

ADC to Launch Global Exchange Program for Students and Emerging Artists

Hundreds of years ago, lacking a shared language, enslaved Africans gathered on Sundays in New Orleans' Congo Square to communicate through music, dance, and art. Today the arts powerfully link the African Diaspora and the 1.2 billion African-descended people dispersed around the globe who, collectively, would constitute the world's third largest nation.

This coming Tuesday January 18th, the [African Diaspora Consortium](#) (ADC), in partnership with the [Edmund W. Gordon Institute for Urban & Minority Education](#) at Teachers College, Columbia University, will launch The Michael Nettles African Diaspora Globalization Student and Artist Exchange. Led by ADC master artists Delfeayo Marsalis, trombonist and composer, and Katrina Andry, visual artist and printmaker, this semester-long online experience convenes students and emerging artists from four diaspora countries (Bermuda, Brazil, the U.K. and U.S.) to enhance and produce comparative knowledge about the Diaspora and global experiences, absorb one another's cultures and life experiences, and focus on artistic engagement, community development, and service-learning projects.

The launch of the Nettles Diaspora Student and Artist Exchange will be on January 18 at 10:30 am. [Register here](#) for this live-streamed and pre-recorded event featuring new music by Delfeayo Marsalis and artwork by Katrina Andry.

ADC is a partner organization of Teachers College's Edmund W. Gordon Institute for Urban & Minority Education, which is directed by Erica N. Walker, Clifford Brewster Upton Professor of Mathematical Education, and of the College itself. TC Provost and Dean Stephanie Rowley is a member of ADC's Board.

“The Gordon Institute and Teachers College are proud to be partners in launching this program, which we believe is enormously relevant during this time, while ongoing struggles against deeply rooted racism continue to be met with opposition and resistance around the world and when the challenges created by the ongoing COVID pandemic make connection across cultures a vital concern for all people,” said Dr. Walker. “Despite progress there is always more work to be done, and this program will help to facilitate those efforts.”

“The African Diaspora is a story so central to an understanding of history and cultures, and to an understanding of human experiences, that it just has to be examined and told,” said ADC founder and President Kassie Freeman. “The Nettles Globalization Student and Artist Exchange recognizes that the arts were and continue to be a critically important part of that story.” The program offers a new model for study abroad exchanges for African-descended students, who are the least likely demographic to participate in study abroad opportunities. “There is a lot of fear among these students about being away from their families and communities. Our program is structured to pair cohort members with faculty from their home countries.”

In 2016, the College Board approved ADC’s plans to create African Diaspora Content (and first Africa topic or theme) to be incorporated in Advanced Placement (AP) Seminar. Highlighted in [Time](#) and [The Washington Post](#), the course will be used by approximately 50 schools during 2022. ADC is now piloting the first African Diaspora curriculum for elementary- through middle-schoolers. [Read an [in-depth story](#) from TC’s website on ADC and the AP course.]

Along with Freeman, Marsalis, Andry and Walker, speakers at the Nettles Diaspora Student and Artist Exchange launch include ADC Chair Paula A. Cox, former Premier of Bermuda; David Lammy, British MP and Shadow Foreign Secretary; Jose Vicente, President of Zumbi dos Palmares University, Brazil’s only Black university; Duranda

Greene, President of Bermuda College, and Michael Nettles, Senior Vice President, ADC Vice Board Chair.

The Nettles Diaspora Student and Artist Exchange honors Michael Nettles, ADC leadership team member, and Senior Vice President and Edmund W. Gordon Chair of Policy Evaluation and Research at the Educational Testing Service. Click [here](#) to learn more about the program.

The Edmund W. Gordon Institute for Urban & Minority Education, part of Teachers College, Columbia University since 1973, is committed to improving the quality of education for urban and minority children and youth and to better understanding their educational, psychological, and social development, as well as the experiences in the home, neighborhoods, communities, and larger society that determine opportunities for development and social mobility. Click [here](#) to learn more about IUME.