

Ambassador's Palette

Newark Arts' E-Newsletter

Celebrating the half year for Newark Arts!

Newark Arts would like to thank everyone who contributed to a highly successful 2016. We reached new heights in 2016 so it's only right that Newark Arts continues on the right path to further expand in 2017. From the artists, curators, volunteers, ambassadors, participants, and Newark Arts staff, our combined efforts made 2016 one of the most illustrious and prosperous yet. As we continue to grow, we would like to keep an open door for our ambassador program and invite all of you to continue to contribute in unique ways for Newark Arts! Be on the lookout for more events from the Newark Arts Council as we usher in this New Year. For the full event schedule, visit our website at newarkarts.org/events.

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Want to keep up with everything Newark Arts in 2017? Be sure to visit our website for all events, news, and how to get more involved at: www.newarkarts.org



The Directors Corner with Jeremy Johnson

Dear Ambassadors:

Welcome to the second edition of our newsletter. I hope you find in these pages stories, facts, and information to encourage your service to Newark Arts. This is going to be an especially exciting year for our volunteer Ambassadors. During the summer and fall of 2017, Ambassadors will take to the streets to spread our mission: TO POWER THE ARTS TO TRANSFORM LIVES.

As Newark's umbrella agency for all the arts, Newark Arts gives you an opportunity to touch every corner of our community—from assisting with children who are served by the Newark Arts Education Roundtable, to seniors involved in community arts events, to thousands of resident and tourists who will descend on Newark in October for the Open Doors Citywide Arts Festival. There's also the slew of neighborhood meetings that will be scheduled for the 18-month Community Cultural Plan.

In other words, we couldn't do this work without you. Thank you for supporting Newark Arts with your generous contribution of time, talent, and treasure.

Sincerely,

Jeremy V. Johnson
Executive Director



Newark Arts is Still Looking for Ambassadors

Why volunteer?

As we usher in the New Year for 2017, Newark Arts would like to continue to keep an open door policy for our ambassadors! We are always looking for new volunteers who can contribute their talents and help out the Newark Arts. Head over to our website at newarkarts.org/volunteer. There are many benefits with being a Newark Arts Ambassador, including making a big impact on Newark's rising arts scene.

We encourage all ambassadors to volunteer and make an impact on the local community, network with others, create valuable connections, and gain more exposure and knowledge of the Newark Arts scene. If you would like to make a difference here in Newark and surrounding areas, volunteering for Newark Arts can be a fun and easy way to make this possible.



There are volunteer opportunities in administrative support, event production and staging, exhibition staff, hosts, graphic design, and even information technology and website design! If you have an interest in the Arts and have some of the above skills, then volunteering for the Newark Arts is especially for you!

If you enjoy meeting new people, gaining knowledge about different art forms, keeping active and gaining cultural awareness of the Newark Arts scene, don't hesitate to become a volunteer and a Newark Arts Ambassador. Don't be afraid to check out our website and try out our easy way to get in touch with the Newark Arts Council. Fill out the simple survey and we will be in touch.



Event Recap: Newark Arts Honors Gala 2017 March 29th at the Avenue A Club

Newark Arts would like to thank everyone who attended its annual Honors Gala on March 29th, 2017 at the Avenue A Club in Newark, NJ. The festive night was filled with networking, dinner, and dancing as we celebrated our four honorees: Willie Cole, Paquito D’Rivera, Richard Meier, and Nell Painter. The yearly event celebrated the transformative power of the arts, honoring artists who have made significant achievements and exemplify the values of creativity, education, and community. Check out some of the event photos below!



Event Recap: Newark Arts Honors Gala 2017

The citywide Arts Gallery Crawl took place Friday Oct 21st, with over 40 exhibits open for FREE! Thank you to all of the participants and ambassadors for making Friday’s crawl such a special citywide event. Cheers to 15 years! Meanwhile, Sunday 22nd had many Art studios in the city open their doors for the final day of the festival. This day included over 15 events, with hundreds of artists from over a dozen countries.



