

# Animating Democracy

## PROGRAM SCHEDULE

National Exchange on Art & Civic Dialogue \* October 9-12, 2003 \* Flint, MI

### Thursday, October 9

#### REGISTRATION

11:00 AM – 7:00 PM

Flint Youth Theatre Lobby

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#### PRECONFERENCE: PRACTITIONERS EXCHANGE (by Pre-Registration Only)

1:00 PM – 5:00 PM

Flint Youth Theatre and  
Robert T. Longway Planetarium Lobbies  
(By pre-registration)

##### **Abundance/The Workshop: A Creative Dialogue about Money**

What is enough for you? What is a lie you tell yourself about money? How would your life be different if you knew, from this moment on, that everyone everywhere would always have enough? This artist-led dialogue employs artmaking as an integral part of the dialogue process. Discussion begins with the sharing of participants' personal experiences with money and develops into an exploration on the role of economic inequity in our lives. For practitioners, artists, and activists, the workshop also focuses on the principles and practices underlying Marty's approach to arts-based dialogue activities.

PRESENTER: *Marty Pottenger, playwright, solo performance artist, and director*

##### **The Arc of Dialogue: Designing Intentional Dialogue Processes**

This interactive learning session will explore the question: "Does an intentionally designed dialogue process enhance the impact of arts-based civic dialogue?" Artists and dialogue facilitators will work in pairs to co-design a dialogic process that serves the artistic purposes and dialogic learning needs of their intended audience and then present and give feedback on those designs. Participants will be introduced to the Arc of Dialogue, a framework to help facilitators and artists learn how to design intentional dialogic processes based on learning goals.

PRESENTERS: *Tammy Bormann and David Campt, dialogue consultants*

##### **Practicing the Story Circle and Discovering Its Uses**

The critical role of sharing personal stories in dialogue is widely recognized. Junebug Productions has been using a particular process to help gather and generate stories, and bring equality and a ground-up process to their community work for the past 15 years. The Story Circle process offers a uniquely democratic form of dialogue that provides an equal and active role for all participants. "When we tell stories we are sharing with each other how we put things together. When we share stories we share whole parts of ourselves. Stories come charged with the spirit of the teller but have lives of their own," says John O'Neal, Artistic Director of Junebug Productions. Holden and Muhammad, both seasoned practitioners of the Story Circle, will lead participants in the Story Circle process.

PRESENTERS: *Theresa Holden, project director, Color Line Project, Curtis Muhammad, organizer, Color Line Project, Junebug Productions*

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#### FUNDERS FORUM 12:00 PM – 5:00 PM

Flint Institute of Music, Anderson Room  
(By invitation)

The Funders Forum is a gathering of local, regional, and national funders who support civil society, community building, community development, and the arts/humanities to explore opportunities and challenges of funding community efforts at the intersection of art and civic life. Hosted by the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, the Ruth Mott Foundation, and the Community Foundation of Greater Flint.

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### EXPLORE APPLEWOOD AND FLINT CULTURAL CENTER

**1:00 PM – 5:00 PM**

Explore the Flint Institute of Arts and the Sloan Museum and walk over to the beautiful grounds of Applewood for its annual Applefest.

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### RECEPTION AND OPENING DINNER

**Reception – 5:30 PM**

**Dinner – 6:30 PM**

Flint Institute of Arts

Get acquainted and enjoy the music of the Sherwood Pea Trio at a reception at the Flint Institute of Arts. Then celebrate our coming together at the opening dinner. In between lively dinner conversation and music performed by the Mott Middle College Steelheads, we'll share some of Animating Democracy's creative highlights, special moments, and big ideas. Expect a warm welcome to Flint and a scan of what's in store during the National Exchange.

The Steelheads Percussion Ensemble and Steel Band was founded in 1993 to give students at the Mott Middle College High School a successful dropout prevention program, a creative opportunity to nurture positive self-esteem and develop focus and a sense of direction, and to relate in positive ways with their peers, families, and community. Directed by James Coviak, the band has performed across the country, was awarded the "Gold Award" and elected "Outstanding Instrumental Group" at the Toronto Music Festival, and performed at the Nice Jazz Festival in France.

### PLANETARIUM HAPPENING AND THE LATE NIGHT BAR

**9:00 PM – 10:30 PM**

Flint Youth Theatre and Robert T. Longway Planetarium

What's Happening in the Planetarium

Check out lasers, stars, and the music of conference-goer and composer Phillip Bimstein, whose "alternative classical" works sparkle with sampled voices and found sounds. Frogs, crickets, coyotes, the sounds of a St. Louis Cardinals baseball game, and Garland Hirshi's cows are mixed with chamber ensembles. Phillip's music has been performed at Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, the Kennedy Center, the Aspen Music Festival, the American Dance Festival, London's Royal Opera House, and on MTV. Phillip served two terms as mayor of Springdale, Utah.

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### Friday, October 10

#### REGISTRATION

(For late arrivals)

7:30 AM – 5:00 PM

Sloan Museum Lobby

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#### BREAKFAST

7:30 AM – 8:30 AM

Sloan Museum and Flint Institute of Music Lobbies

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#### MORNING SESSION

8:30 AM – 10:30 AM

##### Historical Perspectives: Motion of the Ocean

Flint Institute of Music, Rehearsal Room

“It’s not the size of the ship that makes the waves, it’s the motion of the ocean.”

—John O’Neal, quoting Charlie Cobb paraphrasing an Atlanta deejay

The session begins with the premise that artists do not make change single-handedly but are provoked and moved, impeded, and advanced by “the motion of the ocean”—the large social currents of their times. This interactive session will explore such moments in history, both in the U.S. and internationally, when cultural movements have intersected with social movements.

And, in so doing, it will reveal dimensions of a history of civically engaged art. A participatory timeline exercise will illustrate the dynamic relationship between art and history by highlighting a multiplicity of experiences: be they the Civil Rights or Chicano movements, the WPA or the war in Iraq. Recognizing that artists do not create in isolation, the session will reveal the multiple influences and contexts that give work resonance and relevance.

