

PICTURES WITH PURPOSE:

A Symposium on Early African American Photography

NATIONAL
MUSEUM of
AFRICAN
AMERICAN
HISTORY &
CULTURE

☀ Smithsonian

Symposium Participants

Emilie C. Boone

She is the Assistant Professor of Art History in the African American Studies Department at CUNY New York City College of Technology. She focuses on the art and photography of the African Diaspora. Currently as the Chester Dale Fellow in the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Department of Photographs she is advancing her book project on the photographer James Van Der Zee. Her appointment at CUNY followed a Mellon Curatorial Fellowship at the Williams College Museum of Art and the completion of her PhD in Northwestern University's Department of Art History.

Alisha Chipman

She is the Senior Photograph Conservator at The Library of Congress. She has published research on Paul Strand's platinum prints, hand-colored tints, and treatment techniques for blocked negatives. Her conservation experience includes former employment as a photograph conservator with the National Gallery of Art and a Master of Science degree in art conservation from the University of Delaware. Alisha completed undergraduate study in commercial photography, studio art, and art history at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. She completed a Master of Arts degree in art history with a specialization in the history of photography at Hunter College in New York City.

Jasmine Nichole Cobb

She is the Bacca Foundation Associate Professor of African & African American Studies and of Art, Art History and Visual Studies at Duke University, where she teaches courses on black visual culture and representation. Cobb earned a Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania and is a recipient of the American Fellowship from the American Association of University Women (AAUW). She is the author of *Picture Freedom: Remaking Black Visuality in the Early Nineteenth Century* (New York University Press, 2015), and has written essays for the journals *MELUS: Multi-Ethnic Literature of the United States*, *American Literary History*, and *Public Culture*. Cobb is currently at work on *New Growth: The Art and Texture of Black Hair After Emancipation*, which evaluates ideas about black freedom in art and print culture through the lens of black hair.

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Rhea L. Combs

She is the supervisory curator of photography and film and the director of the Earl W. and Amanda Stafford Center for African American Media Arts (CAAMA) at NMAAHC. Combs' exhibitions and projects include, the inaugural Smithsonian African American Film Festival, *Watching Oprah: The Oprah Winfrey Show and American Culture* (2018); *Represent: Hip Hop Photography* (2018); *Everyday Beauty: Images from the permanent Photography and Film Collection* (2016); *Through the African American Lens: Selections from the Permanent Collection of NMAAHC* (2015) and *Rising Up: Hale Woodruff's Murals at Talladega College* (2014). Combs's writings have appeared in *Aperture*, the museum's photography book series, *Double Exposure*, the *Public Historian*, along with numerous anthologies, academic journals, and exhibition catalogues. Combs holds a PhD in American Studies from Emory University; an MA from Cornell University; and a BA from Howard University.

Laura Coyle

She joined NMAAHC in 2010. She oversees the digitization program, which was featured in *The Public Historian* (2018). She is the co-editor with Dr. Michèle Gates-Moresi of the *Double Exposure* series. Before coming to the Smithsonian, she was the Curator of European Art at the Corcoran Gallery of Art, where she presented exhibitions with companion publications including *Joan Miró: The Shape of Color; The Image of Joan of Arc in France and America; and Antiquities to Impressionism: The William A. Clark Collection* at the Corcoran Gallery of Art.

Jennifer Evers

She is the Senior Book Conservator at The Library of Congress in Washington D.C. She has published research on cast pulp paper and the full treatment of a Civil War diary written in iron gall ink. Her conservation experience includes previous employment as the Dibner History of Science conservator at the Huntington Library, an advanced conservation internship at the Folger Shakespeare Library, and a Mellon Fellowship at the Walters Art Museum. She holds a Master of Library and Information Science degree with a certificate in book conservation from the University of Texas at Austin, as well as undergraduate degrees in studio art and psychology from the University of Arizona.

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Michèle Gates Moresi

She is the Supervisory Museum Curator of Collections at the NMAAHC. She assists in identifying and obtaining collections for the Museum, oversees collections acquisition and management activities, and participates in exhibition development. Dr. Gates Moresi is co-curator of the inaugural exhibition Making a Way Out of No Way and co-curated the special exhibition, More Than a Picture, in 2017 featuring selections from the Museum's photography collection. She is co-editor of the series, Double Exposure, and is a contributor to the Museum's A Souvenir Book. She studied history as an undergraduate at Boston University and earned her doctorate in American Civilization at The George Washington University.