Paquito D’Rivera on Newark Arts Honors Gala

“I didn’t expect it. I was so honored to share this award with such distinguished people. Newark is a lovely place, they have NJPAC here, they have WBGO, they have these Portuguese restaurants that are so good. This is the birthplace of Sarah Vaughn, Andy Bey, and James Moody.”

Nell Painter on the Newark Arts Honors Gala

“It feels wonderful, I’m honored, I’moverwhelmed. I have such respect for my co-honorees. It’s a marvelous event. The Newark Arts Council just goes from strength to strength. It’s a very important institution. The event was lovely. I’ve never been to this place before, and I live in the Ironbound, so it’s a gorgeous place and I’m looking forward to next year.”



Willie Cole on the Newark Arts Honors Gala

“It feels great to be honored by the town I grew up in. The event is fantastic. I was really inspired by the other honorees, because I know of them but I don’t know them that well. I wish I had said more when I received my award. I thought about the many ways Newark had changed my life, and I mentioned the first one as a little kid sitting on Abe Lincoln’s lap. I mentioned the second one when Amiri Baraka making us all into black people, but I forgot to mention that WBGO hired me as a graphic designer when they first went on the air as a jazz station. And that brought me back to Newark after I graduated from college.”

THE HONOREES – Newark Arts Honors Gala 2017 March 29th, 2017, The Avenue A Club

Willie Cole



Willie Cole is a world-renowned sculptor and conceptual artist whose art is featured in public and private collections across the country. His work has been inspired by American pop culture and images from Asian and African culture, and he is celebrated for his contributions to the field of African-American art.

Richard Meier



As the 1984 Pritzker Architecture Prize winner and recipient of a host of other prestigious awards, Newark-born architect Richard Meier's legacy will live on in his buildings and complexes across the country. Notably, Meier designed Los Angeles' Getty Center and Newark's Teacher's Village, a new mixed-use community in the heart of Newark's downtown.

Paquito D'Rivera



Originally from Cuba, Paquito D'Rivera is a Grammy-Award winning jazz and classical saxophonist who has performed throughout Europe, the United States, and Central America. After overcoming the obstacles of defecting from his home country, D'Rivera has become one of the most well known jazz musicians in America.

Nell Painter



Nell Painter, a Newarker, is the artist formerly known as the historian Nell Irvin Painter, author of *The History of White People* and *Sojourner Truth, A Life, A Symbol*, and the Edwards Professor of American History, Emerita, Princeton University. Painter's work uses found images and digital manipulation to represent freedom.

Newark Arts' Featured Gallery – Dexter Wimberly, Executive Director of Aljira Gallery

Newark Arts' Jarrett Adams sat down with Dexter Wimberly, the new Executive Director of Aljira Gallery to discuss the new vision and direction of one of Newark's premiere Art galleries. Get to learn more about Mr. Wimberly and Aljira Gallery below!

NA: First Question, what is the background of Aljira, how did it get started, and what is your role here as Executive Director?

DW: Aljira was started in 1983 by Victor Dobson and Karl Hazlewood, two artists who were in Newark and realized there was a significant art community here, and felt that they wanted to create an organization that could nurture that. That was 34 years ago nearly – and Victor continued to be the executive director of Aljira for the past 33 years. Aljira has been a significant part of the Newark Arts scene since its inception – hundreds of artists have had exhibitions here. There have been tons of programs surrounding the exhibitions, I think that if you talk to anyone in Newark about art, within minutes they'll mention Aljira --- not just because the length of time the organization has been here, but the significance to the community.

My goal as executive director really is to guide the organization, to make sure we are really staying true to our mission, and that is to show under recognized artists of all cultures, genders, and geographies, and really enrich the lives of the people in Newark and beyond through the arts. I'm also responsible for a lot of the marketing and fundraising activities that the organization does. We have a staff but as Executive director you really kind of guide everything that happens.



NA: Okay, so you secure most of funds to keep Aljira open as an art space, but do you pick the artists yourself? Who decides what artist gets to curate the space?