PRESENTERS: *Maryo Ewell, formerly with the Colorado Council on the Arts; Isao Fujimoto, University of California, Davis and Central Valley Partnership for Citizenship; Suzanne Lacy, artist, writer, and educator; Alice Lovelace, performance poet, playwright, artist in education specialist; Uday S. Joshi, New WORLD Theater; Michael Marinez, Esperanza Center*  
FACILITATOR: *Jan Cohen-Cruz, New York University, Tisch School of the Arts*

##### The Dialogue Movement: Current Status and Prospects for Arts-based Civic Dialogue

Sloan Museum, Halfway Cafe

Animating Democracy has established links, locally and nationally, with organizations and practitioners that organize and promote dialogue and civic participation. In October 2002, Animating Democracy was well represented when a new National Coalition for Dialogue & Deliberation (NCDD) emerged from a first-ever national convening of dialogue theorists and organizations representing the spectrum of dialogue and deliberation practice. Challenges and questions raised at the conference included: is there value enough in dialogue that is not geared toward action; how to overcome barriers to participation; how to demonstrate impact of dialogue; and what to make of the seemingly inherent “left-leaning” bias of dialogue proponents (a parallel often drawn in the arts community). What is the current status of the broader dialogue movement? From the viewpoint of dialogue practitioners, what are the opportunities for linking arts and civic dialogue and what roles can the arts play?

PRESENTERS: *Lucky Altman, National Conference for Community & Justice/Los Angeles; Laura Chasin, Public Conversations Project; Sandy Heierbacher, National Coalition for Dialogue & Deliberation; Tammy Bormann, independent consultant*

RESPONDENTS: *David O’Fallon, McPhail School of Music; Debra J.T. Padilla, SPARC*

MODERATOR: *Sandy Agustin, Intermedia Arts*

##### Cultural Regeneration through Art and Conservation: The King Kamehameha Sculpture Project

Flint Institute of Music, Anderson Room

Over a two-year period, artists, teachers, and an art conservator found that New England town meetings don’t work in rural Hawai’i. Instead, small-scale art and dialogue projects engaged residents in a central question of authenticity: whether to honor a sculpture of Hawai’i’s first king with original gold leaf, or a more recent tradition of brilliant painted colors added by the community. Traditional puppet workshops, a high school public forum, and classroom projects coordinated by the Hawai’i Alliance for Arts Education promoted dialogue through Hawaiian “talk story”. The project opened a window into tensions of the past and present through

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the relatively "safe" space of art. It tapped public memory in the context of today's spiritual life, tourism, and economic stress.

This session will open with traditional Hawaiian blessings and a short PBS documentary. Presenters will illuminate how an entire community engaged in dialogue about protecting what it values. Questions to be explored include: What constitutes civic dialogue in traditional cultural contexts? How are dynamics between outsiders and locals negotiated in a community-based project? What is the potential for "participatory conservation" to engage meaningful dialogue about the past and future?

**PRESENTERS:** *Sharon Hayden, community organizer; Raylene Lancaster, kumu hula master; Glenn Wharton, conservator, research scholar, New York University*  
**RESPONDENTS:** *Elizabeth Delude-Dix, Salve Regina University, RI; David Rooks, journalist and writer in the Animating Democracy Critical Perspectives project*

### **Nuevo California**

Sloan Museum, Van Bolt

This session looks closely at the aesthetics of an Animating Democracy project. Presenters will discuss the process, challenges, and creative choices made in creating and staging *Nuevo California*—a new play about bi-national relations at the U.S.-Mexico border, set in a fictional future town uniting San Diego and Tijuana. They will share challenges of creating a bilingual text, how they explored issues of neutrality and "multipartiality," and how they resolved aesthetic concerns in the context of the overall goals of the project. How are aesthetic choices affected by civic dialogue goals (and vice versa)? How do artists include, and balance, the multiple perspectives of dialogue with the theatrical need for character development and dramatic structure? What are the challenges of working with a bi-national cast? How does community engagement enhance or hinder the art? Full group discussion will follow presentations. This session will offer a chance to see and experience the art, through video clips of the process and production, and readings from the script of *Nuevo California*.

**PRESENTERS:** *Dora Arreola, San Diego Repertory Theatre; Bernardo Solano, playwright, Nuevo California*

### **Perspectives on Flint: Moving a Community to Change**

Sloan Museum, Discovery Room

Flint is a city that is working hard for change. It can boast significant citizen efforts, anti-racism coalitions, public and

foundation investments, community art projects, and the development of its cultural assets. But change is hard, progress is slow, and both setbacks and gains can create challenges. Many community-building efforts in recent years seek to create a "new story" for Flint by increasing citizen engagement and connection. This session will feature an open conversation among community insiders who participate in and provide leadership for community change initiatives and outside artists and consultants who have been invited to bring their creativity and ideas to help Flint build a brighter future. These insiders and outsiders will share their individual assessments of opportunities and barriers to change in Flint, the role of story and the arts, and the challenge of coordinating and building effective partnerships and creating synergy.

**PRESENTERS:** *Jawole Willa Jo Zollar, Urban Bush Women; John O'Neal, Junebug Productions; Richard Harwood, The Harwood Institute for Public Innovation*  
**RESPONDENTS:** *Artina Sadler, Flint Cultural Center; Gloria Coles, Flint Public Library; Karen Jennings, Flint Institute of Music*  
**MODERATOR:** *Karen Aldridge Eason, Special Assistant to Governor Jennifer Granholm (MI)*

### **Youth, Theatre and Civic Dialogue: Implications and Opportunities**

Sloan Museum, Classroom

What unique contributions can professional theater for youth and youth theater make toward fostering civic dialogue? This session will feature presentations by two Animating Democracy Lab theater projects. Children's Theatre Company's Land Bridge project examined the Minnesota farm crisis and culminated in *Stories from Montevideo*, an original production performed for both rural and urban audiences. Flint Youth Theatre's project on school violence culminated in the original production, *...My Soul to Take*. People's Light and Theatre will discuss its work engaging artists and youth in ongoing collaborations, and its ideas on how youth and community can be central to a complex arts institution. In an open, moderated discussion, the session will pursue such questions as: What roles can and should youth play in this work and how are their voices invited, heard, and honored? How can theater-making be liberated and artistic expectations exploded through intergenerational projects? How does the intent to do dialogue impact the creative process? What are the specific challenges of partnerships in youth-oriented arts-based civic dialogue projects?

