



# Convergence

New Orleans Local Artist Studio Program  
at the Joan Mitchell Center  
2013-2014



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Roots run deep here. Before the storm New Orleans was the U.S. city with the largest percentage of its population living in the same town in which they were born. Acknowledging this fact is not to devalue the dedication and contribution of New Orleans arrivals who have made New Orleans their own.

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**JORDAN FLAHERTY**

*FLOODLINES: COMMUNITY AND RESISTANCE  
FROM KATRINA TO THE JENA SIX*

## FOREWORD

**Gia M. Hamilton**

Director, Joan Mitchell Center

New Orleans is a hyper creative city. It is common to visit and become entranced by the cultural practices, values and expectations that provide cohesion, mutuality and celebration of family and community. They help to maintain the sense of self and appreciation for the journeys of life that one’s forebears have traveled and the principles by which they lived. This, they say, is to be “*rooted*”; when these are absent or disregarded as tensions and division rises up, people are described as being “uprooted.” “‘Up-rootedness’ is defined as a near universal condition resulting from the destruction of ties with the past and the dissolution of community.”<sup>1</sup> French philosopher Simone Weil discusses the political, cultural and spiritual currents that need nurturing in order to lead a fulfilling life. Weil suggests that there is a need to recognize the spiritual and artistic nature of *work*. New Orleans knows its artists’ work intimately, rendering it a safe haven for culture bearers and creatives alike.

The Joan Mitchell Center acknowledges the relationship of the artist to the whole community as a valuable, socially engaged and responsive contributor to society. “Artists invent new ways to approach sickness, to repair the distressed planet and bridge differences. They connect us with our common humanity and our individual histories and truths,” explains Tom Borrup in *Works of Heart: Building Village through the Arts*, and the Center explores new ways to support this invaluable role of the artist.<sup>2</sup> The Joan Mitchell Foundation began its relationship with the city of New Orleans in 2005, by providing emergency support to visual artists in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. Career Opportunity Grants were given in 2008 to under-recognized artists in need of new professional opportunities. Later in 2010, the Foundation reinforced its commitment with *Joan Mitchell in New Orleans*, which included a symposium on her life and work, and three concurrent exhibitions at Tulane University’s Newcomb Art Gallery, New Orleans Museum of Art, and the Contemporary Arts Center of New Orleans. That same year, the Foundation purchased the House on Bayou Road, a local bed and breakfast, with hopes of creating an artist residency center in New Orleans; its first program and capital project outside of New York City.

After four years, the seeds began to grow roots in this community and reach out to the neighborhood and local arts community, as well as create an exchange of the New York arts scene with New Orleans directly. The Joan Mitchell Center continues to be a conductor of energy and human potential, raising the visibility of working artists. The Center is focused on creating an inclusive gathering place, as well as a place for innovation and transformation. It is the intentional work of the Center to

<sup>1</sup> Weil, Simone. *L’enracinement (The Need for Roots)*. Routledge, 1949.

<sup>2</sup> Borrup, Tom. “Working With What’s Underfoot.” *Works of Heart: Building Village through the Arts*, eds. Lynne Elizabeth and Suzanne Young. New Village Press, 2006.

be *rooted* in the mission, values and goals of the Foundation, while integrating the Center’s programming with the cultural traditions that already exist in New Orleans; embodying the meaning of engaging in “place-based work”. The legacy of Joan Mitchell continues by providing artists support, taking into account the unique history of the neighborhood and the Bayou Road corridor.

To walk down Bayou Road is to take a trip back in history to what is arguably the oldest street in New Orleans.<sup>3</sup> The Main House, appropriately named Magnolia because of the large Magnolia tree in the front of the property, of the Joan Mitchell Center on Bayou Road, dates back to the early 1800s and was later moved from Esplanade Avenue to its current location, suggesting its importance to the burgeoning neighborhood in Faubourg Tremé and Esplanade Ridge. Like the current make up of the neighborhood, it is interesting to note that there were a significant number of properties in the area owned by free women of color in the 1700s and 1800s. Today on Bayou Road, that legacy continues as a main business and cultural corridor for the African American community, home to businesses like Community Book Center, King and Queen Emporium and Oils, CoCo Hut Restaurant, Beauty on the Bayou, as well as newcomer Pagoda Café – many of whom have female proprietors. Esplanade Ridge is an eclectic mixture of cultures co-existing in a historically dense neighborhood peppered with winding roads, cobblestone streets and colorful characters. The Joan Mitchell Center on Bayou Road adds to this assortment of exquisitely manicured landscapes and the old world charm of traditional creole cottages. Nearby on Esplanade Avenue, onlookers are drawn to the sculptures by neighborhood artist Robert Tannen, the fountains outside of the Degas House, and the quaint courtyard at Le Musée de Free People of Color.

In 2013, the Joan Mitchell Center piloted its residency program by extending an invitation to all Joan Mitchell Foundation recipients of the Painters & Sculptors Grant Program and the MFA Grant Program. Twenty-four artists were selected to participate over a six-month period. Resident artists regularly participated in New Orleans life through second lines, drumming at Congo Square, St. Joseph’s Night, Second Saturdays on St. Claude, and friendly dialogues with passersby. Some even rekindled their love and connection to the city through long walks from the Center to their offsite studios on Rampart Street. The program presented numerous public events like artist talks, open studios, salons, and artist walks, demystifying the work of artists in their studios. The Center also continued to act as a gathering space for over forty local organizations, including Junebug Productions, National Performance Network, KID smART, YA/YA, and CubaNOLA. At the end of the pilot, artists were already planning their return to the city to continue their connections.

My first residency initiative as the Director of the Joan Mitchell Center was the New Orleans Local Artist (NOLA) Studio Program, designed for local emerging artists who were in need of studio space and professional development. It was important to curate a group that accurately reflected the city’s population, hence honoring the distinctive contributions of African Americans to the city’s cultural capital. Reflecting



Joan Mitchell Center on Bayou Road, Main House.

on my own history reminded me that New Orleans has been referred to by some as the most “Africanized city in the U.S.”<sup>4</sup> Therefore, the focus of this local initiative allows the Center to develop a keen awareness of the unconventional ways of the city, its artists and their needs as it relates to emerging artists in the field. The city melds disciplines the way local chefs blend spices, unimaginable and undetectable to the naked eye yet unlike any other flavor ever tasted. Understanding these idiosyncrasies leads to the development of a successful residency model that is *rooted* in the sustainability of the artist as a global citizen.

The Joan Mitchell Center serves as a weaver of cultural traditions and contemporary art practices, by producing programming that is transformative in nature, artist-centered and intentionally diverse. The New Orleans Local Artist Studio Program offers knowledge about the growing community of artists that identify as emerging. The Joan Mitchell Center staff work to provide a taste of community on the two and a half acre campus in the heart of the city.

And as a culminating, celebratory exhibition, Deborah Willis, Ph.D. embraces the complexities of the city along with its references to the troubled and beautiful past with the show *Convergence: JMC@Prospect.3*. Deborah Willis is able to draw these ten artists together with her seasoned eye and understanding of time-space-place relevance, and the concept of “convergence” embodies the values of the Joan Mitchell Center as a residency program in New Orleans. As we all prepare for what the city holds for the artistic community, the Center turns its attention to the launch of its residency program complete with ways for national and international artists to engage, and with a strong focus on the New Orleans Local Artist Studio Program (newly titled EMERGE). The fall of 2015 holds many exciting changes, including the addition of the new studio building alongside various entry points into our residency program. It brings me great delight and honor to share the NOLA Studio Program artists with you in this catalog alongside many dedicated and spirited contributors, including local arts writer Emily Wilkerson; Joan Mitchell Center Program Associate Tara Foster; writer Denise Frazier, Ph.D.; Miranda Lash, former curator of contemporary art at the New Orleans Museum of Art; and Deborah Willis, Ph.D., curator of *Convergence: JMC@Prospect.3*.

3 Kendall, John Smith. *History of New Orleans*. Lewis Publishing Company, 1922.

4 Grehman, Mary. *The Free People of Color of New Orleans: An Introduction*. Margaret Media, Inc., 1994.



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**con-ver-gence** (noun)

A coming together from different directions, especially a uniting or merging of groups or tendencies that were originally opposed or very different

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## CONVERGENCE: JMC@PROSPECT.3

### Deborah Willis

Ph.D., New York University  
MacArthur Fellow

New Orleans is a place where cultures merge and people from different backgrounds come together to make art, investigate history, create music, eat and dance. The city is a roux: the rich, perfectly rendered foundation from which delicious results emerge.

In 2013, the Joan Mitchell Center (JMC) established the New Orleans Local Artist (NOLA) Studio Program. The ten artists invited to the program—“represent...a diversity of artistic practices and media...share a passion for New Orleans and a strong commitment to their own communities, as well as to the contemporary arts scene in the city”<sup>1</sup>. *Convergence*, on which I worked closely with JMC staff Gia Hamilton and Tara Foster to create a space for the JMC local artists to present their works during *Prospect.3: Notes for Now* (curated by Los Angeles-based Franklin Sirmans), presents the work of these ten New Orleans-based artists.

The invitation to curate and organize a thematic exhibition of these artists’ work inspired me to think about my appreciation for New Orleans, a place of memory and vision that I have visited annually since 1970. Many travelers who come have family ties to the city, while others, like me, truly know what it means to miss New Orleans: we are seduced by its enduring allure. Half of the artists in the exhibition—Katrina Andry, Jer’Lisa Devezin, Rontherin Ratliff, Carl Joe Williams, and Ayo Scott—were born and raised in the city. As I looked at all the artists’ works during intensive, three-day studio visits, I was both intrigued and impressed by the depth and range of their creative practices. They construct, paint, project, write, and research as they create provocative, occasionally subtle imagery. Their content ranges from the notion of pleasure to politics, music, and new media, as well as the gendered body, memory, slavery, rebellion, land, and home. Abstraction is rooted in all of the works. As you will see in the exhibition, each of these artists successfully melds formal aesthetics and personal experiences with cultural production.

