

CREATIVETIME+FOTOFOCUS THE CONVENING

Creative Time and FotoFocus Announce *The Convening* Schedule

Speakers **Charles Gaines, Nicholas Galanin, Gee Horton, Anissa Lewis, Ronald Rael, RaMell Ross, Chip Thomas, Tania Willard,** and More to Gather for 2 Days of Art, Performance, and Discussion Around Land-Use, Stewardship, Borders, and Exchange

October 20 & 21, 2023



Ronald Rael and Virginia San Fratello, *Teeter Totter Wall*, 2019. Steel, paint, 800 miles. Courtesy of the artist

(CINCINNATI, OH — SEPTEMBER 12, 2023) — **Creative Time** and **FotoFocus** announce the schedule and speakers for *The Convening*, a series of critical dialogues, artist interventions, and performances that highlight the organizations' shared missions to lead urgent conversations on art and politics. The event takes place at various locations across Cincinnati on October 20 & 21, 2023. It is free and open to the public.

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Acting as a prelude to Charles Gaines' 2024 exhibition, *The American Manifest*, in Cincinnati, *The Convening* will delve into the intricate relationship between humans and the environment, addressing themes of land-use and self-determination through contemporary art practices, including photography.

On Friday, October 20, *The Convening* will commence at Mecca with a welcome reception and performance by **Omope Carter Daboiku, Nate May, and Talon Silverhorn**.

On Saturday, October 21, *The Convening* will continue with a morning session at the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center, promising thought-provoking discourse around land and stewardship. This session will investigate the complex interplay between human culture, land use, and natural history. Speakers in this session include **Aimee Meredith Cox, Charles Gaines, Gee Horton, Chip Thomas, and Tania Willard**; Creative Time Executive Director **Justine Ludwig**; and FotoFocus Artistic Director and Curator **Kevin Moore**. The morning keynote will be delivered by **RaMell Ross**, the Rhode Island-based liberated documentarian.

The Convening will conclude that same day at the Contemporary Arts Center, with an afternoon of performances, food, and conversation focused on themes of borders and exchange. A collaborative music performance session from **The Well**, uplifting Appalachian, African American, and Native American musical traditions within the Ohio River Valley, will take place following a meal organized by Wave Pool's **The Welcome Project**. Artist **Nicholas Galanin**, designer **Ronald Rael**, will deliver the final keynote conversation, and the day will conclude with a stirring performance by **Guillermo Galindo**, a post-Mexican visual and sound artist from Oakland, CA.

"We're very excited about the collaboration with Creative Time, as an organization that shares our commitment to exploring the pressing issues of our time through art. FotoFocus has always taken a very expansive view of photography and *The Convening* is perhaps our most expansive project to date, highlighting photography and lens-based practices within the broader context of the arts and humanities in an effort to better understand the political dynamics of our moment," said **Kevin Moore, FotoFocus Artistic Director and Curator**.

"*The Convening* offers an exciting opportunity to address some of the most pressing issues of our time and how they manifest both locally and globally. Exploring the thematics of land and borders, we invite speakers to illuminate how the past and present intertwine—powerfully coalescing in Cincinnati. Creative Time's deep commitment to site-specificity, collaboration, and the catalytic potential of art, beautifully coalesce in this partnership with FotoFocus," said **Justine Ludwig, Creative Time Executive Director**.

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SCHEDULE

The Convening is free and open to the public. For the latest schedule and more speaker details, please visit FotoFocus.org/Symposium.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2023:

Mecca, 1429 Walnut Street, Cincinnati, OH

6–9pm **Welcome Reception and Performance** featuring musicians and key collaborators for **The Well**: **Omope Carter Daboiku**, Dayton, OH; **Nate May**, Oakland, CA; and **Talon Silverhorn**, Yellow Springs, OH

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2023:

Morning Session: *Land and Stewardship*

National Underground Railroad Freedom Center, 50 East Freedom Way, Cincinnati, OH

Centering on earth-based themes—land, waterways, trees—these conversations consider histories of land, land use, and the wisdom that can be gleaned from prolific natural histories, in which human culture has played a complicated role.

10am **Land Acknowledgement**

Grounding by **Aimee Meredith Cox**, Associate Professor in the Anthropology Department at New York University, New York, NY

10:30am **Panel** moderated by **Justine Ludwig**, Executive Director, Creative Time, New York, NY, with panelists: **Charles Gaines**, Artist, Los Angeles, CA; and **Gee Horton**, Visual Artist, Cincinnati, OH

11:30am **Panel** moderated by **Kevin Moore**, FotoFocus Artistic Director and Curator, New York, NY, with panelists: **Anissa Lewis**, Artist and Executive Director, Wave Pool, Covington, KY; **Chip Thomas**, Photographer and Public Artist, Flagstaff, AZ; and **Tania Willard**, Artist and Curator, Syilx Territories, British Columbia, Canada

12:30pm **Keynote** by **RaMell Ross**, Liberated Documentarian, Providence, RI

Afternoon Session: *Borders and Exchange*

Contemporary Arts Center, 44 East 6th Street, Cincinnati OH

The border between the United States and Mexico has become increasingly contentious in recent years, symbolizing the inequities intensifying over our dwindling natural resources.

