



FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS  
**VISIONARIES**  
**WHO MATTER**

STUDY GUIDE



ORDWAY | Education

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# Dakota kiŋ ded ohinŋi tipi.



**The Ordway Center for the Performing Arts  
respectfully acknowledges that we gather on Dakota land.**

**De nakun Imnizaska Otunwe eyapi otanin.  
This place is also known as Imnizaska Otunwe  
(Village along the White Cliffs).**

**Hekta Dakota oyate kin hehan nakaha k'a nakun tokatakiya ded tipi k'a  
makoce kin ohodapi heun pidawicaunkiyapi.**

**We are obliged to the Dakota people, past, present, and future,  
who live here and protect this land.**

**In the spirit of reconciliation, the Ordway will continue to honor  
our Native and Indigenous communities through the arts.**

We are grateful to all of the partners whose work informs this project. Our special thanks to:  
Wambdi Wapaha, Glenn M. Wasicuna (Sioux Valley Dakota Nation in Manitoba) – Gwen N. Westerman, Ph.D. • Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate  
Christal Moose • Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe – Kate Beane, Ph.D. • member of the Flandreau Santee Sioux tribe in South Dakota  
Charlymaza (Neil McKay) • Spirit Lake Dakota Nation in North Dakota – Ethan Neerdaels • Bdewakan tunwan Dakota  
Denise Nelson • Dakota – Native American Community Development Institute (NACDI)  
Art: Angela Two Stars • Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate – Design: Maryam Marne Zafar • Lenape/African American/French-Dutch





**A land acknowledgement is more than just a statement.**  
It is a commitment by an institution to not only recognize the Indigenous people whose land the building sits on, but also commitments to going beyond a written statement and investing in continued efforts to acknowledge the past, present, and future of Indigenous people.



# Dakota kin ded ohinni tipi.

This visual land acknowledgement is meant to recognize not just the past Dakota people who were forcibly removed from Minnesota, but also acknowledges the present, living, thriving, Dakota people still here in Minnesota. We are the answers to our ancestors' prayers. We carry their Indigenous knowledge, teachings, and traditions. Finally, a land acknowledgement represents the future Indigenous people that we are leaving this land to steward once we are gone. As Crazy Horse once said, "Upon suffering beyond suffering: the Red Nation shall rise again, and it shall be a blessing for a sick world. A world longing for light again. I see a time of Seven Generations, when all the colors of mankind will gather under the Sacred Tree of Life and the whole Earth will become one circle again."

History books have written the story of Indigenous peoples from one perspective; the colonizer's narrative. Images perpetuate the notion that Native people were willing parties in their removal from their traditional homelands. In contemplation of a visual land acknowledgement, Angela Two Stars appropriated the image of the Minnesota state flag. She reimagined that image by identifying what Minnesota (itself a Dakota word) looked like prior to settler's arrival and the removal of Dakota people.

The first scene represents the original landscapes prior to colonization development and urbanization. It depicts the times when our Dakota ancestors lived in relation with the land; with the understanding that the land was not something to be owned. Dakota ancestors operated with traditional knowledge, language, ceremony, and an advanced understanding of the land and showed gratitude for what the land offered for Dakota survival.

The second scene, at top, represents both the present and future of the Dakota people. This image is a continuation of the teepees (from the first scene) now woven into the Saint Paul skyline and is an acknowledgement that as Dakota people, "We are Still Here".

The second scene, at bottom, represents the future people gathering under the Sacred Tree of Life and all the colors of mankind coming together to heal a sick world. By acknowledging the homelands of Indigenous peoples, we offer the first steps towards healing.



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IN BLACK INK

JOYCE PIERT

ROBIN HICKMAN-WINFIELD

ORDWAY EDUCATION

DAYNA MARTINEZ

MAIA MAIDEN

SARAH WIECHMANN

CHLOE CHAMBERS

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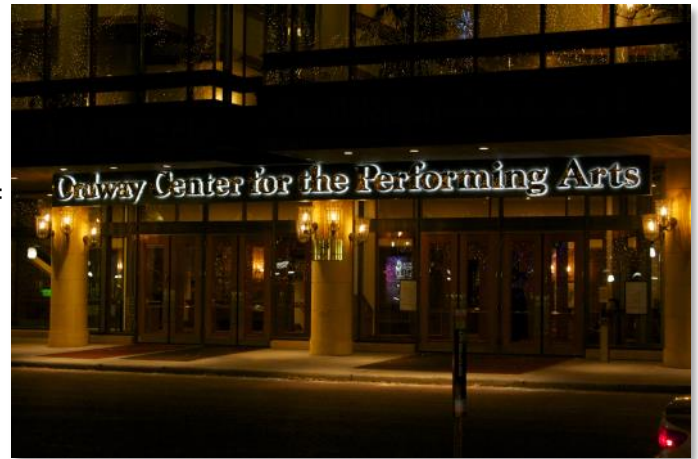
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# The Partners

## Ordway Center for the Performing Arts

In 1980, Saint Paul resident Sally Ordway Irvine (3M heiress and arts patron) dreamed of a European-style concert hall. Sally was the granddaughter of Lucius Pond Ordway (1862-1948) a Saint Paul businessman and early 3M investor. She contributed \$7.5 million; a sum matched by other members of the Ordway family toward the cost of building the facility.



The Ordway Center opened to the public on January 1, 1985 as the Ordway Music Theatre. The name was changed in 2000 to Ordway Center for the Performing Arts to reflect the vast array of performing arts that take place under its roof.

The Ordway Center previously contained a Music Theater, consisting of 1,900 seats. When it was originally built, it included an intimate McKnight Theatre housing 306 seats; two large rehearsal rooms; and the Marzitelli Foyer, a spacious two-story lobby. The McKnight Theatre was demolished in 2013 to make room for the new 1,093 seat concert hall which opened on February 28, 2015.

More than 400,000 patrons come to the Ordway Center for the Performing Arts each year with nearly 500 performances in musical theater, children's theater, world music and dance, orchestra, opera and recitals.

As a center for performing arts, the Ordway takes on three different roles:

### ***Hosting***

The Ordway is home to the following Arts Partners; they program their own seasons and use the Ordway center as their performance venue:

- The Minnesota Opera
- The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra
- The Schubert Club

### ***Presenting***

The Ordway also programs their own performance seasons. Musical theater tours such as Fiddler on the Roof and Waitress are a part of the Broadway @ the Ordway series. The Concerts @ the Ordway series include companies on national and international tours, such as Ragamala Dance Company and Black Violin.



# The Partners

## *Producing*

The Ordway is a member of the Independent Presenters Network, which allows for collaborations to produce large musical productions with other performing arts centers. Such musicals are Disney's *Beauty and the Beast*.

The Ordway also presents the annual Flint Hills Family Festival, a week-long festival of international artists performing for school and family audiences.

## **SoulTouch Productions**

SoulTouch Productions' CEO and Executive Producer Robin Hickman-Winfield formally began her journey with the Ordway in 2004, as a coordinating consultant with the organization and its presenting partner Vocal Essence on a production of *WITNESS: Honoring the Life and Legacy of Gordon Parks*. In years to follow, she continued her consultation work, throughout the organization, including administration, education and community engagement, advancement, programming and production, and marketing. Robin long standing dedication as a Twin Cities servant leader and SoulTouch's visionary founder of educational, media, civic and cultural impact, lead to an invitation from the Saint Paul Foundation to support the Ordway and SoulTouch Productions to develop a formal engagement initiative, led by Robin, for members of the Black community (and of the African diaspora).



