



## FSU ART HISTORY METHODS CAPSTONE SYMPOSIUM

Thursday, December 2, 2021

11:35am–2:05pm

WJB G41

[www.arthistory.fsu.edu/capstone](http://www.arthistory.fsu.edu/capstone)

### PROGRAM

#### SESSION I:

- 11:35am Opening Remarks, Dr. Tenley Bick
- 11:45am Callia Blake (they/them)  
“Portraits and Posterity: Envisioning Black Queer Futurity Through Photography”
- 12:00pm Sophie Middleton (she/her)  
“Does art need to have an audience in order to be accepted?”
- 12:15pm Moses Villanueva (he/him), “Afrotropes: An Imagined History”
- 12:30pm Ten-minute break**

#### Session II:

- 12:40pm Michelle Norris (they/them)  
“Redefining the Nordic Baptism: Deconstructing Viking Age Christian Iconography”
- 12:55pm Dale Barnes (they/them)  
“Picturing Queer Horror: Visualizing a Recent History in U.S.-American Contemporary Art”
- 1:10pm Kylie Stracuzzi (she/her)  
“Experimentation With the Decorative Arts: Traditional African American Quilting and Late Modernist Chromatic Abstraction”
- 1:25pm Janet Diaz (she/her)  
“Decolonizing the Museum: Wendy Red Star and the Children of the Large-Beaked Bird”
- 1:40–2:05pm Q&A**



## ABSTRACTS AND BIOS

### Session I

#### **Callia Blake (they/them)**

“Portraits and Posterity: Envisioning Black Queer Futurity Through Photography”

**Abstract:** In this discussion I hope to examine how photography helps to create space for and envision a future for those who are black and queer. It is my goal to analyze black queer photography and how it functions in a liminal space. Using the frameworks of both social art history and postmodern identity politics, I want to delve into ways in which artists such as Texas Isaiah Valenzuela, Rotimi Fani-Kayode, Zanele Muholi, and Iké Udé explore ideas of futurity and resistance through photography. The photographers that I’m discussing aren’t only giving visibility to their own realities and reimaginings of the world through their practices. They are imagining the future and the positioning of their communities. As artist Zanele Muholi suggests the depiction of black queer bodies in photography tends to focus the oppression and violence that the community is subjected to. Therefore, the way these artists manifest a future for their communities becomes a revolutionary act.

**Bio:** Callia Blake is a senior pursuing their Bachelor’s in Art History. Their interests include photography, American folk art, and how visual culture affects our day to day experiences. After graduation they hope to go into museum education and event planning.

#### **Sophie Middleton (she/her)**

“Does art need to have an audience in order to be accepted?”

**Abstract:** This study aims to reveal the importance of audience members involved in performance art. According to Claire Bishop, participatory art is the shift of the audience member from ‘viewer’ to ‘co-producer.’ On this topic, Miwon Kwon believes contemporary art relies on the audience reaction where they are actively involved in completing the artwork. Over time, various scholars have strongly discussed whether art needs to be accepted by the audience. Therefore, with this paper, I identify the need for participatory art to have an audience to be completed and defined as art. Yoko Ono and Marina Abramovic, who have explored gender and vulnerability in their performance art, recognize the importance of an audience. The audience has the power to dictate what will be accepted; the artist-audience relationship shows how the audience can be persuaded to accept an object as art. It is based on how the object is presented, and the purpose of participatory art changes a viewer's role to be included in art itself. This claim will be supported by Marcel Duchamp. I will use psychoanalysis to consider the viewer’s response and feminism as my method of analysis.

**Bio:** My name is Sophie Middleton, it’s a pleasure to meet you! I’m originally from Birmingham, England, where I lived until the age of eight. I’m currently an Art History Major



and just received my Residential Interior Design Certificate. My hobbies include reading, drawing, water activities, and cooking.

**Moses Villanueva (he/him)**

“Afrotropes: An Imagined History”

**Abstract:** Afrotropes are African iconography repurposed for a specific use usually present in Black Art movements. The topic of Afrotropes has been widely discussed in Art History; scholars such as Huey Copeland and Krista Thompson argue the value in these symbols and their temporality. However, this perspective has not addressed how the overvaluation of these tropes may question the counterintuitiveness of their application. These symbols have been overvalued because of their connection to pre-colonial Africa. My paper addresses Afrotropes with special attention to the eras of the 60’s and 70’s Black arts and civil movements. Specifically, in my project, I will be looking at articles and artwork by AfriCOBRA and anti-colonial literature by Frantz Fanon and Postcolonial theory by Edward W. Said, while considering the politics of Afrotropes, the stakes of using them, within the context of liberation movements of the global Black Diaspora in the 1960s, 70s. I will discuss the dichotomy of Afrotropes and juxtapose them with arguments made mostly by Fanon in order to detail the relationship between these tropes and black liberation. I argue that Afrotropes serve as symbols of the black diaspora while realizing the conflicting ideologies that exist behind the usage of these symbols. For example, The group AfriCOBRA has utilized Pan-African iconography to portray a sense of belonging for those part of the black diaspora in America. AfriCOBRA was a radical arts movement that sought to inject confidence and history for those pasts that have been neglected. In conclusion, this project, by closely examining Afrotropes, will shed light on the neglected history of black people and add to the Art History canon more avenues to critically engage global black diasporic art.

