

**secac 2020**

**common  
wealth**

hosted by

**vcuarts**

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## Welcome from Carmenita Higginbotham, Dean, VCUarts



On behalf of VCUarts, it is my pleasure to welcome you as participants in the 76th annual SECAC conference. While I wish we could welcome you all to Richmond in person, we are honored to host you for what is sure to be a dynamic virtual conversation about the complex notions and ideals that make a commonwealth.

The arts continue to be significant to cultural dialogue and critical inquiry. We at VCUarts are committed to the engagement of arts and education on our campus and in the city of Richmond, and we are excited to include each of you in this intellectual and cultural exchange.

I would like to extend my thanks to Carly Phinizy, assistant chair of the VCUarts Department of Art History and the SECAC 2020 conference director. I also would like to thank VCUarts faculty members Tobias Wofford, Holly Morrison and Orla Mc Hardy; and Chase Westfall, the curator of Student Exhibitions and Programs, who all served on the SECAC Planning Committee. This conference is made possible in no small part by their research and insight. I am also grateful to our partners at SECAC; its president, Sandra Reed, and administrator Christine Tate, who have shared their invaluable expertise and guidance.

I hope you find SECAC 2020 to be a seminal event that addresses a range of societal issues through thoughtful research and inventive pedagogical practices. VCUarts is thrilled to host you virtually, and I hope this opportunity inspires you to visit us in the future.

### **Carmenita Higginbotham, Ph.D.**

Dean, VCU School of the Arts

Special assistant to the provost for the School of the Arts in Qatar

## Acknowledgements from the Conference Director



Planning the annual conference is a labor of love requiring a tremendous investment of time, patience, and skill on the part of the talented people who make it a reality. I have been aided tremendously by the SECAC 2020 Planning Committee, a group of VCUarts faculty and curators, including Holly Morrison, Orla McHardy, Tobias Wofford and Chase Westfall. Each of them contributed significantly to the conference identity and program. Monica Kinsey, Clay Harper, and Chelsea Brtis were integral to the execution of our exhibitions at the Virtual Anderson. I am immensely grateful for the expertise of the VCUarts Communications team, including Suzanne Silitch, Teresa Engle Ilnicki, Emily Park, and Kim Catley. From VCUarts development, Kelly Kerr was crucial in realizing our virtual keynote lecture with the technical expertise of Travis Fairman from the Cinema department. We are so grateful for our amazing partners at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts. I give special thanks to Valerie Cassel Oliver, Sarah Eckhardt, and Michelle Oliver, who all contributed in vital ways to making SECAC 2020 a success.

SECAC President Sandra Reed has served as a mentor and guide for my work as Conference Director these past two years. Without fail, SECAC Administrator Christine Tate has been a source of truly invaluable support throughout the conference planning process. Her patience and wisdom made all the difference in navigating this year's many challenges.

I am so excited to welcome everyone to SECAC's first fully virtual conference, which it has been my absolute honor to oversee.

**Carly Phinizy**

SECAC 2020 Conference Director

**Keynote Speaker**  
**Valerie Cassel Oliver**

**“The Long Road:  
Shifting Culture in  
the Museum One  
Work at a Time”**

**Keynote Lecture**  
**December 5, 2020**  
**7:00 PM EST**  
**Live Q&A following the Keynote**

The keynote lecture will provide an in-depth view into the shifting culture at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts through the eyes of its Modern and Contemporary curator and the bold strategic plan that is allowing it to reinvent itself.

Valerie Cassel Oliver is the Sydney and Frances Lewis Family Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts. Before coming to the VMFA, Cassel Oliver served as senior curator at the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston, Texas for sixteen years. She has organized numerous exhibitions including the acclaimed *Double Consciousness: Black Conceptual Art Since 1970* (2005); *Cinema Remixed and Reloaded: Black Women Artists and the Moving Image*, co-organized with Dr. Andrea Barnwell Brownlee (2009); *Hand + Made: The Performative Impulse in Art and Craft* (2010); *Radical Presence: Black Performance in Contemporary Art* (2012); and the groundbreaking retrospective exhibition *Howardena Pindell: What Remains to be Seen*, co-organized with Naomi Beckwith (2017). Most recently, Cassel Oliver organized the exhibition *Cosmologies from the Tree of Life* that featured over thirty newly acquired works from the Souls Grown Deep Foundation. Currently, Cassel Oliver is working on a new exhibition: *The Dirty South: Contemporary Art, Material Culture, and the Sonic Impulse*. The exhibition, slated to open in May 2021, will explore the sonic and visual currents that not only influenced today’s music but art over the last century.



