost in the Museum](#)

[From the Loom of a Goddess: Reverberations of Guatemalan Mayan Weaving](#)

[Designing Traditions Biennial](#)

[Whirling Return of the Ancestors: Egúngún Masquerade Ensembles of the Yorùbá](#)

[Samurai At Leisure](#)

[Ottoman Turkish Interior Textiles from the Aldrich Collection](#)

[Real and Imagined: Japanese Warrior Prints](#)

[The Indian Boteh Motif](#)

[A Chorus of Chirps, Hums, and Buzzes](#)

[Daimyo Culture in Peacetime](#)

[Beauty at Her Fingertips: Chinese Sleeve Bands from the Aldrich Collection](#)

[Sukima: Vertical Glimpses of the Floating World](#)

[The Triptych Format in Japanese Prints](#)

[Former Glory](#)

[The Phantom of Liberty](#)

[Stranger Than Paradise](#)

[Bona Drag](#)

[Ariel Jackson](#)

[Un/Settled](#)

[United Histories](#)

[David Hartt: Stray Light](#)

Works of art by BIPOC artists introduced into the galleries

[David Adjaye. Washington Skeleton Chair, 2013](#)

[Yüksel Arslan, Arture 51, "100 Meaningless" \(Arture 51, "100 Sans Sens"\), 1964](#)

[Kenojuak Ashevak. Title Unknown, 1962](#)

[Pablo Bronstein. Grande Pendule Coloniale, 2012](#)

[Rafael Ferrer, The Balata River: "In the mountains, there you feel free" \(El Rio Balatá: "En las montañas te sientes libre"\), 1988](#)

[Haitian, Damballa Vodou Flag, 1950 - 1980](#)

[Chinese artists, Shanghai \(garment\) and Guangdong Province \(textile\), Qipao \(also known as Cheongsam\), 1930s](#)

[Issey Miyake, designer, Japanese, b. 1938; Yasumasa Morimura, artist, Japanese, b. 1951. Pleats Please Guest Artist Series, no. 1, 1997](#)

[Japanese artist, Women's Kimono, 1925-1950](#)

[Japanese artist, *Women's Kimono*, 1925-1950](#)
[Peruvian, Inca artist, for the Colonial Spanish market, *Tapestry Panel*, 1600](#)
[Junya Watanabe, *Woman's dress*, spring/summer 2003](#)
[Olga De Amaral, *Cesta Lunar 24 \(Moon Basket\)*, 1989](#)
[Chancay River Valley; Peruvian, Loincloth End, 1100-1420](#)
[Rezia Wahid, *Mosque in Rome I*, 2007](#)
[Aaron Douglas. *Building More Stately Mansions*, 1944](#)
[Gunter Gerzso. *Paisaje Naranja, Amarillo y Verde*, 1966](#)
[Ramiro Gomez. *Nanny and Child \(Central Park\)*, 2018](#)
[Zaha Hadid, *Tea and Coffee Set*, 1997](#)
[Harmony Hammond, *Blue Spirit*, 1978](#)
[Mona Hatoum. *Projection \(Cotton\)*, 2006](#)
[Claudette Johnson. *Untitled*, 2015](#)
[Cheyenne Julien. *Orchard Beach*, 2019](#)
[Udomsak Krisanamis. *Road Hole*, 2000](#)
[Hyewon Lee, *Teapot*, 1989](#)
[Roberto Lugo. *A Century of Black Lives Mattering*, 2016](#)
[Tina Modotti. *Diego Rivera Mural*, ca. 1927](#)
[Fe Noel, design label. *Oshun Slip dress*, 2019](#)
[Donnamaria Bruton, *Me and My Dad*, 1996](#)
[Jordan Seaberry. *The Wanderer*, 2015](#)
[Yinka Shonibare, MBE. *Un Ballo in Maschera \(Courtiers V\)*, 2004](#)
[Sheida Soleimani. *Reyhaneh*, 2015](#)
[Toshiko Takaezu, *Ocean's Edge*, 1992](#)
[Bob Thompson. *Figures with Blue Saint*, 1964](#)
[Joaquín Torres-García. *Construction with Central Anchor*, 1932](#)
[Iké Udé Sartorial *Anarchy #5*, 2013](#)
[Jorge de la Vega. *Historia de Vampiros \(Vampire Story\)*, 1963](#)
[Charles Wilbert White, *Missouri C.*, 1972](#)
[Wifredo Lam, *The Eternal Presence*, 1944](#)
[David Alfaro Siqueiros, *Head*, ca. 1930](#)
[Edward Mitchell Bannister, *Portrait of Christiana Carteaux Bannister*, ca. 1860](#)
[Edward Mitchell Bannister, *At the Oakside Beach*, 1877](#)
[Henry Ossawa Tanner, *The Wailing Wall*, ca. 1897](#)

Asian galleries have [80 objects](#) on view permanently from different regions including East Asia (China, Korea, and Japan), Southeast Asia, the Indian subcontinent, and the Middle east. Japanese gallery has a changing exhibition every 6 months of Asian prints and works on paper.

