

Speaker Bios

Dr. Tamara J. Walker is an associate professor of Africana studies at Barnard College, Columbia University. Her research interests focus on slavery, gender, and racial formation in Latin America; their legacies in the modern era; and global Black mobility. Walker is the author, most recently, of *Beyond the Shores: A History of African Americans Abroad* (2023). Her first book, *Exquisite Slaves: Race, Clothing, and Status in Colonial Lima* (2017), won the 2018 Harriet Tubman Prize. She is currently working on a book about whiteness in Latin American visual culture.

Elizabeth Way is associate curator of costume at The Museum at the Fashion Institute of Technology and the curator of *Africa's Fashion Diaspora*. She edited *Black Designers in American Fashion* (2021), *Ann Lowe: American Couturier* (2023), and *Africa's Fashion Diaspora* (2024). She holds an MA in costume studies from New York University.

To Register

Website: fitnyc.edu/museum
Email: museuminfo@fitnyc.edu

The symposium is free and open to the public. However, reservations are required. Seats are first come, first served with an RSVP. The Museum at FIT and the college reserve the right to cancel a program at any time. If you require accommodations due to a disability, please contact museuminfo@fitnyc.edu to discuss your needs. Please provide enough advance notice so that it is possible to honor your request adequately.

The Katie Murphy Amphitheatre is in the Fred P. Pomerantz Art and Design Center on the northwest corner of Seventh Avenue and West 27th Street in New York City.

The *Africa's Fashion Diaspora Symposium* has been made possible thanks to the generosity of the Couture Council of The Museum at FIT. This project is supported in part by the National Endowment for the Arts. To find out more about how National Endowment for the Arts grants impact individuals and communities, visit www.arts.gov. Additional support was provided by the New York State Council of the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature.

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About The Museum at FIT

For information about visiting The Museum at FIT; its membership group, the Couture Council; and tours and donations, please go to fitnyc.edu/museum.

The Museum at **FIT**

Africa's Fashion Diaspora Symposium

Friday, October 25, 2024
Katie Murphy Amphitheatre

The Museum at **FIT**

Lia Samantha, Colombiamoda fashion show, 2014. Photograph by Marlen Stahlhuth.



Schedule

10 am	Welcoming remarks, Dr. Joyce F. Brown , president of FIT
10:05 am	Introduction, Dr. Valerie Steele , director and chief curator of The Museum at FIT
10:15 am	Elizabeth Way , “Africa’s Fashion Diaspora”
10:45 am	Joelle Firzli , “The Ivorian Cultural Renaissance: A History of Fashion from the 1960s to Today”
11:15 am	Q&A with the audience
10 min. break	
11:30 am	Dr. Christine Checinska , “Hylan Booker: The First Black Couturier in Europe”
Noon	Aisha Ayensu in conversation with Dr. Christopher L. Richards , “Ghanaian Fashion: Histories and Futures”
12:30 pm	Q&A with the audience
12:45–2:15 pm	Lunch
2:15 pm	Lia Samantha Lozano in conversation with Dr. Tamara J. Walker , “Diasporic Design in Colombia”
2:45 pm	Teleica Kirkland , “Callaloo People: Caribbean Heritage, Innovation, and Design”
3:15 pm	Q&A with the audience
10 min. break	
3:30 pm	Dr. Jonathan Michael Square , “Cross Stitchings: Fashion, Textile Art, and Black Feminism Between the U.S. and Brazil”
4:00 pm	Tremaine Emory in conversation with Dr. Pamela Newkirk , “American Histories Through Fashion”
4:30 pm	Q&A with the audience

Speaker Bios

Aisha Ayensu is a Ghanaian designer who launched Christie Brown in 2008. The brand blends tradition with modern silhouettes, celebrating African heritage in luxury women’s wear. Recognized globally, Ayensu advocates for women in leadership.

Dr. Christine Checinska is the Victoria and Albert Museum’s inaugural senior curator of Africa and Diaspora textiles and fashion. She is also lead curator of the museum’s international touring exhibition *Africa Fashion*. Checinska is a board member of the British Textile Biennial and director at large for the Textile Society of America; she also serves on the visual arts committee at St. Paul’s Cathedral.

Tremaine Emory, founder of Denim Tears, uses visual storytelling in his clothing designs to traverse the intersection between fashion, music, and culture. At No Vacancy Inn, the global creative collective that Emory co-founded, he spearheads collaborations centered on contemporary art. Born in Atlanta, Georgia, Emory has worked with Theaster Gates, Hank Willis Thomas, Virgil Abloh, Frank Ocean, André 3000, and Serge Becker, among many others.

Joelle Firzli is a multicultural independent fashion scholar who explores the intersection between fashion and cultural sustainability, particularly in West Africa and the Middle East and North Africa regions. Firzli serves as part-time faculty at Parsons School of Design and at the College of DuPage. She holds a BA in political science from the Lebanese American University and an MA in fashion studies from Parsons School of Design.

Teleica Kirkland is a lecturer in Cultural and Historical Studies at the University of the Arts London: London College of Fashion; a PhD candidate at Goldsmiths, University of London; and the founder and creative director of the Costume Institute of the African Diaspora (CIAD), an organization dedicated to developing resources and building curricula about dress and adornment cultures from the African Diaspora.

Lia Samantha Lozano is a fashion designer and a pioneer of Afro-Colombian fashion. She was inspired by her community’s aesthetics to create her eponymous brand, Lia Samantha, which translates the power of Black and Indigenous peoples’ cosmovisions, traditions, wisdom, spirituality, and beauty into contemporary design.

Dr. Jonathan Michael Square is the assistant professor of Black visual culture at Parsons School of Design. He earned a PhD from New York University, an MA from the University of Texas at Austin, and a BA from Cornell University. Previously, he taught in the Committee on Degrees in History and Literature at Harvard University and was a fellow in the Costume Institute at The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Dr. Pamela Newkirk is a journalist, author, New York University professor, and multidisciplinary scholar whose work examines contemporary and historical depictions of African Americans in popular culture. Her last book, *Diversity, Inc.: The Failed Promise of a Billion-Dollar Business* (2019), was included in *Time* magazine’s “100 Must-Read Books of 2019.” Newkirk was recently inducted into the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Dr. Christopher L. Richards is an associate professor of African art history at Brooklyn College. He specializes in African fashion, dress, and personal adornment. Richards has published extensively on dress and fashion in Ghana and South Africa, including his most-recently published book, *Cosmopolitanism and Women’s Fashion in Ghana* (2022).