



Wolfsonian Public Humanities Lab **Annual Report** **2019–2020**

The Wolfsonian Public Humanities Lab (WPHL) serves as ***FIU's center for public-facing humanities research, teaching, and engagement.*** The lab fosters multidisciplinary research, teaching, and outreach activities that encourage individuals and communities to reflect upon and celebrate diverse heritages, traditions, and histories. The WPHL, as ***FIU's premier humanities hub,*** uses FIU's status as an urban research institution and its strategic location in Miami to promote creative, people-centered, and public-facing scholarship that bridges the university to the broader community in South Florida and beyond.



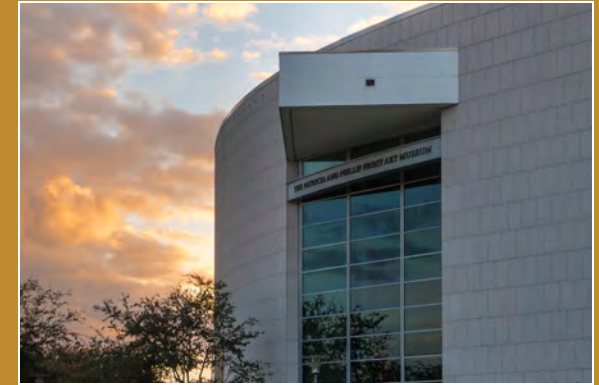
The Wolfsonian-FIU

Rooted in the greatest century of growth and change humanity has ever known — 1850 to 1950 — The Wolfsonian-FIU traces the odyssey from agrarian to urban, colonial empires to Cold War superpowers, the first spike of the Transcontinental Railroad to the advent of television. With more than 200,000 objects, its collection contains material culture on a vast universe of ideas: house-hold appliances that sped the pace of work; designs that bridged cultures; architectural plans fueled by ambition; and propaganda that helped turn the tides of war.



Jewish Museum of Florida-FIU

The Jewish Museum of Florida-FIU (JMOF) is the only museum dedicated to telling the story of more than 250 years of Florida Jewish history, arts, and culture, with a growing collection of more than 100,000 items. The Museum is housed in two restored historic buildings that were once synagogues for Miami Beach's first Jewish congregation. JMOF became part of FIU in 2012, creating a historic partnership that leverages the resources of the Museum and FIU to ignite a new era of interdisciplinary education and research. Under the directorship of Susan Gladstone, the Museum continues to expand its programming and integration into the life of FIU.



Patricia & Phillip Frost Art Museum

Under the leadership of Dr. Jordana Pomeroy, the Patricia & Phillip Frost Art Museum is one of the largest academic art museums in South Florida. Founded in 2008, the Frost Art Museum provides the community with free access to world-class art that spans cultures and time periods. The museum's collections include over 6,000 objects with a strong representation of American printmaking from the 1960s and 1970s, photography, pre-Columbian objects dating from 200-500 A.D., and a growing number of works by contemporary artists, especially from Latin American and Caribbean countries.

Letter from the Founding Director of the **Wolfsonian Public Humanities Lab**

The WPHL, FIU's only humanities-oriented Emerging Preeminent Program, serves as the university's hub for the humanities at large with an emphasis on public-facing and impactful humanities research, teaching, and engagement. The WPHL works in partnership with the university's three museums, The Wolfsonian-FIU, The Patricia and Phillip Frost Art Museum, and The Jewish Museum of Florida-FIU, as well as other internal partners such as the Digital Library of the Caribbean, CasaCuba, and Miami Beach Urban Studios (MBUS), to further connect resources and research with local communities and beyond. Our mission includes overseeing faculty and graduate student interdisciplinary research clusters (e.g., vulnerable landscapes and climate crises; digital storytelling; graffiti art and Miami neighborhoods; LGBTQ history and education; to name just a few), launching curricula, and facilitating conversations

about the humanities. In its commitment to interfacing with our multitude of recently arrived and long-standing communities of people, the WPHL harnesses FIU's status as an urban research institution and its reach throughout Greater Miami to magnify the creative, scholarly and pedagogical expertise of faculty, staff and students in their efforts to doing public-facing work rooted in social justice and equity.

This year has been an overwhelming success in building and working to fulfill the WPHL's mission. Most importantly, the hire of our wonderful Deputy Director: Dr. Julio Capó, Jr., a nationally recognized and sought-out scholar and public-facing thinker whose research and engagement has long since been deeply rooted in Miami. With him on board, we began the hard work of building our community partnerships and create

public events for our students, faculty, and community.