Black women’s bodies signify heavily in several artists’ work, much of which explores gender, race, and hierarchy. Printmaker Katrina Andry’s monumental and lively prints represent and reimagine, embrace and reject ideas of femininity, beauty, motherhood, and duty. There are positive and negatives spaces in her bladework that accentuate vibrant color not commonly rendered in large woodcuts; her work incorporates desire and seduction at every level. They are encoded with messages of daily life and empowerment, and create a curious narrative of eroticized women in contemporary life. The scale of the prints—almost life sized—creates a tension

for the viewer regarding whether to read it as political or aesthetical. Influenced by popular culture, Andry’s figures are fashionable and “of the moment” as they grapple with identity and pride.

*Stereotypes are well ingrained into our Western culture, and are used almost instinctively in order to deal with our differences. Though, the byproduct of stereotypes is that they also create differences between people, and stereotyping establishes an arbitrary set of societal norms/rules that benefit the majority while it disenfranchises other groups of people.*<sup>2</sup>

This positive/negative dichotomy is also manifested in Andry’s titles such as *Mammy Complex: Unfit Mommies Make for Fit Nannies*. Picturing a quilt pattern as backdrop, it is a startling and striking image. By exploring the topic of motherhood and working mothers, Andry compares histories of slavery to the labor of current day nannies. She questions the media’s perception that black mothers are unfit to care for their own babies yet they are employed by white mothers to nurse, raise, and care for white children. According to Andry, her work “looks satirical because it’s meant to be, but it’s also meant to be taken seriously that these [stereotypes] exist and they’ve existed for so long and that they are still so important in how people see each other.”<sup>3</sup> The concept of stereotyping is what also inspires her work titled *Western Interpretation of the Other*. “My work challenges ideas about black people (Other) that once ago had scientific research qualifying them,” Andry writes, “and how these ideas or stereotypes have become a part of how we see each other whether consciously or unconsciously.”<sup>4</sup>

In her multimedia work, Jer’Lisa Devezin mines her experience of being a lesbian growing up in New Orleans and being influenced by artistic traditions of painting and collage as well as the beauty, fashion, music, and dance of bounce culture. Devezin looks at the black body, specifically the curved black bottom, creating models of Styrofoam, cardboard, and artificial locks to tell the story and history of bounce. Highly sexualized, gestural movements are presented in video and drawn on board, enabling her viewers to create their own fantasies about bounce—including sissy bounce—culture. Devezin’s exploration is both representative and abstract; her markings and brush strokes lively and energetic. By reproducing the form’s poses and dance moves, she explores new attitudes of gender acceptance and questions the idea of repression in its explicit dances.

Language is important as Devezin questions—and embraces—what it means to be “vulgar.” She states that her “work consists of researching the history and the current issues including but not limited to the sexual orientation and identity, female exploitation, and vulgarity in the language that bounce music faces in our society today.”<sup>5</sup> By tracing the roots of bounce to the unique mixing of cultures from Africa, the Americas, and the Caribbean that is her native New Orleans, Devezin creates her



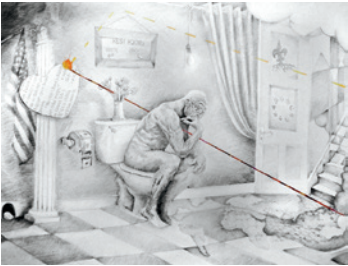
Katrina Andry, *Western Interpretation of the Other*, 2008. Color woodcut reduction, 32 x 44 inches.



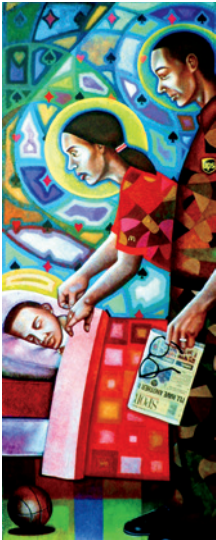
Jer’Lisa Devezin, *Bounce Baby*, 2014. Acrylic on board, glitter, 48 x 24 inches.



Rontherin Ratliff, *Things That Float*, 2010. Wood, plexiglass, photographs, rope and bottled water, 8 x 4 x 12 feet.



Ayo Scott, *Stinker*, 2014. Digital drawing and acrylic, 55 x 72 1/4 inches.



Carl Joe Williams, *Family Value*, 2012. Mixed media on found door, 74 x 36 inches.

personal narrative in this blend of sound from music to the spoken word.

Mixed media artist Rontherin Ratliff’s work is also visualized in conversation with the female body through etched glass and drawings. His work is performative and sculptural; he memorializes intimate moments by reconstructing discarded objects such as window pulleys, rusted bed springs, and weathered window frames, reconsidering the former lives of the castaway objects. His creative family background informs his work. “As native of New Orleans, I was introduced to art at an early age. My mother designed everything from clothing to wooden toys,” he explains. “Working alongside my father I assisted him in bringing her ideas to life. I credit my father for my skilled craftsmanship.”

The memory of Hurricane Katrina and the loss of life and personal family mementos form the creation of *Things That Float*. It is an imaginative installation in which Ratliff recalls the experience of houses floating in the streets of the lower Ninth Ward. When he returned to New Orleans after the storm, he visited his grandmother’s home. He looked at photographs, watching the emulsion float off the paper’s surface. The “living room furniture [was] floating and it was surprising to see...but then these delicate photographs [were] covering the floor. And as I reached down to grab them and collect them, the reality of loss rushed over me at that moment.”<sup>6</sup>

Ayo Scott grew up in the artist’s studio of his father, John T. Scott. Art history, African art, Greek mythology, American history, civil rights, New Orleans, and pop culture all inform Scott’s paintings and large-scale drawings. His work demonstrates a curiosity about a wide range of interests from storytelling to new technologies. His series *The Lies We Believe* includes titles such as *Stinker*, a pun on Auguste Rodin’s iconic sculpture *The Thinker*. An elaborately layered construction, *Stinker* depicts a muscular figure seated on a toilet in a bathroom adorned with icons of Americana, from Old Glory to dollar bills, a heart-shaped message and the fleur-de-lis. Scott digitally collages the images together, then mounts the printed images onto wood, which he then paints, re-photographs or scans, and repeats the process. This attention to detail allows for a highly nuanced, complexly referential work that fuses an impressive range of the artist’s interests. In this way his work mirrors his generation, who through social media daily layer mediated experiences on top of one another to create new forms of cultural interaction.

Carl Joe Williams draws on material culture to tell a collective story of the beauty of life and the disappointments of poverty. Using multimedia installation with carefully selected objects to comment on history, race and music, Williams’ work is grounded in the cultural impact of music videos, news media, and television sitcoms, while paying homage to the very particular place and people that produced him. “My work has evolved into a multiplicity of visions, directions, and intuitive gestures,” he explains.<sup>7</sup> Williams also incorporates portraits of those whom he terms “everyday people”—family life, men, women, and children—while paying homage to New Orleans’ distinctive architecture and its significance as a site of a storied, sometimes

2 Andry’s artist statement  
3 Andry’s artist statement  
4 Andry’s artist statement  
5 Devezin’s artist statement

6 Conversation with the artist, July 2014  
7 Williams’ artist statement



troubled history.

By incorporating fragments of seemingly identifiable objects, Brooke Pickett invites us to engage in her imaginary. Pickett, who hails from Shreveport, a city in the northwest corner of Louisiana, writes: “My process usually starts with an object that I find or make...usually something that I find on a walk and bring back into the studio. And it’s usually broken. My work isn’t so much about making it whole again, as it is about saving or preserving it.”<sup>8</sup> Her large-scale abstract paintings are concerned with reshaping the familiar and exploring the idea of archiving or remembering discarded objects. Because the plane is never fully fixed in her paintings, the viewer can enter from multiple vantage points to explore the spaces that shape and construct her ideas.

The power of Pickett’s paintings relies on her ability to explore the intensity of color and the boldness of scale. She challenges perspective and asks her viewer to join her through these explorations. The effectiveness lies in the ambiguity of the objects we attempt to discern in her paintings. Her understanding of space and reinvention is guided throughout her work. Webbing and weaving through a two-dimensional plane also shape Pickett’s practice. For example, *Closing in Against The Weather* is a swirl of color and lines that offers us a choice of comfort and at the same time a bit of discomfort. It suggests there is trouble brewing or that the storm is over. The metaphoric nature of her work reveals her poetic tendencies.

Painter Norah Lovell explores memory, struggle, and survival through mapping the terrain of history, specifically the 1815 Battle of New Orleans. Through meticulous research, she not only addresses the actual battle but the representation of the battle in later years. Her medium of choice, gouache, is an ideal choice for her thirty-foot panorama, *Reconnaissance: Battle of New Orleans*, a group of ten 38” x 48” panel paintings. This exhibition introduces two paintings from the series, which offers the viewer an opportunity to become immersed in this story and her discovery of forgotten Works Progress Administration painters (WPA) Ethel and Jenne Magafan, sisters who painted a mural of the same subject in Washington, D.C., in 1943. Notably, the Magafan mural acknowledged the contributions of African Americans, which inspired Lovell’s own work. She questions where the women are in our history of battle, and when women document battle, what does it look like? In *Reconnaissance: Battle of New Orleans I*, the inception image for the series, Lovell includes iconic and symbolic references such as horses, owls, carts, and dogs. More significantly, the conjoined heads of Ethel and Jenne Magafan emerge monstrous and gigantic from a filigree of swamp water at the bottom of the painting. Lovell writes, “The initial inspiration for the series came from an interest in the historic Battle. The Battle is notable in part due to the motley assemblage of rebel fighters assembled under Andrew Jackson to oust the British—pirates (under Jean Lafitte), free people of color, Choctaw warriors and even Ursuline nuns, banded with regular army and volunteer militia in a moment of remarkable anarchy.”<sup>9</sup>



Brooke Pickett, *Closing in Against The Weather*, 2011. Oil on canvas, 6 x 4 feet.



Norah Lovell, *Reconnaissance: The Battle of New Orleans I*, 2014. Gouache on panel, 48 x 36 inches.



Aaron Collier, *Horse and Rider, Suspended*, 2014. Oil on canvas, 60 x 48 inches.



Dave Greber, *Iris' Caveau*, 2014. Stasseo installation (5 projections, acrylic, rhinestones, fabric), 15 x 9 x 20 feet.