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PRESENTERS: *David Bradley, People's Light and Theatre; Sharon DeMark and Rebecca Brown, Minneapolis Children's Theatre Company; Bill Ward, Flint Youth Theatre*  
RESPONDENTS: *Talvin Wilks, New WORLD Theatre; Dr. Shaun Nethercott, Matrix Theatre Company*  
MODERATOR: *Joan Lazarus, University of Texas at Austin*

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### GRACE LEE BOGGS 11:00 AM – 12:15 PM

Flint Institute of Music, MacArthur Recital Hall

INTRODUCTION: *Jenny Kuida, Great Leap, Los Angeles*  
FEATURED SPEAKER: *Grace Lee Boggs, The Boggs Center*

Grace Lee Boggs is an activist, writer, and speaker whose 60 years of political involvement encompass the major U.S. social movements of this century: Labor, Civil rights, Black Power, Asian American, Women's and Environmental Justice. She and her husband, James Boggs, African American labor activist, writer and strategist, wrote *Revolution and Evolution in the Twentieth Century*. In 1992, with James Boggs and others, she founded Detroit Summer, a multi-cultural, intergenerational program to rebuild, redefine, and respirit Detroit from the ground up. Currently she is active in the Detroit Agricultural Network, the Committee for the Political Resurrection of Detroit, writes for the weekly *Michigan Citizen*, and does a monthly commentary on WORT (Madison, Wisconsin). Her autobiography, *Living for Change* is widely used in university classes on social movements and autobiography writing.

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### LUNCH AT APPLEWOOD 12:30 PM – 2:15 PM

#### Sponsored by the Ruth Mott Foundation

Applewood—home of the late Charles Stewart Mott and Ruth Mott, national philanthropists and Flint community leaders—is now a part of the Ruth Mott Foundation. The Foundation preserves and shares Applewood as a serene and natural venue for convening community members and specialists to discuss issues of local importance and to inform its grantmaking process. Convenings bring together people representing different interests and perspectives into constructive conversation about common concerns that fosters participation, seeks common ground, and creates shared judgment.

Lunch at Applewood features a performance by Bradley's Flintstone Hoofers. This Flint-based dance troupe, directed by Bruce Bradley and his daughters, is nationally distinguished for its style, energy, and showmanship. The late Gregory Hines extolled the Hoofers performance at the Fall 2002 Tapology Concert organized by the Bradleys at Whiting Hall. Jane Goldberg wrote for *Dance Magazine* about the Hoofers, "New WOW energy in the tap genre." The Bradleys teach tap workshops at all levels and draw on Bruce Bradley's decades of experience as choreographer, dancer, vocalist, and actor, as well as the performance experience of his daughters with Savion Glover, Gregory Hines, and other tap masters.

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### AFTERNOON SESSION 2:45 PM – 4:45 PM

#### Dialogic in Artistic Practice: SPARCing Dialogue II: The Great Wall of Los Angeles

Robert T. Longway Planetarium, Mars Computer Room

The Great Wall of Los Angeles—a half-mile long mural painted over ten years with the help of at-risk youth, scholars, and artists—excavates and chronicles little known historical moments, social trends, political forces, and cultural phenomena affecting minority groups in California. By involving the communities that have inherited the legacy of these events, the processes for producing this mural exemplify arts-based civic dialogue and community cultural development. The Social and Public Art Resource Center (SPARC) is currently expanding the mural to include the decades of the 60s, 70s, 80s, and 90s. The advent of the Internet and digital technology are revolutionizing the notion of arts-based civic dialogue by enabling them to "widen the circle of discussion." SPARC will take this unique opportunity to engage Exchange participants—art makers and cultural, civic, and dialogue workers from all over the United States who work in similar ways—in this process. Participants will create metaphors and images to be included in the next segments of the Great Wall of Los Angeles. Everyone is encouraged to participate. Session results will be published on the SPARC website as a way to illustrate this process and make it public.

SPARC PRESENTERS: *Judith F. Baca, Debra J.T. Padilla, Pete Galindo, and Farhad Akhmetov*

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### **Dialogic in Artistic Practice:**

#### **Liz Lerman Dance Exchange on Dialogue and Making Dance**

Sloan Museum, Discovery Room

The Liz Lerman Dance Exchange, founded in 1976, creates sophisticated performance works through community interaction and participation. The company's recent Hallelujah project staged unique dances in 15 cities across the country. Each program was drawn from the host community's response to the question: "What are you in praise of?" Varied levels of dialogue are incorporated into Dance Exchange's process of community engagement. Through a "Dialogue Audit" conducted for their Animating Democracy project, Dance Exchange explored the dialogue elements embedded in its practice and the "moments of dialogue" that arise in its projects. This no-experience-necessary workshop will highlight particular tools from Dance Exchange's art-making practice that support dialogue, contain dialogue elements, or advance the values of effective civic dialogue. By engaging in aspects of the dance-making process, workshop attendees will explore non-verbal dimensions of dialogue, the impact of specificity in social exchange, and the applications of collaborative structures, with the possibility of gaining tools that are worthwhile accompaniments to other dialogue methodologies.

PRESENTER: *Liz Lerman, Liz Lerman Dance Exchange*

### **Spoken Word and Performing Poetry**

Berston Field House

**SIGN UP: Conference participants must sign up during lunch at Applewood for a limited number of spaces. Bus leaves Applewood at 2:00 p.m.**

City Lore Poetry Dialogues facilitator Regie Cabico takes a jaunt into Flint, offering a participatory workshop for community members and Exchange participants. Hosted by the Flintstone Hoofers at the Berston Field House community center, and joined by local youth and arts groups, Regie will facilitate a process that encompasses the personal and political in creative expression. Exploring themes chosen by community participants, the workshop will include writing techniques and exercises, and move from page to stage with performance coaching. Drawing from the purest elements of the poetry slam, hip hop culture, and the spoken word revolution, Regie will engage the group in freeing voices, sharing work, and performing poetry. No prior experience with spoken word necessary. Feel free to bring a poem, a piece in progress, or an empty page and open mind!

