

# *BOMB*

## BOMB Magazine Awarded Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Grant for Oral History Project National Expansion

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**In June 2021, BOMB Magazine was awarded a two-year \$500,000 grant from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation for the national expansion of the Oral History Project (OHP).** This major grant will expand the geographic scope of the OHP to include New Orleans and Chicago, bringing the revelatory stories of African Diasporic visual artists based in these cultural hubs to a national audience. Until now, the OHP's primary focus city was New York.

Launched in 2014, BOMB's OHP is a series of novella-length interviews with influential African Diasporic visual artists. The program was conceived to fill a gap in contemporary art discourse by creating primary-source documents on historically marginalized artists. For the artists, the immersive interview process provides a singular opportunity to reflect on their lives and work, ensuring that their stories are safeguarded for future generations. The oral histories are available free of charge on BOMB's website, which draws over 720,000 unique readers annually.

To date, BOMB has produced oral histories with twenty-three artists, some renowned, others underrecognized, including: Wangechi Mutu, Edward Clark, Kara Walker and Larry Walker, Peter Bradley, and Gerald Jackson. Previous interviewees have been selected by Editor in Chief Betsy Sussler in consultation with BOMB's distinguished Oral History Project Advisors, including Sanford Biggers, Melvin Edwards,

Thelma Golden, Kellie Jones, Odili Donald Odita, Lowery Stokes Sims, Carrie Mae Weems, Stanley Whitney, and Jack Whitten (in memoriam).

The OHP's expansion to New Orleans and Chicago will significantly grow the number and geographic diversity of oral histories in BOMB's archive and amplify the program's impact through partnerships with local institutions. For the focus cities, the project will raise awareness of and deepen resources on local artists, as well as provide new educational experiences for audiences through related public programs and curriculum.

Two new BOMB staff members will lead the project's expansion: OHP Director Andrea Battleground (joined 9/28/2021) and OHP Managing Editor Janée Moses (joined 10/04/2021). Battleground and Moses will select interview subjects, edit the histories, identify institutional partners, develop project-related public programs, and collaborate with marketing staff to disseminate the oral histories in new and creative ways. Educator, curator and writer Nico Wheadon will partner with BOMB on educational outreach, including the creation of an OHP inspired curriculum for self-guided and facilitated learning environments.

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## **ORAL HISTORY PROJECT EXPANSION TEAM**

**Andrea Battleground, Oral History Project Director**, is an archival projects administrator and curator based in Harlem, New York. Her work focuses on the preservation, description, exhibition, and access of media — particularly moving images, sounds, and oral histories of the African diaspora. She has 13 years of experience conducting memory and preservation work and five years of editorial experience. Battleground is the curator of the 2016 Black Ballots Mixtape, the Schomburg Secret Cinema Saturday series, and the Made In Harlem 2021 film program. She is co-producer of the Lo-Life Oral History Project and has moderated or introduced programs

for Film Forum, Artists Space, and Maysles Documentary Center. Her practice contemplates the ways in which media is both ephemeral and permanent.

**Janée Moses, Oral History Project Managing Editor**, is an oral historian and researcher. She has cultivated over 8 years of oral history engagement and holds a Masters Degree in Oral History and a PhD in American Culture. Her research specialties include 20th century African American Literature, Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, Performance Studies, and 20th century Social Movement History.

**Nico Wheadon, Curriculum Development Consultant**, is founder and principal of bldg fund LLC, and is an independent art advisor, curator, educator, and writer with 15 years' experience in arts education. She is an adjunct professor at Barnard College, Brown University, and Hartford Art School, teaching at the intersections of art history, creative and cultural entrepreneurship, and museum studies. As an educational consultant, she has partnered with Arizona State University, Creative Capital, The Guggenheim, and HBO to produce self-guided arts curricula for both K-12 and adult learners. With a focus on professional development and inquiry-based exploration, these curricula empower learners to manifest art history's contemporary relevance and build the futures they wish to inhabit.

**Oral History Project Editorial Advisors (New Orleans and Chicago)** are Nic Brierre Aziz, artist and Community Engagement Curator for the New Orleans Museum of Art; Ron Bechet, painter and educator at Xavier University; Gianna Chachere, Founder and Executive Director of The New Quorum Artist Residency; Lydia Y. Nichols, writer and arts worker; Rebecca Snedeker, James H. Clark Executive Director of the New Orleans Center for the South Gulf at Tulane University in New Orleans; Lisa Corrin, Director of The Block Museum of Art at Northwestern University; Janet Dees, Steven and Lisa Munster Tananbaum Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art at The Block Museum of Art at Northwestern University; Patric McCoy, Cofounder

and President of Diasporal Rhythms; Nyeema Morgan, visual artist and Professor, School of the Art Institute of Chicago; and Rebecca Zorach, Professor of Art History, Northwestern University in Chicago.

**Oral History Project Publishing Advisors** are Jon Cropper, Managing Partner and Founder of Futurlogic; Darby English, Professor of Art History at the University of Chicago; Dr. Kellie Jones, Professor in Art History and Archaeology at the Institute for Research in African American Studies at Columbia University; Nicholas Negroponete, Founder, MIT Media Lab; and Rebecca Snedeker at Tulane University. Jones and Snedeker will serve on both the editorial and publishing advisory panels, allowing ideas to cross-pollinate across areas of expertise.

**BOMB Magazine**, founded in 1981, produces, disseminates, and preserves artist-generated content, providing the public with unique insight into the creative process. Now in its fortieth year, BOMB comprises a quarterly print magazine, an online publication, a podcast, and a digital archive of previously published content. All online content is available free to our over 720,000 readers worldwide.