

A publication of the Department of African American and African
Diaspora Studies at Indiana University



Welcome to Diaspora, the Department of African American and African Diaspora Studies' electronic newsletter. We are all connected to AAADS in one way or another, yet we are spread far and wide throughout the university, the community, and even farther afield. We are the AAADS Diaspora.

Events and News of Note

- AAADS held a “Globalizing Black Studies Inaugural Event” during the week of October 22nd, 2018. Two professors from the School of Law and Humanities, China University of Mining and Technology (Beijing), and one professor from Valparaiso University, helped launch the event, which was underwritten by the College of Arts and Sciences. The purpose of the project is to globalize underlying philosophies and practices about the nature of Black culture, how it works, as well as how it has shaped the world we live in. Other goals include building black studies courses into Chinese and other international university curriculums and promoting short-term faculty and student exchanges. Invited visitors Professors Huiyan Xu and Hongmei Wang of School of Law and Humanities at China Mining and Technology University (Beijing), presented lectures on “Music, Language and Second Language Acquisition with Implications for Black Culture” and “Alex Haley’s *Roots* and Chinese Root Culture” respectively. They also visited AAADS classes and participated in other cultural activities. Members of the faculty held planning sessions with the visitors, with Professor Tiffany Bell of Valparaiso University, serving as a consultant. An expert on Chinese and North American culture, Dr. Bell

received her B.A. degree in Communication and Culture from Indiana University, and spent two years teaching in China.



Deans Michael McGinnis and Russell Valentino and Chair of AAADS, Carolyn Calloway-Thomas, welcoming Professor and Vice Dean of School of Law & Humanities Huiyan Xu and Professor and Director of International Services, Hongmei Wang (China University of Mining and Technology-Beijing), to the "Globalizing Black Studies Inaugural Reception" in Neal Marshall Hall on October 22, 2018. Pictured from left to right are Michael McGinnis, Huiyan Xu, Hongmei Wang, Carolyn Calloway-Thomas and Russell Valentino.

- The Extensions of the Tradition Concert: Art Music by Black Composers was held Sunday, February 3, 5:00–6:30 p.m. in Neal-Marshall Black Culture Center Grand Hall. In celebration of Black History Month, the concert presented formally-composed works by African American composers. The event featured performances by IU Jacobs School of Music students and faculty, and the African American Choral Ensemble, directed by **Dr. Raymond Wise**.
- Directed by **Stafford C. Berry Jr.**, the African American Dance Company Studio Concert, Featuring Student Choreography, was held Thursday, December 6, 2018 at 7:30 p.m. at Willkie Auditorium.



- AAADS held their annual Holiday Party on Friday, December 7th from noon to 3:00 p.m. at the University Club Faculty Room at the IMU.
- Faculty and students in AAADS participated as readers in the #BlackLit 2019 event at the Neal Marshall Black Culture Center on Friday, February 22nd. Poetry and other original works by black authors were presented in celebration of Black History Month. Readers included Maria Hamilton Abegunde, Nana Amoah-Ramey, Breon Tyler, Phoebe Wolfskill, and AAADS major and Groups scholar Anyjah Perkins.



Pictured: Anyjah Perkins, Breon Tyler, and Maria Hamilton Abegunde

- The three ensembles of the African American Arts Institute performed the annual Potpourri of the Arts in the African American tradition at 7:30PM November 10th at the IU Auditorium.
- The IU Soul Revue held their Soulful Holiday Concert on Thursday, December 8th at 7:30 pm in the Neal-Marshall Black Culture Center, Grand Hall. Admission was free with a canned good donation for the Community Kitchen.
- Dr. Raymond Wise directed the African American Choral Ensemble for their performance at the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday Celebration at the Buskirk-Chumley Theater on Monday, January 21, 2019.



Dr. Wise leading the AACE on MLK day

- In July, 2018, the department commemorated the life of Dr. Frederick McElroy (1950-2018), beloved mentor, teacher, and colleague.