Image courtesy of the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts. Photography: Travis Fullerton.

## Juried Exhibition

# Juried Exhibition Reception & Presentation of Awards

December 4, 2020  
7:00 PM EST

Join us for a virtual reception to include remarks from Guest Juror Sarah Eckhardt and presentation of Best in Show awards.



Image courtesy of the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts. Photography by Sandra Sellars.

### Juror's Statement

With over 400 entries across a wide span of mediums that ranged from paintings, drawings, and sculpture, to installation art and video, the abundance of strong works submitted to this year's SECAC juried art exhibition made for a difficult selection process. The limitations imposed by the pandemic also presented a need to imagine how these works would function when converted into virtual objects in a virtual space. These challenges, however, provided an exciting opportunity to work with the team at VCUarts and the Anderson as they produced a virtual exhibition that features the work of 26 SECAC members. We are grateful to all of the artists that submitted work and to the artists in the exhibition who were open to making the adaptations necessary to translate their artworks into cyber objects. Even though the art cannot be experienced in person this year, the diversity of perspectives offered by these artists will hopefully reach an even larger audience through this online platform.

Dr. Sarah Eckhardt has served as the Associate Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts since 2011. At the VMFA, Eckhardt works with the museum's early 20th-century European holdings as well as the mid-to-late 20th-century and 21st-century collections, including photography and the sculpture garden. Eckhardt's recent curatorial projects include the exhibition *Working Together: Louis Draper and the Kamoinge Workshop* (2020), which was inspired by the archive of Richmond native Louis Draper and the Kamoinge Workshop, a group of African American photographers Draper helped to found in 1963.

# The Virtual Anderson



The Virtual Anderson offers a unique experience at a time when travel and in-person event attendance to conferences, exhibitions, and the like have become particularly complex. While not a replacement for a traditional exhibition, the Virtual Anderson provides a much-needed platform that makes accessible the artworks of the talented artists who were selected by Sarah Eckhardt, Associate Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, for inclusion in the SECAC juried exhibition.

Under the leadership of Chase Westfall, the Anderson Curator of Student Exhibitions and Programs at VCUarts, and with administrative support provided by Monica Kinsey, Administrative Coordinator at the Anderson, the Virtual Anderson was built by Clayton Harper and Chelsea Brtis using the game design engine Unity. Harper is a Media, Art & Text Ph.D. candidate and Kinetic Imaging Adjunct Faculty member at VCU and Brtis is a Communications Arts Adjunct Faculty member at VCU.

The Virtual Anderson is a navigable, 3D-modeled gallery environment in which visitors can view and interact with virtual renditions of artworks, videos, and installations. The courtyard and gallery spaces resemble, as nearly as possible in virtual reality, the Anderson's entrance and first floor gallery spaces.







(from left to right)