[Pendleton House](#) galleries, the [Farago Bridge](#) gallery, and the [18th Century European](#) gallery, display more than **175** pieces of [Chinese ceramics](#) and [Chinese furniture](#) made for the export market.

Collection Care, Acquisitions, De-acquisitions

De-acquisition of the [Head of an Oba](#)

Provenance research on the bronze head of an oba (Gift of Lucy Truman Aldrich 39.054) indicates that the head was purchased from the Knoedler Gallery in New York. It was in a collection in France (sticker and stamp on interior of head) before it was offered by sale at Knoedler. Beyond that, its ownership history remains unknown. Heads such as this were important altar objects during the installation ceremonies of the incoming oba and would therefore not have been made available for sale. British troops sacked the Benin Kingdom in 1897, killing many people, capturing and sending the reigning oba into exile and looting objects like this from the Royal Palace. Since this object was stolen from the Royal Palace and legally belongs to the current oba of Benin, we have deaccessioned it in preparation for restituting it to its rightful owner. We are in dialogue with the staff at a major US museum which has deaccessioned its Benin sculpture and we want to be prepared to move forward with them when the appropriate restitution process is established. It can be housed and cared for in the museum until that time.

Americas Research Initiative [ARI]

ARI is a partnered research program at the RISD Museum that supports the multiyear study of areas of the collection that have received little to no attention with a particular focus on Mesoamerican, Native American, and Latin American art and design. The ARI addresses the dearth of research in these areas—a collection that spans 1200 BCE to the present and originates from the most northern region of what is now Canada to the Southern tip of Argentina—by building partnerships with experts at RISD, Brown and area universities, as well as Indigenous experts, who possess crucial culturally specific knowledge; creating opportunities for emerging professionals from historically under-represented groups to contribute area-specific research from these collections; developing research collaborations through small cross-departmental working groups; and providing improved access to these collections through conservation, photography, publication, and display. The ARI embodies the institution's broader goal to nourish a nuanced and inclusive understanding art and design. Current work includes collection assessment, NAGPRA compliance, and consultation with tribal experts.

From Kyoto to Providence: Preserving the RISD Museum’s Lucy Truman Aldrich Collection of Asian Textile Masterworks for Educational Access

In June 2020 the RISD Museum received an NEH CARES grant in the amount of \$250,000 for the proposed project titled “From Kyoto to Providence: Preserving the RISD Museum’s Lucy Truman Aldrich Collection of Asian Textile Masterworks for Educational Access,” which covers the retention of 11 museum staff members (including extending the Nancy Prophet Fellowship of Tayana Fincher) and endeavors to fully inventory, assess, photograph, and rehouse approximately 900 costume and textiles made in Japan, China, Indonesia, India, Pakistan, Turkey, Syria, and Egypt between the 17th and early 20th centuries.

Conservation of Indian textiles

The Museum received a grant from Bank of America to work with partners to conserve two rare and important textiles made in India for the European market in the 18th century for ultimate display in the museum’s 5th floor galleries. Printed cotton hangings, or palampores, are named after the Hindi word *palang-pos* (bedspread or coverlet). Produced by Indian artisans, these densely patterned textiles show hybrid influence of Chinese, Islamic, European, and Indian elements designed to cater to European markets. As such, they allow for conversations about cross-cultural aesthetics, as well as opening up dialogue about India’s “painted cotton” trade with the world and ensuing European colonial violences.