In October of 2010, about 100 members of the community attended a “visioning” luncheon and strategic session to solidify the final plans for Taking Our Place Centerstage (TOPC). What was envisioned as a one-year initiative transformed in programming for over a decade. The TOPC “movement” has authentically engaged and partnered with members of Indigenous, Latino, Asian and Black communities. Since its inception, this unique partnership maintains a commitment to building diverse audiences by continuing to curate and enhance the promotion of programming, ensuring affordability by providing “SoulTouch Special Offers,” supporting the economic viability of communities by hiring vendors and contractors, introducing youth to a wide range of opportunities in performing arts, on and behind the stage. SoulTouch Productions collaborative role in Ordway's artist's and performer's programming and community engagement has been especially inspiring and impactful.

# The Partners

## In Black Ink

In Black Ink (IBI) is a non-profit publishing arts statewide initiative that creates spaces where the stories and voices of people of African heritage are celebrated, documented, and archived through publications, professional development training opportunities, and public presentations.

Founded in 2016, In Black Ink reshapes the face of publishing for literary artists of African descent. In a predominantly Eurocentric industry, IBI move beyond incremental change by hiring Black artists and workers at every level—from leadership, through editors, illustrators, and more. They produce work by authors of African descent, authentically bringing this diversity of cultures, worldviews, and generations to the page. IBI have created a portal/database that house Minnesota authors of African heritage their books in a database that will be available to schools, libraries, professional in the publishing arts industry. This database serves to highlight the rich literary presence of those Minnesotans of African heritage.

Centered in Black cultural leadership, current programing include:

- Producing Elder Stories
- An annual Sankofa conference featuring Black writers, educators, healers, and others on topics of importance to all Minnesotans. This includes notable speakers, discussions, music, food, and a publication of a signature new book related to the annual theme.
- Collections of archives consisting of books, audio interviews, documentary films, podcasts, and other media by Black Minnesota literary artists, that are accessible to the community.



*Rekhet Si-Asar, Executive Director of In Black Ink*



*In Black Ink's office in St. Paul, MN*



*In Black Ink's Board of Directors*



# The Sally Awards: Celebrating Minnesota's Commitment to the Arts

The Sally Awards are based on the "First Trust Award" presented in 1986 to Sally Ordway Irvine, whose initiative, vision, and commitment inspired the creation of the Ordway Center for the Performing Arts. Her award is permanently installed in the Ordway's Target Atrium.

At the Sally Awards' inception in 1992, the awards were presented annually to acknowledge achievement and contribution in the three areas for which Sally herself was recognized: Vision, Initiative, and Commitment. A fourth category, Education, was added in 1996 to acknowledge the importance of education in nurturing a passion for the arts in future generations. In 2010, the Arts Access category was added to complement the Minnesota Legacy Amendment's focus on engaging more people in the arts.

The Sally Awards have continued to evolve. In 2018, the Social Impact category was created to recognize the powerful role of art in raising awareness on important social issues and affecting social change. The Initiative and Vision categories were combined to maintain the same number of categories and in response to feedback. Finally, the category of Education was renamed Arts Learning.

Each year, one person or organization is honored in each of the five categories of the Sally Awards:

## **Arts Access:**

Recognizes extraordinary efforts to engage a broader and more diverse audience in the arts, or to deepen the involvement that Minnesota citizens have with the arts. This award was inspired by the Legacy Amendment and its impact on enhancing access to the arts statewide.

## **Arts Learning:**

Recognizes an individual, organization, or particular project that has had a significant impact on education or mentoring in the arts, and has contributed to increasing knowledge about the arts throughout the community.

## **Initiative**

Recognizes bold new steps and strategic leadership undertaken by an individual or organization in creating never-before-seen projects or artistic programs that will have a significant impact on strengthening Minnesota's artistic/cultural community.

## **Social Impact**

Recognizes admirable efforts in using the arts to raise awareness on relevant social issues affecting the community, challenge social norms, and encourage progressive social change.

## **Commitment**

Recognizes lifetime achievement, contribution, and leadership in the arts and/or culture.

For the past 27 years, the Ordway has honored members of Minnesota's artistic community with Sally Awards, which recognize and celebrate the contributions and accomplishments of artists, educators, volunteers, philanthropists, and leaders who strengthen and enrich the state with their commitment to the arts.

# For Such a Time as This: Visionaries Who Matter - A Sally Awards Special Presentation

In 2020, the Ordway was unable to gather in person to recognize another group of outstanding Minnesota artists, but at this particular moment in time, the celebration of the arts was believed to have never been more vital to the health of our community. Thus, the work of past Sally Award recipients, Black men whose artistry has made an impact locally, across the country, and around the world were reintroduced and honored. In the special presentation narrated by Minnesota Public Radio President Duchesne Drew, the Ordway highlighted the work of three artists whose commitment to racial and social justice, and healing has been further inspired by recent events. Lou Bellamy, 1994 Sally Award Winner and Founder and Artistic Director Emeritus of Penumbra Theatre Company; Gary Hines, 2004 Sally Award Winner and Music Director and Producer of the three-time Grammy Award-winning Sounds of Blackness; and Seitu Jones, 2005 Sally Award Winner and multi-disciplinary public artist and Co- Founder of Frogtown Farm were honored. The video also features six other Sally Award honorees: j. otis powell, Rev. Carl Walker, Grant West, T. Mychael Rambo, James "Cornbread" Harris, Ta-coumba Aiken.

It was stated that we look to artists to remind us of our common humanity, even when there is division all around us. Some of the most profound artistic work and meaningful community contributions have emerged from these three men, right here in Minnesota. **To listen to their stories, check out the link attached:**

[www.ordway.org/about/visionaries-who-matter](http://www.ordway.org/about/visionaries-who-matter)

Visionaries Who Matter was directed and executive produced by Robin Hickman-Winfield, the Ordway Organizational and Community Partnership Strategist, director of Taking Our Place Centerstage, and executive producer of SoulTouch Productions. It was produced by Peter Myers - Meyers Communications

Check out the video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UCCipMu9gRY>

# Visionary Artists

## Lou Bellamy

*1994 Sally Award Winner*

*Changing the world through theater*

Lou Bellamy has been a prominent member in the Twin Cities arts community for over four decades. He is the founder of Penumbra, educator, actor, director, and Artistic Director Emeritus. Bellamy founded The Penumbra Theatre Company in 1976 while pursuing his master's degree, graduating in 1978, in the same St. Paul neighborhood in which he grew up, Rondo. The theater dedicated itself to the dramatic exploration of the African American experience. As artistic director, Bellamy produced 39 world premieres. Penumbra produced August Wilson's first professional production, and more of his plays than any other theater in the world. Penumbra has been recognized as the largest African American theater in the country.



*Lou Bellamy—Photo by Roosevelt Mansfield*

Bellamy also served as director for numerous other organizations including The Guthrie Theater, Arizona Theatre Company, Denver Center for the Performing Arts, Signature Theatre, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, The Cleveland Play House, Indiana Repertory Theatre, The Kennedy Center, and Hartford Stage Company.

In an effort to provide additional resources for graduate student's interest in theater, Bellamy advocated for the creation of the August Wilson Fellowship in dramaturgy and literary criticism at the University of Minnesota, providing graduate students with support, mentorship and practical experience.

Bellamy was honored with the IVEY Lifetime Achievement Award in 2005, and named Distinguished Artist by the McKnight Foundation in Minneapolis in 2006. Bellamy received an Obie Award for directing a 2007 New York production of August Wilson's *Two Trains Running*. In 2017, he was the recipient of the Kay Sexton Award in recognition for his career as a teacher, mentor, director and promoter of African American literature.

