

CONVERSATIONS in the ARTS

*Call to Community:
Anti-Racism and Inequality*

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Presented LIVE
via [facebook.com/huntingtonarts/](https://www.facebook.com/huntingtonarts/)
February 11, 2021
7:00 - 8:30 PM

PANELISTS



ALICIA EVANS

Educator and artist Professor Alicia Evans is a successful New York emerging artist specializing in fiber arts—crocheted fine artwork organically branded with nature’s gifts including wool, bamboo, sea grass, wood beads, sea shells and more. Her work has been exhibited in art shows in New York and Long Island. Featured in Newsday, Fiber Art Now magazine, on radio and online, she has had sold out solo exhibitions and participates in group shows throughout the region. Prof. Evans has held several artist-in-residences including one at a prestigious Long Island Museum. She has earned a Statement of Accomplishment with Distinction from the Museum of Modern Art. Prof. Evans is accredited as a Museum Educator in Art & Inquiry. She has served as keynote speaker for several arts initiatives and welcomes chatting about the power of art to heal...the power of trees to engender mindfulness and compassion.



LAUREN GONZALEZ

Lauren Gonzalez, M.S.Ed., (she/her) is an Art Educator, Social & Emotional Learning Chairperson, and Yoga Teacher on Long Island, serving over 13,000 students in her school district. Blending creativity and consciousness, she offers opportunities for her students and peers to experience transformation through art and wellness. Gonzalez has a background in facilitating yoga teacher trainings through Breathe For Change. This is a program specifically designed for educators, and she taught over 1,000 hours of yoga and Social & Emotional Learning around the country to support involvement in stress management, self-care, and social justice. Gonzalez enjoys integrating art therapy and meditative practices into her pedagogy and personal life. She also continues her lifelong love of engaging in social activism and supporting local and community-based artists.



EBONY THOMPSON

Ebony Thompson is an expressionist from Freetown Sierra Leone in West Africa. His passion in communicating the African experience and encounters at home and abroad has led to representation of his voice in Art. He uses art defined in the form of earth tone colors on canvas and illustration boards.

Thompson specializes in the use of oil pastels with a distinctive technique of employing various solvents to improve the fluidity and texture. He delights in the magic of bringing images out of darkness into the aspect of light. The process of expressing the transitional effects of light in his images stands out as his art signature. Art for Thompson stands as a representation of societal issues. He successfully captures the things that happen in our daily lives. Thompson's art has been recognized and exhibited in galleries such as, in Brooklyn, NYC libraries, Elmont Library, Roosevelt Public Library and the Contemporary Art Fair at the Jacob Javits Center.

MODERATOR



DR. NICHELLE RIVERS

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.

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