DW: Well the artists don't curate the space. The curator would organize the artists and select the artist and then organize the show. Typically, you would have a curator as a stand-alone person who would organize the exhibition in a space like this. It just so happens that I am also a curator in addition to being the executive director. So, in this first period of time since I started this position, maybe about four months ago at this point, I've been organizing the shows and for the foreseeable future I'll be organizing the exhibitions. But, this is not always the case; in some instances I'll hire a curator on a project basis to come in to put together a show. That will more likely be what we will be doing moving forward in to 2018.

NA: That leads into my next question, how long does an exhibition stay open for on average at Aljira?

DW: Its about 3 months. I mean 2-3 months is about typical, we do about 4 exhibitions per year – at most five, but certainly not more than that.

NA: What is your background into the arts and how did you end up at Aljira?

DW: It's a long story, but the shorter version of this very long story is that I used to run an advertising agency that I started in the 90s. I ran it for 13 years, and while I was running my agency I became interested in contemporary art. I met a lot of artists who were making fantastic work but really need



help guiding their career. And I began working with some of these artists in that capacity, and while doing that I became very interested in how art is presented, and how its consumed, and experienced by the public. So I began organizing exhibitions as another extension of this idea of helping artists and their careers. And that transformed into something completely in and of itself. Without planning to become a curator, its something that I became, and as a result, I began working with artists from all over the country, and eventually internationally.

My history prior to Aljira as it relates to the arts was spending a lot of time as an independent curator. I worked at the Museum of African Art for about a year; about six years ago I was the Director of Communications there. After that, I became the Director of Strategic Planning at an organization called ICI, which is Independent Curators International, in New York City. I knew of Aljira for many years, I'd been visiting, coming to exhibitions, I didn't really ever imagine taking over as Executive Director, and it wasn't something I was thinking about. It just so happens that the timing in my career and what was happening here, things kind of coincided in a way where it totally made sense.

NA: When you took the job, what were some of your goals for Aljira as far as bringing your vision into the space, and what you bring to the table?

DW: Its two things, first you have to build on what has already been done here for the past three decades. Thinking about the contemporary art market, or art scene, or however you want to call it – it has changed a lot. Not only in the past three decades, but it has changed a lot in the last three years, yet alone 30 years. Thinking about that and thinking about artists – it seems there are so many more artists now than ever before. That's funny in a sense that, you would think right off the bat that more artists would be a good thing, but I think it makes it more difficult to be an artist, because there are so many others. And as a result, there are fewer places for artists to have their art seen, because there are so many people vying for the same galleries, and there are only 12 months in a year.



So for me, being here is a great opportunity to really identify artist who are doing significant work that might not have had the opportunities. But still, there is a limit to what we can do here. So it's about building on the past, but also thinking about the world as it exists right now.

NA: What type of artists do you generally support for Aljira?

DW: There really is no specific type of artist. We've shown such a wide variety of artists over the years that you really could not say that its any specific genre or style; its not all political, its not all painting, its not all sculpture, its not all Newark or New Jersey based artists, or old, or young, or American, so its really mixed. The real point is to create a place where those kind of rich unique experiences are not predictable.

NA: Where do you see Aljira going in the future, specifically in 2017 and further beyond?

DW: Well we'll be here in Newark. I think there is always the possibility for any organization to move, don't leave it to me to predict what 25 years from now brings for this organization, but for the foreseeable future, I think Aljira is woven into the fabric of Newark. We will be here, whether we are in this building, up the street or around the corner, you know – that's fine and not really so relevant because places move. But I think being in Newark is critical and so important.



And also growing, not just growing the size and space, but growing in terms of the type of things that we do. Launching new programs like the artist and residents program, or really just looking to partner with museums around the country and sharing exhibitions, and doing things of that nature. So it's about growth, but some of that growth is physical and the other half is growing our mission.

NA: As far as the Newark Arts scene overall, what role do you feel Aljira plays in the bigger picture?

DW: I think we are right in the middle of it, we are certainly not the biggest gain in town but we are certainly not the smallest. We are right in the middle of it. I think we are a very important piece of that puzzle. I think that while a lot of local artist have not shown in Aljira recently, if you look at its history, there have been lots of opportunity for local artists. I think part of the mission now is to not just focus solely on locality, but to really think about how to bring the world here to Newark. And part of that is showing artists who are not from here, or dealing with issues that are broader issues that might reflect back on to Newark.