Selected acquisitions of historically underrepresented artists within the past 5 years

Derek Adams, Shark Float, 2017

[David Adjaye, Washington Skeleton Chair, 2013](#)

[Katsuyo Aoki, Predictive Dream LVII, 2018](#)

[Juan José Barboza-Gubo and Andrew Mroczek, Pilar, 2015](#)

[Dawoud Bey, Birmingham: Four Girls, Two Boys, 2014](#)

[Robert Blackburn, Window Shapes, 1963, and Fenetre, 1960s](#)

[Pablo Bronstein, Historic Rhode Island Decor \(Stephen Hopkins House\), 2019, Pablo](#)

[Bronstein, Historic Rhode Island Decor \(First Baptist Church in America\), 2019, Pablo](#)

[Bronstein, Historic Rhode Island Decor \(Rhode Island State House\), 2019,](#)

[Nicole Buchanan, IN 08, 2015](#) among seven other works in the series

[Sonya Clark, Hair Necklace 4 \(Chain\), 2012](#)

Leonard Drew, Number 27D, 2005

[Nabil Gonzalez, Memento Mori, 2016](#)

[Raul Gonzalez III, Watchalo, Papa, Watchalo, 2016](#)

[Claudette Johnson, Untitled, 2015](#)

[Lubaina Himid, Undo the Knots of Poverty, 2011](#)

[Takenobu Igarashi, TI-1 Flatware Set, 1990](#)

[Arghavan Khosravi, There's So Many of Us \(2\), 2017](#)
[Deana Lawson, Binky and Tony Forever, 2009](#)
[Joyce Lin, Exploded Chair, 2019](#)
[Roberto Lugo, A Century of Black Lives Mattering, 2016](#)
[Zanele Muholi, Kodwa I, Amsterdam, 2017](#)
[Yasumasa Morimura, Brothers \(slaughter 1\), 1991](#)
[Vik Muniz, Cassius, 2001](#)
[Yoonmi Nam, Oishii, 2015](#)
 Shirin Neshat, [Ghada](#) and [Sayed](#), 2016; [Fervor](#), 2000; [Rapture](#), 1999; [Careless](#), 1997
[Magdalene Odundo, Asymmetrical Series II, 2015, TL156.2020 \(September FAC\)](#)
[Chris Ofili, Black Shunga, 2008-2015](#)
[Michael Platt, Untitled, 1997](#)
[Jagdeep Raina, Satnam Singh at the Punjabi Deli, 2016](#)
[Jagdeep Raina, British Invasion at the Punjabi Deli Part 2: Dreaming of that Chai Chai, 2016](#)
[Joyce Scott, Family, 2009](#)
[Shahzia Sikander, Portrait of the Artist, 2016](#)
[Shahzia Sikander, Self-Rooted, 1994](#)
[Sanle Sory, Young Music Lovers, 1974 \(printed 2017\)](#)
[Vincent Smith, Eight Etchings, 1965-66](#)
[Toshiko Takaezu, Tea Bowl, 1998](#)
[Various artists, Ei-Q and friends, 1984](#)
[Raul R. Velasquez, Lord Ganesha, 2016](#)
 Dahn Vo, [Forever New Frontiers](#), 2011
[James Van Der Zee, Reception in the Office of the CJ Walker Company, 1929](#)
[Fe Noel, design label. Oshun Slip dress, 2019](#)
[Haitian, Damballa Vodou Flag, 1950 - 1980](#)
[Haitian, "Baron Samedi" Vodou Flag, 1950 - 1980](#)
[Chinese artists, Shanghai \(garment\) and Guangdong Province \(textile\), Qipao \(also known as *Cheongsam*\), 1930s](#)
[Japanese artist, Women's Kimono, 1925-1950](#)
[Japanese artist, Women's Kimono, 1925-1950](#)
 Diedrick Brackens, [natal lake](#), 2019
[Korean, pojagi \(wrapping cloth\), ca. 1950](#)
[Chinese, Hezhe Fish Skin Jacket, 1875-1900](#)
[Christina Kim, dosa \(design label\), various garments, 2014](#)
 Issey Miyake / Cai Guo-Qiang, [Gunpowder dress](#), 1998
 Kalabari Ijo people, [Pelete bite \(cut-thread textile length\)](#), ca. 1930-1950
[Lisa Z. Morgan, Stitching Alive Her Unseen Desires, 2019](#)
[Junya Watanabe, Comme des Garçons, Dress, 2000](#)
 Dakota Tracht, [Puffer coat and skirt](#), 2015
[Japanese, Robe Worn by a Zen Buddhist Mendicant Monk \(Koromo or Jikitotsu\), ca. 1920/30](#)

