

Artist/Curator **Gwendolyn Black**

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Gwendolyn Black, a native of Pittsburgh, PA, is a graduate of the **Art Institute of Pittsburgh** and the **Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT)** in New York. Ms. Black is a fine artist, curator, educator, producer, teaching artist, illustrator, and art consultant.

Ms. Black has over 30 years experience organizing events and curating exhibitions. Since 1991, she has been using her work to uplift the community through the arts and to further the importance of arts and education.

Although she started her career in the Fashion Industry as a **Fashion Illustrator** (where her work was used in all areas of beauty and fashion), it was her desire to advocate for community development that led her to create and present some groundbreaking events and organizations---most notably **Arts and Jazzfest NYC™/Visual Arts and Jazzfest,™** the **Pioneer Awards: Honoring Women in Visual Arts™** and the creation of **IAM (Incorporation of Artists on the Move, Inc.™)** and the **OpenSpce Arts™**, with the mission of empowering artists and providing vast opportunities.

Aside from her artistic pursuits, Ms. Black's corporate experience includes working for the **McGraw Hill Companies/Data Communications Magazine**, where she was awarded **employee of the year** (and ultimately promoted to Acting Marketing Director) where she planned and organized corporate programs and events in New York and throughout the US. She also worked at **Sony Music** in the **Black Music Marketing Department** where she first developed her marketing skills.

To further her work in developing our communities through the arts, Ms. Black has sat on the board of many cultural organizations including the **Westside Arts Coalition** (where she served as the secretary and 1st editor for the monthly newsletter), **Co-chair of the Arts and Culture Committee for Community Board 10, IWJ/International Women in Jazz** (where she served as editor for the monthly newsletter), the **Jackie Robinson Park Conservancy** (serving as the organization's secretary). And most recently she currently sits on the **Planning Committee for WeAct for Environmental Justice** and a member of the **Prison Ministry at Convent Baptist Church** in Harlem.

Ms. Black has been invited as a lecturer and speaker for several organizations including the **Map for Life Program** at various high schools in the Bronx and Manhattan and has served on the advisory committee for **two Harlem public art projects:** the **Harriett Tubman** sculpture project (2004) and the **Malcolm X** sculpture project (2005) organized by **DCA (Department of Cultural Affairs)** and worked as a curator for the **Harlem River Park Project** in 2009.

Ms. Black adds that the highlight of her career was to be invited as the **keynote speaker** for the **Accion Academy 2015 Graduation** (held at the beautiful campus of **Fordham University**). “Inspiring youth is something that I am passionate about and I was thrilled to receive such a standing ovation from students.”

Since Ms. Black’s entry into fine arts, she has also carved out a niche for herself as a **talented artist, curator, educator, and arts supporter**. Throughout her career, Ms. Black has received many awards and recognitions for her art, community events and exhibitions.

Most recently, in 2015 Ms. Black received a **complimentary copy of President Obama’s Arts and Humanities Month Proclamation** (celebrated annually in October). In addition, **President Obama**, during his first term in office, has graciously “liked” Ms. Black’s **Visual Arts and JazzfestNYC™ Facebook Page** (other celebrities who liked the page include **Stevie Wonder, Will Downing, Carol’s Daughter and others**) and in 2016 Ms. Black’s comments thanking **President Obama for Obama Care** were added to the personal **Thank You Card** given to the President.

For her recognition as a woman in business, in 2014 Ms. Black was honored with the **National Association for Professional Women (NAPW)** honoring women for their outstanding work.

In addition, her awards include **four proclamations** from the **Manhattan Borough President’s office**. One for a group exhibition she organized: **The Shaping of Black America in the 20th Century (2001)** and for her **1st, 2nd, and 3rd Annual Visual Arts and Jazz Day (2012, 2013 & 2014)**.

In 2005 she received the **Commissioner’s Prize from DYCD** (Department of Youth & Community Development) for her artwork “**Praise Him**” and a **City Council Citation for Arts Advocacy** from then **City Councilman Bill Perkin**. In 2004 she was awarded a **NEA (National Endowment for the Arts) Artists in Residence with Truce (Harlem Children’s Zone)**, where she had the opportunity to present her **Art In Motion Exploring the Harlem Renaissance™ series**.

In **2003, 1998 & 1996** she received the **LMCC (Lower Manhattan Cultural Council)** for her **Beauty & The Beat: Women In Jazz™**, an exhibition and performance series which augments the contributions of women instrumentalists, composers, and vocalists to our great art form jazz.

In print, her work has been used on several publications including designer of the **25th Anniversary Poster for the Jamaica Arts Center** (1997). In 2000 her artwork “**Praise Him**” was first used on the cover of the invitation for the **African Voices Ellie Charles Awards** honoring noted actress **Ruby Dee** and currently in 2012 her illustrations were published in “**From Fast Foods to Slow Foods: How to Wake Up Laughing**” by author **Yvonne Stafford**.