With an ambitious agenda well underway, we at the WPHL shifted gears again in response to COVID-19. These difficult circumstances only affirmed just how important and critical all this work really is, and, surely, just how necessary it will remain in the future. Julio and I immediately got to work launching new, sustainable, and purposeful local-based and community engaged work that were accessible and that reflected the urgency of humanistic inquiry in these unprecedented and challenging times.

We began our response to the dual global pandemics of COVID-19 and structural racism by issuing a call for Stories in the Time of Corona from members of our communities far and wide. We created our weekly webinar





Coffee & Conversations and later launched a second season that explores the history of anti-Blackness among cultural institutions. All of this work has helped to solidify partnerships with our internal programs across the university and those situated in neighborhoods throughout South Florida, from the Museum of Graffiti in Wynwood to the Stone-wall National Museum & Archives in Fort Lauderdale. These relationships will serve as the basis for a variety of grants projects we have embarked on to launch a Miami Studies Program and tell the stories of our many communities through oral histories, exhibitions, photography, digital projects, and other public-facing work.

We also managed to further build our team in a variety of ways, including both the hiring of the award-winning, acclaimed writer Ana Menéndez and also the creation of a

Faculty Fellow Program which cuts across three colleges. This year we welcome: Dr. Andrea Fanta Castro of Modern Languages (SIPA); Dr. Nathaniel Cadle of English (CASE) and Dr. David Rifkind in Architecture (CARTA). John Stuart at MBUS continues to work with the WPHL this year in connecting us to the amazing arts work he and others are doing in South Beach and beyond. We have also connected with Jacek Kolasinski and his emphasis on entrepreneurship and the arts at the Radcliffe Incubator. Last but not least, I am delighted to welcome Dr. Hadassah St. Hubert on board, as our Digital Projects Director and CLIR Fellow.

Allow me to welcome you to all of the pages that follow, representing samples of the exciting and meaningful work we have done and are in the process of doing. We have a most productive and exciting year ahead and are grateful for all of your support.

In solidarity and with warmth,

Rebecca Friedman
Director, Wolfsonian Public
Humanities Lab

Faculty Fellow, Office
of the Provost



Rebecca Friedman is the Founding Director of the WPHL and Associate Professor of History. She comes to the WPHL after serving as Director of the EU Center of Excellence and the Director of the European and Eurasian Studies Center. Her accomplishments over the academic year include:

- Traveling to Washington, D.C. for Advocacy Day on the Hill with the National Humanities Alliance
- Participating on a panel about the humanities and first-generation students at the National Humanities Conference
- Networking in Genoa and Milan to build partnerships in the public humanities
- Serving as Faculty Lead for Mellon-funded Humanities Edge Program
- Participating in roundtable conversation on careers in the humanities

Staff Updates



Dr. Julio Capó, Jr.
Deputy Director,
Wolfsonian Public
Humanities Lab

Associate Professor,
Department of History

Julio Capó, Jr. joined FIU as an Associate Professor in the Department of History and as the Deputy Director of the WPHL in summer 2019, after many years at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. An award-winning historian and humanist, he is thrilled to build the WPHL into an internationally recognized center for the humanities and public-facing work. Highlights of his work over the past academic year include:

- Publishing new op-ed pieces in *The Washington Post*, *The Sun-Sentinel*, and *The Abusable Past*
- Curating main exhibition for HistoryMiami Museum titled *Queer Miami: A History of LGBTQ Communities*
- Co-curating new exhibition for The Wolfsonian-FIU and the WPHL based on collection of HIV/AIDS posters from around the world
- Being named Distinguished Lecturer from the Organization of American Historians
- Serving as Public History Coordinator at FIU
- Being appointed to the National Historic Landmarks Committee of the National Park System Advisory Board (National Park Service, Department of the Interior)
- Being profiled in *Lifestyle* magazine
- Being a featured commentator for a Canadian documentary series, *Pride, The LGBTQ+ History Series*
- Joining Sun-Serve Advisory Board
- Delivering talks to a wide range of academic and community audiences, including those at Brown University, the Stonewall National Museum & Archives, the Wilzig Erotic Art Museum, Worcester Historical Museum, Sun-Serve, the United States Department of Health & Human Services, Mater Lakes Academy (High School), among many others