[Japanese, Reversible Hikeshibanten/Hikeshi Hanten \(Fireman's Coat\), mid-1800s](#)
[Kenzo Takada, Japanese, Ensemble, 1994](#)
[Yoruba, Egúngún Masquerade Ensemble, 2015](#)
[Indian, Bengal, Kantha Quilt, 1800s](#)
 Isabel Toledo, Matador Ensemble made for Joey Arias, 1985
[McCarty, Nana \(Chief\), Fante Asafo Flag, 1900-1925](#)
[Issey Miyake, Indigo Batik Dress, 1984](#)
[Carla Fernández; Lucas, Rosa Hernández; Mujeres Conservando Raíces, Poncho Poema, 2018](#)
[G-Star RAW; Williams, Pharrell; Bionic, RAW for the Oceans Jacket, 2017](#)
 Faig Ahmed, Wave Function, 2016
[Chinese, Hani Child's Layered Ensemble \(jacket, vest, pants\), 1900s](#)
[Ghanaian, Ewe, Chief's Mantle, early 1900s](#)
[Ghanaian, Man's Robe \(Fugu\), mid-1900s](#)
[Indian, Chintz trade cloth, 1850-1900](#)
[Kohistani, Child's Amulet Vest, 1900s](#)
[Nigerian, Yoruba, Man's wrapper, early 1900s](#)
[Utagawa Kunisada, Ikuyo no mutsugoto, 3 vols. ca. 1855](#)
[Utagawa Kuniyoshi, Onoe Kikugorō III as Tenjiku Kaja Conjuring Up Rats, 1836](#)
[Utagawa Kuniyoshi, Votive Tablet with Masks of Kabuki Actors taken at Face Value \(Ataru hōnō negai o gakumen\), ca. 1848](#)
[Iranian, Wall Tiles, 19th century \(Group of 10 tiles\)](#)
[Utagawa Toyokuni II, Sumo Wrestler Hiodoshi Rikiya, ca. 1848](#)
[Hasegawa Sadanobu III, Yanone from the series Eighteen Kabuki Plays of Loyalty and Filial Piety \(Chūkō kabuki jūhachiban\), ca. 1952 Utagawa Yoshitora, Russia \(Oroshia\), 1861, 2nd month](#)
 Troy Michie, *America is Wove of Many Threads #2*, 2019
[Jazzmen Lee-Johnson, Grandma's Lament/Sello sa Nkoko, 2019](#)
[Harmony Hammond, Blue Spirit, 1978](#)
[Huma Bhabha, Ghost, 2008](#)
[Andre Bradley, Wallet Size Poster Child, 2015](#)
[Andre Bradley, I Learned About Race Today, 2015](#)
[Pia Camil, The little dog laughed, 2014](#)
[Xavier Cha, abduct, 2015](#)
[Ramiro Gomez, Nanny and Child \(Central Park\), 2018](#)
[David Hartt, Stray Light, 2011](#)
 Kahlil Robert Irving, "Have mercy on me," 2017
[Kahlil Robert Irving, "Many Men, many, many, many, many men, wish death pon me," 2017](#)
 Kahlil Robert Irving, "Lord I don't cry no more, Look to the sky no more," 2017
[Cheyenne Julien, Orchard Beach, 2019](#)
[Simone Leigh, Opuwo, 2018](#)
 Eric N. Mack, (Menagerie) The Thorn / The Veil / The Face of Grace, 2018

[James Montford, Holocaust Blankets with Smallpox, 2015](#)

[Adam Pendleton, Black Dada Reader \(wall work #1\), 2016](#)

[Arnold Prince, Standing Figure, 1986](#)

[Jordan Seaberry, Hallmarks, 2018](#)

[Jordan Seaberry, The Wanderer, 2015](#)

[Do-Ho Suh, Main Entrance 2, 388 Benefit Street, Providence, Rhode Island, 02903, USA, 2015](#)

[Bob Thompson, Figures with Blue Saint, 1964](#)

[Nafis M. White, A Burst of Light, 2018](#)

Staff

[Confronting ourselves together](#) (on internal staff dialogues committed to anti-racism and decoloniality)

Department of Asian Art

Dr. Wai Yee Chiong was hired as Assistant Curator of Asian Art in November 2018 to activate the museum's collection of Asian art. She received her PhD in Art History from Princeton University in 2017. Before coming to RISD, she was the Cunningham Curatorial Fellow in Japanese Art at the Harvard Art Museums.

Luce Curatorial Fellow for Native North American Art

The Henry Luce Curatorial Fellow assists in the interpretation and care of the RISD Museum's Native North American collection through active engagement in provenance research, cataloging, building a network of experts and tribal representatives, reviewing storage and display requirements, and creating interpretation and programming based on this work.