Since 1990, Ms. Black has been a creative force in presenting the visual arts citywide. She is the **first curator to present “one exhibition” in multiple spaces simultaneously** and since this time she has also been at the forefront of advocating for the visual side of jazz music. She is widely known for her annual **Visual Arts and Jazzfest™**, now in its 15th year, which started out as **Visual Expressions on Jazz™** in the legendary **JVC Jazz Festival** as a special event.

Recognizing the lack of support from the jazz community for visual artists and their works, Ms. Black was inspired to create this ongoing exhibition and music series. The festival has featured over 400 visual artists including master artists **Romare Bearden, Benny Andrews, and Faith Ringgold**, to emerging and contemporary artists such as **Bernard Hoyes, Danny Simmons, Michael Singletary, Leroy Campbell, Dindga McCannon** and presented noted musicians **Randy Weston, Andre Strobe, Emme Kemp**, and Author **Quincy Troupe**, among others.

It was in 1993, at the suggestion of jazz vocalist **Nneena Freelon**, Ms. Black had her first solo exhibition of her paintings of women in jazz at the **University of Massachusetts** in Amherst. That same year, she also had her first solo exhibition at the **Langston Hughes Library** in Corona, Queens where her work was enthusiastically received. And in 2014 she returned to the library with her annual jazz exhibition series featuring the work of **Master Artist Ellsworth Ausby**.

Ms. Black's most recent jazz art project includes a 20 ft mural (from 2011-2012) dedicated to the hit tune "**A Night in Tunisia**" and was created by adults with disabilities from the **AHRC Day Program** (along with other community participants), where she had been teaching art since 2009.

And in 2016, **Ms. Black added a special dedication to Visual Arts and Jazzfest™ honoring Latin Jazz Legends which premiered at the Civico Dominicano Cultural Center in Harlem.**

Throughout her career, as an Arts Administrator Ms. Black has developed many key educational programs including the **OpenSpace Arts and Education Program™** and **Swing, Bebop, to Hip Hop™** to inspire young people (as well as adults) to tap into their own artistic talents.

As a Teaching Artist, Ms. Black enjoys working with persons with disabilities and has witnessed the transforming power of the arts. She has created key workshops while working with **AHRC, Healing Arts Initiative (HAI)**, and currently as an **independent arts contractor**.

To help advance her work, Ms. Black has received funding from many notable corporations and city agencies including 13 years of support from **WABC-TV** along with funding from **JP Morgan Chase, Citibank, K&R Realty Group, UMEZ** (Upper Manhattan Empowerment Zone), **City Councilman Bill Perkins** (who was instrumental in providing Ms. Black with her first City Grant), **City Councilwoman Inez Dickens**, among others.

Reviews and articles of her work and exhibitions have appeared in print including *ArtSpeak, New York Newsday, African Voices Website, New York Beacon, Amsterdam News, Jazziz Magazine, Caribbean Life, Daily News, and Newsweek* along with other notable publications. She has been a guest on numerous radio programs including **WBGO Jazz 88, WHCR, WBLS, WBAI** and others.

Ms. Black's artwork has been privately collected and to find out more about her current work and activities visit www.gwenblackarts.com and www.fineartamerica.com/artists/Gwendolyn+black



Gwendolyn Black with acclaimed artist Otto Neals 2015 whose sculpture dedicated Ezra Jack Keats has just received landmark status.

Artist/Curator wendolyn Black



Career Highlights:

- 2020 Featured interview on Open Show on BronxNet with Host Dr. Bob Lee
- 2020 Featured interview on Perspectives on BronxNet with Host Daren Jaime
- 2020 Presented Randy Weston: The Man and His Music—A Panel Discussion and Artist Talk with guest including TS Monk, TK Blue, Jon Brathwaite and others
- 2019/2020 Produced 16th Annual Arts and Jazzfest NYC™ festival (Dec. 16th-Jan. 19th) at the Stuyvesant Mansion dedicated to Randy Weston: The Man and His Music
- 2019 Featured Article the New York Beacon News December dedicated to Randy Weston: The Man and His Music
- 2019 Featured video clip in the Annual Dorsey's Women's Exhibition
- 2019 Presented the 16th Annual Arts and Jazzfest NYC™ festival at the Dominican Cultural Center in Harlem. Theme: Jazz Textures & A Tribute to Latin Jazz Legends
- 2019 Featured Article in Daisy Magazine (an online arts and community publication)
- 2019 (March) Featured Article in the New York Beacon News
- 2019 (Feb) Interviewed on WHCR Radio with Antoinette Montague's Jazz Woman to the Rescue
- 2019 (Feb) Guest along with Emme Kemp on WHCR Radio with Antoinette Montague's Jazz Woman to the Rescue
- 2019 Exhibited artwork at the Westside Arts Coalition Black Renaissance Exhibition
- 2018 Presented a Holiday Jazz Storytime at George Bruce Library, featuring Pianist/Broadway Composer Emme Kemp
- 2018 Exhibited artwork on Charlie Parker & Dizzy Gillespie at Minton's Charlie Parker Birthday Celebration
- 2018 Developed and facilitated mural art workshop for high school students with West Harlem Development Corporation
- 2018 Promoted to Marketing Consultant (worked as P.R. Consultant and Community Liaison from August 2016
- 2016 Civico Dominicano Cultural Center/Harlem Annual Visual Arts and Jazzfest Tribute to Latin Jazz
- 2016 Limited Edition Jazz Prints acquired by West Harlem Group Assistance for their 114th Street NYCHA Development
- 2016 Comments praising Obama Care was added to the personal Thank You Card to President Obama
- 2015(July) Produced 1st Annual Hip Hop Benefit Art Show: Music + Social Commentary; New Century Artists Gallery, Chelsea; Produced 1st Graffiti Fine Art Show with Mixed Media
- 2015 Invited Keynote Speaker Accion Academy Graduation (Fordham University Campus)
- 2015 (January) Received Complimentary Copy President Barack Obama Proclamation for Arts and Humanities Month
- 2014 (Dec.) Produced the 3rd Annual Year End Holiday Celebration and Art Sale. Partnered with TWU Local 100 union. Presented the event in Brooklyn and Manhattan.
- 2014 Awarded the NAPW National Association for Professional Women's Women of the Year 2014-2015 for outstanding work in support of women in business

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- 2014 Lanius Baxter, Collector acquires Jazz Prints for his Ebony and 145th Street Hotels
- 2014 Presented the 3rd Annual Visual Arts and Jazz Day expanding the program to Queens (currently the program takes place in Harlem and Brooklyn)
- 2014 Assisted the Countee Cullen Library with developing An Art Competition to honor the late poet. Conducted a portrait making workshop to assist participants with developing their artwork
- 2013 Presented Holiday Craft Workshop at Harlem Branch Library; presented music by Emme Kemp & Trio
- 2013 Organized and Curated for Senator Adriano Espaillat, Freedom Now: The Pursuit of Justice for All. A group art exhibition celebrating Black History Month, Dominican Independence and Women's History Month at the Harlem State Office Building
- 2013 Joined HAI (Healing Arts Initiative) as a Teaching Artist
- 2012 Produced A Holiday Celebration and Closing Art Exhibition for Visual Arts and Jazzfest 2012 at Citibank Financial Center; presented the Emme Kemp Trio
- 2012 Started a craft making workshop at the Harlem Branch Library instructing participants in creating art from recycled materials
- 2012 Manhattan Borough President Proclamation (Scott Stringer) for the 1st Annual Visual Arts and Jazz Day
- 2012 Guest on the Garden of Tranquility with Sister Daiye/WHRC
- 2012 Jazz Reflections II: 10th Annual Visual Arts and Jazzfest
- 2012: Swing, Bebop, to Hip Hop™ Workshop—Countee Cullen Library
- 2011-2012 Mural Dedicated to A Night in Tunisia (created by adults with disabilities, community youths, parents, and residents); mural is 20 ft by 9 ft.
- 2012 Guest on the 4 G Experience with Brother Bill Defossett/WHRC
- 2011 Guest on I Love Jazz with Host Dee Ramey/WHCR
- 2011 Featured Article, Amsterdam News (Celebrating 10th Annual Visual Arts and Jazzfest)
- 2011 Produced Black History Awards Ceremony at Citibank, Harlem
- 2010 Created Meet the Artist Series @ Citibank Financial Center
- 2010 Produced Visual Arts and Jazzfest: 9th year celebrating visual arts and jazz.
- 2010 Organized Visual Arts and Jazz Youth Workshops (Harlem Branch Library)
- 2009 Organized Harlem Branch Library Centennial Mural Project
- 2009 Join AHRC as a teaching artist and art consultant
- 2009 Produced Seeing Jazz: A Tribute to the Masters & Pittsburgh Jazz Legends™, presented at the Manchester Craftsmen's Guild, Pittsburgh, PA
- 2008 Selected by the Harlem River Park Task Force to Curate and serve as the Project Consultant for the Harlem River Park Walk Public Art Project
- 2008 Teaching Artist for Community Works and Groundworks; created workshops on planning a fashion business and designing a t-shirt line; lectured and taught the fundamentals of graphic design and presented a collage art project on visual arts and jazz @ Harriett Tubman School
- 2007 Produced the 8th Annual Visual Expressions on Jazz: Portraits in Blue (annual JVC Jazz Festival Event)
- 2007 Produced the 7th Annual Visual Expressions on Jazz: To Mary Lou Williams with Love and Jazz Legends from Pittsburgh Tribute (special JVC Jazz Festival Event); National Museum for Catholic Art and History
- 2007 Interview on WBGO with David Rodriguez (To Mary Lou Williams with Love)
- 2006 Organized "This Little Light of Mine" group exhibition at Citibank @ 144th Street
- 2006 Produced/Curated "Jazz Textures" group exhibition at the Manhattan Borough President's Office; Citibank Financial Center @ 144th Street; Taller Boricua Gallery
- 2006 Invited Panelist and exhibitor for the Harlem Arts Alliance Black History Month Celebration
- 2005 Participated on the DCA advisory committee for the Malcolm X sculpture project in Harlem
- 2005 Received City Council Citation, for arts advocacy, by Councilman Bill Perkins