Newark Arts' Featured Ambassador: Karime Diaz

Karime Diaz: Newark Arts Ambassador, Art Enthusiast, Kean Student

The Newark Arts E-Newsletter would like to thank and recognize our featured Ambassador, Karime Diaz, for her interest in Newark Arts and her volunteer work during Open Doors 2016. Get to know Karime a bit more in the interview below.



NA: What is your background in the Arts and what type of art do you do?

KD: I took a lot of art classes in high school. I did a lot of transitional art like painting – stuff like that. I currently don't do a lot of art right now, but I'm really an art enthusiast. I like going to museums, learning about new art, and teaching art history classes. I took art history here in college, and in high school I was a part of the National Art Honor Society. So that's really my background. At one point, after watching this movie I wanted to get into being an art curator, and purchase art for galleries. That would be one thing I want to do in the arts. Or if I was dedicated, I would be interested in pursuing the performing arts, plays, and singing – stuff like that. Those are the top two things I would want to do.

NA: How did you get involved with Newark Arts?

KD: So here at Kean, I am a Public Relations Communications major, and as one of my electives, I took Event Planning and Management. So for this class we were required to find an outside event to volunteer for and at least put in 15 hours of work and help plan the event and gain experience on what the event industry is like. Like what is the motive



behind people planning these events? I learned a lot from you guys. So every since then, they've been asking me to come back to the office to help out here and there. That was my start.

NA: What specific event did you volunteer for?

KD: I volunteered for the Open Doors Citywide Arts Festival, which happens every fall.

NA: I understand you are a student at Kean University? What is your status there? Are you involved with any arts organizations on campus?

KD: I am currently a student here; I am in my junior year of college. Hopefully I'll be graduating in May 2018. Not like any clubs or anything, but we do have multiple galleries within the campus. So when I have free time, I usually go check out the new art that's being displayed. We have a whole variety of very exceptional artists that display their art here. Its very great to have this campus. One of the reasons I love it, is the multicultural diversity, Kean is very in tune with different cultures and activities and other stuff like that. That's why I love going to Kean; it is very diverse.

NA: Can you describe your experience working for Newark Arts during Open Doors? Do you remember what exhibits you worked at?

KD: They designated me as a captain for some of the days. So that's how I became an ambassador. On Wednesday, opening night, I worked the opening ceremony. I didn't really have a big role; I was being used as more of a floater that helped here and there. The next day was the launch party at the Prudential Center, where I was also a floater and a greeter. I guided people here and there to certain locations and helped them find their way. The last two days I helped out, I was doing the Gallery Crawl, & Murals and Martini's. I also helped with the registration desk, so that's really it.

NA: How do feel about the Ambassador program and how can it improve?

KD: Before taking this event planning class, I had never really heard of the Newark Arts Council. This was actually really by chance. As far as improvements, I think the program is there, I feel like maybe I could do more. I like that they have an ambassador program; I don't know what they could do differently, honestly.

NA: Are you from Newark? Is there any other reason why you choose to volunteer for Newark Arts?

KD: I'm not really from Newark, but I am from Elizabeth, NJ. I am really familiar with a big city environment. So with these cities, everyone has the misconception that it's all violence, dangerous, etc. And with programs like the Newark Arts Council, it gives everyone a good eye-opener, and a different perspective of these inner cities. That's why I love Newark Arts, I admire them for the work that they do. The reason I got involved with them was because I'm an art enthusiast and I just love the work that you guys do; what you promote and what you stand for. I'm a big community lover, so I definitely believe that the Newark Arts Council, really brings the whole community together in a positive way. So that's why.

NA: What's it like being selected for the Ambassador's Palette, Newark Arts' E-Newsletter?

KD: It was such an honor! It was unexpected; I did not really know I had such a good impact here at the Newark Arts Council. So I really admire that I was chosen for the Newsletter. I haven't had such a high honor in a while, so I thank you for selecting me!