<https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/louisville/obituary.aspx?n=fredrick-lawrence-mcelroy&pid=190029144>

Faculty

- Last March, *TIME magazine online* interviewed **Professor Carolyn Calloway-Thomas** on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the death of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. She offered commentary on the most important speeches delivered by Dr. King (time.com/5221314/martin-luther-king-jr-speech). Dr. Calloway-Thomas is also featured as an expert in a docudrama titled “True First,” which celebrates forgotten and overlooked African American trailblazers. Calloway-Thomas offered commentary on the life of Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm of New York, the first woman to run for president of the United States. “True First is produced by Vimeo Documentary Company in Indianapolis, and will stream on Urban Movie Channel, and possibly on PBS, in February 2019. In June, Professor Calloway-Thomas delivered a lecture titled “Under Cherry Trees there are no Strangers: Cross Cultural Communication between North Americans and Chinese” at North China University,

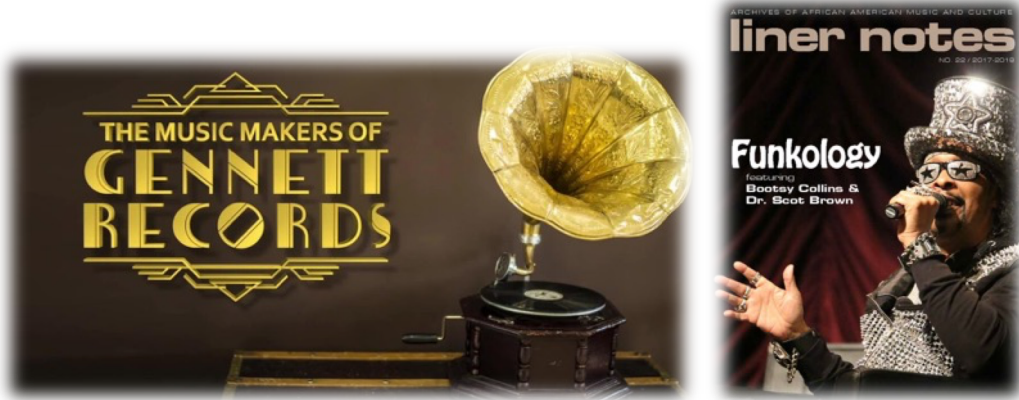
Taiyuan City, and one on “Empathy in the Global World” at Chinese School of Traditional Medicine (Shanghai).



Carolyn Calloway-Thomas standing in front of a banner welcoming her to North China University (Taiyuan City), where she delivered a lecture titled “Under Cherry Trees there are no Strangers: Cross Cultural Communication between North Americans and Chinese,” June 26.

- In July, Calloway-Thomas submitted a book-length manuscript on *Intercultural Communication between North Americans and Chinese* to Intellectual Projects Publishing Company, Ltd with coauthor, Professor Yingli Zhou, of School of Law and Humanities, China Mining and Technology University-Beijing, for publication in China in 2019. Central States Communication Association (CSCA) established the Carolyn Calloway-Thomas Inclusivity Speaker Series in September 2018. The purpose of the Series is to highlight inclusivity scholars who are part of CSCA and to help bring in scholars from outside the thirteen-state region. Scholars who are invited to be part of the speaker series will be given the honorary title of CSCA Calloway-Thomas Inclusivity Fellow.
- In the fall of 2018, **Dr. Tyron Cooper** recorded and mixed Marietta Simpson’s forthcoming album project, “Slave Songs.” Dr. Cooper also served as the musical supervisor and edited the score for the PBS Documentary “Music Makers of Gennett Records,” which premiered on PBS November 25, 2018. In September, he finished the mixing edits for the PBS Documentary “Eva A-7063,” which aired in October. Dr. Cooper also published the annual newsletter, *Liner Notes*, for the Archives of African American Music and Culture in September. He served on Rural Affairs

Task Force of the Indiana State Office of Community and Rural Affairs headed by Lt. Governor of Indiana Suzanne Crouch and Tory Flynn, Director of Publications and Public Affairs for Hillenbrand Inc.