While reflecting upon his many awards and opportunities to promote the theater and Black life, Bellamy has been quoted as saying, "There are only a few people who get chances to be where I am in my career. I want to use it for putting the lens on Black people and showing them in all their beauty, their facets and warts. These are people who I care about and love and want to see in all their complexity on the stage."



# Visionary Artists

## *Penumbra Theater*

The Penumbra Theatre Company is Minnesota's only professional African American theatre, and is one of only three professional African American theaters in the nation to offer a full season of performances. Under Bellamy's quarter century of continuous leadership, Penumbra has stayed on the cutting edge of the national theatre scene and continues to present groundbreaking productions.

The Penumbra has hosted performances that have reached over 40,000 people of all backgrounds every year, the Educational and Outreach activities impact more than 5,000 students each year. They employ more actors, choreographers, dancers, directors, and administrators of color than all other theatres in Minnesota combined.

## Seitu Jones

*2005 Sally Award Winner*

*Changing the world through art*

Seitu Ken Jones is a public artist who through working on his own or in collaboration with other artists or communities has created over 40 large-scale public artworks. As a scenic designer, his artistic mastery has been displayed in the sets created for Penumbra Theater, Minneapolis Children's Theater, the Guthrie Theater, the Illusion Theater, Ananya Dance Theater, Pangea World Theater, and the Park Square Theater.



*Seitu Jones—Photo by Roosevelt Mansfield*

Seitu was millennium artist-in-residence for 651Arts, in Brooklyn, NY and was the first Artist-in-Residence for the City of Minneapolis. However, Seitu is a master of all kinds of visual artist, working with paint, wood, clay, glass, steel, theater sets, even plant material. Much of his work is public art on a grand scale: bridges, murals, sculptures, walls, stops along the Green. Seitu has created art-work for three stations for the Greenline Light Rail Transit system in the Twin Cities. His work even includes a half mile community dinner.

At the Minneapolis Sculpture Garden: [Shadows at the Crossroads](#), is a commission by Twin Cities-based artists Seitu Jones and Ta-coumba T. Aiken and poet Soyini Guyton. Together, the artists traced the shadows of community members and then worked with the Walker Art Center Teen Arts Council to select the silhouettes that appear in the Garden.

His work has garnered him many awards, such as: a Minnesota State Arts Board Fellowship, a McKnight Visual Artist Fellowship, a Bush Artist Fellowship, a Bush

# Visionary Artists

Leadership Fellowship, a National Endowment for the Arts/Theater Communication Group Designer Fellowship and The Loeb Fellowship at the Harvard Graduate School of Design.

Seitu is a fourth-generation Minnesotan and was born and raised in north Minneapolis. In elementary school, Jones realized that he didn't want to be anything other than an artist. Before graduating from high school his grandfather took him to see the Wall of Respect in Chicago, Illinois which was considered the first collective street mural. For Jones, "just seeing these black figures done large-scale – that blew my mind. From then on, I saw the power of the museum of the streets. That was my turning point to want to create large-scale work."

Jones grew up in a family full of creative people. He recalls having aunts and uncles that were painters, while Jones' father was an artist and also a painter. This was the inspiration that infused Jones' life and he considers himself fortunate to have their work to guide his passion. Sadly, Seitu's father was forced to give up on art as a career due to racism and discrimination. His father decided to run a print shop from his home. His father was also a sign painter, painting signs for black businesses on Minneapolis' south side. It appears that the theme of equity inspires Seitu, and he expresses it in his belief that a person should leave their community more beautiful than when they found it. This mantra has caused Seitu to merge his public art into the Twin Cities, and the Twin Cities into his public art. Seitu affirms that the Twin Cities is truly his home and he seals that affirmation with the acknowledgement that with the birth of his grandchildren, his family has been in Minnesota for six generations. Seitu acknowledges that his legacy is integrated deep in the soils of this land. It is this historical presence that fuels his passion to create a better world for his progeny and those who follow!

## Gary Hines

*2004 Sally Award Winner*

*Changing the world through music*

Gary Hines is the director and producer of the Grammy Award winning vocal and instrumental ensemble Sounds of Blackness. Some have said that he's also part teacher, part preacher, part psychologist, part father, part coach, part

activist, part historian, part musical master, part drill sergeant. For 50 years, since 1971, Hines has led Sounds of Blackness, building them from a student choir at St. Paul's Macalester College to three-time Grammy winners who have raised their voices on five



*Gary Hines—Photo by Roosevelt Mansfield*

# Visionary Artists

continents and worked with everyone from Aretha Franklin to Elton John.

Hines has recorded, performed, toured, written for and appeared with: Quincy Jones, Jimmy "Jam" Harris & Terry Lewis, Prince, Usher, Stevie Wonder, Michael Jackson, Luther Vandross, Aretha Franklin, Elton John, Johnny Gill, Patti LaBelle, Sting, Dolly Parton, Danny Glover and Jordin Sparks to name just a few. Along with the Sounds of Blackness, he has performed in every major city in the U.S. and, abroad in Africa, England, Holland, Switzerland, France, Germany, Italy, Portugal, Japan, Brazil, Mexico, Canada, Bermuda, Jamaica, Martinique and the Bahamas. From Jazz and Blues to Rock & Roll, R & B, Gospel, Spirituals, Hip-Hop, Reggae and Soul the Sounds of Blackness was conceived and birthed out of the heart of the Black community in the Twins Cities.

Hines has been the recipient of such honors as a Grammy, International Time for Peace Award, and the Minnesota Music Academy Awards, Hines has also received the Minnesota Music Hall of Fame Award, Golden Scroll for The Promise of Greatness Award, and the Macalester Distinguished Citizen Award.

As an innate activist, he uses his work as a vehicle to address injustice within the community, to offer a voice for healing and reparations. Hines draws upon the Spirit of the ancestors, such as Fannie Lou Hamer and others to speak truth to power, to build community and to nurture the community's greatest wealth - our children. His most recent event was in the George Floyd Square this summer with Common, while honoring the one-year anniversary of Mr. Floyd's death.

At the age of 4, Hines found himself with a set of bongos from his mother, Doris Hines, who was herself a world traveling singer. He was born in New York. His family moved to Minneapolis when he was an adolescent. He attended Macalester College where he took over the leadership of the then, Macalester College Black Voices. Changing the name to Sounds of Blackness, they soon became the first act signed to Jimmy Jam and Terry Lewis' Perspective Records, who were intrigued with the Sounds of Blackness' ability to be a bridge to the Black community and a vehicle for expression.

Gary Hines has conducted countless music workshops, seminars, lecture-demonstrations and master classes across the United States and internationally about the history, impact and evolution of African American music and culture.



*Seitu Jones, Lou Bellamy, and Gary Hines—  
Photo by Roosevelt Mansfield*



# Mahmoud El-Kati: An Inspiration to the Visionaries

Mahmoud El-Kati, known as Elder Mahmoud within the community, has been the source of inspiration to many evolving community members and activists. As the Elder, he holds the space of Spirit and support for the sacred in both the young and old, including modeling the values, rituals and traditions that promote Re-Africanization and Pan-Africanism.

Elder Mahmoud is a lecturer, writer, and commentator on the African American experience. He specializes in African American history and advocates institution building within cultural communities. He is an advocate of building one's humanity through the understanding of their culture, history and community.

Elder Mahmoud is also a Professor Emeritus of history at Macalester College in St. Paul, Minnesota. Macalester College has established the Mahmoud El-Kati Distinguished Lectureship in American Studies in recognition of his scholarly and community work.