Nancy Prophet Fellowship: recent fellows include Amber Lopez and Tayana Fincher

The Nancy Prophet Fellowship at the RISD Museum is a two-year, full-time position for artists and scholars embarking on careers in the arts and considering the museum profession and the roles museums play in an increasingly diverse society. Named in honor of the Nancy Prophet, an artist of Narragansett and African heritage and RISD's first graduate of color in 1918, this program provides significant professional-practice opportunities to high-achieving college and graduate school alumni up to three years post-graduation. Fellows will have the opportunity to participate extensively in aspects of the Museum's curatorial and programming work. Through mentorship and

professional-development support, they will develop the knowledge, skills, and experience necessary to make important contributions to the museum field.

Henry Luce Curatorial Fellowship, Decorative Arts and Design Department

The fellowship is an academic-year position open to students currently enrolled in a degree-seeking graduate program who are considering curatorial work in decorative arts and have an interest in the roles museums play in an increasingly diverse society. The 2018-19 fellow was [Kimia Rahnnavardi](#), a graduate student in the department of Interior Architecture with a strong interest in sustainability and adaptive reuse, transforming existing spaces to make them more eco-friendly and energy efficient.

Artist Fellowship: recent fellows include Becci Davis, Dana Heng, Jazzmen Lee-Johnson (current fellow)

We invite local artists and designers working in any medium to apply for the 2020 artist fellowship. One selected artist receives a stipend of \$10,000, professional-development support, and the opportunity to work closely with our collections and staff members to realize a proposed project rooted in object-based research. We aspire to create an accessible and inclusive environment that builds meaningful relationships across all communities. We recognize that museums are not neutral spaces and that our collections reflect power structures of exclusion, and our current work aims to offer an expanded view of artists, art-making and history.

Selected Programs, Publications, and Initiatives from the past two years

Manual Issue 14: Shadows

The RISD Museum's fourteenth issue of *Manual* shines a light on the shadow, centering the black body as a site of possibility, liberatory self-awareness, radical non-conformity, and joyful defiance. *Manual 14: Shadows* opens with an excerpt on the shadow from W. E. B. Du Bois's *The Souls of Black Folk*, followed by an introduction by Dr. Anita N. Bateman, who elucidates: "Operating in the shadow comes with a legacy of resistance, both in spiritual and ideological forms. Contributors include: Akwaeke Emezi eats the sun, removing the shadow by removing the light; Shuriya Davis sings from *Butterfly Hymnals That Won't Disturb the Pleasant: Complacency, and Other Lullabies*; Kelly Taylor Mitchell reminds you that Black people don't owe you shit; Rashayla Marie

Decolonial/Anti-Racist Work

Brown and Matthew Shenoda celebrate the love in Ming Smith's *Romare Bearden, New York, NY, 1977*; Leslie Wilson and Emanuel Admassu consider sideways glances and multiple meanings in Aïda Muluneh's *Age of Anxiety*; Andrea Achi and Gina Borrromeo grapple with racial types, missing handles, and the long lost history of an ancient bust of an African child; Kevin Quashie and Sade LaNay take a peep at Black privacy, gender, and sensuality in Toyin Ojih Odutola's *Last Portrait of the 18th Marquess*; Makeda Best highlights Calvin Burnett's 1964 portrait of Sojourner Truth, and the photos Truth herself commissioned; Melanee C. Harvey studies the preliminary works for and final version of Aaron Douglas's *Building More Stately Mansions*; Tayana Fincher casts new light on a 19th-century Nubian sandal, its largely obfuscated earlier history, and its purpose in a museum collection; Oluremi C. Onabanjo illuminates how Carrie Mae Weems haunts history.

Raid the Icebox Now digital publication

Works of art relegated to museum storage have much to do with the ways art history has been written, who wrote it, and whom it serves. Those objects left unattended are ripe with stories to be told and opportunities for new ways of making. For *Raid the Icebox Now*, artists were invited to use the collection as an extension of their practice, to explore ideas they might otherwise not have pursued. Through access to a rich collection, material and financial resources, and a creative staff, new things have happened. The *Raid the Icebox Now* digital publication features critical investigations of the collection and new projects by [Simone Leigh](#), [Nicole Eisenman](#), [Pablo Bronstein](#), [Beth Kettleman](#), [Pablo Helguera](#), [Paul Scott](#), [Sebastian Ruth](#) and [Triple Canopy](#).

Land Acknowledgement

Building upon collaborations with Lóren Spears which include the publication of [Kunneepaumwuw ut Nahhiggananeuck aukéashut](#) (You are standing on Narragansett lands), we are in the final stages of developing a land acknowledgement which will be used in programs, have a physical presence in the museum, and will also be published on the website.