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Simultaneously, the concept of borders plays an outsized role in the human psyche, defining—often arbitrarily and harmfully—boundaries between not only nations but cultures, genders, species, and generative forms of shared knowledge between these entities.

- 1:30pm** **Wave Pool/The Welcome Project Lunch**
The Welcome Project bridges relationships within neighborhoods, and empowers Cincinnati's refugee and immigrant population while connecting, assisting, and inspiring all through art and food. This special iteration is grounded within *The Convening* themes and presents a meal alongside an artistic response and participatory engagement.
- 2:30pm** **Workshop Performance: The Well**
Sound Intersections: a collaborative new music commission uplifting Appalachian, African American, and Native American musical traditions within the Ohio River Valley featuring: **Nate May**, Composer, Oakland, CA; and **Talon Silverhorn**, Cultural Educator, Yellow Springs, OH; in sonic conversation with Cincinnati-based musicians **Jay Bolotin**, **Kathryne Gardette**, and **Baba Charles Miller**
- 3:30pm** **Keynote Conversation with Nicholas Galanin**, Artist, Sitka, AK; and **Ronald Rael**, Designer and Professor of Architecture and Chair of the Department of Art Practice at the University of California Berkeley, La Florida, CO and Oakland, CA
- 4:30pm** **Performance by Guillermo Galindo**, Post-Mexican Visual and Sound Artist/Composer, Oakland, CA



RaMell Ross, *iHome*, 2012. Pigment print, 36 x 46 inches. Courtesy of the artist and Pace Gallery

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SUPPORTING PARTNERS

Creative Time and FotoFocus are grateful to *The Convening's* supporting partners:

- [21c Museum Hotel](#)
- [Contemporary Arts Center](#)
- [National Underground Railroad Freedom Center](#)
- [Terra Foundation for American Art](#)
- [Wave Pool/The Welcome Project](#)
- [The Well](#)

ABOUT CREATIVE TIME

Since 1974, Creative Time has commissioned and presented ambitious public art projects with thousands of artists throughout New York City, across the country, around the world—even in outer space. The organization's work is guided by three core values: art matters, artists' voices are important in shaping society, and public spaces are places for creative and free expression. Creative Time is acclaimed for the innovative and meaningful projects they have commissioned, from Tribute in Light, the twin beacons of light that illuminated lower Manhattan six months after 9/11, to bus ads promoting HIV awareness, to Paul Chan's production of *Waiting for Godot* in New Orleans, and much more. In partnership with a variety of well-known cultural institutions and community groups, Creative Time has commissioned art in unique landmark sites from the Brooklyn Bridge Anchorage, Times Square, Rockefeller Center, Governors Island, and the High Line, to neglected urban treasures like the Lower East Side's historic Essex Street Market, Coney Island, and New Orleans's Lower 9th Ward. Creative Time is committed to presenting important art for our times and engaging broad audiences that transcend geographic, racial, and socioeconomic barriers.

ABOUT FOTOFOCUS

FotoFocus is a Cincinnati-based nonprofit arts organization that champions photography and lens-based art through exhibitions and public programming. Since 2010, the organization has engaged art and educational institutions throughout the region to support and expand the cultural dialogue around the medium that has come to define our time. With an emphasis on intellectually and academically rigorous programs, the organization provides uniquely enriching access to lens-based art, film, and practices inspired by photography. FotoFocus has collaborated with organizations, curators, academics, and more than 2600 artists and participants, to present over 750 exhibitions and programs.

Signature FotoFocus programming includes the **FotoFocus Biennial**, which took place October 2022 with the theme, *World Record*. Past editions have presented work across the Cincinnati region by historic and contemporary artists, including Berenice Abbott, Eugène Atget, Roe Ethridge, Zanele Muholi, Karl Blossfeldt, Francis Bruguère, Thomas Ruff, and Akram Zaatari. Other landmark events include the **FotoFocus Symposium**, which has contributed significant dialogue and insight to culturally relevant topics including the controversial Mapplethorpe

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exhibition, and the **FotoFocus Lecture and Visiting Artist Series**, which has brought globally renowned artists such as Zoe Leonard and William Wegman to Cincinnati.

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