

CORCORAN

GALLERY OF ART • COLLEGE of ART + DESIGN

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: November 21, 2013

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CORCORAN PRESENTS *QUESTION BRIDGE: BLACK MALES*

Collaborative, national transmedia project explores being “black” and “male” in America

December 7, 2013—February 16, 2014



WASHINGTON, D.C.—This winter, the **Corcoran Gallery of Art and College of Art + Design** hosts *Question Bridge: Black Males*, a collaborative, transmedia project that complicates traditional views of identity by exploring the full spectrum of what it means to be “black” and “male” in America. In video-mediated exchanges, over 150 African American men of different social, economic, political, and generational backgrounds from across America respond to questions posed by one another about issues that unite, divide, and puzzle them.

Framed as an internal conversation within a group too often defined externally, *Question Bridge* uses candid discussion to expose the diversity of thought and identity among black males, challenging monochromatic

views of “blackness.” The wide-ranging conversation touches on family, love, masculinity, discrimination, community, education, violence, and the past and future of black men in society.

The public is invited to engage with the *Question Bridge: Black Males* project in a variety of ways. Visitors to *Question Bridge* will be among the first to test out a new custom app that allows participants to pose and respond to questions; those videos will then be included in the project’s archives. Visitors can listen to recent responses from other D.C. visitors, tag conversations with theme words, or search for content by keyword. The app is accessible via iPads available in the exhibition and will be available for download via The Android Market, iTunes, or by visiting the Question Bridge website. Beginning in early 2014, the app will link to a new, interactive online platform with additional filtering and sorting options. The website is designed to help everyone, from academics and statisticians to casual visitors, uncover new ways to understand the complexities of black male identity in America.

In addition to the five-channel video installation at the Corcoran, the project includes a single-channel version of the project at the Corcoran’s Community Gallery at THEARC (1901 Mississippi Avenue, SE, Washington, D.C.) January 11 through February 16. A special lecture with artist Hank Willis Thomas will take place December 9 at 7 p.m., and roundtable discussions with local leaders in the African American community will take place at THEARC January 23 from 6:30-8:30 p.m.

[Question Bridge: An Evening with Hank Willis Thomas](#)

Monday, December 9; 7 p.m.

Members \$10, Public \$15

On this evening, celebrated photo conceptual artist, Hank Willis Thomas, discusses his current projects and practice, as well as *Question Bridge: Black Males*, the compelling transmedia project that explores the full spectrum of what it means to be “black” and “male” in America. An exhibition viewing of *Question Bridge* follows the program.

[Question Bridge Blueprint Roundtable Discussion at THEARC](#)

Thursday, January 23; 6:30 p.m. –8:30 p.m.

Location: THEARC (Town Hall Educational Arts Recreation Campus); 1901 Mississippi Ave. SE; Washington, D.C.; 20020

FREE

Join us at THEARC for the *Question Bridge* Blueprint Roundtable Discussion. Hear from local black leaders as they break down the communication boundaries between generations, share their insights, and identify ethical issues requiring leadership and mentorship at a local level. Bayeté Ross Smith, one of the projects artists and co-creators, will join the panel as well.

Question Bridge: Black Males was created by Chris Johnson, Hank Willis Thomas, Bayeté Ross Smith, and Kamal Sinclair. It has been shown at New York’s Jack Shainman Gallery, San Francisco’s The Exploratorium Museum, the 2012 Sundance Film Festival, the Utah Museum of Contemporary Art, the Oakland Museum of California, and the Brooklyn Museum, among others. Visit <http://www.corcoran.org/exhibitions/question-bridge-black-males> and <http://questionbridge.com/>.

MORE ON *QUESTION BRIDGE: BLACK MALES*

Question Bridge originated in 1996, when artist Chris Johnson was looking for a way to generate meaningful conversation around class and generational divisions within San Diego's African American community. Mediated through the lens of a video camera, ten members of the black community were given a format to openly express their beliefs and values through candid and unscripted question and answer exchanges. A decade later, Hank Willis Thomas approached Johnson about collaborating to establish a similar project focused on black men around the country. Over a four year period, the artists and their collaborators have traveled the nation collecting questions and answers from more than 150 black men in cities including New York, Philadelphia, New Orleans, and Atlanta. The resulting project includes more than 1,500 exchanges.

Question Bridge: Black Males was created by Chris Johnson, Hank Willis Thomas, Bayeté Ross Smith, and Kamal Sinclair. The Executive Producers are Delroy Lindo, Deborah Willis, and Jesse Williams.

Question Bridge is a fiscally sponsored project of the Bay Area Video Coalition (a 501c3 not for profit organization) and supported in part by a grant from the Open Society Institute: Campaign for Black Male Achievement, The California Endowment, The Tribeca Film Institute, the LEF Foundation, The Center for Cultural Innovation, and the California College of the Arts. The project was supported by the Sundance Institute's New Frontier Story Lab.

VISITOR INFORMATION

The Corcoran's hours of operation are as follows: Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Wednesday from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.; closed Monday and Tuesday. Admission is \$10 for adults, and \$8 for seniors (62+) and students (with valid ID). Free: children 12 and under, active duty military (with ID), Corcoran Members.

MEMBERSHIP

Corcoran Gallery of Art membership offers special access to the Corcoran's renowned collection, temporary exhibitions, lectures, films, concerts and an array of social events. Members also receive valuable discounts at the Corcoran Shop, Todd Gray's Muse at the Corcoran, and the Corcoran College of Art + Design. Corcoran Members may visit the Corcoran an unlimited number of times for free. For more information, contact the Membership office at (202) 639-1753, membership@corcoran.org or online at www.corcoran.org/membership.

ABOUT THE CORCORAN

Established in 1869, the **Corcoran Gallery of Art** was one of America's first museums of art—dedicated, in the words of founder William Wilson Corcoran, to “encouraging American genius.” Today it is Washington, D.C.'s largest nonfederal art museum, known internationally for its distinguished collection of historical and modern American art as well as contemporary art, photography, European painting, sculpture, and the decorative arts. A dynamic schedule of special exhibitions complements a range of educational programming, which together enrich the perspectives of the visiting public, support the local arts community, and encourage thoughtful interpretation of today's most compelling social issues. **The Corcoran College of Art + Design** was founded as a school of art in 1890 and stands as Washington's only four-year accredited college of art and design. The College is one of the few in the nation whose educational model includes an integral relationship with a museum, fostering the talent of the next generation of artists. For more information about the **Corcoran Gallery of Art and College of Art + Design**, visit www.corcoran.org.

Hours

Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday: 10 a.m.–5 p.m.

Wednesday: 10 a.m.–9 p.m.

The Corcoran is closed on Monday and Tuesday.

The Museum offers extended hours every Wednesday until 9 p.m.

Admission

Wednesday through Friday and Sunday: \$10 Adults; \$8 full-time students (with ID) and seniors (62+); children under 12 free; Corcoran Members free.

Image: *Question Bridge: Black Males*

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