FACILITATOR: *Regie Cabico, spoken word artist, City Lore Dialogues project*

### **The Flint Color Line Project: Connecting Civil Rights Movement Stories to Teaching, Organizing, the Arts, and Change**

Flint Public Library, Multipurpose Room

An inability to sustain dialogue around issues of color and racism persists in American society. The national Color Line Project is a response to this dilemma. The Flint Color Line Project (CLP) is a collaboration between Junebug Productions, the Flint Cultural Center Corporation, and Flint community/educational organizations, artists, educators, students, and organizers. Entering its third year, the project has centered around the collecting of community stories about the Civil Rights Movement and the use of those stories by educators, artists, and organizers to promote civic dialogue about persistent issues of civil rights and inequality. During this interactive session, high school students will share poems based on stories they collected, and local artists who are creating a performance piece based on Flint Civil Rights stories will read from work in progress. Artists, CLP Core Committee members, and Junebug Productions staff will offer perspectives on the benefits and challenges of this community story project. In the context of the national CLP, they will examine a new type of "artist residency model" that combines O'Neal's story-circle methodology and plays with the creation of new artwork highlighting local interests, all working toward establishing structures for dialogue and education devoted to catalyzing action for social justice.

PRESENTERS: *Artina Sadler, Flint Cultural Center; Kendall Reaves, Northern High School Project; Lee Bell, Flint community organizer; Alfreda Harris, teacher and artist; Sterline Lacy, Flint CLP; John O'Neal, Junebug Productions; Theresa Holden, National CLP; Jim Randels, education specialist; Curtis Muhammad, National CLP*

### **Dialogic in Artistic Practice:**

#### **Invisible Communities**

Sloan Museum, Van Bolt

The Prison Creative Arts Project (PCAP), Los Angeles Poverty Department (LAPD), and actor/facilitator Michael Keck have been engaging invisible communities of prison and skid row in and through the arts for many years. By witnessing the stories of the forgotten and displaced, they seek new ways of making connections between lived experience and the social forces shaping people's lives. PCAP's recent theater project, *When Can*

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*We Talk?*, addressed the challenges of incorporating ex-cons back into communities by enabling audience members to confront prisoners with their questions and concerns. LAPD's *Agents & Assets*, a work about drug policy, involved city residents impacted by drugs and drug policy in dialogue and activist work related to policy reform. Michael Keck's solo performance piece, *Voices in the Rain* explores the plight of America's urban black male. Drawing upon these and other projects, this session explores how creative process enables dialogue within these communities as well as how theater and other art forms can help move the dialogue into the public realm. Questions to be explored include: What are the personal and civic goals of community based work with the disenfranchised? Can dialogue generated by these invisible communities change government mindsets and policy?

PRESENTERS: *Buzz Alexander, Gillian Eaton, and Janie Paul, Prison Creative Arts Project; John Malpede, Los Angeles Poverty Department; Michael Keck, actor, composer, writer, prison activist*

### The Media: Partner, Forum, or Foe?

Sloan Museum, Classroom

Animating Democracy projects accumulated a wide range of experience with the media through their projects. In some cases, as in Lima, OH, media outlets including radio and TV stations were active partners in promoting projects, recruiting participants, and covering events. In Pittsburgh, PA, as in Lima, through ongoing feature coverage and letters to the editor they fostered ongoing public discourse that expanded the reach of the project. However, in the case of the Jewish Museum's exhibition *Mirroring Evil*, the New York press pretty much stole the show by launching a sensational, inflammatory, and counterproductive discourse three months before the exhibition opened. Join arts organization leaders and media representatives and specialists to discuss media strategies for coverage and controversy.

PRESENTERS: *Judy Gilbert, Common Threads; Carole Zawatsky, The Jewish Museum; Will K. Wilkins, Real Art Ways*

RESPONDENTS: *Matt Zacks, Uncommon Sense; Lynn McKnight, Center for Documentary Studies, Duke University*

SESSION LEADER: *Shirley Mae Springer Staten, Understanding Neighbors*

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## VIDEO SPACE

5:00 PM – 6:00 PM

Sloan Museum, Halfway Café

### Two Theater Projects Developed from Dialogue Process

#### The Land Bridge Project

This project—involving Children's Theater Company of Minneapolis and theater artist Rebecca Brown—engaged rural and urban residents in theater activity and dialogue about the farm crisis in Minnesota. The video will feature excerpts from the play, *Stories from Montevideo*, and project dialogues.

#### Abundance, artist Marty Pottenger in collaboration with The Working Theater

This two-year theater-based dialogue focused on economic resource, distribution, and consumption and the social impact of money on people's lives. It will feature excerpts from project artmaking and dialogues.

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### FLINT YOUTH THEATRE PRESENTS *ALIEN SOIL*

**Dinner/Performance/Dialogue – 6:30 PM**

Flint Youth Theatre/Robert T. Longway Planetarium  
Lobbies and Bower Theater

Relax over a meal and conversation with fellow participants and get ready for an evening of theater, reflection, and discussion. Then see *Alien Soil*, a new play created by Flint Youth Theatre's artistic director William P. Ward. *Alien Soil* explores the historical and contemporary displacement of peoples—at the hands of another nation, their own nation, or through social or political circumstance. What is it to be without a home or to constantly have to redefine the concept of home?

Small group discussions facilitated by dialogue practitioners and artists will follow the play as an opportunity to pick up on issues evoked by *Alien Soil*. Community members who contributed personal stories to the development of the script may join some discussion groups. Theater artist and Flint Youth Theatre collaborator Gillian Eaton will lead an interactive creative dialogue session, including community members, who will be developing their own “performance response” to *Alien Soil* over the next few weeks.

**Saturday morning!** An *Alien Soil* debrief breakfast round table will be convened by Bill Ward (playwright, director), Walter Hill (stage manager), and Margaret A. Mead-Finizio (choreographer), 8:45 a.m. to 10:00 a.m., for informal discussion about the development of *Alien Soil*.