THE ARCHIVES OF AFRICAN AMERICAN MUSIC & CULTURE PRESENTS

Acclaimed mezzo-soprano
Marietta Simpson
Live in concert

WTIU-TV/PBS will be recording this event for future public television airing

Performing songs from her new CD
Crooked Stick: Songs in a Strange Land

February 17, 2019
6:00 PM (Doors at 5:30)
WTIU Studio 6 in the Radio-TV building
Free Admission
Reception following in the NMBCC Grand Hall

Music Director, Dr. Tyrone Cooper, with guest performers Evelyn Simpson-Curenton (piano), Dr. Marcos Cavalcante and Kevin Cooper (guitar), Brennan Johns (trumpet), Dennis Perez (percussion), Kenny Phelps (drums), Brandon Meeks (bass).

Co-Sponsored by the Neal-Marshall Black Culture Center, WTIU-TV/PBS, the Department of African American and African Diaspora Studies, and the Jacobs School of Music

- Last April, **Professor Jakobi Williams** gave an invited lecture, “Martin Luther King and his Global Legacy on the Fiftieth Commemoration of his Death” at the University of Turin in Italy. In November, Professor Willlliam’s invited lectures included, “*American Revolution II*” for the Chicago Film Archives and the Rebuild Foundation at the Stoney Island Arts Bank, Chicago, Illinois and “50th Anniversary of John Carlos and Tommy Smith's Human Rights/Black Power Salute at the Olympics in Mexico City and Connections to the Current Political Movement” the Annual Thornbrough Lecture at Butler University and the Indiana Association of Historians, Indianapolis, Indiana. In October, Dr. Williams

presented, "Remembering the Black Panther Party's Rainbow Coalition in the Age of Trump," an invited lecture held at the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center, Speak and Sign Series in Cincinnati, Ohio. Last summer, Professor Williams gave the Commencement Address:

"Education is the Equalizer: A History of African American and West Indian Immigration Educational Achievement," at Hartford High School, Hartford, Connecticut. Dr. Williams served as a consultant for "Development of Civil Rights Movement Instruction and Curriculum for K-12 Teachers" for the Southern Poverty Law Center, Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio, June 3, 2018.

- In December, **Dr. Valerie Grim** gave the plenary address at the 31st Symposium on African American Culture and Philosophy: 50 years of Black Studies: Intellectual Histories and Institutional Demands, at Purdue University in West Lafayette, Indiana. Dr. Grim also published "Land Was One of the Greatest Gifts": Women's Landownership in Dakota Indian, Immigrant Scandinavian, and African American Communities," with Karen V. Hansen and Grey Osterud in *Great Plains Quarterly*, Summer 2018. In September, Dr. Grim was co-editor of a special issue of the *International Journal of Africana Studies*, with an emphasis on Agency Reduction Formation, which was published December 2018.
- **Dr. Candis Smith** was awarded a Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning (CITL) Diversity and Inclusion Fellowship for 2018-2019. Dr. Smith also participated in New Faculty Orientation in August. Last February, Dr. Smith was a Living Legend Award Recipient sponsored by Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. Tau chapter. Two of her former students nominated Dr. Smith for this award and created a video vignette about her influence on them.



- Last summer, Dr. **Phoebe Wolfskill** won a Seed Grant Award through the Center for Research on Race and Ethnicity in Society (CRRES), a Research Travel Grant through the College Arts & Humanities Institute (CAHI), a Primary Source Immersion Grant through IU, and was a fellow at IU's Teaching and Learning Center. Her forthcoming publications include "The Enduring Legacy of the Harlem Renaissance" in Edward Chambers, ed., *Routledge Companion to African American Art* (New York: Routledge, 2019) and "Interview with Joyce Scott," online exhibition catalogue, "Fragments of a Crucifixion," Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, May 2019. Dr. Wolfskill presented her recent research on the early work of Romare Bearden and Ben Shahn at the College Art Association annual conference in New York in February 2019, the American Studies Association annual conference in Atlanta in November 2018, and the Association of Historians of American Art (AHAA) in Minneapolis in October 2018.