Newark Arts' Featured Ambassador: Medinilla Soares



Medinilla Soares: Newark Arts Ambassador, Painter/Artist

The Ambassador's Palette newest contributor, Babatunde Ojo sat down with another Newark Arts Ambassador Medinilla Soares for another great volunteer feature in our newsletter. Check out what she had to say and some of her art pieces below!

NA: First off, introduce yourself?

MS: I am currently a sophomore at Essex County College and am an Art Major. I was accepted to the Art Program at Rutgers-Newark and am looking forward to it.

I moved to Newark about a year ago and I love it here. I lived close by, but I didn't venture as much as I should have because there's so much to do here.

NA: So, What was your experience with Newark Arts?

MS: So last year I... Right around Open Doors I was looking to get into the art scene and volunteer, because you have to go to the places to meet the people you want to meet. I love art and I love to meet like-minded people. I searched online for what there was available here in Newark. My first real experience was for Open Doors last year and I was amazed. Honestly, they could not have a better group of people; everyone was so kind and so friendly and it felt like we were a little art family. I learned so much working with all



the intelligent and bright women working there. And I was just impressed at how much was available here with Newark's art scene. Until I explored I didn't realize just how much I was unaware of.

NA: What form of Art are you interested in or studying?

MS: Initially I was interested in photography, but Essex County didn't offer it. So I decided to study the Fine Arts and it turns out that I'm actually good at it. Right now I'm really excited to work on the three dimensional design track and I'm really starting to like it. But again, there's so much out there and you kind of have to explore a little bit.

NA: How did you feel about the Newark Arts Ambassador program overall?

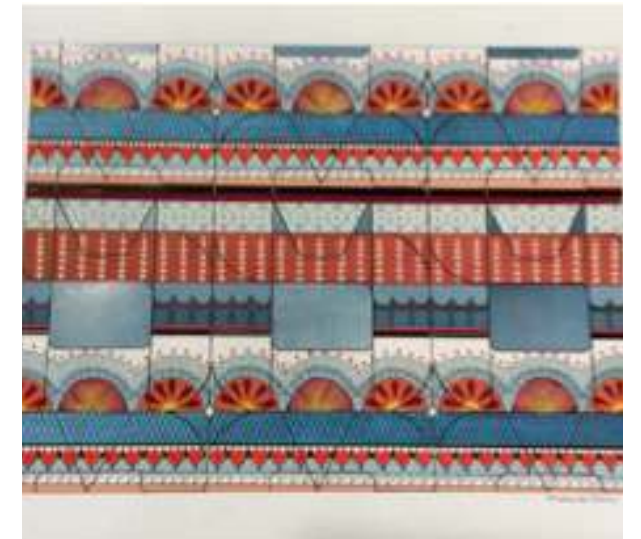
MS: I think it's very inclusive and that everyone that works in the office makes it a point to be that way. First of all there's so many people, I was surprised to see the turnout from so many people who want to volunteer in art related media. I think it's so nice to meet different people from all walks of life. It's so important for people to value art because it is a part of human identity. There are people who come together and think that the city needs to be functional, but also needs to be beautiful.

NA: Anything you would do differently with the Ambassador program?

MS: I just wish there were more people that knew about it to volunteer and be active because art is universal and timeless.

How did you feel about being selected for the Ambassador program?

MS: I felt very proud! Newark Arts had something like a top-down bottom-up kind of attitude. Every member is valued and people like Susan and Ruby have a thousand things going on yet still remember every single person's name. There were people who acted as role model as were the standard of how we should treat one another. It was nice to see such a positive outlook on the group of people who are working so hard to create something so wonderful.



Newark Arts' Featured Artist: Steve Colson

NA: It is my understanding that you guys are two of the biggest names in modern jazz, how do you view yourselves as artists on the jazz scene, past, present, and future?

IC: Well, we do think we are really good. But we are not famous in the way that people see fame in popular music. So yes, we are well known as artists, but it's a funny scene. Some people think of art and entertainment as the same thing. We look at art as something a little bit different than entertainment. We do consider ourselves artists, and some people say jazz – but that's a loaded word as well. We consider ourselves artists, we do a lot of presentations, but as far as rank I don't know how we would approach that.



NA: Can you break that down a little further, the aspect of being an artist vs. being an entertainer?