Ana Menéndez
WPHL Faculty

Associate Professor,
Department of English

The WPHL is thrilled to announce its new faculty hire, acclaimed writer and thinker Ana Menéndez, MFA. Menéndez joins the WPHL as a joint hire with the Department of English at FIU. The former program director of The Humanities Edge Program, she is the author of numerous essays, books, and think pieces. Her works of fiction include *Adios, Happy Homeland!* (2011), *The Last War* (2009), *Loving Che* (2003), and *In Cuba I Was a German Shepherd* (2001), whose title story won a Pushcart Prize. She has worked as a journalist in the United States and abroad, lastly as a prize-winning columnist for *The Miami Herald*. As a reporter, she wrote about Cuba, Haiti, Kashmir, Afghanistan, and India, where she was based for three years. Menéndez's work has appeared in a variety of publications, including *Vogue*, *The New York Times*, and *Tin House*.



WPHL Faculty Fellows

The WPHL is grateful for the support from the College of Arts, Sciences & Education; the College of Communication, Architecture + The Arts; and the Steven J. Green School of International & Public Affairs for their support that allows us the creation of our Faculty Fellows Program.



David Rifkind
Associate Professor
of Architecture
CARTA



Andrea Fanta Castro
Associate Professor
of Spanish
SIPA



Nathaniel Cadle
Associate Professor
of English
CASE



The Wolfsonian-FIU Metadata Squad

The Wolfsonian-FIU Metadata Squad is an ongoing research partnership with The Wolfsonian-FIU, the Wolfsonian Public Humanities Lab, and the Department of History at FIU. Every year, three graduate students are offered fully-funded assistantships and gain skills in digital humanities projects and public-facing work by researching and digitizing museum collection objects at The Wolfsonian-FIU. The Metadata Squad is generously supported by The Wolfsonian-FIU, the Wolfsonian Public Humanities Lab, the Steven J. Green School of International & Public Affairs, and Thomas C. Ragan.

- The Metadata Squad was founded in the 2015–2016 academic year
- As of 2020, participating students have researched over 5,300 objects
- As of 2020, 100% of Metadata Squad students graduate from their respective graduate programs
- As of 2020, 80% of participating students have found a job in a field related to their degree after graduation
- Participating students have found employment at the following institutions: The Wolfsonian-FIU, Vizcaya Museum & Gardens, HistoryMiami Museum, St. Thomas University, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Miami-Dade County Public School System, and the Miami-Dade Public Library System



Hadassah St. Hubert
WPHL Digital Projects
Director and CLIR
Postdoctoral Fellow
in Data Curation

Dr. Hadassah St. Hubert is the Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR) Fellow in Data Curation for Latin American and Caribbean Studies at the WPHL. As a CLIR Postdoctoral Fellow, she leads Digital Humanities efforts, has worked to increase access to and preserve Caribbean research materials, and has applied for additional funding through CLIR, the Mellon Foundation, the Prince Claus Fund, National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), and Modern Endangered Archives Program (MEAP) grants.

Total Funding Received: \$1,042,831+

Recent grants include:

- Summer 2020: National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) Digital Humanities Advancement Grant "Documenting Haiti's Forts": \$50,000
- Summer 2020: Prince Claus Fund (MUPANAH, dLOC, University of Glasgow): \$50,000

- Spring 2020: Prince Claus Fund and Smithsonian Funding for ISPAN: \$100,000 (Milot Royal Church)
- Fall 2019: Prince Claus fund Vodou arts and culture for dLOC partners: \$300,000
- Fall 2019: Collections as Data Grant: \$50,000
- Fall 2019: Modern Endangered Archives Program (MEAP): \$50,000
- Summer 2019: U.S. Embassy Haiti PAS Annual Program Statement with Haitian Studies Association: \$16,000
- Spring 2019: CLIR Microgrant for Symposium: \$7,831+
- Spring 2019: Florida Humanities Council Grant "Documenting Caribbean Diasporic Communities": \$5,000
- Fall 2018: CLIR Funding provided by Andrew W. Mellon Foundation: \$130,000

WPHL-Office of the Provost Humanities Research Grants

Budget total \$30,000

This year's Humanities Research Grants Program funded by the Office of the Provost emphasized the collaboration with the WPHL and the efficacy of public-facing research and engagement. This initiative supports faculty in their research efforts within the humanities disciplines and cognate disciplines with particular emphasis on projects and scholarship that align with the strategic priorities of the WPHL, our university-wide humanities leader and an Emerging Preeminent Program at FIU. This effort underscores FIU's overall goals as successful research projects in the humanities yield national and international recognition that heightens FIU's visibility, prestige and ranking. The scholarly productivity of faculty in the humanities is essential for FIU to retain its designation as R1: Doctoral Universities-Highest Research Activity, the highest tier in the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education.



