



CONVERSATIONS IN THE ARTS

"Call to Community—Access and Opportunity"

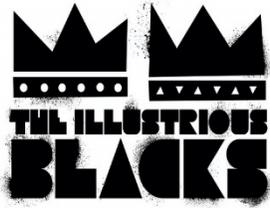
February 10, 2022, 7:00 – 8:30pm

Presented LIVE

via facebook.com/huntingtonarts/

PANELISTS

THE ILLUSTRIOUS BLACKS, Music and Dance



The Illustrious Blacks (Manchildblack x Monstah Black) are NeoAfroFuturisticPsychedelicSurrealisticHippys on a mission to save the world one beat at a time! With inspiration from artists like Prince, David Bowie, Grace Jones, Depeche Mode and George Clinton, The Illustrious Blacks have arrived with a mission to fuse futuristic funk, hypnotic house, space disco and synth-pop into pulsating positivity for the planet.

In 2017, the duo *The New York Times* called Bed-Stuy's "favorite creative couple," released their highly anticipated debut EP, *Neo Afro Futuristic Psychedelic Surrealistic Hippy*. Subsequent singles followed, The Illustrious Blacks garnered international fame, touring the world. Fast forward to 2020 they released their sophomore EP, *Technegrocolor*. To follow up *Technegrocolor*, The IBs put out two synth-pop singles. By the end of 2020, they were the subject of a *VICE News* piece, launched the YouTube program *Hype Life w/The Illustrious Blacks*, collaborated on a stunning visual clip for Phillips Auction/Gallery and put the final touches on a new single and music video for "Cloud 9" that was released in June of 2021.



HARPER BELLA, Fine Art Photographer

Harper Bella is an award-winning photographer and recipient of the 2021 Decentralization grant. Born into a rich Caribbean heritage (Trinidad & Tobago and Barbados), her work often explores the experiences of African descendants living in the United States of America.

A graduate of the Fashion Institute of Technology, Harper holds a Bachelor's in Advertising and Marketing Communications. Harper has excelled in her photography career with work featured in Rockefeller Center, the Museum of

Contemporary Arts in Long Island, and Miami Art Week, as well as other artistic cultural institutions in the US and abroad.

Today, Harper works with students to develop their perspectives as artists, and through public-funded grant projects.



TRACY TODD HUNTER, Curator

A Patchogue, NY native. Tracy Todd Hunter's creative endeavors include writing, photography, event planning and interior design. He is a Community Organizer and Founder/Curator for "Of Colors ~ A Creative Collective" established in Artspace. He has curated numerous engaging exhibitions and events that bring people together in friendship, encourage diversity, inclusion, understanding, volunteer spirit and create opportunities for artists. His wish is to include all and offer a platform for emerging artists, youth and those with special needs to showcase their artwork/talents in mainstream exhibits. The "Of Colors Black History Exhibition & Diversity Celebration" is

held annually and conceived by Tracy.

Though Patchogue has a small African American population, The exhibition attracts hundreds as a premier community affair. Tracy is the curator for three Black History and two Hispanic Heritage Month exhibits throughout Long Island including the annual "Of Colors Latin Exhibition."

In 2011 Tracy was selected to live in Artspace, and was a member of the first Patchogue Artspace Liaisons Committee (PAL). He was elected as the Gallery Manager & Exhibition Committee Chair for the 2014-2015 season. Artspace Patchogue earned "The Bethpage Best Art Gallery on Long Island Award" in 2015 due his efforts and Artspace Patchogue artists. He was awarded a proclamation from Patchogue Village Mayor Paul Pontieri "for his dedication to the Arts and his tireless efforts to make Artspace a place for the Arts to be seen, developed and enjoyed" and is a 2015 Artspace Artist Award recipient.

MODERATOR



DR. NICHELLE RIVERS, Multimedia Artist & Educator

Dr. Nichelle L. Rivers, a multi-media artist and educator, is a native of Memphis, TN. Her bold and vibrant depictions are not only inspired by her culturally rich childhood, but also by such iconic art figures as Faith Ringgold, Frida Kahlo, Romare Bearden and Jacob Lawrence. Her paintings are a manifestation of her soul. Over time her work has been grounded in her love of music and bringing to life spatial relationships and patterns. Although a long time social justice activist, just over two years ago Dr. Rivers realized she must use her voice as an artist to convey the pain, turmoil, anger, misunderstanding and lack of tolerance that exist in our society.

A graduate of Tennessee State University in Nashville, she holds a BS in Art Education, M.Ed. in Educational Administration, and a Doctorate of Education from the University of Memphis. Dr. Rivers was featured in the November '03 issue of Memphis Magazine. In '12, she illustrated her first children's book, "Heavenly Daddy Why do I Talk this Way", by author Jennifer Carter. She has exhibited throughout Nassau and Suffolk Counties, Tennessee, Minnesota and Illinois.

A proud member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc., she serves as Director of Grants and Funded Programs in the Roosevelt UFSD and the founding President of the P.O.W.E.R Foundation, an advocacy and empowerment organization that works with LGBTQIA youth, at-risk student populations and local faith and community-based organizations in Nassau and Suffolk. She advocates for LGBTQIA rights, access and opportunity, in addition to culturally responsive educational best practices for all children. The passion she feels for the education of children continues to drive Dr. Rivers. She lives by the mantra from one of her "sheroes"-Audre Lorde-, "When you dare to be powerful, to use your strengths in the service of your vision, then it becomes less and less important whether you are afraid." She and her family reside in the Long Island area. Dr. Rivers is currently Director of Fine, Performing & Culinary Arts in the West Hempstead School District.

EDUCATION • SUMMER FESTIVAL • GALLERY • EXHIBITIONS • GRANTS • EVENTS

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