**03.** (the piece on the floor): Jonathan Durham,  
Untitled (Systems Over), 2018

**13.** Brent Dedas, *Sfumato No. 322*, 2019

**04.** Lauren Cardenas, *#SueñoAmericano Inflight  
meal 001*, 2019

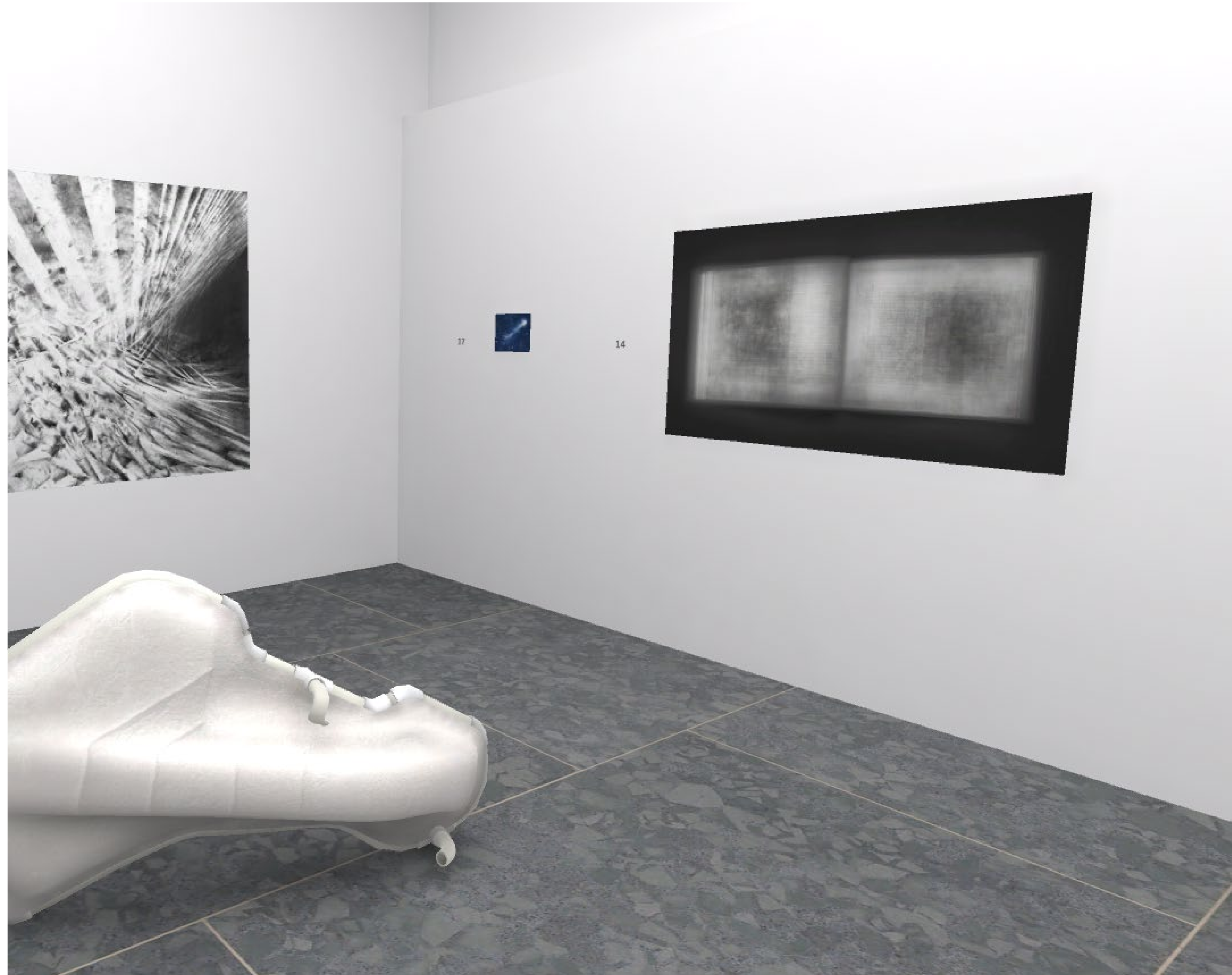
**18.** Alexandra Giannell, *Fallacies of Structure*, 2019

(from left to right)

17. Shannon Johnstone, *Stardust and Ashes #95*, 2018

14. Eddy López, *Nicaragua: Surviving the Legacy*, by  
Paul Dix, Pamela Fitzpatrick, 2018

Modeling and 3D design by Richard Harper and  
Chelsea Brtis



# Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Statement & Racial Justice Town Hall

**Racial Justice Town Hall**

**December 2, 2020**

**1:00–2:30 pm EST**

**Facilitated by Marian R. Vassar**

This event is generously sponsored by the Columbia College Chicago Department of Art and Art History