Aaron Collier inventively draws on art historical references and fantasy, creating drawings and paintings that set up an imaginary space and place. “A solitary figure transgressing a low-lying horizon line is found in both works. This makes the solitary figure appear monumental. I treasure the fact that what actually ‘monumental’ in these two paintings are the least-knowable and nameable elements present,” he writes. The figure is both implicit and drawn not as representational but referential. He creates a tension between what is discerned and what is identifiable. Working also in collage and using discarded advertisements, Collier reimagines complex experiences from cultural artifacts that address the media’s influence on consumer culture.

Video artist, filmmaker, painter, and photographer Dave Greber creates site-specific installations focusing on the city of New Orleans—from street scenes of everyday life to nightlife, from shop windows to iconic objects. Greber incorporates video, paint, and glitter to make electronic sculptures and video murals. His installations are like tarot readings, giving us the notion of possibilities the make up our lives. His imaginative use of projected images is a mélange of allegorical and real life moments that, like Scott’s work, are saturated with the use of new technologies. He sees the world moving constantly and by representing a cross of colors and scenes he introduces his audience to a new urban environment that is informed by suggestive imagery. In a statement that could address the work of several of the artists here, Greber eloquently writes:

*I observe media/social texts with a mystic reading to tease out the cosmic, archetypal play at hand and relate it to something tangible. I take what is attractive about particular forms of corporate or complicit social marketing, advertising campaigns, gambling machines, commercial newspeak, and pop-culture iconography and use it to frame out contemporary visual fables. My parables operate on the same level as our popular culture itself, blinding and obscene like an eclipse; you won’t see the face of my inspiration looking directly into the light. But, contemplate the shadows and you will be left with curious evidence of the energy in the universe, the faint smell of ozone and a nagging feeling that you forgot what you were going to say.*<sup>10</sup>

Finally, Colombian-born painter Mario Padilla introduces the faces of New Orleans’ communities, the second line and music, and its visitors. Padilla’s paintings and mixed media sculpture interpret the culture, reverberating with the beauty of the movement and the contemplation of his subjects. The expressions, movements, and dress of the brass bands, trombone soloists, and drummers are central to his palette as he finds ways to explore the muted and vibrant colors of the city. The figures are at once unidentifiable yet fully expressive; Padilla captures the dynamism of live performance in each canvas and sculptural rendering with the suggestiveness of blur and subtlety of gesture. There is no other city in the U.S. in which the sounds of musicians playing permeate the neighborhoods on an average day, marking tradi-

8 Pickett’s artist statement

9 Lovell’s artist statement

10 Greber’s artist statement

tions that were hard won and dearly kept.

Media analyst Henry Jenkins calls convergence culture the place “where old and new media collide [...] where the power of the media producer and the power of the media consumer interact in unpredictable ways.”<sup>11</sup> Each of these ten exciting artists expand the notion of community and politics as they re-imagine spaces in which to tell and re-imagine their stories. The interdependence of artist and audience, the need for interaction and identification, the significance of a shared popular culture and historical references, and the necessity of a dynamic exchange are at the heart of each of these artists’ works, set the theme for this exhibition, and bode well for the future of visual art from New Orleans.



Mario Padilla, *Second Line Tales 3*, 2014.  
Oil on canvas, 48 x 60 inches.

# INSIDE THE NOLA STUDIO PROGRAM

## Miranda Lash

Curator of Contemporary Art,  
Speed Art Museum

In almost every community in the United States, artists struggle with the task of finding the resources necessary to create and promote their work. Affordable studio space in many cities is often in short supply. Finding the money to buy art supplies and technical assistance is also perpetually a challenge for many artists. Beyond these material needs, artists are in need of exposure and feedback from colleagues, collectors and arts professionals, in order to secure exhibition venues, sales, and to be encouraged to evolve in their work. Artists living in New Orleans are no exception to this case. Following Hurricane Katrina and the failure of the levee system in 2005, there was an extreme scarcity of viable housing of all kinds to both live and work. As the city has recovered, neighborhoods that had previously been havens for artists (originally the French Quarter, then Marigny, and more recently, Bywater), have experienced a rapid rise in real estate prices. Replaying an oft-repeated narrative, gentrification in this city has pushed artists to seek more affordable places further afield, now in neighborhoods such as Gentilly, Holy Cross, Arabi, and locales further into New Orleans East.

Dedicated to answering these needs, the Joan Mitchell Foundation during the years following Katrina, has been a powerful and sustaining source of support for New Orleans-based artists. Their generosity has been multi-faceted, from establishing a residency center on Bayou Road, to providing grants for public art, to providing a space at their center for “town hall” style meetings for the community. This essay focuses on one of their more recent endeavors, a pilot project called the New Orleans Local Artist (NOLA) Studio Program. Its premise was to provide studio space to artists in a renovated building on Rampart Street in the French Quarter. Artists received a materials stipend, career development conversations with arts professionals, a rigorous string of studio visits, and a time for open studios when the public could come and see their work. During this pilot, I had the privilege of being able to visit with all ten of these artists. The following is an account of my experiences with them.

## Katrina Andry

In Katrina Andry’s studio, we quickly fall into a discussion about women, race, and the role of stereotypes. The prints she brought to her studio deal with how black women are viewed by other members of society. Andry’s demeanor was one of quiet intensity as she pulled out each piece. The images are brightly colored woodcuts. Intensely cut hatch marks reveal images of white men and women in “black face,” playing out roles that Andry believes are expected of (or projected upon) black women: the temptress, the welfare recipient, the obliging nanny. Framing many of these images against a background of quilt patterns, she includes symbols that she explains are



Katrina Andry, *When I Grow Up: The Ascribed Black American Dream*, 2009. Color woodcut reduction, 42 x 90 inches.



traditionally associated with the erotic or the exotic: bananas, serpents, stilettos, and the large curved hips typically associated with African American women. Growing up in the South, Andry understands that these stereotypes are difficult to escape, even amongst well-meaning citizens. Perhaps the first step towards improvement is first acknowledging the most unflattering expectations put upon African Americans, followed by a dedication to understanding that there is a long distance between these societally-reinforced images and the reality that can be found in individuals.

### Aaron Collier

Aaron Collier has the gift of being able to work in many different modes at once. In years past I had marveled at the difference between his large abstract paintings, which are full of color and broad, gestural strokes, and his intimately detailed graphite drawings, which include fragments inspired by Old Master paintings. When visiting his studio I noticed that he is continuing to work in a variety of styles. On the easel was a canvas with an image inspired by the famous seventeenth-century Spanish painting by Jusepe de Ribera of *The Club Footed Boy*. In Collier’s piece there is just enough information in the painting to recognize the Ribera reference, but the face is obscured, and elements are shifted just enough to make it an expressive, almost Francis-Bacon-like representation of the figure. On the wall are collages that Collier had been working on, which combine found images with blocks of pure color. He also catches me up on the activity at Staple Goods, the artist collaborative he helped establish in St. Roch. Despite his peaceful voice and temperament, Collier’s work conveys many degrees of tension: the tension between representation and abstraction, tension between order and chaos, tension between colors, and tension between empty and full space. But he manages these conflicts well, and leaves enough mystery in the pieces for the viewer to also participate in this “push/pull” dynamic.

### Jer’Lisa Devezin

Jer’Lisa Devezin has a lot to share about Bounce music. “It’s changed so much!” she exclaimed to me. She recalls growing up listening and dancing to Bounce in the lower Ninth Ward of New Orleans. It was a neighborhood phenomenon, when people from all ages could come and be absorbed in the rhythm and the dance of the street. Bounce music is now much more widespread, and enjoys an increasing degree of mainstream popularity. In the process however, Devezin explains that it has lost some of its “neighborhood feel.” She talks passionately about her desire to convey through her art the feel and experience of Bounce. Many of her artworks deal with the female dancer, emphasizing one of the signature features of Bounce: rapid-fire booty shaking and a celebration of the voluptuous female behind. Devezin acknowledges the trickiness of dealing with this subject matter; she seeks to uplift African American females and avoid their depiction as over-sexualized objects. She emphasizes the empowering feel of Bounce, and talks about her ideas for conveying this in new ways, shifting from her two-dimensional practice to installation work, involving lighting and sound. She wants to give her viewers a glimpse into the soul of Bounce - a “personal experience,” she explains.



Aaron Collier, *Picture With a Club Foot*, 2014. Oil on canvas, 60 x 48 inches.



Jer'Lisa Devezin, *Go Kisha*, 2012. Acrylic on board, 24 x 48 inches.



Dave Greber, *YOU CAN TRIPTHE SKIN OFF OF A SNAKE 2 : The Return*, 2013. Video still.



Norah Lovell, *Reconnaissance: The Battle of New Orleans II*, 2014. Gouache on panel, 48 x 36 inches.



Mario Padilla, *In The Same Boat*, 2008. Oil on linen, 48 x 48 inches.

### Dave Greber

Dave Greber’s videos have a way of being jubilant and psychedelic, as well as thoughtful and slyly critical of society. Before he was an artist, Greber made commercial videos. He remains fascinated by the language associated with consumerism, reality television shows, and other popular culture platforms where the human experience is compressed into digestible sound bites and tag lines. In some of his videos characters adopt the format of a reality show “confessional.” They talk directly to the camera, striving to convey their feelings in a mystic riddle-like form of speech. Despite their earnestness, we are never quite sure what is genuine and what reflects the type of fabrication we associate with reality television. In his latest body of work, Greber describes being inspired by his recent trip to Asia. We look at videos of people passing in the reflections of store windows, reminiscent, not coincidentally, of scenes in the French Quarter. Typical of his work, we question what is reality and what is mirage. For Greber however, there is truth to be found in both.

### Norah Lovell

Norah Lovell’s paintings have a careful yet dreamlike quality about them. Her compositions are drawn first, then precisely painted with a high level of detail. The scale of her pieces is often small and intimate, akin to that of a Persian portrait miniature. The imagery, however, is expansive and surreal, with colorful visions blending into each other in a floating amalgam of faces, filigrees, floral patterns and wallpaper designs. She has described her work as “lush, feminine, oddly decorative and subjective,” words which seem apt for her style. During our visit she was embarking upon an ambitious series of work with paintings on a larger scale. Inspired by the upcoming 200th anniversary of the Battle of New Orleans, Lovell is creating a kind of history painting with a feminist bent. The work is inspired by two female artist predecessors, Ethel and Jenne Magafan, who painted a WPA mural of the Battle of New Orleans in 1943. Their portraits appear in the series, as a type of homage, but it is clear that this is Lovell’s take on the timeless theme of war. She is exploring the way this specific conflict shaped how we understand New Orleans today.