Plus! A facilitated Saturday breakfast discussion exploring issues in *Alien Soil*, 8:45 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

### LATE NIGHT BAR AFTER THE PERFORMANCE

**10:00 PM**

Flint Youth Theatre and Robert T. Longway Planetarium  
Lobbies

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### Saturday, October 11

#### BREAKFAST

**8:30 AM – 10:00 AM**

Flint Youth Theatre and  
Robert T. Longway Planetarium Lobbies

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#### OPTIONAL: ROUND TABLE SESSIONS

**8:45 AM – 10:00 AM**

Flint Youth Theatre and  
Robert T. Longway Planetarium Lobbies

##### **Debriefing on Flint Youth Theatre's *Alien Soil***

CONVENERS: *Bill Ward, Walter Hill, Margaret A. Mead-Finizio*

##### **Story: Use of Story, Oral History, Interviewing in Civic Dialogue**

CONVENERS: *Linda Frye Burnham, Lisa Mount*

##### **Rethinking Curatorial & Education Practice**

CONVENERS: *Carole Zawatsky, Maribel Alvarez*

##### **Art & Dialogue in Educational Settings**

CONVENER: *Alice Lovelace*

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#### VIDEO SPACE

**8:45 AM – 10:00 AM**

Flint Youth Theatre, Bower Green Room

##### **Imagining Robert: My Brother, Madness, and Survival**

This film about two brothers, one mentally ill and the other his caretaker, explores the impact of chronic illness on families, the system, and how to challenge assumptions and perceptions about treatment, stigma, and delivery of services. You will also have the opportunity to converse with Hayley Wood, dialogue coordinator, Massachusetts Foundation for the Humanities.

Flint Youth Theatre, Elgood Green Room

##### **The Three Willies**

This multi-media jazz opera is about issues of the Black male as perpetual suspect and the ways that such stereotyping has affected different generations, genders, and classes of people. You will also have the opportunity to converse with Homer Jackson, librettist.

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#### MORNING SESSION

**10:15 AM – 12:15 PM**

##### **The Dentalium Project**

Flint Youth Theatre, Elgood Theater

In Blue Lake, CA, the construction of a casino by the Native American Rancheria caused heated debate about its impact on quality of life in this small rural community. Recognizing an economic power shift, the issues were: what would be the future of this place and who would be driving that future. Based on decades of making theater of place here, Dell' Arte wondered if theater could get people talking together instead of apart about the future of Blue Lake. A new satiric play, *Wild Card*, and a documentary video based on dialogues among Blue Lake citizens and Rancheria members evoked concerns about leadership, citizen participation, and relations between the city and Rancheria. How did an historical, cultural divide, and tensions around the Rancheria's rights as sovereign nation and the current economic power shift affect the need and potential for dialogue for Native and non-Native Americans? What were expectations for art and for dialogue? How do you find the native voice in the theater work in a way that is truthful and organic to the community? What are the cultural norms of art, humor, and dialogue, and how do they translate across cultures? What are issues of power and partnership in a project like this? When a theater company takes a lead in addressing civic issues, how is it positioned and perceived by different stakeholders?

PRESENTERS: *Michael Fields, Dell' Arte; Arla Ramsey, Blue Lake Rancheria*

RESPONDENTS: *Phillip Bimstein, composer, former mayor, Springdale, UT; Susan Koscis, Search for Common Ground*

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### The Dialogic Within the Creative

Flint Youth Theatre, Studio 2

Animating Democracy has asserted that art can be a form of dialogue. Art can go beyond “getting folks talking” by offering fresh ways and multiple modes to engage people. Democratic principles inherent in community art practice set up the proper conditions for full participation and meaningful exchange. But when do creative exercises and the collaboration to create artworks constitute real dialogue? When is it civic? How does dialogue fit within or contribute to creative practice? What is the unique power of art in creating potential for new kinds of civic dialogue? Can the demands of dialogue stifle creativity or challenge an aesthetic standard? Can artistic standards help to raise standards for dialogue?

In the Animating Democracy Lab, five artist-led organizations, whose pioneering community-based work has always incorporated dialogue practice, took the opportunity to examine, codify, modify, and reflect on the dialogue elements in their work. Some of those artists will share their learning, insights, and lingering questions on this cross-disciplinary panel. Dialogue practitioners and other attendees are invited to add their observations and reflections through discussion and creative engagement. For those attending Thursday pre-conference programs and Friday afternoon experiential workshops, this session offers an opportunity to debrief and reflect.

PRESENTERS: *Jawole Willa Jo Zollar, Urban Bush Women; Judy Baca, SPARC*

RESPONDENT: *Maggie Herzig, Public Conversations Project*

MODERATOR: *John Borstel, Liz Lerman Dance Exchange*

### Art, Dialogue, and Activism

Flint Public Library, Multipurpose Room

How do we effect change through our work? Where and how do art and dialogue fit into social change activism and movement building? A conversation among activist artists and community organizers will examine a range of approaches for connecting arts, dialogue, and activism. To stimulate a full group discussion about strategies and challenges, presenters will discuss the dynamics of partnerships between artists and organizers, the development of community ownership and decision making, the transformative power of image, story, and metaphor, and the connection between individual and systemic change. They will also explore the tensions that may arise when an activist's need for outcome clashes

with an artist's creative process or when the point of view, advocacy orientation, and power analysis of an activist campaign runs up against the multiple perspectives and open ended nature of dialogue.

PRESENTERS: *Grace Lee Boggs, The Boggs Center; Sonya Childress, Active Voice; Curtis Muhammad, Junebug Productions; Isao Fujimoto, University of California, Davis and Central Valley Partnership for Citizenship; Graciela Sanchez, Esperanza Peace and Justice Center; Geno Rodriguez, Alternative Museum*

FACILITATOR: *David Campt, dialogue and diversity consultant*

### History as a Catalyst for Civic Dialogue

Robert T. Longway Planetarium, Mars Classroom

How can we tap the power of history to engage people in meaningful dialogue about today's civic concerns? Two projects that boldly call forth histories of slavery, marginalization, and displacement are the focus: the St. Augustine's Church Slave Galleries Project explores issues of marginalization on the Lower East Side of Manhattan; and Evoking History, an ongoing program implemented in conjunction with the Spoleto Festival USA, connects Charleston's past to current issues of race, cultural tourism, development, and gentrification. Participants will hear about approaches to dialogue through connections to restoration (Slave Galleries) and public art and education projects (Evoking History), and examine practical and philosophical challenges inherent in history-based civic dialogue. Among questions for exploration are: How can the search for truth in histories previously untold, hidden, denied offer opportunity for deep and honest dialogue? How can you offer one group's history to inspire dialogue and connections between other groups/communities, while maintaining specificity of ownership of that history? What practical (e.g., education, community development) and poetic roles can arts play in history-based civic dialogue? How do you allow a program to morph over time and maintain a sense of trust in the future during dormant or dry periods?