Elder Mahmoud has written articles, essays, and reviews that deal with a variety of issues including the myth of "race," Ebonics, gangs and Black youth, education, African Americans, sports, and other issues. These writings have appeared in several newspapers and publications. As a published author, he has written such books as Politically Considered: 50th Commemoration of the Supreme Court Decision of 1954 and The Hiptionary: A Survey of African American Speech Patterns with Critical Commentary and A Digest of Key Words and Phrases, Haiti: The Hidden Truth, and recently edited the collection of writings Towards An African Education, that featured several local contributors.

Since the inception of Taking Our Place Centerstage (TOPC), Elder Mahmoud El-Kati has been a supporter of community engagement, music, dance and Broadway programming. In 2016, he served as a member of the Vision Council for the Ordway's season of The African Diaspora in Harmony. Elder Mahmoud graced the stage introducing the performance of Spectrum Dance Theater's A Rap on Race, and he was the proudest audience member during his son's hometown, premier solo performance, STOKLEY!

During the interviews, each Visionary acknowledged the significance of Elder Mahmoud in their lives. The video was dedicated to him.

*Hear from Professor El-Kati yourself:*

<https://voicesofthecivilrightsmovement.com/video-collection/2018/10/2/living-up-to-your-moral-assignment>

*Visit these links for more information:*

[www.MahmoudElKati.com](http://www.MahmoudElKati.com)

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/MahmoudElKati>

# Student Activities Inspired by our Visionaries

Each activity below is inspired by one of the highlighted visionaries. Parents and educators are encouraged to document their students' process and completed creative motifs and productions with In Black Ink. IBI will share your reflections and documentation with the respective visionary artists.

## Taking a look at *Fences* by August Wilson - A play once directed by Lou Bellamy

*Recommended Grades: 10-12*

*Objective:*

This lesson will allow students to explore the critical thought and cultural influences in the theater production of the play, *Fences* by August Wilson. Students will examine this critical work from a personal, societal, cultural, and historical contexts.

In this activity, have each student download the free *Fences* script to their iPad or other Tablet device. Provide students with journals/paper and pencil for reflections.

*Resources:*

- <https://archive.org/details/WilsonFences> (You can choose to download the file in various formats)
- <https://www.sparknotes.com/drama/fences/> (Plot, summary, analysis of *Fences* resource)



*Lou Bellamy—Photo by Roosevelt Mansfield*

1. Distribute copies of the script to your students and have them read the script together in groups of four. This reading will allow students to comprehend the storyline and the characters.
2. In a few paragraphs, have students to describe the storyline of the play.
3. Identify the main characters and the secondary characters in the story, and describe their relationships to the storyline.
4. August Wilson has established his plays upon the culture in the Black community. Students should identify the cultural elements threaded throughout the play.

# Student Activities Inspired by our Visionaries

5. The theme of “unfulfilled aspirations” is hidden within the storyline. Have students identify where this theme arises in the play.
6. Another theme that is embedded in the storyline is conflict. Have students identify where the themes of conflict appear in the story and the characters that are in conflict. Remember that conflict can exist with systems.
7. Have students to reflect on their own families and examine where these two themes (unfulfilled aspirations and conflict) appear within their families. Have students to write their response in their journals, this topic may be sensitive for students to reveal to their classmates. However, if anyone feels comfortable in sharing, let them because the candidness may lead to open discussions and engender understandings.

## *Whole Class Activity:*

This activity is for the whole class. Students will have the opportunity to perform a dramatic reading or actually perform Act I of the play *Fences* by August Wilson with minimal props. Assign characters in the play to the students by scene. This will allow the maximum number of students to participate. Allow students enough time to prepare for their dramatic presentation of *Fences*. Pick a class period for students to read or perform the play.

## *Note:*

The “n”-word is used in *Fences* by August Wilson. It is used as reflective or authentic language of the people portrayed in the story. The “n”-word which is considered taboo and a very disrespectful term to use in everyday language. However, it is appropriate for reading/saying aloud the “n”-word, if it’s written in the context of historical and current literary narratives that are reflective of that community. Furthermore, parents and educators must consider the maturity of students and the current climate in their community before reading this word simply aloud in text. Parents and teachers with their students may need to discuss the history and impact of the word on African Americans. A substitute for the n-word could be “negro,” an old reference to African Americans. Still, this may not feel comfortable to some. Another possible substitute could be “Brother.”

## *Suggestions for Extension Activities:*

- If students are really eager and there is time, Act II can be included in the presentation schedule.
- Have students watch the movie *Fences* (2016) directed and produced by Denzel Washington. Starring Denzel Washington and Viola Davis.
- Have students review the Penumbra Theatre’s website and share their insights: <https://penumbratheatre.org/>



# Student Activities Inspired by our Visionaries

## *Standards for Middle School (7th Grade)*

- Theater: CR: 4.7.2.2.3:  
Describe a scripted or improvised character's motivations and objectives in a work.
- Theater: CR: 4.7.2.3.1:  
Defend original ideas and artistic choices for a work based on critical analysis, background knowledge, and historical and cultural context.
- Theater: CR: 4.7.2.3.2:  
Demonstrate respect for self and others and their roles in preparing or devising a work.
- Theater: PR: 4.7.3.5.2:  
Analyze and explain a character's objectives in a work.
- LA—Writing: W4:  
Write arguments to support claims and to persuade in an analysis of topics or texts, using valid reasoning and evidence while considering audience.
- LA—Writing: W5:  
Write informative or explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through use of informational and literary text, considering audience.

# Student Activities Inspired by our Visionaries

## Shadows of your Class/Community inspired by Seitu Jones' Shadows at the Crossroads:

*Recommended Grades: 2-7*

One of the most visible of their collaborations is *Shadows of Spirit* (1992), a series of sculptures that Seitu Jones and Ta-coumba T. Aiken were commissioned by the City of Minneapolis to create for Nicollet Mall, a busy downtown pedestrian walkway. The project honors significant figures from the region's cultural history in the form of human silhouettes, which were cast in bronze and embedded in the street's wide sidewalks. Poetry by Soyini Guyton is inscribed on each shadow. The seven shadows in downtown Minneapolis represent stories of "Minnesota's heroes," some known, others unsung.

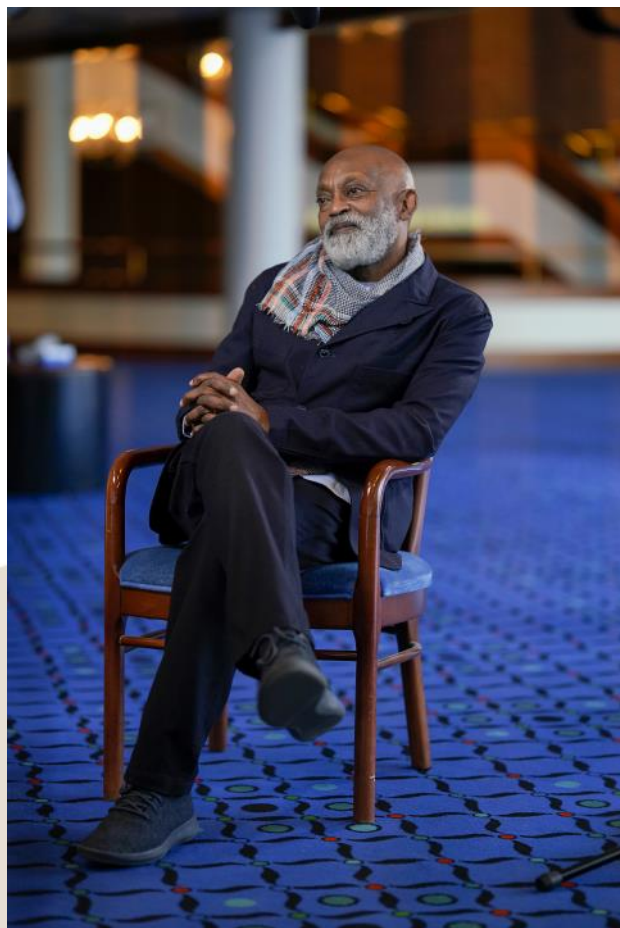
*Objective:*

This lesson will allow students to create a production of art that commemorates themselves being reflective of their class, school and neighborhood communities. Every student must understand how they have impacted their various communities and how others have impacted them.