### Mario Padilla

“I want people to feel the energy of the music,” Mario Padilla explained as he described his recent work dealing with New Orleans second line parades. Originally from Colombia, Padilla came to New Orleans around 2001. He was displaced by Hurricane Katrina, an experience he addresses in the painting *In The Same Boat*. In this work, citizens of different ethnicities cluster on a lonely raft amidst a black sea, leaning on each other in a moment of both fragility and cohesiveness. Padilla eventually returned to New Orleans after the storm, and is now exploring what he calls the “emotions and controversies” surrounding the second line tradition. In these pieces we see horns blaring in a palette of bright colors, a warmth reminiscent of his previous work, which depicted Latin Americans. Now an active member of the New Orleans art community, Padilla is well poised to understand the connections between both sides of the Caribbean.

### Brooke Pickett

Brooke Pickett’s paintings are large and ponderous in the best way possible. Their creator is a woman of petite stature, and I must admit that seeing the contrast in scale between the product and progenitor often gives me a sense of glee. I call them ponderous because they depict semi-abstract objects that seem cautious yet grand, monumental yet uncertain of their status. They are loosely derived from still-lives of objects and pieces of refuse that Pickett has arranged in her studio. Thoughtfully and often heavily painted (she cites Philip Guston as an influence), these canvases convey dialogues in contrasting colors, varied textures, and seemingly frozen movement. This native of Shreveport, Louisiana moved to New Orleans after Katrina and has been involved in a number of arts organizations, from organizing her own residency in Central City to participating in artist collaboratives such as the Front and Press Street. She describes her work as possessing the “pitifully soulful quality of Solomon Burke’s music, weathered and beaten over time.” While her paintings do not always convey a sense of melancholy for me, I agree with Pickett’s description of their stature. She says, “I make paintings whose size and heaviness creates a sensation of permanence for me. I make paintings of broken things, but I make them too heavy to break.”

### Rontherin Ratliff

Rontherin Ratliff is an avid transformer of objects. In his studio we looked at artworks made from items that might otherwise be discarded: bedsprings, wooden chairs, and pieces of musical instruments. In Ratliff’s hands they become a means of describing life in New Orleans, from the joy and power felt in its music, to the pain and sorrow inflicted by the tragedies of Hurricane Katrina and the city’s continuing and relentless violence. More recently, Ratliff has been interested in the literal building blocks of the city: its bricks. Creating bricks in glass with the words “souls,” Ratliff contemplates whether to reproduce these in greater numbers, potentially as a larger installation. Able to work in a variety of media, Ratliff’s studio and website display his talent in working on murals, mosaics, and furniture. We discuss the complications involved in working in modes typically associated with craft, though Ratliff has no trouble imbuing his mediums with intense messages. For a recent installation at the Contemporary Arts Center for example, his *Revolve* piece incorporated bedsprings and toys into a sculpture of an ominously massive handgun. The piece speaks directly to the outrageously high incidence of deaths amongst youths in New Orleans.

### Ayo Scott

In Ayo Scott’s studio we discuss the meaning of the quintessential “modern family.” He was working on a new body of work, which involves a unique combination of old and new technology. He creates collages of images digitally in Adobe Photoshop, which are then printed for him to draw upon. He then takes a photograph of this image and makes it into a monochromatic digital image, which is printed again for his addition of paint. For these technically blended pieces, Scott draws inspiration from Old Master paintings and objects from both Eastern and Western cultures. In this case, we contemplate an artwork initially influenced by the Francois Boucher painting of the *Education of Cupid*, a scene derived from Greek mythology. In this



Brooke Pickett, *Flotation Devices*, 2011. Oil on canvas, 4 x 6 feet.



Rontherin Ratliff, *SOULS: A look at what was left*, 2014. Glass, reclaimed wood and wire 32 x 3.5 x 12 inches.



Ayo Scott, *The Miseducation of Cupid*, 2014. Digital drawing on paper with acrylic, 50 x 50 inches.

work the cherubic Cupid is left to his own devices while his parents, the goddess Venus and the god Mars (helmeted as a Samurai) check their iPhones and are otherwise distracted. Proudly the son of acclaimed New Orleans artist and Xavier University professor John Scott, Ayo is also an innovator and entrepreneur as the founder of NOYO and NOYOdesigns.

### Carl Joe Williams

Carl Joe Williams was in an excited mode of preparation when we met at his studio. He had a significant project in the works, a solo exhibition at the Ohr-O’Keefe Museum of Art in Biloxi, Mississippi. The studio was filled with pieces, including brightly colored paintings on found objects, which ranged from wooden doors to television sets. In the center of the room was an altar-like gathering of semi-abstract paintings combined with his recent body of work, totems with speakers that projected sound. Williams’ work is in many ways a fusion of his interest in aesthetics and music. A native of New Orleans, Williams is also a musician, and his compositions can be heard in his latest installations. Williams often addresses the life of African Americans in this city, adapting postures and themes from Norman Rockwell and Grant Wood. Many of his figures wear haloes or are set against a background of colorful rings or patterns. These backgrounds (which are also inspired by the tradition of quilt-making) demonstrate Williams’ formalist interest in geometry. They also give his figures the appearance of radiating energy, as if music and sound are somehow pulsing off of them. It is as if the energy inherent in the people of New Orleans has been made visible.



Carl Joe Williams, *American Shotgun*, 2012. Mixed media on found doors, 74 x 36 inches.



# BEING IN TIME

**Denise Frazier, Ph.D.**

All too often, time permeates and marks our existence, one where information technology and mobile devices track our every move, drones spy on friends and foes alike through invasions of privacy. Violations, protests, institutions that are built and empires that are maintained through endless wars are all things that are happening somewhere in real time. And New Orleans, Louisiana is not immune from the reality or illusion of time’s passage.

One need only to look at the light posts that line North Rampart Street to get a sense of the colonial past of the city. Coats of arms adorning the structures proclaim: French, Spanish, and Confederacy Dominations subtly and solemnly facing the cobbled plaza of Congo Square, echoing the vibrant cultural manifestations of African, American, French, Spanish, Creole, and indigenous multi-ethnicities in different forms. Their distinct nationalities communicate and articulate existence through words, music, dance, and art. The same streets that once held pantalooned dandies and ladies in *tignons* now support Nike™ soles, basketball hats, and headbands. Different musicians, same rhythms.

Time has not tempered the city. This city is and has always been a city of strangers and newcomers; a port town that frequently seeks an authenticity that appears as elusive as the containment of the bodies of water that surround us. The covetousness of this authenticity is as inconsistent as a thought, an idea. New Orleans, Louisiana is an idea; an idea that is coveted by the tattooed-faced transplant in St. Roch screaming on the street to her neighbor, “This is St. Roch! I can play my music outside whenever I want.” It is the angered retort of an Indian Chief at a community meeting proclaiming that our kids need our mentorship and support. It is a community garden, formerly blighted by neglect, currently seeded with cucumber, melons, and okra. It is the happy exuberance of neighborhood kids riding bikes in the middle of the streets. And summer will turn into fall, and we will remember what we can, what we need. Katrina anniversaries and Zulu parades will come and go—our memories are the remnants of the illusions we create. For while something is lived and experienced, it is already converted to the prejudices of your thoughts, it yields to your perception of self, it escapes the grasp of generations that no longer need to memorize their own phone numbers. The creative process of time, life, and memory nourish the New Orleans landscape. Art is our center. Time is our edge. And every center has an edge.

The ten selected New Orleans-based emerging painters and sculptors from the Joan Mitchell Center’s New Orleans Local Artist (NOLA) Studio Program were offered the privilege of “time” in the form of materials, financial resources, and a year-long period comprised of workspace, professional support and artistic development for



Rontherin Ratliff, *Revolve*, 2013. Mattress springs, steel wire, plywood and wooden toys, 9 feet x 32 inches x 16 feet



Katrina Andry, *Welfare Queen*, 2009. Digital media & color woodcut reduction, 58 x 42 inches.



Jer'Lisa Devezin, *U got to shake to keep from crying, U got to shake to keep from dying*, 2013. Collage on paper, watercolor, rocks, 8 1/2 x 11 inches.



Ayo Scott, *Creation of a Movement*, 2014. Digital drawing on paper with acrylic, 100 x 45 inches.



Dave Greber, *Stilllives 2: Stilllavin'*, 2012. HD Video loop, installed with 3 synched projectors 30 x 10 feet.



Aaron Collier, *Heavyweight*, 2012. Graphite on BFK paper, 13 1/4 x 16 inches.

the purpose of further supporting a burgeoning contemporary arts scene. The diversity of these selected artists enriched the dynamism of the city’s blossoming community of artists and art spectators. Their time has been invaluable to delineating the immediate temporal context of being on the precipice of change.

Rontherin Ratliff’s *Revolve* presents an ominous rusty-colored metal structure in the shape of a gun with a handle composed of brightly colored children’s toys. The gun is pointed at the street, indicating the temporal existence of unengaged youth in a society wrought with social discrepancy.

Katrina Andry’s biting commentary on the prevalence of a historic color caste system in a society sick and obsessed with racial difference echoes the injustice of white agency without reflection or compassion. Her art is a Derridean structural play of difference, calling into question our comfort with signifiers of feminine and racial oppression. The layered, muted colors of *Welfare Queen* complicate U.S. society’s more profound stereotypes of race, agency, and social welfare mixed with national iconography.

Jer’Lisa Devezin’s watercolor series proclaims territorialization—space, music, and time. Pastel pink homes and orange sky framing deep blue buttocks in tight pants, exhibit the predominance of the feminine in bounce, the Diaspora memory, a glittery baby holding a stereo set to one of the city’s prominent hip hop radio stations. The creative process of life, feminine innovation and movement have nourished the New Orleans cultural landscape and kept rhythms in their most appropriate and democratic place, the street.

The anachronistic style that Ayo Scott’s *The Lies we Believe* series displays harkens back to Picasso’s primitivism, Lam’s tropicalist sarcasm, and a technological anxiety in the age of memes, Instagram, and Photoshop. Scott responds to these (in) tensions by creating a digitalized authenticity. That authenticity is delivered by mixed remnants of a European painting tradition with African elements that have characterized the cultural production of post-colonial, post-modern society, a time typified by the contradictory existence of a Black president and encroaching race-based violence and discrimination.