PRESENTERS: *Mary Jane Jacob, Evoking History, Spoleto Festival USA; Rev. Deacon Edgar Hopper, St. Augustine's Episcopal Church; Liz Sevchenko and Lisa Chice, Lower East Side Tenement Museum; John Kuo Wei Tchen, Asian/Pacific/American Studies Program and Institute, New York University*

RESPONDENTS: *Glenn Wharton, conservator, research scholar, New York University; Rob Jones, National Conference for Community and Justice/Southeastern New England*

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SESSION LEADER: *David Thelen, University of Indiana  
Bloomington*

### Understanding Neighbors: Out North Contemporary Art House

Flint Youth Theatre, Studio I

After years of advocating and action to legalize gay marriage in Alaska, Out North Contemporary Art House founders Jay Brause and Gene Dugan viewed Animating Democracy as an opportunity to approach the issue in a new way. They partnered with the Interfaith Council of Anchorage and Alaska Common Ground to establish a more neutral space that would bring citizens with a mix of socially conservative, moderate, and liberal viewpoints together in dialogue around the question: "What is the legal, moral, and cultural place of same-sex couples in our society?" The project was titled "Understanding Neighbors" to reflect its shift in goal from influencing policy to achieving understanding. Performance and video works incorporating community interviews were created by artists Peter Carpenter, Sara Felder, and Stephen Mazurek to serve as creative catalysts for weekly small group dialogue sessions. Ann McBroom and Public Conversations Project advised on dialogue design. This session will explore a range of questions elicited by this complex project: How effective and necessary was all the effort to establish a neutral base for the project? What effect did the artists and their work have on the dialogues and how could their participation and roles have been enhanced? What has been gained in Anchorage as a result of Understanding Neighbors? How best can the effects of this project be continued and by whom?

PRESENTERS: *Jay Brause, Out North Contemporary Art House; Shirley Mae Springer Staten, UN project coordinator; Mia Oxley, UN Coordinating Committee member and dialogue trainer*

### Institutional Issues in Community Engagement

Robert T. Longway Planetarium, Jupiter Classroom

When arts and cultural institutions enter the civic arena, old perceptions are challenged and new expectations are raised, both internally and out in the community. Curatorial, educational, and marketing conventions frequently need rethinking. Some institutions are compelled to examine philosophies and mission statements and reconsider staff roles and functions. This session will consider the characteristics and conditions needed to support and sustain effective arts-based civic dialogue. Presenters will share their stories and discuss how arts-based civic dialogue and engagement may be

advanced or impeded by institutionalized attitudes, behaviors, and operating procedures and practices. Join in a probing discussion on institutional responsibility, accountability, and the ethics of community engagement.

PRESENTERS: *Maribel Alvarez, University of Arizona, Ties that Bind project, MACLA; Jessica Arcand, The Andy Warhol Museum; Jeffrey Herrmann, Perseverance Theater*

RESPONDENTS: *Joanna Lindenbaum, The Jewish Museum, Cindy Ornstein, Flint Cultural Center Corp.*

SESSION LEADER: *Kathie deNobriga, consultant and project liaison, Animating Democracy*

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### LUNCH BREAK

12:15 PM – 2:30 PM

Box lunches will be available in the Flint Youth Theatre Lobby. Or, take a break from the Flint Cultural Center and have lunch at the Flint City Market! This traditional farmers market has more than 50 local vendors selling everything from local produce and baked goods to craft items and spices.

The Holiday Inn Express Shuttle will depart the Flint Youth Theatre beginning at 12:15 p.m. and will make a continuous loop every 15 minutes to the Flint City Market. The last shuttle will depart the market at 2:15 p.m.

Or take some time to see museums, network, or just relax!

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### VIDEO SPACE

1:00 PM – 2:00 PM

#### Traces of the Trade

Flint Youth Theatre, Bower Green Room

This project explores issues of race using the film *Traces of the Trade*, about the filmmaker's slave trading ancestors and their contemporary descendents, the role of the North in slavery, and how amnesia created fertile ground for Northern and national blindness about contemporary racism. Film excerpts and conversation with Katrina Browne, director/producer, and Rob Jones, dialogue advisor, National Conference for Community & Justice,

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### Film and Video from Museum Exhibition Programming

Flint Youth Theatre, Elgood Green Room

The Jewish Museum will show an interpretive video used at the entry and exit points of its exhibition, *Mirroring Evil: Nazi Imagery/Recent Art*, to be followed by a conversation with Joanna Lindenbaum. The Andy Warhol Museum will show excerpts from the Video Comment Booth, set up for exhibition goers to comment privately about their experience of seeing *Without Sanctuary: Lynching Photography in America*. This will be followed by a conversation with artist/educator, Carrie Schneider.

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### AFTERNOON SESSION

2:30 PM – 4:30 PM

#### New WORLD Theater's *Project 2050*: A Call to Action

Flint Youth Theatre, Elgood Theater

New WORLD Theater's youth initiative, *Project 2050*, is a multi-year exploration of the mid-century demographic shift, when it is projected that people of color will become the majority in the U.S. Addressing issues compelled by these changing demographics, the project engages youth communities, professional artists, scholars, and community activists in civic dialogue and artistic creation. The project promotes creative imagining of a near future when it will become imperative to not only address issues such as race construction, ethnic balkanization, social inequity, and power imbalance, but to move beyond these traditionally disempowering institutional frameworks. Presenters will recap the history and evolution of New WORLD Theater's youth initiative that began as separate programs in three Western Massachusetts communities and is now one multi-cultural community collaboration blurring the lines between intergenerational art, activism, politics, and culture. Through video, slides, performance, and dialogue, the *Project 2050* team, including three youth, will explore New WORLD Theater's intensive summer program to engage youth communities, the work's impact on year round activity in the various communities served; and how the work has unilaterally inspired the creation of a youth action community coalition.