Gallery and digital interpretation

[Why is this even here? Soundwalk](#) for the public that investigates the back stories of objects in the collection highlighting the colonial and imperial conditions under which collections were formed and issues of provenance. [Reverberations: Gorham Silver](#) offered firsthand multi-generational accounts about Gorham and its connections with labor, craft, and the Elmwood neighborhood, as well as Indigenous and environmental

perspectives about the landscape the company occupied. RISD-affiliated contributors included Matthew Bird (faculty, Industrial Design); Becci Davis (2018 museum artist fellow); Sherenté Mishitashin Harris (RISD/Brown dual-degree student); and Christopher Roberts (SEI Research Fellow). A series of videos on Nesmin consider: [Is a Mummy a work of art?](#) and [How did Nesmin get here?](#)

Museums and Mental Health

Explore what it means for art museums to center mental health as part of the visitor experience during the age of COVID-19 and the Black Lives Matter Movement with Kajette Solomon, Education Program Coordinator, RISD Museum, and Damion Vania, Clinical Counselor, RISD. This open dialogue will consider how museums can be both spaces of healing and curiosity while also triggering traumatic experiences and negative emotions. How can art make visitors feel seen and considered? How can art museums put us in touch with our senses and ultimately elevate the human experience?

Art and Activism

After a summer of racial unrest, following the murders of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor at the hands of white police officers, and countless other Black lives lost, artists responded by creating public works of art in and around the city of Providence; from murals on storefront plywood to prints handed out at protests. Art as cultural production is an effective conduit for activism; to increase social awareness and create change. Join a panel of artists, including Nafis White and Kendel Joseph facilitated by museum educator Kajette Solomon.

Selected Past Programs

Strand by Nafis White and Garcia Sinclair

Strand is a performative sculptural work that is activated by an intergenerational community of weavers using the Grand Gallery as site for a commemorative piece that spans 400 years since the enslavement of Africans in the United States of America to the present day, from 1619 to 2019. Weavers created a foot of sculpture as a marker for each year, building over the course of a week a 400 foot piece composed of hair, cotton and rope and imbued with the embodied knowledge, love and care of the people generating it.

This Is MY House

The European paintings in the Grand Gallery represent what was considered artistic achievement in Western art from around 1500 through the 1800s, but who was left out of being allowed to paint or to be immortalized on canvas? I was. This is MY House: an immersive space about representation—or the lack thereof. Join artist Jess Brown, along with The Haus of the Glitter Dance Company and Sidy Maiga, to explore under-represented depictions of black gentry of this period, experience performance art, see flash mob style "Voguing" the runway, hear music of another land, and experience works of art in surprising ways.

Will Work for Revolution

Organized by guest programmer Becci Davis, this event presents artists' interpretation and performance surrounding the concepts of anger, resistance, and joy. A group of invited artists share their work toward the goal of radical societal change.

[Pigments of Your Imagination](#) by RAC (RISD Art Circle)

A coloring book that asks users to reconsider whiteness in ancient Greek and Roman sculpture. See [Hyperallergic](#) article and [New Yorker](#) piece.

[Making Meaning from a Fragmented Past: 1897 and the Creative Process](#)

Peju Layiwola, artist, Professor of Art History and head of the Department of Creative Arts at the University of Lagos in Nigeria, shares her expertise in the history of bronze casting in Benin, the legacy of the 1897 punitive expedition, and the fight for restitution. Layiwola's work is inspired by history and her dual heritage (Yoruba and Benin). Presented in collaboration with RISD's Office of Social Equity and Inclusion and Sculpture and Theory and History of Art and Design Departments.

[Global Dialogues: Sustainable Development in African Fashion](#)

Explore ideas of sustainable fashion with social designer, Abrima Erwiah, recent recipient of the prestigious Council of Fashion Designers of America Lexus Sustainable Fashion Award. Via video-conferencing, Erwiah discusses Studio One Eighty Nine and its impact on the Ghanaian/African fashion industry, in conjunction with the exhibition *Repair and Design Futures*. Abrima Erwiah is the co-founder of Studio One Eighty Nine, an artisan-produced fashion brand and social enterprise that has recently won the prestigious Council of Fashion Designers of America Lexus Fashion Initiative for Sustainability. Alongside her friend and partner, Rosario Dawson, Erwiah has built a

globally renowned lifestyle brand that produces African and African-inspired content and clothing.