2016 MacArthur Fellow Joyce J. Scott in her Baltimore home and studio

- **Visiting Assistant Professor Nana Amoah-Ramey** published her book *Beyond Expressions, Resistance, and Advocacy: Female Highlife Performance in Ghana from the 1970s*, Lexington Books, Lanham, Maryland in July 2018. From May 19 – June 2, 2018, Dr. Amoah-Ramey participated in the OVPDEMA Study Abroad Program to Ghana, which included twenty IU undergraduate students and accompanying faculty. She also published two book reviews in December 2018 in the *Journal of African and Asian Studies*: a review of Abdul Karim Bangura, *Falolaism: The Epistemologies and Methodologies of Africana Knowledge*, 2018, and John Kwadwo Osei-Tutu, Editor, *Forts, Castles And Society In West Africa: Gold Coast & Dahomey, 1450-1960*, 2018. Last February, Dr. Amoah-Ramey served as Keynote Speaker for Black History Month Programming at the Second Baptist Church, Bloomington, Indiana. Her lecture title was, “Whose Shoulders do You Stand On?” In January 2019, Dr. Amoah-Ramey won Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority’s Living Legend Award.
- **Dr. Maria Hamilton Abegunde** published “Learning to Eat the Dead #2: For Diamond Reynolds” from *Learning to Eat the Dead: Juba, USA* in the *Tupelo Quarterly* in November 2018, as well as “Untitled” (Two Black Women Board a Ship Retracing Slave Ship Routes) in *Out of Easy Reach*, published by IU’s Grunwald Gallery in November. She also performed this work in August while the exhibition was on display. In November, Abegunde presented “Begin with Wholeness, End with Joy” at the Center of Contemplative Mind in Society at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst. Abegunde gave the keynote lecture, “How Does It Free Us: The Academy as Contemplative Practice” at the Inaugural Women of IU Conference in August. In May, Abegunde was an invited poet at the Rootwork Gallery in Chicago Illinois, and at the Waldron Arts Center in Bloomington.
- Last spring, Professor of Practice **Stafford Berry** led the African American Dance Company in their spring concert.



In October, Professor Berry presented choreography at the American Dance Guild Festival in tribute to American dance pioneers Eleo Pomare and Jane Comfort.

- Professor of Practice **James Strong** successfully nominated, lobbied, and headed the Honorary Doctorate Degree Committee in honoring Kenny “Babyface” Edmonds with an Honorary Doctorate Degree from Indiana University. Edmonds received the award on October 18, 2018 at the IU Auditorium. Afterwards, Professor Strong led a 45-minute conversation with Edmonds on his career and accomplishments. The next day, Dr. Edmonds and his party visited Professor Strong’s Soul Revue class at the Neal Marshall Black Culture Center, where students performed and were able to interact directly with Edmonds.



Left to Right: James Strong, Charles Sykes, Daryl Simmons, Kenneth “Babyface” Edmonds, and James Wimbrush at the Honorary Doctorate ceremony

In July, American singer and songwriter Bootsy Collins invited the IU Soul Revue to perform with him at the 2018 Cincinnati Musical Festival commonly known as the Cincinnati Jazz Fest, held at Paul Brown Stadium. Featured artists were Jill Scott, The Ojays, Common, The Roots and Keith Sweat. Please see video links below:

- <https://youtu.be/rhz7qYXy-cs>
- <https://youtu.be/8wHSMR-Ix34>
- <https://youtu.be/bPuxaX0NO24>

Subsequently, Mr. Collins asked Professor Strong to serve as his Musical Director. The invitation provided Professor Strong with the opportunity to invite some of our advanced Soul Revue students to travel with him to Los Angeles and perform with Bootsy at The Grand Performance Concert in downtown Los Angeles.



Left to Right: Ignisco Miles, Bobby Davis, Professor Strong, Brian Carson, and Brennan Johns backstage at the Bootsy Collins Concert.



Backstage with William “Bootsy” Collins at his concert in Los Angeles.

- **Dr. Raymond Wise** served as the guest conductor, composer, and accompanist for the Hockaday School for Girls, Dallas, Texas, in February 2019. Dr. Wise prepared and conducted an all-school choir comprised of

the middle and high school students, faculty and staff for their annual One Hockaday Martin Luther King, Jr. celebration. The choir learned and performed several of his original compositions.



In February, AACE members gathered for an All-Day Music Retreat. During the retreat, AACE members learned about the history of the African American Arts Institute, developed their musical skills, learned repertoire for the upcoming semester, played games, and grew as a musical family. The retreat also allowed the students to interact and develop relationships outside of the normal class setting. For this retreat, Dr. Wise and Associate Instructors Darian Clonts and Tiffany Daniel led breakout sessions. For Black History Month, AACE also presented its annual School of Education Black History Month Concert in the School of Education Atrium on Wednesday, February 13th from 11:45-1p.m.