PRESENTERS: *Roberta Uno, Talvin Wilks, and Uday S. Joshi, New WORLD Theater; M.J. Donoghue, Jacqueline Johnson, and Amira Schroeder, Project 2050 youth leaders*

### The Artist, Institution, Community Triangle

Flint Youth Theatre, Studio 2

Whether the impulse to develop an arts-based civic dialogue project originates with the artist, the cultural institution, or a civic group, as projects evolve, collaborating partners find that building trust and maintaining a shared vision for the project is challenging. As Animating Democracy projects developed, partner expectations were defined and redefined. Roles were negotiated and re-negotiated as community engagement processes unfolded to bring the community participants themselves into a central role. The shifting kaleidoscope of perspectives surfaced many multi-faceted questions: Who owns the project? Who defines and represents "local culture"? How should political divisions and power relations within the community be acknowledged or addressed? Who is to maintain the relationships and the momentum around the issues developed through this project? In this session participants will consider these issues of trust and power, accountability and sustainability, and ethics and discuss how civic engagement projects challenge existing models for artist residencies, outreach, and marketing.

PRESENTERS: *Sandy Agustin, Intermedia Arts, Mary Keefe, Hope Community, Inc.; Deborah Grotfeldt, Project Row Houses*

RESPONDENT: *Selma Jackson, 4 W Circle Enterprises*

SESSION LEADER: *Jane Hirshberg, Liz Lerman Dance Exchange*

### Facilitating Meaningful Dialogue Around Arts Events

Flint Youth Theatre, Studio 1

Post-performance talkbacks and panel discussions, the norms for much audience participation programming, rarely offer opportunities for true dialogue. Structuring dialogues that both honor the art and meaningfully engage participants challenges institutional programming conventions and the expectations of audiences. Among Animating Democracy projects, Cornerstone Theater's production of *Zones* within its Faith-based Theater Project blurred the lines between performance and dialogue. The Common Threads project in Lima, OH, used evocative questions, creative exercises, and a mix of large and small group discussion formats to encourage participation. The Center for Cultural Exchange in Portland, ME, choose not to call it dialogue at all. The Warhol Museum provided daily dialogue opportunities for visitors after viewing an emotional exhibition. Most

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groups reported a "discovery moment" when they really understood how to approach dialogue planning.

While art can be a powerful catalyst for dialogue, the art, and the setting and timing, the audience and the goals of the dialogue need to be taken into account. What are reasonable expectations for a one-time dialogue? When should you break or respect conventions in exhibiting and presenting work? How should the art be brought into the dialogue? Share your "discovery moments" and participate in a full exchange on theory and practice.

PRESENTERS: *Lucky Altman, National Conference for Community & Justice; Dr. Patricia Romney, Romney Associates; Carrie Schneider, The Andy Warhol Museum*

RESPONDENTS: *John Haworth, Smithsonian National*

*Museum of the American Indian; Treva Offut, The Kitchen*

SESSION LEADER: *Maggie Herzig, Public Conversations Project*

### What Difference Are We Making? Understanding Civic Impact

Flint Public Library, Room 205

As cultural organizations address civic issues through their work, assessing artistic and organizational effects often seems easy compared to figuring out what difference they are making at a civic level. This session begins with the premise that it is valuable to set civic goals, and track and assess what difference civically engaged arts and humanities makes on citizens, the issue, and on communities. Presenters will share from their experience the inherent practical, ethical, and interpretive challenges of evaluating civic change and approaches they have taken to defining and gauging civic impact. The session will examine questions such as: What constitutes *civic* impact for various constituents of the project? How do you frame intended civic outcomes that are feasible but that also stretch and connect with broader or longer-term civic goals? What's important to document and track and why? What is less important? How do you document dialogue to demonstrate civic impact? How do you measure what is difficult to measure (e.g., shifts in attitudes and beliefs)? If the long view is key to understanding civic impact, what can you realistically do to track evidence of change?

PRESENTERS: *David Campt, dialogue consultant and facilitator; Florence Kabwasa-Green, consultant to Urban Institute's Cultural Indicators Project; Mat Schwarzman, National Performance Network; Jill Chopyak Hogan, Institute for Community Research*

RESPONDENTS: *Jay Brause, Out North Contemporary Art House; Steve Day, School of Social Work, University of North*

*Carolina at Chapel Hill; Sharnita Johnson, Ruth Mott Foundation*

### Laying an Egg: Writing about Civically Engaged Art

Flint Youth Theatre, Scene Shop

At an Animating Democracy gathering of writers, anthropologist/poet Renato Rosaldo compared the process of writing about civically engaged art to "laying an egg (something I know nothing about)." How do we write about civically engaged art in a manner that is reflective and stimulates further dialogue? What are the relationships between writer and artist, community, reader? How do writers take creative risks, remember "one's responsibility to the people you're working with and at the same time [keep] the writing fresh and provocative?" (Lucy Lippard) How can writing reflect the multiple perspectives that are so important in dialogue?

Animating Democracy created the Critical Perspectives Project to support a multi-perspective approach that expands who has voice and authority in writing about civically engaged art. Three writers were involved in each of three Lab projects. Writers explored the intricacies of these projects from diverse professional and personal perspectives as well as vantage points from within and outside of the projects and communities. They will read excerpts from their essays and, with project directors, share insights and lingering questions about arts-based civic dialogue and their writing experiences. The full group will then discuss positive and negative challenges in writing about civically engaged arts and humanities. (Note: Lucy Lippard's introduction to the upcoming Critical Perspectives anthology is included in your conference binder.)

PRESENTERS: *Dentalium Project: Ferdinand Lewis, playwright, arts writer, and cultural planning scholar; David Rooks, journalist and Oglala Lakota tribal member; Michael Fields, Dell'Arte; Slave Galleries Project: John Kuo Wei Tchen, Asian/Pacific American Studies Program and Institute at New York University; Rev. Deacon Edgar Hopper, St. Augustine's Episcopal Church; Ties that Bind: Maribel Alvarez, University of Arizona.*

FACILITATOR: *Caron Atlas, Critical Perspectives consultant*

### Cultural Perspectives: Honoring Tradition and Working Cross-Culturally

Flint Public Library, Multipurpose Room

What constitutes civic dialogue or participation in different cultural contexts or traditions? How do certain

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art forms or cultural practices embody or enable dialogue? How do we reconcile tensions between indigenous, non-Western, or international approaches and Western, European, or U.S.-centered approaches to art, dialogue, and engagement? How do histories of prejudice, exploitation, or even laws against inter-group contact affect a community's or cultural group's view of participating in public discourse? How do we work together given these histories? This session looks at cultural assumptions, expectations, and notions of appropriateness and power relations in arts-based civic dialogue. Artists and cultural organizers working in a wide range of cultural and political contexts will bring forward their particular challenges in working across borders or cultures, and important moments of realization, understanding, or learning. Brief informal opening comments by presenters will bring forward key issues and topics, followed by initial responses, and facilitated group discussion.