*Review:*

Ta-coumba Aiken and Seitu Jones: *Shadows at the Crossroads*

- <https://walkerart.org/calendar/2019/seitu-jones-and-ta-coumba-aiken-shadows-at-the-crossroads>
- <https://walkerart.org/magazine/shadows-crossroads-seitu-jones-ta-coumba-aiken-soyini-guyton>



*Seitu Jones—Photo by Roosevelt Mansfield*

# Student Activities Inspired by our Visionaries

## *Class Activity:*

In this activity, the students will emulate the public artist, Seitu Jones, as he and fellow artist Ta-coumba T. Aiken captured the shadow shape of each piece of their work in “Shadows at the Crossroads.”

## *Materials:*

- Long sheet of paper (white or brown) 3’ x 6’ white piece or several 8.5” x 11” can be taped together to create this approximate size canvas.
- Pencil or marker (Trace shadow and write narrative)

## *Instructions:*

1. Separate students into groups of three or four.
2. Have students take turns being traced on a sheet of paper. Students can be as creative as they want to create the shadow shape they want. Once a pose is struck, then the student must freeze and remain still while other students quickly trace the outer lines of the shadow.
3. Have the students create a poetic verse that speaks to their life, work or purpose. Students will inscribe this short narrative onto the area of their shadow reflection/projection.
4. Students then may paint or color in the shape so that it looks like a shadow. Be creative.
5. Put the projects on display in the class or outside on the side walk or other open area. Have the class conduct a Shadow Walk and documenting their thoughts and feelings regarding their community’s/class’ shadows. Groups can Post-it notes while visiting each other’s work and leave comments.
6. Have a classroom reflection of the process of creating the shadows and their experience of the Shadow Walk.

## *Notes:*

Tracing the shadows will work best on a bright, sunny day and students can use the sunlight to make the shadows, or students can use a flashlight or some other bright light to shine on each other to make shadows on the ground.



# Student Activities Inspired by our Visionaries

This activity may take several days or class periods. Breaking the process down into manageable parts is important.

*For example:*

Period 1     Tracing

Period 2     Creating verses

Period 3     Inscribing verses onto shadow

Period 4     Coloring/painting shadow

Period 5     Showcase creations

Period 6     Reflections on process and others creations in your class

Have students review Seitu's website and share their insights:

<https://seitujonesstudio.com/>

*Standards for Middle School (7th Grade)*

- Visual Arts—CR: 5.7.2.2.2:  
Apply a variety of approaches to explore artistic methods and generate ideas.
- Visual Arts: PR: 5.7.3.5.1:  
Individually or collaboratively develop a visual plan for displaying works of art.

# Student Activities Inspired by our Visionaries

## Songs of Inspiration, Affirmation and Instigation: A Retrospective of Gary Hines and His Work with the Sounds

*Recommended Grades: 7-12*

Sounds of Blackness has been a force and presence in the Twin Cities communities and throughout the world in bringing awareness and activism in song and spirit to address the social injustices and inequalities targeting African American communities. Since 1971, Sounds of Blackness has been intentional in making their voices heard.

Welcome to the Sounds of Blackness (Review the background and work of the Sounds)

<https://youtu.be/wKDqg5EQkWo>

*Objective:*

This lesson will allow students to explore the critical music productions by the Sounds of Blackness that influence and are influenced by personal, societal, cultural, and historical contexts.

*Activities:*

Students will listen to three Sounds of Blackness videos. Students will then give analysis on the purpose, meaning and significance of the song. Students will also notice and remark on the artistry of the sound, music, performers and videography/imagery. Students can do this a whole class or break up into small groups to do the analysis. Multiple class sessions can be used to manage and break down analysis and discussions time.

Here are three songs:

Optimistic

This uplifting song was written and produced by Jimmy Jam, Terry Lewis and Gary Hines in 1991.

<https://youtu.be/0DR4Thf2B9c>



*Gary Hines—Photo by Roosevelt Mansfield*

# Student Activities Inspired by our Visionaries

## Royalty

This song is the brainchild of Gary Hines, director and producer for Sounds of Blackness. Hines wrote and produced the song, which was released in February 2016. The song was written with the intention of uplifting and empowering African-American youth both here in Minnesota and worldwide. The lyrics feature the affirming message, “If you never been told, time for you to know — you’re royalty.”

[https://youtu.be/0b3Z\\_ewfnnE](https://youtu.be/0b3Z_ewfnnE)

## Sick and Tired

Even the most optimistic among us get tired of fighting the same battles and the Sounds of Blackness are no exception. The three-time Grammy Award-winning group is back with a timely anthem for the movement entitled “Sick & Tired”. Inspired by 400 years of systemic injustice that continues today, the group’s singers and band express the perpetual pain and rage of Black people in the words of the Great Fannie Lou Hamer: “I’m Sick Tired of Being Sick & Tired!”

<https://youtu.be/tToy06ER67c>

### *Small Group Work:*

Show the video to the whole class. Afterwards break students into small groups of 3 to 4 people.

### *Questions to consider for discussion:*

Use these questions to analyze each song. Each member in the group should respond to each question. A recorder from each group should take notes because he/she/they will report back to the whole class.

1. As you listened to the song, share a word with your group that describes how the song made you feel?
2. Share what you think this song is about?
3. Why do you think the Sounds of Blackness wanted to sing this song?
4. What message do you think that they wanted to convey?

Bring students back together in a whole group and have a reporter from each group share their responses with everyone. Discuss the findings.

### *Answer these Question as a Whole Class Discussion:*

Culture is a pattern of behavior shared by a society, or group of people. Many different things make up a society’s culture. These things include food, language, clothing, tools, music, arts, customs, beliefs and religion. Every human society has a culture and oftentimes, different cultures can blend with each other.



# Student Activities Inspired by our Visionaries

1. What cultural elements can you find in the music and the performance of the song?
2. Think about your culture and identify the ways your culture is similar to or different from the culture(s) that you identified in the song?
3. Sounds of Blackness use music as a venue to address issues that impact Black lives, such as, Black youth empowerment, police brutality, voting rights and even reparations for African Americans. Why do you think that some groups use music to address social concerns or causes?
4. Can you identify other music groups that use music to protest social issues? What songs and what are their messages?

## *Sing a Simple Song Group Activity*

In this activity, the class will collectively create a song that addresses an issue in your community. Separate students into groups of three or four.

Have groups perform the following tasks:

1. Identify a problem or cause in their community that they can bring attention to in a song. It could be police brutality, high crime, the pandemic, or just lifting up the community in love and compassion.
2. Have students create lyrics to a song together about that issue.
3. Have students create a beat with their hands, mouths, and/or feet to accompany the song. Students can also do this simultaneously while shaping the lyrics.
4. Let them have time to practice.
5. Have students perform their group's music composition to their class.