The work of Dave Greber can be characterized as psychedelic and celestial. The *Stilllives* and *Stilllives 2: Stilllavin’* series provokes the psychological hunger for ecstasy. The popular culture production of unrestrained and unceasing desire is projected in a brightly colored mess, the bacchanalia muted by the deep-rooted need for concealment, layering, our creation and hatred of trash, consumer culture; baby-blue paint spills from beer bottles, a cat, white powder, tape, and yards upon yards of brilliant fabrics consistently cover and layer over recklessness and jumble, representing erasure and escapism.

Conversely, Aaron Collier’s work illustrates the limits of a restrained image. The white space is engulfing, almost to the point of image annihilation. The black space of *Title Bout* presents the comfortable perspective of a boxer from the bottom angle, possibly an angle that is on par with that of the losing combatant. This piece juxtaposes well with *Heavyweight*, where the wrestler’s pained expression contends with the worthy opponent that is white space. The disturbing unquiet of white space

draws much-needed attention to the art of rupture.

The minimalist Sumi ink drawings series *Untitled (Choosing Your Home Plans)* by Brooke Pickett convey the solitary suggestion of structure: an abstracted thought of the choice of deconstruction, appearing more as theory, than as sound assemblages. In one of the drawings the home is split in half, and the lines that shape the upper half of the house appear through the roof. It is as if Pickett could not be trifled with the details of three-dimensional illusion. The curly lines add to the softness and instability of the structures, calling into question the stability of plans, of structure, of home.

Sense of home becomes transported to subject matter-driven art from Mario Padilla. The South American indigenous landscape in *Abuelas* and *Los Desplazados* offer a quiet intimacy as landscape to more politicized signifiers of the indigenous presence in the Latin American urban metropole. *La Sierra Madre* calls into question issues of political autonomy and burgeoning civil society within neo-colonialism as the three indigenous women, one holding a small baby, walk on a winding cobblestoned street with three looming figures with beige faces attired in green suits and matching green hats, stare in their direction.

The city’s influence is present in Norah Lovell’s New Orleans Series 2008-2010. The two-year timeframe demonstrates a colorful deluge of water-based work replete with colonic forms hiding colorful figures, faces, and body parts. The presence of magical-realism in this particular work is made more pronounced through the use of gouache, a paint designed to create and manage opacity. The soft intestine-like structures of the bright pink, violet, and royal blue shapes are frequently differentiated by a dark, black horizon that gives the impression of a fantastical swamp’s shore. It is as if the overlay of imagery cleverly seeks to conceal veiled truths that require years, perhaps, centuries to exhume.

African-American stories, Louisiana subject matter, and the shape-driven chromatic iconography that compose Carl Joe Williams’ work encompass the cumulative experience of a man who frequently traverses musical realms to provide geometric whimsicality to public art sculpture. The subject matter is decidedly non-judgmental by offering more profound insight into its subjects’ humanity. The painting *Paulette* shows a young woman in a short red skirt and red bra top looking at herself in a mirror. She holds up a long white dress that covers the entire front portion of her body. Williams engages the audience in a meta-narrative. We see the woman look into the mirror. Her face is forlorn, almost decidedly ambiguous. We imagine what she is thinking, if she has ever worn that dress, if she longs for change. We all long for change, but are we comfortable with the unexpected? The unforeseen perils that shape our destinies? Global warming, rising waters, gentrification, and the ebb and flow of instability that rocks the city so hard it made a musical genre to share in the improvisation that is New Orleans are all apparent here, as though Williams believes less in being ‘on’ time, but more in the beauty of being ‘in’ time.

Williams and all of these artists embody the current spirit of the time. Their art manifests stories that have no set understanding of limitations. They offer images that are intrinsically seeped in the dichotomies of life and death. Time is neither



Brooke Pickett, *Untitled (Choosing Your Home Plans)*, 2010. Walnut ink on handmade paper, 12 x 9 inches.



Mario Padilla, *La Sierra Madre*, 2005. Oil and mixed media on canvas, 54 x 54 inches.



Norah Lovell, *Double Cornu I*, 2011. Gouache on paper, 8 x 8 inches.



Carl Joe Williams, *Paulette*, 2012. Mixed media on found door, 74 x 36 inches.

defied, nor can it be resisted in a place where funerals contain second line dancing and t-shirts contain loved ones who have passed. Corner store signs are painted on buildings, an outline of a curvy, silhouetted woman faces my ride down St. Claude Avenue. Art is the soul of the city; the blood pumping through calloused fingers pressing metal, or clinking ivory keys.

According to Black arts movement writer and activist, Amiri Baraka, “There is no depth to education without art.”



# BECOMING KNOWN

## SUPPORTING THE WORK OF WORKING ARTISTS

### Tara Foster

Program Associate, Joan Mitchell Center

Earlier this year, at one of our bi-weekly artist dinners as part of the New Orleans Local Artist (NOLA) Studio Program at the Joan Mitchell Center, artist Mel Chin sardonically referred to himself as a “submerging artist,” in jest of course, but in direct response to the idea of an emerging artist. The ten artists gathered around the table laughed, but the joke stayed with me. I began to ponder what it means to emerge into and through one’s artistic practice, and who gets to define that emergence.

In recent years, there has been increasing focus on how best to directly support visual artists, in particular the hard-to-define, sub-group of emerging artists. An artist is defined as emerging – whether by self-identification or institutional classification – by a nebulous and diverse set of factors including age, level of educational attainment, artistic promise or potential, and recognition of one’s work (gauged oftentimes by exhibition history and press coverage).<sup>1</sup> The Jerome Foundation, in operation since 1973, is one of few organizations to put forth its own comprehensive definition for how they define emerging artists, naming those artists as individuals:

*who take risks and embrace challenges; whose developing voices reveal significant potential; who are rigorous in their approach to creation and production; who have some evidence of professional achievement but not a substantial record of accomplishment; and who are not recognized as established artists by other artists, curators, producers, critics, and arts administrators.*<sup>2</sup>

The Jerome Foundation is careful to clarify though that “there is no exact and singular definition of an emerging creative artist.” Conveniently, this lack of a shared definition of who and why one is considered emerging allows for a number of entry points into accessing support for a wide-range of working artists.

Much like the far-reaching parameters of who is considered to be an emerging artist, support for these artists takes a variety of forms. Emerging artist support ranges from

direct financial assistance through grants; exhibition opportunities; and, of course, time and space to develop and hone one’s practice in the form of residency programs. This spectrum of support is critical when considering that, in 2012, “more than 40% of artists served by residencies identify as ‘emerging,’” according to research that surveyed nearly 600 artists participating in over 150 residency programs conducted by the Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts and the Alliance of Artists Communities.<sup>3</sup> From 1997 until 2012, the Joan Mitchell Foundation’s MFA Grant Program was indeed one such support mechanism for emerging contemporary visual artists. In 1997, the first group of artists received funding through this program, and since 2002, MFA Grant recipients have been included in an annual group exhibition at the CUE Art Foundation and an accompanying catalogue.<sup>4</sup> The primary aim of this program has been to assist artists in their transition from an academic studio practice to a full-fledged career as an artist. Notably, the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art is currently showcasing the work of more than 100 carefully selected emerging contemporary artists with their exhibition, *State of the Art*, which opened to the public in September 2014. The exhibit, “a snapshot of unheralded 21st century American art...[from artists] most of whom were not well known outside their cities or regions,” is a testament to the need for ongoing examination of how arts organizations categorize and support present-day working artists, emerging or otherwise.<sup>5</sup> In fact, the Joan Mitchell Foundation’s MFA Grant Program is currently undergoing such examination, as a means to ensure that we are supporting the artistic potential of a wide-ranging group of artists.

While the Joan Mitchell Center’s residency program has served contemporary visual artists at every stage of their career since its inception as a program of the Foundation in 2010, this past residency cycle (2013–14) marked a turning point. In November 2013, the Center began a year long pilot of the NOLA Studio Program. Designed in part to focus residency support on our local community of visual artists, the program required that all ten selected artists self-identify as emerging. Additional selection criteria for nominations from members of the New Orleans arts and cultural community included demonstrated, active commitment to one’s community; residence in New Orleans for at least the past five years; need for a professional workspace that would make a significant difference in one’s work practice; and the ability and willingness to commit to spending a minimum of twenty hours per week in the studio. Artists were selected through an anonymous process by an independent jury panel composed of prominent visual artists, curators, and art educators to select participants that represent a diversity of artistic styles and practices. As one of the NOLA Studio Program artists reflected during the year, an “encouraging thing for me

1 “Residency Programs: Emerging Artist Fellowship.” Santa Fe Art Institute, 2014. [www.sfai.org/applications.html#fell](http://www.sfai.org/applications.html#fell)

“Regional Emerging Artist-in-Residence.” ArtSpace, 2014. [www.artspacenc.org/artists/opportunities/call-for-residencies/regional](http://www.artspacenc.org/artists/opportunities/call-for-residencies/regional)

“Emerging Artists Program.” Tofte Lake Center, 2014. [www.toftelake.com/emerging-artists-program](http://www.toftelake.com/emerging-artists-program)

“Call for Artists: Queens Museum-Jerome Foundation Fellowship Program for Emerging Artists in New York City.” Queens Museum, 2014. [www.queensmuseum.org/news/2014/06/25/call-for-artists/](http://www.queensmuseum.org/news/2014/06/25/call-for-artists/)

2 “Definition of Emerging Artist.” Jerome Foundation, 2014. [www.jeromefdn.org/apply/travel-study/definition-emerging-artist](http://www.jeromefdn.org/apply/travel-study/definition-emerging-artist)

3 “Serving Emerging Artists.” Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts and Alliance of Artists Communities, October 2012.

4 “MFA Grant Program.” Joan Mitchell Foundation, 2013. [www.joanmitchellfoundation.org/artist-programs/artist-grants/mfa](http://www.joanmitchellfoundation.org/artist-programs/artist-grants/mfa)

5 Kennedy, Randy. “Crystal Bridges Lines Up Emerging Artists for American Show.” *The New York Times*, *Arts Beat Blog*, July 15, 2014. [www.artsbeat.blogs.nytimes.com/2014/07/15/crystal-bridges-lines-up-emerging-artists-for-american-show/](http://www.artsbeat.blogs.nytimes.com/2014/07/15/crystal-bridges-lines-up-emerging-artists-for-american-show/)

is that it's not just some homogenous group of artists, it's not the slick crowd...the group is very well curated...the composition of artists in the residency was really well considered and really representative of the type of work being made in New Orleans and the people in New Orleans.”