**Bio:** My name is Moses Villanueva I am from Hollywood, Florida. I am currently majoring in Art history as an undergrad. I am of Dominican descent and seek to graduate with my bachelors. I love skateboarding, Hip-Hop, and Black Diasporic Art.

**BREAK**

**SESSION II**

**Michelle Norris (they/them)**

“Redefining the Nordic Baptism: Deconstructing Viking Age Christian Iconography”

**Abstract:** When studying Viking art during the great transition to Christianity, it is to a great detriment to the art historian to study it in a Euro-Christian point of view which is the dominant interpretation in the field so far. However, to even begin studying these artifacts in a new light one must deconstruct any preconceived notions about how one might convert to Christianity. The thorough conversion, a complete disregard for their previous faith would have been a very



difficult feat to achieve in the ninth and tenth centuries, and ultimately unrealistic. The reality of the Viking Baptism can be found in artifacts such as the Gosforth Cross and the Jelling Stone. I argue that these artifacts are evidence that the Christian God was more so adopted into the Nordic Pantheon rather than the common notion that Vikings were attempting to simply “relate” their faith to that of a Christian one.

**Bio:** My name is Michelle Norris, I am non-binary and am referred to with they/them pronouns. I am studying Art History however I study and practice ceramics and sculpture in my own time.

### **Dale Barnes (they/them)**

“Picturing Queer Horror: Visualizing a Recent History in U.S.-American Contemporary Art”

**Abstract:** This paper looks at a genre that I have entitled “Queer Horror,” that focuses on queer themes while also evoking horror—a sense of fear or uneasiness—within an audience. Exploring and expanding upon limited scholarship, I investigate the works of three U.S.-American contemporary artists from the 1980s to present day who comment through “Queer Horror” on injustices against queer people. The first, Jason Edward Davis, employs campiness to explore horror, while also focusing on cinematic horror icons. The second artist, David Wojnarowicz, explores the horrors of the AIDS epidemic. The last artist, David Antonio Cruz, looks at the horrific murder of transgender women of color. Using the methodologies of iconographic and social art historical research, I explore the symbols used in the works in relation to the socio-political aspects that have merited this turn to horror. I argue they call attention to the socio-cultural climate of their time.

**Bio:** Dale Barnes (They/Them): Dale Barnes is in their last semester at Florida State University, pursuing a bachelor’s in art history. They are greatly influenced and interested in queer art and horror. They are very thankful for Dr. Bick for giving them an opportunity to be able to present their research in a conference-like setting.

### **Kylie Stracuzzi (she/her)**

“Experimentation With the Decorative Arts: Traditional African American Quilting and Late Modernist Chromatic Abstraction”

**Abstract:** Considering the work of Harriet Powers, Al Loving, and Sam Gilliam, this paper will investigate the relationship between modernist chromatic abstraction and traditional African American quilt making. In the art historical field, there have been few studies on how these artworks intersect, but with special attention to abstract improvised designs, geometric shapes, and patterning, this paper will explore the former’s influence on the latter. I use formalist, iconographical, and biographical theory to breakdown the aftershocks of African American quilting on late modernist painting, specifically to argue that the building blocks these quilts were made with, were used to contextualize the early period into the new, with renewed attention to hanging fabrics in the early to mid 1970s. For my argument, I use writings by Jacqueline Tobin, Anna Katz, and Darby English to illuminate this rarely acknowledged connection, with



attention to the works themselves, decorative arts as abstraction, and museum exhibitions.

**Bio:** Kylie is graduating with her bachelor's in art history, and she has a great interest in Contemporary works. She attended TCC before transferring to FSU and hopes to work as a Museum Educator or in Art Therapy in her future. When not in school, she makes time to play with her chubby cat, Lambchop. She also practices reading tarot cards and loves binge watching Ghost Adventures when she has downtime.

### **Janet Diaz (she/her)**

“Decolonizing the Museum: Wendy Red Star and the Children of the Large-Beaked Bird”

**Abstract:** For centuries art has been depicted, defined and analyzed from a very narrow perspective, that of the colonizer. Racist depictions romanticizing, fetichizing, and antagonizing Native Americans have lived through art, literature, and cinema for many years. Native people also been depicted out of context as shown in the photographs taken during the Crow Delegations of 1873, 1880, and the early 1900's. Thankfully, multimedia artist and Apsáalooke (Crow) tribe member, Wendy Red Star, has dedicated her life to telling the story of Native people through their lens and providing context for these photographs. Dismantling colonial political agendas and providing a more accurate narrative. In this essay I will argue that through her exhibition *Apsáalooke: Children of the Large-beaked Bird*, Red Star helps to decolonize the museum, presents a more accurate and complete history of America, and honors Indigenous experiences and their individuality. I will argue that she does this by: rectifying the often flawed narratives about Native people; educating the world about American indigenous culture; providing the Native perspective; and giving back their identity to the individuals depicted on the Crow Delegations photographs. The methodologies I will employ to conduct my research are: biography, because Red Star's own life and experience is key to her work; post-colonial critique, because her work allow us to look at history through the lens of the colonized instead of just the colonizer's; and iconography because the interpretation of images and symbols is an essential part of this exhibition in order to understand the context of the photographs.

**Bio:** Janet Diaz is a 27-year-old art history student at FSU. She was born on May 24th of 1994 in Havana, Cuba, where she lived for most of her life. She enjoys photography, painting, and writing short stories and poems in Spanish. She is a wife, a daughter, a sister, and a friend.