Have students review the Sounds of Blackness website and share their insights:

<https://www.soundsofblackness.org/>

## *Standards for Middle School (7th Grade)*

- Music: PR: 3.7.3.6.1:  
Perform music for an audience by responding to notation, using expressive skills.
- LA-Writing: W4:  
Write arguments to support claims and to persuade in an analysis of topics or texts, using valid reasoning and evidence while considering audience.
- LA-Writing: W5:  
Write informative or explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through use of informational and literary text, considering audience.

# Walking in the footsteps of the Visionary Seitu Jones

## Ayo Olabaju (Interviewer)

Ayo is a sophomore at Howard University in Washington, DC majoring in Journalism. She was born and raised in Minnesota and graduated from Patrick Henry High School in Minneapolis.



## Seitu Jones (Interviewee)

Seitu is a multidisciplinary artist, advocate and maker based in St. Paul, Minnesota. Working between the arts and public spheres, Jones channels the spirit of radical social movements into experiences that foster critical conversations and nurture more just and vibrant communities from the soil up. He is recognized as a dynamic collaborator and a creative force for civic engagement.



Ayo:

It's an honor and a privilege to sit here with you today. Congratulations on your Sally Award in 2004 and being recognized as Visionary Who Matters in 2021. I will interview you on your life's journey that will teach fellow young people like myself that our dreams and visions are obtainable. Can you introduce yourself and describe yourself as a visual artist in the context of community?

Seitu:

Thank you for recognizing this award. I'm so fortunate and blessed to be able to have created a career and charted a path as an artist. And I would not have been able to do that without the support of an entire community. Without folks teaching, prompting, pushing, slapping me and all of the above to help me be who I am and become who I am.

But I describe myself as a visual artist. Period. My roots are here in Minnesota I am believe it or not. I am a fourth generation Minnesotan. My great grandfather who was born in slavery, in the 1840s fought in the civil war, on the union army after he gained his freedom, and then ended up in Red Wing, MN in the 1870's earning enough money as a porter for the Saint James Hotel to start a farm in Rochester, MN where my grandmother was born. She moved to Old Rondo a hundred years ago, and with my father and his brothers and sisters were born. So I have these long time ties to this place, and site and one of the things that they taught me is to have this deep love for myself, for my family, and for my community. So that is where this commitment began.

# Walking in the footsteps of the Visionary Seitu Jones

Ayo:

If I or if any other youth was walking the path of your life with you, what would we see? I know you described some of your family's roots, what was your early life like too?

Seitu:

In that family, I was never discouraged from being an artist. From the time I was in grade school, I wanted to be an artist. I was in 6<sup>th</sup> grade, and a 6th grade teacher at Field Elementary School in South Minneapolis recognized this gift and this skill that I had and asked me to draw, to help her create greeting cards for the holidays. And, So I sat at her desk with her, while all the other kids were working on an assignment. Now I probably should have been working on the assignment too, but this got me out of having to do that and having somebody recognize this stuff that I could do had me like, wow, I wonder if I could continue to get out of stuff by drawing. And then I thought, while I guess this was important enough, and somebody recognize that. But my mind at that time wouldn't allow me to think of it as a career, but it was this thing that I liked doing and was rewarded for doing. And that's what started it. I've been drawing all that time.

My father was a painter. Studied art at the University of MN. And painted signs for Black businesses, and I watched him doing that. I had an uncle who also was a painter, his brother, and then I had all these aunties that sewed, and sewed without patterns. My family was creative, all the time, and so it was just something that was in the family. And so they knew with me and all my crazy cousins that they had to give us the tools to be able to fight the oppression and racism that they knew we were gonna have to face, and so they told us over and over how gifted we were and how smart we were, even though we didn't necessarily always demonstrate that. They knew enough to put that in our minds so that we actually began to believe that, and embrace that. And that's what really triggered this. And so if you going to see a path, it would start with these drawings and drawing things around me, but then also drawing super heroes and reading comic books and that taught me anatomy, even though it was always exaggerated, but it taught me anatomy, so I kept drawing all the way through high school.

And then all the way through the late 60's and early 70's my last years of high school and early years of college, I got swept up in the Black Arts Movement. The cultural component of the black Power and Civil Rights movement. I was creating posters for demonstrations, marches, and rallies. I was doing sets for theatres, I started to do murals. So I saw and participated in all of that because it was right there in my community. And one of the things I learned then is that you should leave your community more beautiful than you found it. That was one of the many tenets of all these different philosophies at that time from the Black Panthers to the Nguzo Saba, and that was we should always leave our community more beautiful than we found it. And that's the thing that underlies my basic philosophy.



# Walking in the footsteps of the Visionary Seitu Jones

Ayo:

You mentioned after high school that you started getting into incorporating your art with community and with Black people. When did you become conscious of being Black and what does it mean to be a Black artist?

Seitu:

I never really suffered from a black inferiority complex or was unconscious of who I was as a Black person. I wasn't impacted while growing up by this white standard of beauty consciousness in society. I never really suffered from feeling inferior. I always was encouraged to embrace this blackness and, and had this beautiful black family I came from. My aunts, my mother, my sisters, my cousins, they were all so stunningly beautiful.

But I didn't know everything. After my junior year, the summer between my junior and senior year in high school, I enrolled and took a class in the Twin Cities Institute for Talented Youth. Believe it or not, I took a class from my master teacher and he brought me to a level of understanding and consciousness that was pivotal. I was transformed forever. This teacher was none other than Mahmoud El-Kati. He had a small group of high school students that signed up for his African American history class, at that time it was called Afro-American Experience. But Professor Mahmoud has been my steady guide and teacher ever since then.

On a side note, about coming into consciousness. If you looked at that event Visionaries Who Matter. Each one of us Sally Award recipients credited Mahmoud El-Kati in some kind of way. Gary Hines and Lou Bellamy all of us had been impacted and are indebted to Mahmoud for waking us all up in some way. So that class between my junior and senior year were the things that woke me up and put me on this path to really formally organize. So I went back in my senior year in high school at Washburn H.S. in 1968 and 1969 and helped organize a Black student union at my high school. We put out a set of demands to our high school administration to make our school and our experience more inclusive and diverse. We ended up getting two African American teachers, one that taught history, another one that taught French and African Dance. And I haven't looked back since that time. Once one transforms their consciousness, it is really hard to go backwards when you know the truth. I've been going forward with this new found purpose and passion ever since.

Ayo:

Are there any other experiences, events or people that at some point growing up told you that you were to be the person you are today? People who saw who you were to become?

Seitu:

I was also fortunate and blessed there. I had so many folks show me great love and the

# Walking in the footsteps of the Visionary Seitu Jones

power of love. You know and that's something we don't spend enough time talking about and unfortunately in most contexts, people think it's corny to talk about love, but there's this love that we must have for ourselves. Martin Luther King defined all these types of love, but the thing he focused on was the love we should have for each other, and the love of humans for human kind and that's the thing that helped push me more than anything.

I was so fortunate to be born when I was the middle of the last century (1951) and come of age at this time when there was this big mix of politics and culture. It was a time of collective transformation for our community. It wasn't just me. We would come out of the houses one day dressed in black berets and black leather jackets like the panthers. We would come out the next day with dashikis like the cultural nationalists. We would come out the next day dressed like Jimmy Hendricks with our fros blown out. You know so we were fortunate to be exposed to all of those different philosophies and all of those different political ideas at that time, and it made me go into deeper studies. I was studying Marxist/Leninist thought, studying different African religions, as well as the Nguzo Saba that was created by Maulana Karenga. We were studying and reading W.E.B. DuBois and Booker T. Washington. Mahmoud just opened up this door, of inquisition and I ran into all these other teachers along the way. Being born at that time one couldn't help being swept up into these rivers of political tensions and ideas and sometimes conflict, and even conflict within the African American community.