The ten NOLA Studio Program artists each received studio space and a materials stipend for five months, as well as professional development support for the entire year. This catalog and its accompanying exhibition, *Convergence: JMC@Prospect.3* curated by Deborah Willis, Ph.D., is not only a celebration of this group of artists, but a culminating professional development opportunity. Throughout the duration of this pilot program, professional development has taken a variety of forms, but in all ways, has reflected the needs and goals set forth by the participating artists. These forms have included one-on-one critical feedback in the form of regular studio visits with more than 25 fellow artists, curators, writers, and arts professionals based in New Orleans and beyond; community engagement opportunities through public events such as open studios and Community Coffee; and peer-to-peer community building and critique within the cohort. One NOLA Studio Program artist shared that his “anticipations for the coming year would not be what they are had it not been for this program – it gives logistics, specifics, relationships, concrete elements to those aspirations that would’ve just been guess work on my part without.” While another one of the artists revealed that she is “learning so much about the emotions of this creative process.”

Through the NOLA Studio Program, I have worked closely to support the growth and careers of this group of artists. As you will see in the later pages of this catalog, their work spans genres and media, addressing socio-political themes of race, gender, displacement, technology, and cultural memory, among others. It has been one of the most rewarding periods of my professional life. These artists are devoted and determined to continually learning, growing, and experimenting in their work. Through these artists’ determination and energy, we at the Center have also consistently adapted and challenged our own assumptions of what it means to emerge, to step into view and become known. We look forward to frequently revisiting our own ideas of artist support, no matter the career stage, in future iterations of artist residencies at the Joan Mitchell Center.

## New Orleans Local Artist Studio Program 2013–2014

KATRINA ANDRY

AARON COLLIER

JER'LISA DEVEZIN

DAVE GREBER

NORAH LOVELL

MARIO PADILLA

BROOKE PICKETT

RONTHERIN RATLIFF

AYO SCOTT

CARL JOE WILLIAMS

All quoted material is excerpted from essays by Emily Wilkerson. A writer and curator, Wilkerson participated in the NOLA Studio Program through studio visits as a professional development consultant.



# KATRINA ANDRY

printmaker | [katrina-andry.com](http://katrina-andry.com)

A native of New Orleans, LA, Katrina Andry received a M.F.A. in printmaking at Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, in 2010. Andry was listed in the September 2012 *Art in Print* magazine as one of the top 50 printmakers. Her work was also featured on the popular *Beautiful Decay* blog. She has recently shown in a group show, *Shape of Place*, at Staple Goods Gallery in New Orleans, curated by each of the Staple Goods artist collective's members. Andry has also been an artist-in-residence at Anchor Graphics in Chicago and Kala Art Institute in Berkeley, CA. She currently lives and works in New Orleans.



*Mammy Complex: Unfit Mommies Make for Fit Nannies*, 2011.  
Digital media & color woodcut reduction, 40 x 60 inches.



*The Jungle Bunny Gave You Fever. The Only Cure is to Fuck the Bunny. She Wants It.* 2011.  
Digital media & color woodcut reduction, 40 x 60 inches.



*Western Interpretation of the Other*, 2008.  
Color woodcut reduction, 32 x 44 inches.

“Inspired by artists such as Adrian Piper, she reverses the roles people find themselves in to emphasize irrational assumptions and the futility of stereotypes.”



# AARON COLLIER

painter | [postmedium.org/aaroncollier](https://postmedium.org/aaroncollier)

Aaron Collier is a visual artist living in New Orleans, where he teaches painting and drawing at Tulane University. Solo exhibitions of his work have occurred at Cole Pratt Gallery and Staple Goods, an artist collective in the St. Roch neighborhood. His work was featured in the Contemporary Arts Center's *NOLA NOW* exhibition, on the cover of the *New Orleans Review*, as well as in *New American Paintings*, and is represented in collections such as the New Orleans Museum of Art (NOMA), Iberia Bank, and the Boston Medical Center. Collier has been awarded residencies by the Ragdale Foundation and Virginia Center for the Creative Arts.



*Let's See, 2014.*  
Clear gesso and oil on paper, 64 x 48 inches.



*Picture With a Club Foot, 2014.*  
Oil on canvas, 60 x 48 inches.



*Horse and Rider, Suspended, 2014.*  
Oil on canvas, 60 x 48 inches.

“Collier’s attention to scale and abstraction emphasizes, as he describes, the ‘mystery in this seemingly colossal story.’”



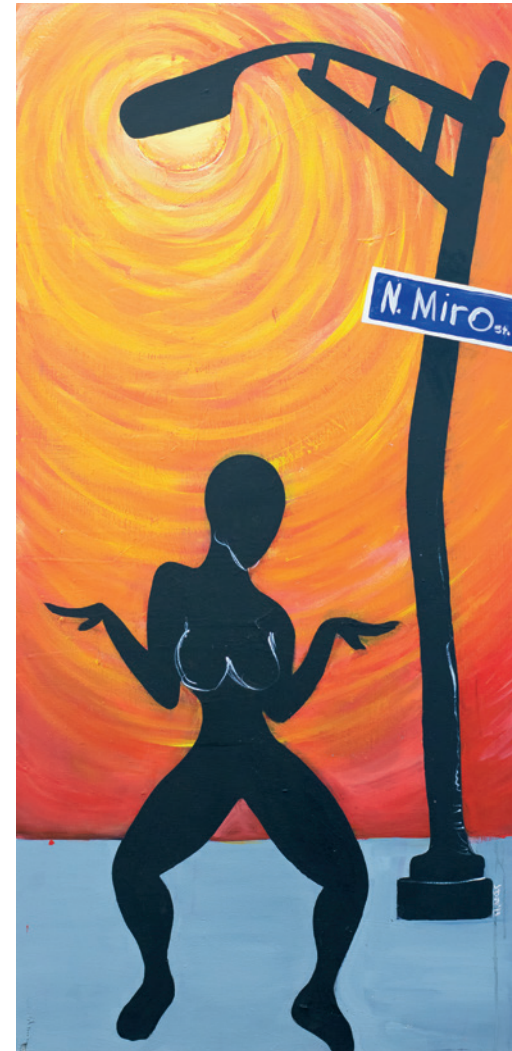
# JER'LISA DEVEZIN

painter and sculptor | [jerlisadevezin.com](http://jerlisadevezin.com)

A native of New Orleans, Jer’Lisa Devezin grew up in the Lower Ninth Ward. Having taken an interest in the arts at an early age, she was placed in the Gifted and Talented Visual Arts program in elementary and secondary schools, continuing her studies in art during her high school years. Jer’Lisa entered Dillard University as a visual arts major, where she began to develop her interest in working with mixed media and continued to establish her artistic vision. In 2010, she obtained a scholarship to study anatomy and the human figure at Penland School of Crafts in Penland, NC, using the clay medium. Following graduation from Dillard University in 2011, Devezin obtained an internship with the television series *Treme*.



*Sing a Black Girls' Song*, 2012.  
Terracotta clay and acrylic, 15 x 24 inches.



*Dip Wittah*, 2013.  
Acrylic on wood panel, collage, 48 x 24 inches.



*Bounce Baby*, 2014.  
Acrylic on board, glitter, 48 x 24 inches.

“Devezin’s conceptual methodology intertwines the social and political atmosphere of New Orleans with popular culture and spiritual practices, and her exploration of the ritual nature of bounce and spirituality is grounded in New Orleans’ tradition of celebrating one’s life at death.”



DAVE GREBER

installation artist | thesculpted.com

Dave Greber studied at Temple University, Universiteit van Amsterdam, and Tulane University. After working as a filmmaker and commercial video producer, he found his calling in the contemporary art resurgence of post-Katrina New Orleans, creating video loops and site-specific installations. His installations have been exhibited in Prospect 1.5, The Ogden Museum of Southern Art, Arthur Roger Gallery, C24 Gallery in NYC, and International Media Festivals. His work has been covered by *Art in America*, *Rhizome*, *Artforum*, *Artvoices*, *Hyperallergic*, *DailyServing*, *Pelican Bomb*, *Oxford American*, and others. Greber is a curator and exhibitor at the artist-run collective, The Front.



*Iris' Caveau*, 2014.  
Stasseo installation (5 projections, acrylic, rhinestones, fabric), 15 x 9 x 20 feet.



*Ender*, 2014.  
Digital collage, 22 x 17 inches.



*Sinew-en-Ciel*, 2014.  
Screenshot of an HD video for Stasseo, 22 x 10 feet as installed.

“Dave Greber’s videos, projections, and interactive works ignite the imagination in a psychedelic spiral, while questioning the ways we receive information and operate within a consumer-driven society.”



NORAH LOVELL

painter | [norahlovell.com](http://norahlovell.com)

Norah Lovell is a visual artist whose recent work includes drawings on paper and ephemera, books, and paintings. She received her M.F.A. from the University of Chicago and B.F.A. from the University of New Mexico, and taught art and dance at the University of New Mexico. Residing in New Orleans since 2008, she has worked as a painting conservator, and for the honors program at Tulane University. Her work has been exhibited at the Contemporary Arts Center, The Ogden Museum of Southern Art, Callan Contemporary, and is included in the Drawing Center Museum's Viewing Program in New York City.



*Reconnaissance: The Battle of New Orleans I*, 2014.  
Gouache on panel, 48 x 36 inches.



*Reconnaissance: The Battle of New Orleans II*, 2014.  
Gouache on panel, 48 x 36 inches.

“Through layering, Lovell prompts the viewer to question the ways in which we gather, understand, and adapt our many histories and how this, in turn, affects our future.”



*Untwinned Horn (Capilus)*, 2013.  
Casein on panel, 16 x 12 inches.



