Afro-Amerindian Research & Cultural Center

DIVIDING LINES

An African American & Native American Symposium

2020 SUMMARY
The Afro-Amerindian Research & Cultural Center is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) based in the metro-Atlanta area. It's mission is to comprehensively research African American and Native American historical and contemporary cultural cross-sections, while also addressing these through various programming efforts.

Through its strategic partnerships and donor support, AARCC can continue its research and outreach initiatives.

To learn more & donate visit: AARCCenter.wixsite.com/home
Creating New Spaces for Conversation and Understanding

In our second iteration of the Dividing Lines Symposium, we saw a substantial amount of growth in comparison to 2019. We were fortunate to have presenters and attendees from Georgia, Tennessee, North Carolina, Missouri, Los Angeles, New York, Chicago, Puerto Rico, Germany. We showcased over 47 films from over 13 countries, and benefited from the support of around 20 organizations and university departments. The conversations and discussions offered a unique conceptualization of a Black History Month event.

As we both celebrate and evaluate the success of the 2020 symposium, we hope to continue to find and encourage innovative ways to foster cross-cultural dialogue and understanding. African American and Native American communities have been inextricably linked for centuries and providing spaces to explore these connections ensures that our work is meaningful and can create a multitude of long term impacts.

Thanks to all our co-sponsors and volunteers, and especially the organizing team on behalf of the Afro-Amerindian Research & Cultural Center: Darian Hailes, Emily Cook, Marcus Sebastian & Kamran Sadiq.

Steven D. Gayle
Founder & Organizer
Dividing Lines: An African American & Native American Symposium
Learning

Presenters showcased their respective research and provided attendees with an innovative learning experience. This year the symposium hosted panels and presentations in a number of subject areas including History, Sociology Cultural Studies, Mental Health, Film, Law, Business, and Leadership.

Engagement

Participants are provided opportunities to not only learn, but engage during the symposium. This year we featured a Virtual Reality animated short film, *Crow: The Legend* produced by John Legend and featuring the voices of John Legend, Oprah Winfrey, Sarah Eagle Heart.

Dialogue

The symposium featured a space of multifaceted dialogue. This offers a space of intercultural understanding and academic exchanges. By creating areas that support such dialogue participants were encouraged to pose thought-provoking questions and hear commentary from students, community members, and scholars.
The Cultural Sensitivity Workshop and Discussion Circle served as an opportunity for symposium participants to equally share their personal experiences with the concepts of cultural awareness, diversity, and sensitivity.

In alignment with The AARCC event, which is intended for multiple perspectives to be identified, heard, valued, and incorporated-- one of our intentions in this space was to create a shared, but diverse, opportunity to redefine concepts, practices, and understandings from a Decolonial perspective.

Joining in Circle, symbolic in many Native American cultures and in Restorative Justice Practice, allowed symposium participants to come together in community and outline shared agreements and expectations for the symposium setting.

The Keeper of the Circle offered an opening ceremony, followed by storytelling among Circle members, a practice of Circle agreements related to cultural sensitivity, and a closing ceremony.

Sharing our stories in a safe space, while actively listening to others’ cultural experiences, is what brings our differences and the interconnectedness between those differences to life.

“It is not our differences that divide us, it is our inability to recognize, accept and celebrate those differences”

– Audre Lorde.
In 2020 we were fortunate to partner with Kennesaw State University’s Library System, Coles College of Business, Interdisciplinary Studies Department and Office of the Provost and Academic Affairs to present two distinguished speakers.

We were able to feature performances and talks with award-winning musician and educator Martha Redbone and a conversation with noted businessman and speaker, Stedman Graham.

The Martha Redbone Roots Project provided the symposium with an unparalleled musical showcase that not only highlighted the group’s musical talents, but also provided a level of understanding of African American and Native American intersection.