IC: Well we would like to think of ourselves as artists and what we do as entertaining. But some people think of entertainment as the goal. And for us that is part of the process or part of what we hope we are presenting, but we're not only focused in entertaining. It's been a transition. A lot time in the history books they'll write about the progression in music and how in the 1920s or so, musicians were more concerned about performing dance music, so that the public could dance and enjoy themselves. When you get to about the 1940s – to what you would call the modern jazz or beat bop era, the musicians were more concerned about their performance, than providing the audience with some kind of dance support. They were more interested in just performing their music, sort of like a concert as opposed to providing dances. Its been a change psychologically, whether you are working to supply fun for the audience, or whether you are trying to pursue a level of art that takes the listener to another realm.

NA: You have roots in Chicago, how did you end up in Newark and working with the Newark Arts Council?

IC: I was born in Newark. I was in and out of Newark until I left for college. My

grandparent's home was in Newark. On Sundays my family, my parents, brothers and sisters we would all come to Newark to attend Bethany Baptist Church. In fact where the church is now, is where my grandparent's home previously stood. When they past and the church moved this location form Market St., they acquired the land where my grandparents home was, and that's where the church is now.

My wife is from Chicago, so when I left and went to school, I went to Northwestern University in Evanston, and that's where I met her; we were both in the music school. And when I graduated I stayed in Chicago, and I lived in Chicago altogether for about 16-17 years. So I got very familiar with Chicago, and eventually we decided to move here to Jersey. So I'm back in Essex County, and that's how I got back into association with different people in and around East Orange and Newark.

NA: Can you break down the Chicago Arts Scene and your transition back the New Jersey? What were some of the differences and similarities?

IC: In Chicago, first of all, it is a major place for the development of art and the development of jazz performance in the United States. And it is still a very big music town – music and arts. It was good for me, because when I had my options to go to college, that was one of my thoughts, that Chicago was one of the big cities and major influences for jazz. That's what I was interested in, becoming a jazz musician. So I was going to a classical music school because it was an excellent school, but the training at Northwestern was for classical performances like Mozart and Bach and

Beethoven. So it was a feeding school for the Chicago symphony orchestra. That was the type of music they presented and the type of music they taught. I was learning jazz on my own, and when I got out of school, I was very fortunate because Chicago is where the AACM began. That's the Association for Advancement of Creative Musicians. I became familiar with some of its members; they had put out some recordings. When we started playing with Fred Anderson – he's a great saxophonist in Chicago who was an original member – and my college band started playing with Fred Anderson and his band, I became familiar with members from the AACM. When I moved from Evanston to Chicago, I joined the organization. My wife also joined the organization and from there we have been able to associate with a lot of the great musicians that came out of Chicago in the middle 60s and 70s.

We recorded our first record in 78' and 79' and that helped us start traveling internationally. We were actually traveling and doing major shows and jazz festivals all over Europe, before I moved back to New Jersey. That really helped us as far getting our recognition, and playing to different audiences. We've traveled throughout Italy, France, Germany, Holland and Austria quite a bit, and that was great for our musical education to hang out with different musicians and very well known people.

In terms of Newark, I just started performing a lot in and around Newark; the Newark Museum had jazz in garden, and I have performed at Symphony Hall. I've worked with Amiri Baraka in his group the Blue Ark, him and Amina Baraka, and performed a lot. Anybody that knows

poetry knows Amiri Baraka is one of the great literary minds, and a great poet. So I was very fortunate to work with him. And that helped me get involved with some of the Newark musicians. And also travel in and around this area with someone who is internationally famous. Because Amiri was such a literary person, he did a lot of notes for great people – it was great to be around Amiri, he was a master theorist in terms of politics and social movements. That helped me to become more familiar with people in Newark, to play in and around Newark.

