

Question Bridge: Black Males  
Opens October 26, 2013



*Question Bridge: Black Males* is an exhibition that explores challenging issues within the black male community by instigating a transmedia conversation across the geographic, economic, generational, educational and social divisions of American society. Question Bridge provides a safe setting for necessary, honest expression and healing dialogue on themes that divide and unite black males in the United States. An intimate and essentially genuine experience for viewers and subjects, the exhibition provides new opportunities for understanding and healing.

This is a critical period in history for the African-American community. In recent years, many have been able to transcend racial, cultural and economic boundaries while others have found themselves increasingly confined to the margins of society. Empirical data shows Americans, including Black people, still harbor negative associations that directly impact the ability of Black males to function successfully in this country. Being exposed to more complex and multi-faceted images and narratives of African-American men is the most effective means of overcoming the negative bias. Question Bridge strives to make it more difficult to say, “Black males are \_\_\_\_\_.” If we succeed in deconstructing stereotypes about, arguably, the most opaque and feared demographic in America, then the Question Bridge model can work to overcome limiting assumptions about any culture or group.

*Question Bridge: Black Males* was created by Chris Johnson and Hank Willis Thomas, in collaboration with Bayeté Ross Smith and Kamal Sinclair. The executive producers are Delroy Lindo, Deborah Willis and Jesse Williams.

To learn more, click here, [www.questionbridge.com](http://www.questionbridge.com).

New Mythologies: William Villalongo  
Opens October 26, 2013



*"There are always two things going on: the one you can see and the one you can't see. That's what interests me."* – William Villalongo

To create good new art, an artist has to know a lot about what came before them; then use that knowledge not to emulate but to extend. William Villalongo is a painter and installation artist who is interested in skewing traditional concepts found in art and history. These include the value we place on traditional Western art and history (European); the classical female; cultural typecasting, and symbolism.

He picks up these threads and weaves in concepts of race, identity, and history to create paintings that confront traditional notions of the male gaze. We are peeking through the woods (a classic construct in painting), and observing the “nymphs” at their leisure. But instead of being passive and meeting western ideals of beauty, these women are engaged in building their own sense of culture and society out of symbols found in the western world.

William Villalongo is a Brooklyn, NY based artist born in Hollywood, FL and raised in the town of Bridgeton, NJ. He received a BFA in 1999 from Cooper Union and an MFA in painting in 2001 from Tyler School of Art. Mr. Villalongo's work was first introduced to the public through his residency at the Studio Museum in Harlem in 2004 and PS1 Contemporary Art Center's Greater NY 2005 exhibition. His work has also been exhibited in the Studio Museum In Harlem's 2005 "Frequency" exhibition and El Museo del Barrio's fifth biennial: The (S) Files in 2007. He is a recipient of both the Louis Comfort Tiffany Award and the Joan Mitchell Foundation Painters & Sculptor's Grant. In 2012 he received a The New York Foundation for the Arts (NYFA) annual Artist Fellowship in Painting. His work is included in several notable collections including the Studio Museum In Harlem, El Museo Del Barrio and Princeton University Art Museum. His work has been reviewed in the Minneapolis Star Tribune, The New Yorker and the New York Times. Mr. Villalongo was appointed lecturer in painting/printmaking at Yale University in 2010.

*New Mythologies* was curated by Gantt Center Director of Education & Public Programming Jonell Logan, and features Villalongo's most recent paintings, digital collages and video.

African American Art Since 1950: Perspectives from the David C. Driskell Center  
Opens October 26, 2013



*African American Art Since 1950: Perspectives from the David C. Driskell Center* is an exhibition in which works by renowned artists Romare Bearden, Elizabeth Catlett, and Sam Gilliam are coupled with the work of exciting new visionaries, including Chakaia Booker, Lorna Simpson, and Kara Walker. This group of artists collectively reflects the growing prominence—and complexity—of the field of African American Art over the last 60 years.

The exhibition is organized by the David C. Driskell Center for the Study of the Visual Arts and Culture of African Americans and the African Diaspora and showcases a generation of artists who opened up the possibilities for African American art, from pursuing pure abstraction to providing a forum for art as political activism. The exhibition also presents the newest voices in African American art which utilize a variety of media and possess a hybrid approach to cultural and social identity.

### **About the David C. Driskell Center**

The David C. Driskell Center for the Study of the Visual Arts and Culture of African Americans and the African Diaspora at the University of Maryland, College Park, celebrates the legacy of David C. Driskell --Distinguished University Professor Emeritus of Art, Artist, Art Historian, Collector, and Curator-- by preserving the rich heritage of African American visual art and culture. Established in 2001, the Center provides an intellectual home for artists, museum professionals, art administrators, and scholars of color, broadening the field of African diasporic studies. The Driskell Center is committed to collecting, documenting, and presenting African American art as well as replenishing and expanding the field. For further information about the David C. Driskell Center, please visit [www.driskellcenter.umd.edu](http://www.driskellcenter.umd.edu).