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- 2005 Organized Harlem Benefit for Katrina Evacuees at Zip Code's NY
- 2005 Presented 5th Annual Visual Expressions on Jazz with the JVC Jazz Festival
- 2004 Participated on the DCA advisory committee for the Harriett Tubman sculpture project in Harlem
- 2004 Moderator/Exhibitor for African Voices Cultural Circle Conference: The Art of Romance Writers
- 2004 National Endowment for the Arts Artists in Residence with Truce (Harlem Children's Zone)
- 2003 Lower Manhattan Cultural Council Grant Recipient (Women in Jazz Series)
- 2003 Map for Life—Invited lecturer and speaker at various high schools in the Bronx and Manhattan
- 2002 Featured Article in Jazziz Magazine for exhibition on Jazz (October 2002)
- 2002 Manhattan Borough President Proclamation (C. Virginia Fields) for the exhibition "The Shaping of Black American in the 20th Century
- 2001 Implemented Art In Motion: Exploring the Harlem Renaissance (Playing 2 Win)
- 2000 Artwork used for the cover of African Voices Ellie Awards (Honoree: Ruby Dee)
- 2000 Artists' Spotlight Feature on African Voices Website
- 2000 Quoted and Mentioned in Allegro Publication (Local 802 Musicians Union Publication)
- 2000 Nominated to International Women in Jazz Board of Directors (former newsletter editor/designer/currently inactive)
- 1999 Incorporated IAM (Incorporation of Artists on the Move, Inc. /current President)
- 1998 Lower Manhattan Cultural Council Grant Recipient (Women in Jazz Series)
- 1997 AmsterdamNews Mention in Melba Liston Article
- 1997 Designer of 25th Anniversary Poster for Jamaica Arts Center
- 1997 Nominated to Westside Arts Coalition Board of Directors (currently inactive)
- 1996 Feature Article in Amsterdam News (on Women in Jazz Exhibition)
- 1996 Lower Manhattan Cultural Council Grant Recipient (Women in Jazz Series)
- 1995 New York Beacon Feature Article
- 1995 WBAI Radio Interview (Africa Speaks)--Highlighting Black History Month Exhibition "In the Spirit"
- 1995 Cable Show Interview/Presentation (CHANNEL 16) — Highlighting Black History Month Exhibition entitled "In The Spirit."
- 1994 McGraw-Hill Art & Crafts Show—2nd Place given to artwork "Les Femmes Of Rhythm."
- 1994 McGraw-Hill Art & Crafts Show — Honorable Mention given to artwork "Ma" (from "Beauty & The Beat-Women In Jazz" Series).
- 1993 U. Mass Campus Paper (Off Campus)—Feature Article on Exhibition "Beauty & The Beat-Women In Jazz."
- 1993 Big Red News—Feature Article celebrating Black Music Month on series "Beauty & The Beat-Women In Jazz."
- 1992 WBAI Radio (Richard B. Isle)— 2 1/2 Hour Live Interview (Celebrating Women's' Month) featuring "Beauty & The Beat-Women In Jazz" (Live Performance by Corinthia Cromwell & Chapter 5)
- 1992 New York Women's' Forum—Commissioned to Illustrate Katherine Dunham for Celebration of her 83rd birthday (Presented at the Schomburg Center for Black Research).
- 1991 Medgar Evers College—Artwork presented to Ms. Edna Edete (Formerly of the International Sweethearts of Rhythm)
- 1990 New York Newsday (Queens Section)—Featured Article
- 1990 Grace Lutheran School (Queens Village)—Invited Keynote Speaker (Fashion Seminar) "Preparing Our Teens For The Business World."
- 1990 WBLS Radio Interview (Health Talk)—Discussion of Fashion Seminar held at Queens Hospital
- 1989 Designers Network—Artwork commissioned for presentation to Ms. Lois Alexander, founder of the Fashion Museum of Harlem