Global Dialogues: Connecting Generations

Via video conferencing, multimedia artist, Wendy Red Star, raised on the Apsáalooke (Crow) reservation, discusses repair as it relates to Native American histories and ideologies. Learn about her creative practice, hopes for future generations, and thoughts surrounding museum collections, in conjunction with the exhibition *Repair and Design Futures*. Wendy Red Star is a contemporary artist who explores the intersections of Native American ideologies and colonialist structures. Reclaiming representations of indigenous people and culture, she posits perspectives on Native narratives, and brings American traditions and histories to the forefront through mixed-media installations.

Global Dialogues: Reparative Cultures

Through video-conferencing, Kiowa artist Teri Greeves, creator of the beaded high-tops in the exhibition *Repair and Design Futures*, speaks about repair as breathing new life into old objects. Highlighting the cyclical nature of Native American art, she discusses how although art-making materials change with circumstance, intention remains ever present. Join us in this conversation with RISD Professor Claudia Ford, as we see context being put back into museum collections. Based in Santa Fe, Teri Greeves is a contemporary Kiowa artist known for her expressive beadwork. Raised on the Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho Nations' reservation in Wyoming, her work references rich cultural histories and produces a new visual language.

Global Dialogues: Preserving Memories

Join Randall Mason, Associate Professor of City & Regional Planning at the University of Pennsylvania, and Julia Brennan, Textile Conservator at Caring for Textiles, in discussing how negative heritage can help repair social misgivings. Referencing their work with PennPraxis, they share their expertise, experiences, and concerns regarding the conservation of Rwanda's national genocide memorials. Join this conversation, along with Brown University Professor Dietrich Neumann, as we consider cultural and historic preservation in the exhibit *Repair and Design Futures*. This year marks the 25th anniversary of the Rwandan genocide, a cataclysmic event that has placed commemoration at the center of intense political and cultural debates. Memorials to the Rwandan genocide are complex, evolving sites designed to provide evidence, enable mourning, and allow remembrance and reflection for survivors as well as outsiders. Conservation of the genocide memorials has gained urgency and raised long-term

issues, including repair of extensive textile and artifact collections and preservation of buildings and landscapes.

[Global Dialogues: Decolonizing Design and Mapping Indigenous Futures](#)

Through video conferencing, speak with interdisciplinary designer, Tristan Schultz, about issues of repair across communities, environments, and geographies. Schultz, an Australian with both European and Aboriginal heritage, discusses notions of repair through a decolonising perspective. Schultz is joined by Damian White, Dean of RISD's Liberal Arts Division, to examine methods of responsibly designing sustainable futures, in the exhibition *Repair and Design Futures*. Born in the Gold Coast, Australia, Tristan Schultz is of Kamilaroi descent. He leads several social design collectives, including Redirective Practice and Relative Creative, which focus on designing interdisciplinary strategies and programs towards decolonization and sustainability.

[Discussion: Where is Africa?](#)

Artists Salome Asega and Delphine Fawundu, along with the curator Niama Safia Sandy, share their work related to representation, decolonization, and artistic practice happening on the continent and in the African diaspora. The discussion continues with RISD Global Fellows, Emanuel Admassu, Assistant Professor in RISD's Architecture Department and Principal, AD-WO, and Anita N. Bateman, Andrew W. Mellon Curatorial Fellow at the RISD Museum and Ph.D. Candidate, Duke University. Admassu and Bateman organized this event in conjunction with their research project, WHERE IS AFRICA?. Co-sponsored by RISD Global and the RISD Museum.

[Decolonizing Design, Imagining Alternative Futures](#)

Consider new visions of design theory and practice with author, anthropologist, and philosopher Arturo Escobar in conversation with RISD faculty, Namita Dharia, Jess Brown, Ramon Tejada, and Ijlal Muzaffar. Studio practices are explored through the lens of justice, ethics, and the environment. This conversation and [the faculty workshop](#) are planned in conjunction with the Museum's exhibit, *Repair and Design Futures*. Co-sponsored by RISD's Liberal Arts Division.

[On Repair: Kader Attia](#)

For many years, Kader Attia has been exploring the perspective that societies have on their history, especially regarding experiences of deprivation and suppression, violence and loss, and how this affects the evolving of nations and individuals — each of them being connected to collective memory. This lecture is co-sponsored by the RISD

Museum as part of the exhibit Repair and Design Futures, and by the RISD Graduate Commons lecture series "Conversations in Contemporary Art." The latter is a collaboration among RISD's Divisions of Graduate Studies, Fine Arts and Liberal Arts, with the support of the RISD Provost's Office. Kader Attia, grew up in Paris and in Algeria. In 2016, Attia founded La Colonie, a space in Paris to share ideas and to provide an agora for vivid discussion. Focusing on decolonization not only of peoples but also of knowledge, attitudes and practices, it aspires to de-compartmentalise knowledge by a trans-cultural, trans-disciplinary and trans-generational approach.