2020–2021 Awardees

Iqbal Akhtar, Religious Studies (SIPA) and
Giri Narasimhan, Computing and Information
Sciences (CEC): \$3,200

Translating Islamic Pluralism Through the
Medieval Book of Lights

Mark Kelley, English (CASE): \$2,500
Feeling Adrift: What Early American Sailors
Teach Us about Isolation

Eric Lob, Politics & International Relations
(SIPA); Zhaohui Fu, GIS Center; Levente
Juhasz, GIS Center; Archie Rea, GIS Center;
and Mark Finlayson, Computing of
Information Sciences (CEC): \$3,000
Iranian Reconstruction, Development, and
Aid in Syria: Geopolitical Interests, Conflict-
Based Drivers, and Transnational Linkages

María Ines Marino, Communication &
Journalism (CARTA); Mercedes Vigón,
Communication and Journalism (CARTA);
María Elena Villar, Communication &
Journalism (CARTA); and Ana María Bidegain,
Religious Studies (SIPA): \$3,000
Mental Health Interdisciplinary Collaborative
Pilot and Sustainable Plan

Okezi Otovo, History and African and African
Diaspora Studies Program (SIPA); Alexandra
Cornelius, History and AADS (SIPA); Andrea
Queeley, Global and Sociocultural Studies
and AADS (SIPA): \$3,800
From Moments to Movements: Story-Telling
as Epistemology in Black Maternal Health

Mark Padilla, GSS (SIPA); Nelson Varas-Díaz,
GSS (SIPA); Matthew Marr, GSS (SIPA); and
Sheila Rodriguez-Madera, GSS (SIPA): \$3,000
“Greetings Covidians”: Creating Spaces for
Public Dialogue and Generating Solutions
for COVID-19 through Virtual PhotoVoice

Alpesh Patel, Art & Art History (CARTA):
\$2,500
Global Trans and Queer of Color Artistic
Practices

David Rifkind, Architecture and Journalism
(CARTA) and Daniel Evans, Architecture and
Journalism (CARTA): \$3,000
Design Criticism

Angela Salmon, Teaching & Learning (CASE)
and Silvia Pease, Art & Art History (CARTA):
\$3,000
From Story Spaces and Understanding to
Action: Taking action towards more inclusive
and sustainable societies

James Sutton, English (CASE): \$3,000
Shakespeare in Miami: The Bard at the
Crossroads of the Hemisphere

Grant Activity

The WPHL is the hub for humanities research at FIU. We work to create research clusters of faculty and graduate students across the university and within our communities in order to create, foster, and engage in public-facing research. Grants are a central part of this process. Members of the WPHL faculty apply for grants in order to further their transdisciplinary, public-facing research and curricula.



Outside the *Queer Miami: A History of LGBTQ Communities* exhibition at HistoryMiami Museum curated by WPHL Deputy Director Julio Capó, Jr. in 2019

Humanities Initiatives at Hispanic-Serving Institutions Grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (Awaiting Decision)

Maximum ask: \$150,000.00

Grant Title: Miami Studies: Building a New Interdisciplinary Public Humanities Program

PI: Julio Capó, Jr.

Co-PI: Rebecca Friedman and Andrea Fanta Castro

Miami is one of the most important cities in the United States and the Americas. Yet, its history, culture, politics, and overall meaning

are still largely caricatured through myth, stigma, and hyperbole, all of which are deeply rooted in the region's layered past and relationship to colonial processes and empire. Although the region and the millions of people who reside in and traverse it every year remain woefully understudied and misunderstood, community and grassroots efforts have long created, fostered, and studied local knowledges that serve as a corrective to this broader national narrative that has marginalized and underscored Miami as a site of significant cultural and intellectual inquiry and impact. This project offers a new, rigorous program in Miami Studies that is at once critically engaged with the complexities of these

histories and experiences and also mindful of the unique skills our diverse student body currently possesses or needs to sharpen to be successful in today's job market. This project proposes the creation of a sustainable series of skill-based courses that are integrated to FIU's Office of Micro-Credentials, housed within the Division of Academic & Student Affairs, and are centered on the study of history, literature, culture, language, art, architecture, politics, and overall humanistic experience of the diverse people of the Greater Miami area, a minority-majority region whose demographics are mirrored in the student population at FIU.