**PRESENTERS:** *Dora Arreola and Bernardo Solano, San Diego Repertory Theatre; Graciela Sanchez, Esperanza Center for Peace and Justice; Greg Howard, Appalshop; Arla Ramsey, Blue Lake Rancheria*

**RESPONDENTS:** *Raylene Lancaster and Sharon Hayden, Hawai'i Alliance for Arts Education; Wayne Winborne, national advisor and dialogue liaison, Animating Democracy*

**SESSION LEADER:** *Andrea Assaf, Animating Democracy, Americans for the Arts*

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### VIDEO SPACE

**5:00 PM – 6:00 PM**

Flint Youth Theatre, Bower Green Room

#### Excerpts of Performance Work from Animating Democracy Projects

CEPRO Grain Elevator site-specific performance

Wendy Morris choreographer, and Doug Ewart, composer; part of Intermedia Arts' People, Places, Connections Project, examine issues of fear, safety, displacement, and community design around the development of the Midtown Greenway.

Faith-based Theater Project

Cornerstone Theater Company's five-year, Los-Angeles-based project explores issues of faith that unite and divide.

#### Moby Dick

Perseverance Theater—Anchorage, Fairbanks, Barrow, Alaska—presents an Alaskan adaptation of the classic story that served as dialogue catalyst on issues of subsistence rights, the urban-rural divide, and the struggle between economy and environment in Alaska.

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### DINNER AND HAIR PARTY WITH URBAN BUSH WOMEN

**6:30 PM – 9:00 PM**

Whiting Hall Stage

Proceeding from the notion that EVERYBODY has a hair story, Urban Bush Women invites you to dinner and a HAIR PARTY!

Urban Bush Women created an evening length dance/theater work called *HairStories*. Source material for this piece came from a series of informal conversations that developed into a deliberate program of arts-based civic dialogue sessions called *Hair Parties*. Using the deceptively simple topic of HAIR as the organizing principle—how hair color, length, and degree of curl affect our definitions of “good hair” and “bad hair” both within and outside of the African American community—*Hair Parties* encourage participants to re-examine closely held beliefs about themselves, society, class, race, gender, age, and individual beauty.

Political, fun, and sometimes raucous, Saturday night's *Hair Party* combines dinner, dialogue, improvisation, your testimony, and performance highlights from the *HairStories* performance piece.

**Don't forget to bring a photo of a personal hair history moment (or your license with photo). Be ready to share stories and celebrate choices.**

**UBW HAIR PARTY PRESENTERS:** *Jawole Willa Jo Zollar, founder/artistic director; Elizabeth Herron, co-director/facilitator, Hair Stories; Wanjiru Kamuyu, Francine Sheffield, Maria Bauman, Nora Chipaumire, dancers; Vanessa Manley, special projects director; and Selma Jackson, UBW partner, 4W Circle*

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### LATE NIGHT BAR AND OPEN MIC 9:00 PM

Whiting Hall Lobby

Hosted by spoken word artist Regie Cabico! Opened by Flint's own Neo Griot collective!

Featuring YOU!

Poetry, spoken word, music, monologues, movement, and more! Join together for a dynamic and inspiring after-dinner open mic hosted by the inimitable (and now much anticipated) spoken word artist Regie Cabico. National Exchange participants are joined by the Flint spoken word collective, Neo Griot, in a charged final night of exciting performances. If you've got creative work to share (finished or in progress), bring it! Check in with Regie during the National Exchange or before the open mic begins.

Neo Griot is a performance collective—poets, emcees, and vocalists—committed to restoring the spoken art forms. Neo Griot is essentially a shared idea, grounded in the notion that art is life and through art, life can be enhanced. The name Neo Griot comes from the combination of the word *Neo*, which simply means “new,” and *Griot*, which is a word that refers to a cast of people in many African countries that are responsible for “keeping the history of the people.” The Griot often entertains the community with great stories of its past and present. The traditional Griot is truly reflective. Neo Griot is not simply a hip hop / spoken word squad...Neo Griot is the extension of a tradition.

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### Sunday, October 12

#### **BREAKFAST**

**8:15 AM – 9:30 AM**

Flint Youth Theatre and  
Robert T. Longway Planetarium Lobbies

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#### **OPTIONAL: ROUND TABLE SESSIONS**

**8:15 AM – 9:30 AM**

Flint Youth Theatre and  
Robert T. Longway Planetariums

##### **Intersections with Community Development**

CONVENER: *Tom Borrup*

##### **Advancing the Practice: Integrating, Evolving and Passing on Dialogic Learning and Community Art Making**

CONVENER: *Jawole Willa Jo Zollar*

##### **Reinventing Cultural Institutions for Civic Roles**

CONVENER: *Kathie deNobriga*

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#### **PLENARY: REFLECTIONS & CLOSING**

**9:45 AM – 12:00 PM**

Flint Youth Theatre, Elgood Theater

*ANIMATING* has been the focus of our past two days. This morning we conclude the *National Exchange on Art & Civic Dialogue* by considering, in conversation and through art, the other word in our title—*DEMOCRACY*.

*How do the idea, ideal, and reality of democracy at this moment in history provide context, challenges, and possibilities for our work?*

David O'Fallon facilitates a conversation about democracy among invited Exchange participants including Grace Lee Boggs, David Thelen, Pete Galindo, and Margaret Morgan-Hubbard followed by an invitation for everyone to reflect on the convening as a whole and consider the next chapter of this work. We will ask ourselves, individually and collectively: *What will be our new story?*

PARTICIPATING ARTISTS: *Liz Lerman, Alice Lovelace, Shirley Mae Springer Staten*

RECORDED MUSIC: *Terry Dame*

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#### **BRUNCH**

**12:00 PM – 1:30 PM**

**Sponsored by Midwest Express**

Flint Youth Theatre and  
Robert T. Longway Planetarium Lobbies

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