**Columbia**  
COLLEGE CHICAGO

## **SECAC Statement of Commitment to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion**

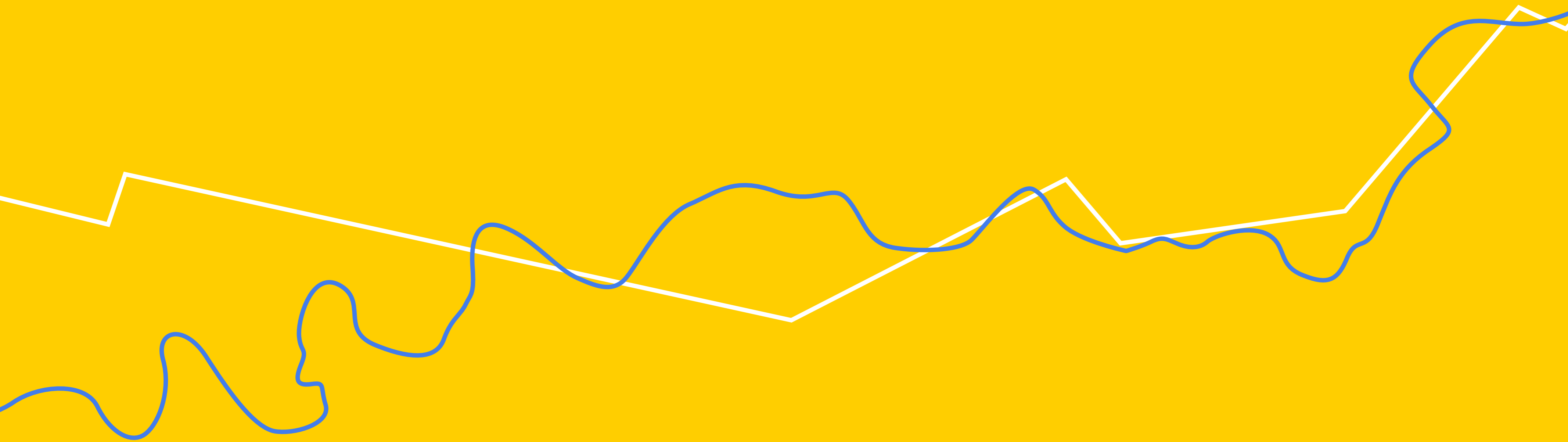
As an organization that fosters creative, scholarly, and educational dialogue in universities, colleges, community colleges, professional art schools, and museums, SECAC must strive to understand, dismantle, and resist the legacies of racism and white supremacy. This begins internally, with an acknowledgement of SECAC's complicity in institutional and systemic racism, and a commitment to enacting substantive change. Together, we can imagine and create a better world, united in the pursuit of justice, equity, and transformation.

Read the full statement here: [secacart.org/page/EDlcommitment](https://secacart.org/page/EDlcommitment)



Marian R. Vassar is the Executive Director for Diversity and Equity at the University of Louisville, where she has served approximately 27 years in various roles. With over 16 years of experience as a Diversity and Equity Practitioner, she conducts approximately 300 workshops annually focusing on Anti-Racism, Implicit Bias, Microaggressions, Power and Privilege, Engaging in Difficult Dialogue, and more. In addition to her work within UofL, Marian has worked with over 30 K-12 school districts, universities, government and corporate sponsors to foster spaces that are more inclusive and equitable for all. In 2019, Marian received the 2019 UofL Presidential Multicultural Engagement award and was also recognized as an Adult Black Achiever. She was also nominated as Today's Woman 2020 Educator of the Year.

# Schedule of Sessions



**Tuesday, 12/8**

**Block C: 4 PM–6 PM**

**Room 3**

**Graphic Design**

**What Graphic Design Can Do for Social Change**

**Chair:** Jong-Yoon Kim, Plymouth State University

**Presenter 1**

**Stefanie Cobb, Middle Tennessee State University**

*A Novel Idea: Students Utilize the Literary Experience to Conceptualize Political Campaign Branding and Design in an Exhibition Called In the Books*

**Presenter 2**

**Shantanu Suman, Ball State University**

*Educating Future Designers about Accessibility*

**Presenter 3**

**Yixue Li, Parsons School of Design**

*A Design Ethnography: Visual Landscape Around Chinese Factories*

**Presenter 4**

**John O'Neill, University of Minnesota Duluth**

*Teaching Inclusivity Using Web Accessibility*

**Presenter 5**

**Eve Faulkes, West Virginia University**

*Fostering Diversity and Inclusion in Our Design for Social Impact Course*

**Presenter 6**

**Eddy López, Bucknell University**

*For the Common Good: Social Impact Design through Experiential and Service Learning*

**Room 4**

**Studio**

**Innovative Foundations**

**Chair:** Steven Bleicher, Coastal Carolina University

**Presenter 1**

**Jennifer Logun, Pratt Institute**

*Sans Color-Aid*

**Presenter 2**

**Nicole Condon-Shih, Cleveland Institute of Art**

*A Drawing of a Drawing of a Drawing*

**Presenter 3**

**Rachel Cohn, Ball State University**

*Not a Video Class: 4D Foundations*

**Presenter 4**

**Steven Bleicher, Coastal Carolina University**

*Session Introduction: Innovating Studio Practice*