Presentations: Understanding Repatriation and Restitution

Organized by New England Museum Association as part of a day-long workshop, these presentations by Elon Cook, Program Director and Curator, Center for Reconciliation, Rae Gould, Associate Director of Native American and Indigenous Studies at Brown University, and Lorén Spears, Executive Director, Tomaquag Museum, address repatriation and restitution.

K-12 Virtual Visits and Teacher Professional Development

Classroom modules for K-12 teachers use works of art to investigate settler-colonialism, imperialism and collecting practices, and systemic racism in Rhode Island and the US. Teacher professional development has focused on relevant topics to build teachers' awareness of positionality, identity, implicit bias in curriculum and learning and teaching strategies. Summer institutes include Learning through Place (July 2020), Social Justice and the Arts (July 2018) and Intercultural Practice in the Museum and the Classroom (July 2015). Teachers' Lounge programs have included Doing History as Reparative Work using Material and Visual Culture with Elon Cook Lee (December 6, 2018) and On Multicultural Practice with Dr. Kimberly Ridley, Assistant Head of Gordon School (January 28, 2016).

The Art of Race

The Art of Race, an ongoing program in collaboration with the Center for Reconciliation, welcomes members of the regional community to the RISD Museum to engage in frank conversations about race in America inspired by artwork in the museum's collection.

In the Making

What can art-making materials tell us about the natural world, global trade, social and cultural frameworks, and artists' ideas? This series of gallery conversations, laboratory experiences and studio workshops immerses participants in hands-on exploration of a

single material while investigating its relationship to complex histories of economic power, colonial oppression, labor, gender, and environmental impacts.

Academic Initiatives and Programs

Museum staff support over 4000 RISD student engagements per year, in addition to over 100 programs supporting students and faculty, like open hours and teaching workshops. In recent years, many museum staff have focused on pushing forward long-standing partnerships with faculty by diversifying objects selected for teaching and offering updated perspectives and course content that complicate and critique museum practices. In addition to in-depth partnerships with faculty at the forefront of this work, including many new and adjunct instructors, museum staff are increasingly supporting curriculum that is centered on the institution rather than on objects: investigating collecting histories, repatriation, and colonial origins of museums.

The museum continues to support students through paid internship programs, paid assistantships and fellowships, and a paid student group that develops monthly public programming, the Museum Guild. This group of undergraduate students from RISD and from other local colleges and universities who do not have similar on-campus resources have a stated mission of working toward representation, inclusion and advocacy for student voices in the museum space. These students use their unique position to amplify student voices in the museum galleries and critique dominant Eurocentric narratives. In a recent program, entitled “How Did This Get Here?,” students staged a series of temporary interventions throughout the galleries during a Third Thursday in spring 2019 and Night at the Museum in fall 2019, and invited public audiences and incoming RISD first-years to engage in informal conversations about works ranging from the Benin Head of a King (Oba) to 18th-century Chinese textiles, with the aim to problematizing museum histories and introducing ideas of repatriation, restitution, and reparations.

Dorner Prize

Annually RISD students are invited to submit Dorner Prize proposals for temporary, site-specific projects at the RISD Museum. This artistic intervention can take the form of a physical, digital, or programmatic encounter, and can examine, critique, or celebrate the Museum’s collections, architectural idiosyncrasies, habits of visitation, and or/web presence.

2020 winners include Bobby Joe Smith III, MFA Graphic Design 2020 and collaborators: RISD students - Will Mianecki, Aryana Polat, Sadia Quddus, and Sharanya Aggrawal for a performance titled *Evidence of Slave Sale*. Their proposal reads, *In 1945, the RISD Art Museum acquired an odd piece for its collections—the certificate of purchase of an African American slave. There are no other pieces like it and there are no known notes. This document has since troubled the museum’s archive. Is it art? Does it belong here? What should institutions do when confronted with such objects in their history or archives? The bill of slave sale, the bottles of rum, the garment made of slave cloth, and my own brown body bring into conversation Rhode Island’s complicity in slavery, the flesh behind the fragments of evidence troubling archives, and their utterances reminding us of the violent methods of wealth production that made Providence, RISD, and the Museum’s collection possible.*