I was also invited several times by Clement Price to the Madhouse and the Marion Thompson-Wright lecture series. Clement Price was a great historian associated with Rutgers University, and he had an annual event, so I was involved with several of those series. I brought my band to perform, so Clement Price and Amiri Baraka helped keep me established in and around this area. The piece I'm doing is dedicated to them, it is called, "Here is the Place, Our City" it is going to premiere on April 7th at 8 p.m., that's a Friday. The piece is also a dedication to Newark for its 350th year anniversary, but as I'm writing the piece there are really two people that I owe quite a bit too. In fact Clement Price was the one who forwarded my name to do a piece for Newark's 350th year, and I am very humbled to have been mentioned in that regard. It was NJPAC that made the official commission.

NA: What's it like performing in dedication to Amiri Baraka now he has passed? What does it mean to you?

IC: Well I've played with Amiri for over 34

years. We've traveled overseas, and in fact we did a big piece when NJPAC first opened. In 1998, we did a singing praise for Dr. King, but it was the first one at NJPAC. Newark had always done the celebration, but I had been commissioned to write a piece that would be premiered for Martin Luther King when NJPAC first opened. I asked Amiri Baraka and Richard Wesley to join me and collaborate with me on the piece – and we actually did an orchestra piece at NJPAC back in 1998. So I've played with Amiri for many years. In terms of Newark being 350 years old, hanging out with Amiri I never used to realize that, and Amiri would mention it every once and while and say, "You realize Newark is the 3rd oldest city in America?" You know, I feel humbled that Clement Price suggested my name as far as the 350th celebration, so that's how I feel about those two individuals. I've known them and played with them and they've actually helped me for many years since coming back to New Jersey.

NA: My next question is about the music you have done with your wife. Do you guys still collaborate on music? If so how did you guys develop your chemistry?

IC: Yes we collaborate all the time. We put together our record company together back in the late 70s. My wife writes music but she also writes most of the lyrics. If I would write a song, I would give it her and suggest she completes the lyrics. So she has done a lot of the lyrical work for our music, but we also collaborate on actual music together. And she has done several songs of her own. We do that and listen to see what songs will go together, and we've put out several records on our own label,



called the Silver Sphinx. Its been great that I have a partner that also has a musical background – if I'm going through any kind of situation, she kind of understands it because we've done a lot together. We've traveled to a lot of places together, as performers or as educators; we've both been involved in education. So that helps as well, because we are able to go back and forth between the performance aspect or the teaching aspect. I've given a number of lectures it's been a great situation for me, not only am I able to write my own music but I have a person who I'm close to, to add words when I need words, or sometimes make the arrangements when we have to travel.

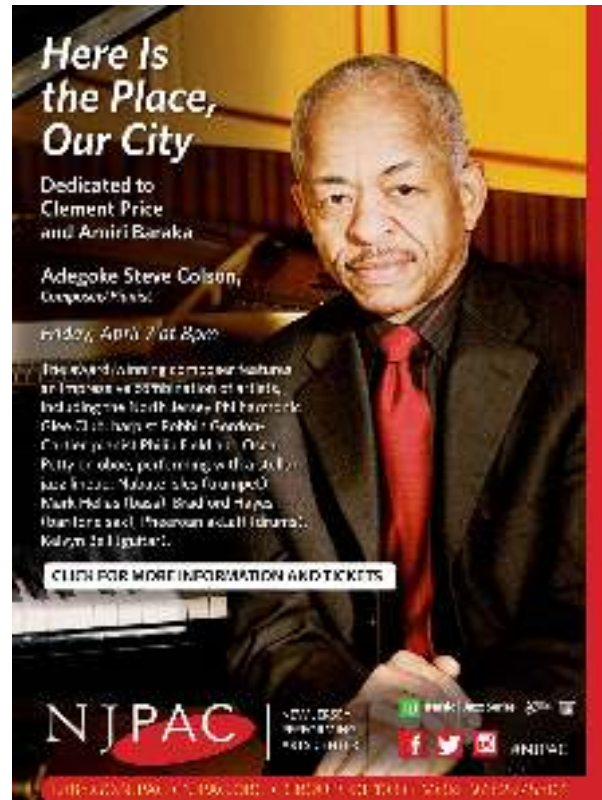
As musicians, we've learned that you need to be self reliant, or its good if you have knowledge to be self reliant, because music is one of the easiest things to use where you don't have to compensate those who created it. It's different because its intellectual property. But people feel that music should be free. Nowadays with the Internet and the way people download things – they can take a blank CD and rip off the data and pass it on, right now its very difficult for musicians getting paid for their work. My wife and I have been able to meet some of these challenges. And we have gone through difficult situations like anybody else, but we have been able to work independently and self-sufficiently and know a lot about the business because of it. So having my own label and being able to push my own records or make my own deals as far as how my music will be heard – that becomes that important in terms of a career, particularly how things are now.