There were community cultural institutions like The Way in North Minneapolis and the Inner-City Youth League in St. Paul right on Selby and Victoria were places for us to gather as artists and talk shop, talk stuff, to argue back and forth.

Ayo:

What college did you go to and what were your degrees in?

Seitu:

I was fortunate to be able to get through college. It took me a long time. I was able to get through school with two degrees. I have a Bachelors in Landscape Design, and my graduate degree is in Environmental History and both of those are from the Agricultural School at the University of Minnesota. But even with those degrees, I still feel that I learned more from listening to brothers and sisters argue about the role of Black artists at Inner-City Youth League, than I ever did in the academy.

To all the other artists out there coming up in the generations behind me and the generations behind them, there is this kind of organic education that comes from your community and you get from hanging out with each other, talking shop and talking stuff. You push each other back and forth, and love each other, and through this process you will keep learning and learning and learning.

# Walking in the footsteps of the Visionary Seitu Jones

Ayo:

As an artist that has done many forms of art over the years, what training did you need to do all of that? And what would be your favorite form of art?

Seitu:

A couple things, one is I learned more from experience than from an academic route, as I just said. Now that's not to say that because I went this route in an agricultural program that it didn't have any bearing on my artistic ability. It really helped. If I would have gone through and gotten degrees in art, I'm not sure that I would be doing what I am doing now. Second, I took a number classes in art. I took a number of design classes, and in high school I took a number of drafting classes.

Part of the language of design is drafting. Taking and using scale and proportions to draw objects, products, and buildings using numbers, distance, weights to create it. A design that has all that dimensional information can then be turned over to somebody, or yourself, to be constructed, or fabricated into the real world.

Ayo:

What is your favorite art medium?

Seitu:

That's one of those hard questions to answer. For me, it's whatever I'm working on at the time, because, I am so focused on what I am doing right now that's what I'm doing. I do use the traditional artist media drawing, painting, sculpture, etc. But art is so much more. Currently, I'm curating a project in Omaha, Nebraska to help come up with a template and inspire local communities in different places how to eat right, put in folks in contact with their local farmers and create table conversation with hundreds of people. I also have curated community gardens like the Frogtown Farm.

Ayo:

Tell me about a childhood memory?

Seitu:

I had an auntie that use to call me "Little George Washington Carver." And I would bristle at that. Of course, I wouldn't let her know, it just made me upset that somebody called me little George Washington Carver. This was at the age of 6 or 7 and he had died before I was born, but I knew who he was and I thought, why would I want to be like that old bald-headed man. So I didn't think of it as an honor be called that name. Not too many people knew about George Washington Carver. I later found out he was a painter, an accomplished painter. And that's really what led him into the study of Botany or plants and nature. He painted over and over again. We know about his experiments with food, with peanut, with sweet potatoes. But not too many people know about his experiments with color. He created 73 different colors and stains that he used in his paintings and he created them from plants and natural elements in the environment. Now I've been

# Walking in the footsteps of the Visionary Seitu Jones

looking at him as a point of inspiration.

Ayo:

What would you tell our youth and aspiring artist about going into this field?

Seitu:

It is a challenge. It is something you have to work through. Being an artist is hard and tough. Persevere and be persistent. You have to be a good student, good child and good person. People have a lot on their plates. They have a lot of responsibilities. So it can be hard to focus on your art. The basic solution to that is structure - structure your life, your day and balance it. But continue on. Get a mentor. Ask questions and last but not least be loving and encouraging. Love and encouragement will come back to you as you share your passion and vision with others.



*Photo from Seitu's Community Meeting—provided by In Black Ink*



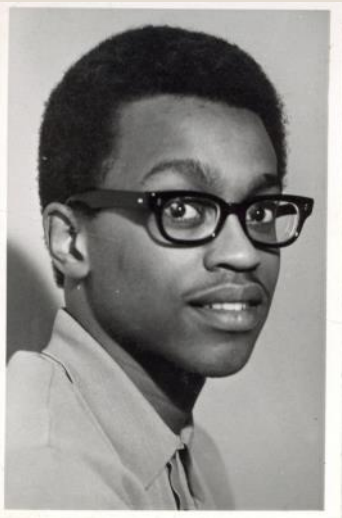
# Walking in the footsteps of the Visionary Seitu Jones

## *Student Activity:*

1. What were three interesting stories or pieces of information to you shared by Seitu Jones in his interview?
2. Write down and share what your vision is as an adult. What work or career do you see yourself doing? Why do you want to do those things in the future? Students can choose as many careers, fields and type of work they want.
3. What are some things that you can do to help yourself prepare for the future?
4. What type of education or knowledge will you need to help you prepare for your future?
5. Who can you ask for help to find out more about your future work or career?

## *Vocabulary:*

- **Curate** - carefully chosen and thoughtfully organized or presented work or project medium/media - the materials or methods used by an artist
- **Drafting** - Technical drawing and is the process of composing drawings that visually communicate how something functions or is constructed.



*This photo "was taken by my father in about 1967 or 1968. I was 16 or 17."*



*"I am barely seen in this group shot of my 1969 Washburn High School graduation"*



*"The photo is of me in the dispatch room of the Chicago Police Department. My uncle was a Chicago cop and gave me a tour of the police department."*

# Sally Award Honorees of African Heritage

Over the 27 years of the Sally Awards, the following 12 individuals and groups from the African heritage community have been honored. Similar to our three honorees this past year, these individuals have made substantial contributions to their local, national and in many ways international community. It is important that you know their names and what their contributions have been. These people are very different, yet they are not so different from you and I as they show that one can come from many different upbringings, and have very different experiences, but with a level of determination and consistent effort, they have all been able to and continue to contribute to their community to make it a better place for themselves, their families and so many countless others.

Lou Bellamy - 1994

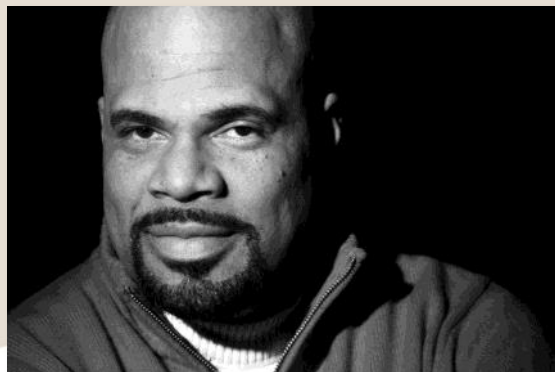
Gary Hines - 2004

Seitu Jones - 2005

<https://ordway.org/about/sally-awards/>

## *T. Mychael Rambo (2009)*

Emmy Award winning actor, vocalist, arts educator and community organizer; T. Mychael Rambo is a long-standing Penumbra Theater Company Member. T. Mychael has made an indelible mark here in the Twin Cities performing principal roles at such theaters as: the Guthrie, Ordway Theatre, Illusion Theatre, Mixed Blood, Park Square Theatre, Ten Thousand Things, Children's Theatre and Minnesota Opera among others. He is an adjunct professor in the Theater Arts and Dance Department at the University of Minnesota



## *TU Dance (2011)*

Founded in 2004 by Toni Pierce-Sands and Uri Sands in Saint Paul, Minnesota, TU Dance is a leading voice for contemporary dance. The 10-member, professional company is acclaimed for its diverse and versatile artists, performing work that draws together modern dance, classical ballet, African-based and urban vernacular movements. The TU Dance repertory features original work by renowned choreographers including Dwight Rhoden, Ron K. Brown, Kyle Abraham, Gioconda Barbuto, Katrin Hall, Marcus Jarrell Willis, Gregory Dolbashian and Camille A. Brown. Through celebrated performances of the professional company and accessible dance education at TU Dance Center, TU Dance provides opportunities for everyone to experience the connective power of dance.