# MARIO PADILLA

painter and sculptor | mariopadilla.com

Born in Colombia, Mario completed a M.F.A. at New York Academy of Art in Manhattan (2008), subsequently working as an Artist-in-Residence at Leung King Community Center in Hong Kong. Currently, he is the Honors Art Teacher at International School of Louisiana in New Orleans. He is on the Board of Directors of the oldest non-profit youth arts organization in New Orleans (YA/YA), and he curates and organizes art exhibitions for a local community center. His work has been shown in Miami, Houston, New York, and more. In addition to gallery exhibitions, his work was featured as part of the large-scale *Art of the Americas* international exhibition in Miami in 2006.



*Second Line Tales 3*, 2014.  
Oil on canvas, 48 x 60 inches.



*Second Line Tales 5*, 2014.  
Oil on canvas, 60 x 48 inches.

“Ritual, energy, and movement play a central role in Padilla’s work, rooted in his experiences participating in community gatherings, from cock fighting in South America to second lines in New Orleans.”



*Hot Blues*, 2014.  
Mixed media: recycled wood, copper, iron, and resins, 72 x 36 inches.



BROOKE PICKETT

painter | brookepickett.com

Born in Shreveport, LA, Brooke Pickett is an artist currently living and working in New Orleans. Pickett earned a M.F.A. in painting from the State University of New York at Albany and a B.A. in both Painting and Literature from Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge. She was an Artist-in-Residence at Hotel Pupik, Schrattenberg, Austria and at the Virginia Center for Creative Arts. Pickett has been a Visiting Assistant Professor of Painting at Middlebury College in Middlebury, Vermont, and is the founder and director of Central City Artist Project, a non-profit residency program in New Orleans. Pickett is a member of The Front, and her work is included in numerous private and public collections, including a recent acquisition by the New Orleans Museum of Art.



*Untitled*, 2009–2013.  
Oil on canvas, 3 x 4 feet.



*Give Me Something to Believe In*, 2013–2014.  
Oil on canvas, 5 x 7 feet

“Using broken objects and ready-mades to create the initial sculptural compositions, Pickett’s final works morph into strong investigations of potentiality.”



*Wait for Something Better*, 2013–2014.  
Oil on canvas, 5 x 7 feet.



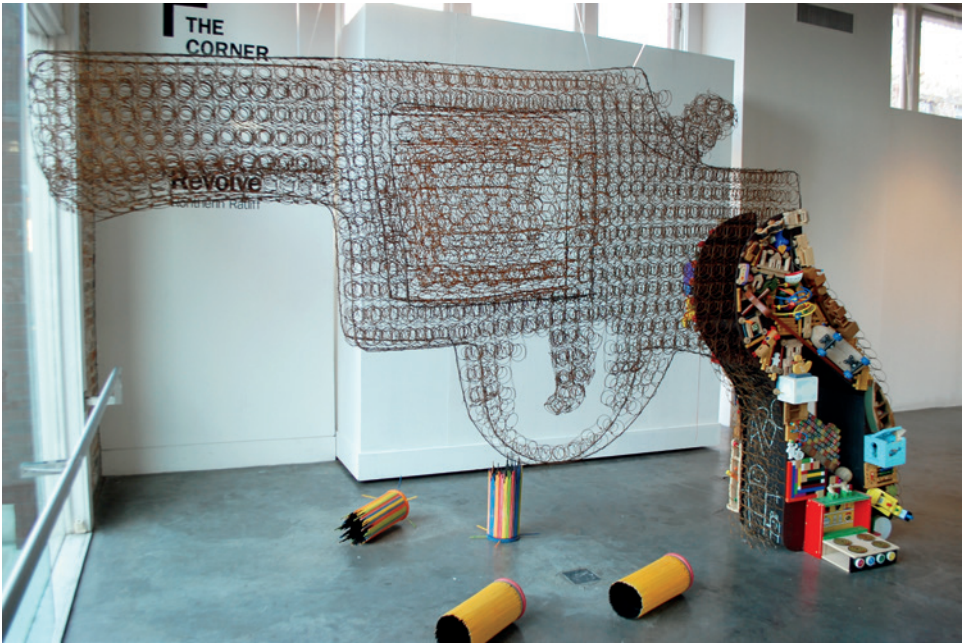
# RONTHERIN RATLIFF

sculptor | rontherin.com

Rontherin Ratliff is a multi-faceted visual artist currently working in and out of New Orleans, where he was born and raised. His artistic training was fostered through the nationally renowned arts organization YA/YA, where he now holds the position of Creative Director. Through his mixed media, sculpture and installation work, he attempts to display a way of thinking about life and relating to the world around him. His creative process demands that he be attentive in the way of a conversation, establishing an exchange of opinions, ideas, feelings and everyday matters, be that his own or that of his environment.



Things That Float, 2010.  
Wood, plexiglass, photographs, rope and bottled water, 8 x 4 x12 feet.



Revolve, 2013.  
Mattress springs, steel wire, plywood and wooden toys, 9 feet x 32 inches x 16 feet.



Ultimate Aloneness, 2014.  
Sash weights, wood glass, mattress springs, 72 x 32 x 7 inches.

“Every piece of found material transfers a multitude of stories to Ratliff’s works, which continue to cultivate significance with each viewer.”



# AYO SCOTT

painter | ayoscott.com

From as early as he can remember, Scott found himself immersed in the art community of his city, New Orleans. He grew to love the studio time he spent with his father, artist John T. Scott: 40-year professor of art and recipient of the MacArthur Fellowship. He never felt pressured to be an artist, but his family always provided him with opportunity, guidance and support for his endeavors from bronze casting to papermaking. After graduating from Xavier University in New Orleans with a Bachelor of Arts degree in 2003, he pursued a master's degree in Design and continues to develop his visual vocabulary.



*The Miseducation of Cupid*, 2014.  
Digital drawing on paper with acrylic, 50 x 50 inches.

“Scott is creating a conversation that oscillates between the old and the new as it is present in so many forms, from art practice, to society, our history, and the future.”



*9th Ward Gothic*, 2014.  
Digital drawing on paper with acrylic, 45 x 80 inches.



*Creation of a Movement*, 2014.  
Digital drawing on paper with acrylic, 100 x 45 inches.



CARL JOE WILLIAMS

painter and sculptor | carljoewilliams.com

Carl Joe Williams was born in Uptown New Orleans as the only child of Annie and Clarence Williams. Art was Williams’s first love, and he drew relentlessly. At the age of 14, he was accepted into the New Orleans Center for Creative Art (NOCCA), where he experienced his first art training under Frank Gross and Jean Pichotta. Renowned New Orleans artist John Scott also mentored Williams. Upon completing high school, Williams began studying at the Atlanta College of Art in 1988. Williams returned to New Orleans in 2003. He relocated to Atlanta briefly after Hurricane Katrina and returned to New Orleans again in 2008.



70's Thug gets Bitch Slapped by his Mama (detail), 2014. Mixed media on painted TV, with edited “Good Times” episode and original music by artist, 38 x 11 inches.



Deeper Questions, 2014. Mixed media on painted TV with a clip from Michael Jackson’s *Black or White* music video, with original music by artist, 39 x 11 inches.

“Williams often incorporates found objects into his work, further emphasizing the technique of layering, which he uses as a tool to mine historical and contemporary implications of shapes and colors.”



Yea, though I walk through the valley, 2013. Mixed media on found door, 85 x 35 inches.

# CONTRIBUTORS

## Gia M. Hamilton

Gia M. Hamilton, a native of New Orleans, received her Bachelor’s in cultural anthropology with a minor in visual art from New York University and her Master’s in applied anthropology from City University of New York. For 15 years in New York City, Hamilton worked with non-profit organizations as a Serial Entrepreneur, Program Development Consultant, Community Engagement Organizer and Curator. Gia spent 6 years working in the corporate sector as a researcher and organizational design consultant with Downey Associates International, supporting financial firms and non-profit organizations like Citigroup, Hearst-Ar-gyle and TIAA-CREF in their restructuring process. In 2009, Hamilton founded Gris Gris Lab, as a place based incubator and cultural exchange space to ensure that emerging thought-leaders could actualize their interdisciplinary projects through an innovative live-work model in Central City, New Orleans. Later, Gris Gris Lab built a team of social scientists who began cultural consulting to further support and strengthen the local economies of non-profits and small businesses in New Orleans, Seattle, Haiti, Washington D.C., Detroit and New York City. Hamilton joined the Joan Mitchell Center in 2011 as a consultant and was appointed Director in July 2013. She comes to the Joan Mitchell Center with a broad perspective of visual art, operational functions and community development where she acts as a conductor of information between the New York and New Orleans communities as well as a catalyst for change in contemporary art through designing innovative models for artistic and cultural exchanges and expansive public programming in the global arts and creative community. Hamilton is currently on the board of Alliance for Artists Communities and a member of Res Artis, ArtTable, The American Anthropological Association, and a Dr. Norman Francis Leadership Institute 2014 Fellow.

## Deborah Willis, Ph.D.

Deborah Willis, Ph.D., is chair of the Department of Photography & Imaging at the Tisch School of the Arts at New York University. Professor Willis has an affiliated appointment as University Professor with the College of Arts and Sciences, Africana Studies, as well as at NYU. Professor Willis has been the recipient of Guggenheim, Fletcher, and MacArthur fellowships, the Infinity Award in Writing from the International Center for Photography, and recipient of the Anonymous Was a Woman Foundation Award. Named one of the “100 Most Important People in Photography” by American Photography magazine she is one of the nation’s leading historians of African American photography and curators of African American culture.

Her newest book, *Out [o] Fashion Photography: Embracing Beauty* was released by the Henry Art Gallery, University of Washington Press, and a co-authored project, *Envisioning Emancipation: Black Americans and the End of Slavery*, was released by *Temple University Press*. Among her other notable projects are *Reflections in Black: A History of Black Photographers - 1840 to the Present*, *A Small Nation of People: W.E.B. DuBois and African American Portraits of Progress*, *The Black Female Body in Photography*, *Let Your Motto be Resistance*, and *Obama: the Historic Campaign in Photographs*. This fall, Dr. Willis curated the traveling exhibition *Posing Beauty in African American Culture*, which was based on her book *Posing Beauty: African American Images from the 1890’s to the Present* and has been on tour in the United States for four years. *Michelle Obama, The First Lady in Photographs* received the 2010 NAACP Image Award for Outstanding Literary Work Biography/Autobiography. Professor Willis lives in New York.