Amy M. Mooney

She is an Associate Professor at Columbia College Chicago. Her publications include a monograph, Archibald J. Motley, Jr., as well as contributions to anthologies and catalogs including Beyond Face: New Perspectives in Portraiture (2018). She is a recipient of fellowships from the American Council of Learned Societies, the National Portrait Gallery, the Smithsonian American Art Museum, and the Terra Foundation for American Art. In collaboration with Dr. Deborah Willis, she recently launched a digital humanities project, "Say It with Pictures" Then and Now that recovers and examines Chicago's African American photographers from the 1890s into the 1930s. As the 2019-2020 Terra Foundation Visiting Professor of American Art at Oxford University, she will complete her second book, Portraits of Noteworthy Character: Negotiating a Collective American Identity, a project that investigates the social function of portraiture.

Doug Remley

He is the Rights and Reproductions Specialist at NMAAHC. He joined the NMAAHC staff in 2014 to assist in coordinating the Museum's slate of inaugural publications. Since then, he has coordinated the publication of numerous books and online features, while managing all copyright clearances and distribution of images and information relating to objects in the NMAAHC collection. He received both a M.A. in Media and Public Affairs and a B.A. in Political Communication from The George Washington University in Washington, D.C.

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Maurice Wallace

He is the Associate Professor of English at the University of Virginia. His fields of expertise include African American literature and cultural studies, nineteenth-century American literature, the history and representation of American slavery, and gender studies. He is the author of *Constructing the Black Masculine: Identity and Ideality in African American Men's Literature and Culture, 1775-1995*, a book on the history of black manhood in African American letters and culture, and is co-editor with Shawn Michelle Smith of a volume of scholarly articles on early photography and African American identity entitled *Pictures and Progress: Early Photography and the Making of African-American Identity*. Dr. Wallace has served on the editorial boards for *American Literature* and *Yale Journal of Criticism* and is a contributing editor to *James Baldwin Review*. His current research and writing agendas include a monograph on early photography in the making of African American identity on the heels of the U.S. Civil War, and a critical exploration into the sound of Martin Luther King Jr.'s voice.

Brian Wallis

He is a writer, curator, and historian of photography. He is Curator for The Walther Collection, New York / Neu-Ulm, and was formerly Deputy Director and Chief Curator at the International Center of Photography, New York, 2000–2015. He has held positions at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, the Museum of Modern Art, and the New Museum of Contemporary Art. Wallis is the author or editor of numerous books including *The Order of Things: Photography from The Walther Collection* (2015), *Weegee: Murder Is My Business* (2012), *Miroslav Tichy* (2010), and (with Deborah Willis) *African American Vernacular Photography* (2006). He is currently organizing a retrospective exhibition of the documentary photographs of Mary Ellen Mark.

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Maggie Wessling

She joined NMAAHC in 2017 as the Conservator of Photographs. Maggie completed her graduate conservation training at the Institute of Fine Arts at New York University and she is a Professional Associate of the American Institute for Conservation. Prior to joining NMAAHC Maggie held positions at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, The Rijksmuseum, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Deborah Willis, Ph.D.

She is the Chair of the Department of Photography & Imaging at New York University Tisch School of the Arts; has an affiliated appointment at the College of Arts and Sciences, Department of Social & Cultural Analysis, Africana Studies where she teaches courses on Photography & Imaging, iconicity, and cultural histories visualizing the black body, women, and gender; and is Director of the New York University Institute of African American Affairs and Center for Black Visual Culture. She is a MacArthur and Guggenheim Fellow; author and curator of numerous books and exhibitions including *Posing Beauty: African American Images from the 1890s to the Present* and its accompanying exhibition; and co-organizer of the Black Portraiture[s] conferences.

Helena Zinkham

She caught the picture library bug in 1977 working with photographic and graphic arts collections at the Maryland and New York historical societies. The opportunity to develop online research tools for visual materials brought her to the Library of Congress in the 1980s. Currently, Helena is Chief of the Prints & Photographs Division and invites you to explore the more than 16 million pictures in your national library through the samples in Flickr or in person. Collaborating with NMAAHC to acquire the Howland Album is a favorite highpoint in a 40-year library career.