# Sally Award Honorees of African Heritage

## *Ta-coumba Aiken (2012)*

Saint Paul painter Ta-Coumba T. Aiken is the force behind some of Minnesota's most acclaimed public artworks. Since the early 1970s, he has created public art in collaboration with schools, neighborhood organizations, and city planning and development departments on works such as the Jax/Gillette Children's Hospital mural, the Minneapolis Central Library's tile fireplace and the North Side's Pilot City murals project. He supports the use of his artwork by organizations involved in pursuing social justice.



## *James Samuel "Cornbread" Harris (2013)*

James Samuel "Cornbread" Harris Sr. is a famous Minnesota musician. He is a singer and pianist. He was a performer on Minnesota's first rock n roll record, and he is the father of record producer Jimmy Jam. His repertoire includes blues and jazz. He was born in 1927 in Chicago, Illinois.



## *The Steeles (2014)*

The Steeles consist of five siblings; J.D., Fred, Jearlyn, Jevetta, and Billy Steele whose singing style is an integral part of the Minnesota sound. They have recorded and performed with Prince, Donald Fagen, Morgan Freeman, George Clinton, Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, Mavis Staples, Johnny Lang, The Five Blind Boys of Alabama, the national radio broadcast A Prairie Home Companion and others throughout their long and storied career. The family has traveled around the world in the acclaimed musical The Gospel at Colonus including a Broadway run at the Lunt Fontanne theatre in 1988. Their accomplishments span far and wide including corporate projects with Target, AMBEV, and Delta Airlines. They have been featured on local and national commercials.





# Sally Award Honorees of African Heritage

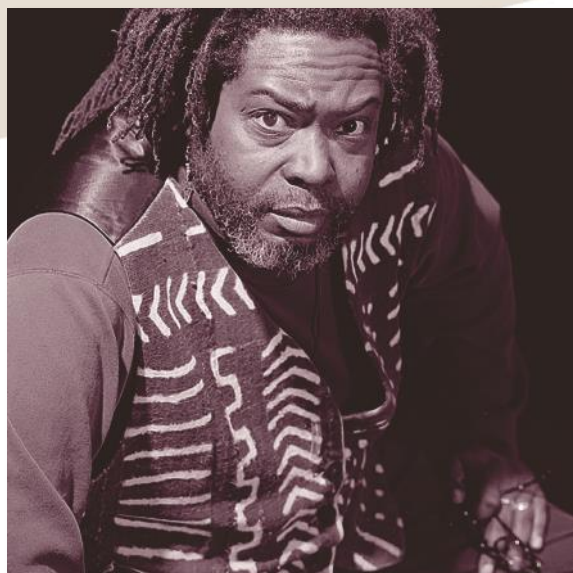
*Reverend Carl Walker and Grant West (2016)*

Reverend Carl Walker is a resident of St. Paul, Minnesota and is a renowned musician for more than 50 years. He is the Co-founder and Board member of the Walker-West Music Academy. He is on the Board of Directors for MacPhail Center for Music. He is a member of the St. Paul Black Ministerial Alliance. Rev. Walker is the Founder and President of the Morning Star Community Development Corporation and founding pastor of Morning Star Missionary Baptist Church.



Grant West is the co-founder of the Walker West Music Academy. Grant's music career includes teaching, composing, recording, and performing at various special events around the Twin Cities. One of his career highlights is forming the West Bros Jazz Piano Duo with his brother, Thom. The duo performed for Prince at Paisley Park and in concert at the World Theater. They have two CD credits, *Jazzy Holidays* and *Jes' Playin'*. As a solo artist, Grant has accompanied Sammy Davis Jr. Grant's passion is to inspire students' personal growth and confidence through the study and expression of music. In nearly 30 years of operation.

Walker-West has served thousands of students. Carl West and Rev. Carl Walker developed their signature method for teaching piano and other instruments called the "Walker-West Method." This method is a highly successful, culturally based program built on teaching music as language. Its technique offers immediate gratification for students and provides them with tools for success throughout their musical pursuits.



*J. Otis Powell (2017)*

Powell was a writer, performance artist, mentor, curator and consultant. He was a founding curator for Bridges, a performance arts program with Pangea World Theater. J. Otis' words have been recorded and released on several CDs and a DVD titled *News as Abstract Truth* with Bill Cottman, *Unsentimental* with Rene Ford, *BALM!* In association with SpeakEasy Records, *THIS CAT IS OUT*, with The New Day Blues Band, *THEOLOGY: Love & Revolution* and *Words will Heal the Wound*. The Minnesota Spoken Word Association awarded Mr. Powell their Urban Griot Innovator Award and inducted him into their Hall of Fame.



# Sally Award Honorees of African Heritage

## *Maia Maiden (2018)*

Maia Maiden is the new director of arts learning and community engagement at the Ordway Center for the Performing Arts. She is also known as Rah Fyah and she has been a leader in the dance community for over 20 years. She is native of South Minneapolis, she has studied all genres of dance primarily focusing on West African, Hip Hop, and Step. Her work has been featured in *Momentum: New Dance Works 2008*, the *Hip Hop Theater Festival 2008* and *Fringe Festival 2008* in Washington D.C., *Snapshots: Reflections of Women 2010* and the *Catalyst Series 2012*. In 2015, she was featured in the *CHANGEMAKERS Profile Series* presented by Intermedia Arts.



## *Janis Lane-Ewert (2019)*

Janis Lane-Ewert hails from Chicago, Illinois and began her career as an arts administrator in 1977. Her work with nonprofit organizations led her to Minneapolis, MN in 1989, where she resided as a Development Officer at KBEM, Jazz88 FM (Minneapolis, MN). She was KFAI Fresh Air Radio's Executive Director for twelve years and engaged with a variety of nonprofit organizations in the Midwest as a development consultant and media producer. Lane-Ewert remains active in mentoring youth of color seeking direction and leadership towards advancing their educational and community-based careers.

# Glossary

**Collaborate**—to work, one with another; cooperate, as on a project.

**Commemorate**—to honor the memory of someone/something by some observance.

**Commission**—authority granted for a particular action or function.

**Community**—a social group of any size whose members reside in a specific locality, share government, and often have a common cultural and historical heritage. Simply a group of people that have some commonality with each other.

**Diversity**—the inclusion of individuals representing more than one national origin, color, religion, socioeconomic stratum, sexual orientation, etc.

**Ebonics**—a dialect of American English characterized by pronunciations, syntactic structures, and vocabulary associated with and used by some North American Black people. African American Vernacular English (AAVE) or Ebonics exhibits a wide variety and range of language forms and elements, however many its elements are shared with Standard American English.

**Equity**—something that is fair and just. Has some shared principles with equality.

**Penumbra**—the region in which only a portion of the light source is obscured by the occluding body, a partial eclipse, the part where some or all of the light source is obscured.

**Porter**—a person hired to carry burdens or baggage, as at a railroad station or a hotel.

**Script**—a manuscript or document.

**Segregation**—the institutional separation of an ethnic, racial, religious, or other minority group from the dominant majority.

**Silhouette**—a dark image outlined against a lighter background.

**Theater**—a building, part of a building, or outdoor area for housing dramatic performances or stage entertainments, or for showing movies.

**Traditions**—the handing down of statements, beliefs, legends, customs, information, etc., from generation to generation, especially by word of mouth or by practice.

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