## Miranda Lash

Miranda Lash is Curator of Contemporary Art at the Speed Art Museum in Louisville, Kentucky. At the Speed, Lash is overseeing the reinstallation of the permanent collection of contemporary art for a new building designed by wHY architecture, and the commissioning of artworks for the Elizabeth P. and Frederick K. Cressman Art Park, both of which will open in April 2016. Prior to the Speed, Lash was curator of modern and contemporary art the New Orleans Museum of Art (NOMA). She joined NOMA in 2008 as the museum’s first curator dedicated exclusively to modern and contemporary art, and the founder of NOMA’s modern and contemporary art department. At NOMA Lash also managed NOMA’s Sydney and Walda Besthoff Sculpture Garden—one of the most important sculpture gardens in the United States. During her tenure at NOMA, she curated over twenty exhibitions, including the large-scale traveling retrospective exhibition *Mel Chin: Rematch* and the site-specific installations and exhibitions *Camille Henrot: Cities of Ys*; *Rashaad Newsome: King of Arms*; *Katie Holten: Drawn to the Edge*, and *Swoon: Thalassa*. The exhibition *Parallel Universe: Quintron and Miss Pussycat*, which Lash organized in 2010, included the artist Quintron composing and recording an entire music album in a museum gallery. Titled *Sucre du Sauvage*, the album was inspired by NOMA’s collection and was released by Goner Records. Lash’s essays have been published in the Harvard journal *Res: Anthropology and Aesthetics*, the anthology *Baroque Tendencies in Contemporary Art*, *New American Painting*, and *Gulf Coast: A Journal of Literature and Fine Arts*. Lash has been named a Clark Fellow at the



Clark Art Institute, a past consultant for Creative Capital, and one of the co-founders of the arts criticism website Pelican Bomb. She received her B.A. in the History of Art and Architecture from Harvard University, and her M.A. in Art History from Williams College.

Denise Frazier, Ph.D.

An interest in Cuban politics and African Diaspora culture within Latin America led Dr. Denise Frazier to New Orleans where she received an M.A. and Ph.D. in Latin American Studies at Tulane University. Frazier’s graduate studies in Cuba and Brazil aligned with her interest in contemporary music, specifically hip-hop, and public performance. She is currently working as a college advisor for College Track New Orleans, a non-profit organization supporting students throughout high school and college. She has lectured and presented seminars and workshops on diversity, African Diaspora culture, contemporary music and performance all around the country. She has reviewed academic manuscripts for Sage Publications, and has been published in scholarly journals and arts magazines, including the online arts journal, Pelican Bomb. Frazier is currently working on a novella and a manuscript proposal on socio-political public performances.

Tara Foster

Tara Foster is a writer, visual artist, and interdisciplinary scholar. Tara completed a self-designed, dual degree master’s program at the University of New Orleans, earning a M.A. in arts administration and M.S. in urban studies. Tara received the University’s annual Fritz Wagner Prize for her urban studies master’s thesis on the aesthetics of gentrification in two downtown New Orleans neighborhoods. Her continued scholarship focuses on public space, participatory art, and the urban political economy. Tara received a B.A. in art history from the University of Vermont, with a minor in studio art. As the Program Associate for the Joan Mitchell Center, Tara is responsible for the day-to-day management of the New Orleans Local Artist (“NOLA”) Studio pilot program and the Artist In Residence Program, launching in fall 2015. Since relocating to New Orleans in 2009, Tara has worked with a variety of organizations on program design, implementation and evaluation; strategic partnerships and coalition building; marketing and brand development; and organizational effectiveness, including U.S. Biennial, Inc./Prospect.2, the Arts Council of New Orleans, DailyServing, and, most recently, Neighborhoods Partnership Network. She has served on Advisory Councils for St. Claude Main Street and the Foundation for Louisiana’s TOGETHER Initiative. Previously, Tara spent more than five years working in events production and business development for global law firms such as Cleary,

Gottlieb, Steen & Hamilton LLP. From 2011 to 2013, Tara conducted archival and qualitative research for *Unfathomable City: A New Orleans Atlas*, published by University of California Press and co-edited by Rebecca Solnit and Rebecca Snedeker. In 2013, Tara was selected to join the second cohort of the Highlander Research and Education Center’s Zilphia Horton Cultural Organizing Institute, and she infuses the principles of cultural organizing into all that she undertakes.

Emily Wilkerson

Emily Wilkerson is a writer and curator based in New Orleans, LA. She is a regular contributor to Pelican Bomb, an online platform dedicated to contemporary art in Louisiana. She has also contributed to the Atlanta-based BURNAWAY, and served as a writing consultant for Ronchini Gallery in London. Wilkerson has worked on exhibitions and projects at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, the Chinati Foundation, and the Contemporary Arts Center, New Orleans, and was involved with the development and presentation of Prospect.1 New Orleans and Pacific Standard Time in Los Angeles. She previously served as contemporary curator at Longue Vue House and Gardens, a historical house museum in New Orleans. Her ongoing research focuses on socially engaged art practices and the alternative educational strategies of international artist and curatorial residencies, the latter for which she was awarded the 2011-2012 Neely Macomber Travel Prize. She completed her Master’s degree at the University of Southern California in Art and Curatorial Practices in the Public Sphere in Los Angeles in 2012 and holds a B.A. from Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A Note From the Joan Mitchell Center

The *Convergence: JMC@Prospect.3* exhibition and publication of this catalog mark the completion of the inaugural session of the New Orleans Local Artist (NOLA) Studio Program. For the success of this program we are indebted to a great number of people, many listed here, and many others unnamed.

We would like to thank in particular Deborah Willis, for generously giving her time and attention to the work of these New Orleans artists, and her thoughtful curation of the exhibition *Convergence: JMC@Prospect.3*. We also thank our community partners for sharing in our vision, the Artists In Residence of the 2013 AIR pilot program for their invaluable advice and participation, and our dedicated installation team and docents. We thank Franklin Sirmans, Brooke Davis Anderson, Ylva Rous, and the organizers of *Prospect.3: Notes For Now* for their artistic vision, collaboration and dedication to the artists of the New Orleans region.

Finally, we are grateful to the NOLA Studio Program Artists for opening up their studios, and sharing their work and their vision with us, and to the people of New Orleans for welcoming the Joan Mitchell Center to the city.

New Orleans Local Artist Studio Program, 2013–2014

Katrina Andry	Jer’Lisa Devezin	Norah Lovell	Brooke Pickett	Ayo Scott
Aaron Collier	Dave Greber	Mario Padilla	Rontherin Ratliff	Carl Joe Williams

Arts and Cultural Community Advisors

Stephanie Atkins	Luther Gray	Ma Po Kinard	Sabrina Montana	Cameron Shaw
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Tori Bush	Miranda Lash	Lisa Sigal	Emily Wilkerson	Meow Wolf members: Corvas Brinkerhoff Mat Crimmins
Mel Chin	Alberto Lescay	Stephen Slappe	Deborah Willis	
Susannah Darrow	Juan Logan	Bradley Sumrall	Linda Yablonsky	
Matthew Deleget		Herb Tam		

ABOUT THE JOAN MITCHELL FOUNDATION

The Joan Mitchell Foundation is an artist-endowed non-profit organization established in 1993. Our mission is to celebrate the legacy of Joan Mitchell and expand her vision to support the aspirations and development of diverse contemporary artists. We work to broaden the recognition of artists and their essential contributions to communities and society. This mission is activated through a varied range of programming.

The Foundation includes the promotion and preservation of Joan Mitchell’s legacy as part of its mission. To fulfill this, the Foundation provides loans of Joan Mitchell artworks from its collection to museums, academic institutions and other non-profit arts spaces. The archive houses Mitchell’s papers, including correspondence and photographs, and other archival materials related to her life and work.

The Foundation’s archives are open to all qualified researchers. Additionally, Foundation staff are available to answer reference questions and direct individuals to works by Joan Mitchell in museum collections. Staff also create educational materials to complement exhibitions and provide useful age appropriate materials for art educators. The Joan Mitchell Foundation Education & Research Center in Manhattan houses the archives and the Joan Mitchell Catalogue Raisonné Project, established in summer of 2014.

The Foundation awards grants directly to individual artists through its Painters & Sculptors and Emergency Grant programs and provides funding to arts organizations that support visual artists in their respective communities. Since 1994, the Foundation has awarded grants to over eight hundred individual artists and provided funding to over eighty organizations.

Additional programs operated by the Foundation include the Creating a Living Legacy (CALL) program, begun in 2006, that provides support to older artists in creating a comprehensive documentation of their careers. The CALL program has developed new ways to support mature artists through a range of tools, including the CALL Database, comprehensive resource workbooks, and by training emerging artists as Legacy Specialists.

The Joan Mitchell Center, an artist residency center founded in 2010 and based in New Orleans, aspires to be a place for creation, innovation and transformation, by providing a forum for artists and acting as a welcoming, inclusive gathering place for artists and the broader community of New Orleans. While the Center is undergoing development of its own studios on-site, it has been hosting visiting artists and others working in the arts community. In late 2013, the Center began a year long pilot program (as featured in this catalog) designed to support emerging artists by providing free studios, monthly stipends and professional development. The Center also curates and produces public programming, creating events that support values of community, diversity and social equity.

Begun in 1997, the Foundation’s Art Education program provides opportunities for both emerging youth and young adult artists through inclusive and diverse arts education programming. All programming is offered completely free and is open to the public. The program enhances the artistic education of young painters and sculptors through studio classes, in concert with other educational opportunities encouraging students to pursue and develop their voice in the arts. Simultaneously, the program supports the artistic development of working painters and sculptors through teaching opportunities, professional development training, and engagement with the artistic community.

The Art Education program began with a single community partner, four Artist-Teachers and two classes that served approximately thirty students on Saturdays. Currently, the Art Education program partners with six organizations, offers Saturday, weekday, and summer programming, employs approximately forty Artist-Teachers, and serves one thousand students each week. In the fall of 2014, the Art Education program expanded programming once more as it moved into the Joan Mitchell Foundation Education & Research Center, a newly renovated space in Manhattan, with dedicated classrooms, a media lab, and flexible meeting spaces.

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All artworks are courtesy of the artists.

The works of Aaron Collier, Jer'Lisa Devezin, Norah Lovell, Ayo Scott, Mario Padilla, Brooke Pickett, and Carl Joe Williams were photographed by Jeremy Tauriac of Tauriac Photography.

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