NA: Throughout your career what has been some of the accomplishments you are most proud of?

IC: Well the things that I am proud of and things that I appreciate has a lot to do with the people I've been able to meet. My wife and I have played on some of the biggest jazz festivals in the world, and there are some musicians you meet with a particular kind of circumstance. One thing I really savior was when we were at North Sea Festival and I had a chance to have my name on the same bill with names like Dizzy Gillespie, Art Blakey, Mongo Santamaria, Ray Charles, Tito Puente, Oscar Peterson, just the greatest musicians on the planet. I was actually involved in a conversation with Dizzy Gillespie and Freddie Hubbard when Oscar Peterson walk ed up and asked if he could join the conversation. That's pretty much a highlight in my life.

Oscar Peterson is one of the best pianists to ever live, and Dizzy Gillespie and Freddie Hubbard, the same thing in terms of their trumpet playing. So I was standing around with three of the musicians that I admire. And it was hard to wrap my head around the idea that I was standing there talking to them.

But the other thing is my wife and I have managed to start our own record company. We were in only in our 20s when we started our record company. I put out a record, this November -- it was my solo CD. But we managed to do these things just the two of us. So, I'm kind of proud of those things. I'm proud of the fact that my wife has become the Arts Supervisor for the East Orange District at the Cicely Tyson School. So we've managed to meet and interact with some very wonderful people. Great artists and musicians, that's pretty much what does it for me.



Take a Look at Upcoming Newark Events for June

- Sat June 3rd** – Citywide Arts Education Summit, Express Newark Hahne & Co. Building. 54 Halsey St. Newark, New Jersey 07102. 9am - 2:30pm
- Sat June 3rd** – Taalam Acey Presents Wordcraft: Newark Newark Symphony Hall. 1020 Broad St. Newark, NJ 07102. 7 - 10pm
- Sat June 3rd** – Rainbow Country Reggae Sound Clash, SOLO(s) Project House 972 Broad St., Newark, NJ 07102. 9pm - 12am
- Sun June 4th** – Index BBQ at 27 Mix hosted by Index Art Center. 27 Halsey St. Newark, NJ 07102. 4 - 9pm
- Thu June 8th** – Evolution Open Mic: Crystal Kids ft. Sir Thelonious. 211 Community Impact: 211 Halsey St., Newark, NJ. 7pm - 12am
- Fri June 9th** – Omar Abdallah's Newark Riverfront House Party Newark Riverfront Park, Newark NJ 07105. 6 - 9pm
- Fri June 9th** – Wine, Cheese & Beer Tasting Fundraiser for LIPS Living Incubator Performance Space. Two Gateway Center, 283-299 Market St., Newark, NJ. 7 - 9pm
- Fri June 9th** – Portugal Day Newark Festival, Ironbound 56 Congress St. Newark NJ 07105. 1pm - 12am
- Tue June 13th** – Newark Arts Annual Meeting: The State of Arts in Newark Express Newark. 54 Halsey St. Newark, NJ 07102. 5:30 - 7pm
- Thu June 15th** – The Strategic Artist Talk with Patricia Arias-Reynolds 372 Broad St., Newark, NJ. 6:30 - 8pm
- Sat June 17th** – EO MACfest hosted by Arts Council of East Orange – ACEO City Hall Plaza, East Orange, NJ 07107. 12 - 8pm
- Sat June 17th** – Cloud 9: Gallery Aferro's 9th Annual Art Auction and Party Gallery Aferro. 73 Market St. Newark, NJ 07102. 7 - 10pm
- Sun June 18th** – 3rd Annual Brick City Solstice Event, Military Park 93 Park Pl. Newark, NJ 07102. 10am - 12pm

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Thank you!



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