- Through the generous gift from the Black Philanthropy Circle, the dance studio A217 in the Neal Marshall Black Culture Center was named the Iris Rosa dance floor after **Professor Emeritus Iris Rosa**. The naming event was held on Saturday, November 10, 2018. A documentary is currently being planned that will be available in early spring.



In December 2018, Professor Rosa received a Certificate of Appreciation "In honor of Elder Iris Rosa" at the Indianapolis Kwanzaa Event at the Indianapolis Public Library. She received the Distinguished Achievement Award from the Top 20, Inc. Board of Directors and Participants of Top 20 II Dance and Mentoring Program in recognition of outstanding contributions to bridging contemporary dance and African diaspora dance forms with students and youth in October 2018. Professor Rosa was also honored at the 50th Anniversary of the Groups Scholars Program during the IU Homecoming Football game and at their weekend events. She performed for the Indy Jazz Fest with Pavel & Direct Contact in a show entitled "Puerto Rico, isla del encanto." She also continues to perform with Sancocho: Music and Dance Collage at various public and private schools in Indianapolis and surrounding areas for countless audiences from K-12, and Bembe, an Indianapolis group that performs the music of bomba and plena from Puerto Rico.

- Emeritus **Professor John McCluskey** presented a book talk at the Monroe County Historical Society on October 6, 2018. He received the distinguished Academic Contribution Award at Case-Western Reserve University, sponsored by African American Alumni Association on October 13, 2018 in Cleveland, Ohio. Dr. McCluskey chaired the panel, "The Black Chicago Renaissance: People, Texts, and Contexts", at the annual conference of the Modern Language Association on October 5, 2018, in Chicago, IL. He also contributed "Auditions" (a novel chapter), to the publication *Roots of the Chicago Black Renaissance: New Negro Writers, Artists, and Intellectuals*, (in press), University of Illinois Press.

- Professor Emeritus **Vernon Williams's** review of Ibram X. Kendi's *Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America* was published in the *Journal of African American History* 103 (Fall 2018): 720-721. The issue appeared January 2019.

Graduate Students

- In May 2018, PhD candidate **Khadijah Edwards** received a college dissertation completion fellowship.
- PhD candidate **Anne Mahady-Kneller** received a fall 2018 CRRES Graduate Student Research Award and a Grant-in-Aid of Doctoral Research by the University Graduate School to support her research on artist Palmer Hayden. These grants allowed Anne to travel to Los Angeles in November to study a large collection of paintings by Hayden in a private collection and at the Museum of African American Art (MAAALA). Anne wrote catalog entries on Jacob Lawrence's *Migration* (1947) and William H. Johnson's *Nightlife-Harlem* (1939-40) for the exhibition *Once Upon a Time in America* (Wallraf-Richartz-Museum & Fondation Corboud, Cologne, Germany), which was published in December 2018. In April, Anne presented "'If Beale Street Could Talk': Urban Folklore and the Great Migration" for the Center for the Research of Race and Ethnicity in Society, Indiana University, Bloomington.
- MA/MFA student **Simone Person's** poetry chapbook *Smoke Girl* will launch March 27, 2019 with Diode Editions. In March, Simone will travel to Portland, Oregon, to give a reading of her work alongside other writers. See <https://www.diodeeditions.com/product-page/smoke-girl>
- In October, PhD Candidate **Floyd Hobson** released a digital exhibition, *Ghetto Heaven: Wish U Were Here*, a photojournalistic essay

about urban blight in his hometown of Gary, Indiana. See below:

<http://thealabastermuseum.tumblr.com>

Undergraduate Students

- AAADS major **Victoria Jones** won the prestigious Generation Feminist (GenF) Fellowship, for which she spent a month studying at the University of Rochester. Only twelve students in the country are selected for this fellowship. Dr. Smith serves as Victoria's advisor for the AAADS Honors Program.

Diaspora is edited by Dr. Phoebe Wolfskill and is published bimonthly through the fall and spring semesters. Following the contours of the academic calendar, AAADS issues the newsletter at the end of September, November, February, and May.