Mr. Graham discussed his African American and Waccamaw Siouan heritage as well as steps involved in forming one’s own identity in both personal and business endeavors. The discussion was facilitated by Dr. Sonia Toson, Associate Professor of Business Law.
Spaces for Cultural Dialogue

The opening of Dividing Lines involves African and Native American cultural showcases. These segments are not performances, but are instead immersive educational experiences.

Presenters showcased various cultural elements including dance, regalia, traditional customs and songs representing their respective cultures.

Through these demonstrations participants are able to see the various areas of commonality between African and Native American cultures, which often encouraged historical intersection.

These showcases are also designed to foster mutual appreciation of differences between cultural groups.
The symposium featured an art display courtesy of Jesús Molina, Yuly Fernandez, Yasser G. Rittoles and the José Antonio Peláez Experimental Art School in Havana, Cuba. The works reflected the African and Indigenous cultural and ethnic blending of Cuba throughout the centuries.

In addition to visual artwork, we featured a display of Afro-Native portraits and excerpts from The Red-black Connection: Contemporary Urban African-Native Americans and Their Stories of Dual Identity by veteran photojournalist Valena Broussard Dismukes.

Other aspects of the symposium included panel discussions covering a range of topics including: Cherokee and Cherokee Freedmen histories and issues, Afro-Indigenous dress in Nicaragua, an analysis of the impacts of racialized violence on the African American psyche, and Cherokee Archival materials from Georgia.
Creating a Platform
In order to expand the scope of the symposium, as well as to welcome a multitude of perspectives, the symposium showcases a variety of films ranging in genre and scope. This further highlights the varied stories and voices of the African and Native American diasporas.

International Screenings
Screenings consisted of over 47 film projects created by filmmakers spanning over 13 countries. Each film offered a unique depiction of the African/African American and Native American experience.

Panel Discussion
Filmmakers were invited as panelists to discuss their projects more in-depth with students and other attendees.

I wanted to send a Thank you to Steven D. Gayle as the Founder/Organizer of Dividing Lines. Alongside, Kennesaw State University’s staff and students who helped organize the event for us all to continue being educated, respected, and to share our voice through films.

SYDNEY MORGAN
DIRECTOR
HUES AND HIDDEN KINGS
Below is a snapshot of the 2020 Dividing Lines Symposium budget. Our sponsor and donor contributions coincide with budget projections following the 2019 symposium.

**Sponsor/Donor Contributions**

- **$21,825**
  - Guest Speakers
    - Honorariums
    - Speaker fees
  - Guest Speaker Expenses
    - Travel
    - Hotel
  - Food & Catering
    - Catered Lunch
    - Hors d'oeuvres
    - Refreshments
  - Marketing & Promotion
    - Flyer Printing
    - Digital Ad campaign
    - Program Booklet
    - Promotional Posters
    - Other Promotional Materials
  - Additional Event Support
    - A/V Support
    - Rented Technology
    - Security Personnel
    - Promotional Posters

- **$2,555**
  - Event Personnel
    - Event Organizer
    - Event Supervisor
    - Registration Personnel
    - Marketing & Social Media Specialist
    - Livestream support
    - Logistical and Facility Support

- **$1,917**
  - Photography, Videography & Graphic Design
    - Photographer
    - Videographer
    - Video and Photo Editing
    - Graphic Designer

- **$1,084**
  - In-Kind Contributions
    - Flyer Printing
    - Digital Ad campaign
    - Program Booklet
    - Promotional Posters

**TOTAL**

This total includes in-kind donations as well as direct financial sponsorship.

**$37,373**
CONCLUSIONS

In the second year of the Dividing Lines Symposium, we saw significant increases in attendee registration as well as engagement.

AARCC was fortunate enough to gain support from multiple sources within Kennesaw State University, the Global South Research Consortium and others.

As we look toward the future of Dividing Lines: An African American and Native American Symposium, there are boundless opportunities for expansion and development.

In the years to come we hope to continue to create innovative, cross-cultural spaces for scholarship, understanding.