Front page of an unearthed issue of the rare, alternative press *Miami Life* dated November 10, 1934. The WPHL has tracked several issues of the newspaper, which had previously been thought to have been lost to researchers forever, and has applied for a grant to digitize them and make them freely available.



Florida Humanities Community Grant (Awaiting Decision)

Maximum ask: \$5,000

Grant Title: *Miami Life*: Digitizing and Making Accessible a Rare Alternative Press

PI: Julio Capó, Jr.

The WPHL and FIU Libraries' Digital Collections Center propose digitizing and making a rare, weekly alternative press titled *Miami Life*—which had been previously assumed entirely lost to researchers—freely available to the public in an effort to better understand the region's checkered past. Project Director Dr. Julio Capó, Jr. tracked down a collection of select issues of *Miami Life*. These issues touch on histories of economic downturn and recovery, anti-Semitism, Prohibition, immigration, and race and gender relations, among many others. The project would hire two undergraduate interns, who will be trained in metadata analysis and digitization, and will also lead to a full-day symposium on *Miami Life* and the history its pages covered prior to ceasing operations in 1965. Undergraduate and graduate students will be encouraged to curate a new exhibition based on the newly digitized resources.



National Endowment for the Humanities CARES Grant (Not Funded)

Maximum ask: \$300,000

Grant Title: Preparing for a Future: Continuing Training for Public Humanities Career Paths

PI: Rebecca Friedman

The WPHL partnered with The Wolfsonian-FIU on this grant to expand the number of graduate students we train for humanities careers, purchase equipment to increase the amount of public-facing digital content produced, and create virtual resources for use by other institutions looking to learn from our workflows and processes. Funding would be used to hire a Digital Humanities Program Director for the WPHL, retain and hire seven graduate students, and retain an intern for the WPHL. Four graduate students would join The Wolfsonian-FIU's Metadata Squad, two would serve as digital content editors to help transform the researched metadata into online-facing projects, and one would serve as a graduate assistant for WPHL. These retained and new positions were to aid the WPHL and The Wolfsonian-FIU by building on existing foundations and strengthening institutional capacity for innovative and successful public programming.



Mellon Foundation: Public Knowledges Division (Received Invitation to Apply)

Maximum ask: \$750,000

Grant Title: Community Data Curation: Preserving, Creating, & Narrating Everyday Stories

PI: Rebecca Friedman

Co-PIs: Julio Capó, Jr. and Hadassah St. Hubert

This project, foregrounded in the Public Knowledge Division of the Mellon Foundation, takes as its starting point the narration, creation, and preservation of stories within a variety of communities in South Florida.

At its core, this project involves leveraging the WPHL's strong community partnerships with archives, nonprofits and museums, both large and small, young and old, to capture and digitize the everyday lives of our many neighbors—in the form of archival digitization, oral histories, exhibition curation and public-facing writing, which ultimately will be archived for future generations. The overlapping communities we will work with include a variety throughout South Florida, ranging from LGBTQ communities to Afro-Cubans to Jewish communities to graffiti artists and African American communities. In particular, our team will work closely with six community partners to digitize their existing collections and create new archives by collecting and preserving new stories. The WPHL, its faculty

and staff, along with a host of student interns, will digitize, preserve, and create stories as well as provide training so that these projects are sustainable—and lie in the hands of our partners—in perpetuity. It is our intent to bridge the divide between scholars and the public, while building capacity for our community partners. Ultimately, the technologies, tools and skills necessary for the capturing of this multitude of stories will be shared with our partners so that they may continue the work long after the grant is completed.



FIU ORED SEED Interdisciplinary Grant (Awaiting Decision)

Maximum ask: \$25,000

PI: Rebecca Friedman

An interdisciplinary coalition of FIU faculty in the humanities, global studies, architecture, and the sciences seek to embark on research projects and gather data, together and individually, to establish a common set of narratives and create an outlet to unite ongoing work on how Miami's many human communities are beginning to engage the realities of climate change and sea level rise (SLR) in our coastal environment. This research collective opens up a collaborative space for the sharing of knowledge and approaches to SLR and climate change. Across our disciplines, we are already looking at responses to SLR in Miami that range from a deep sense of loss as familiar landscapes change to defending the status quo no matter the cost, and ultimately to creative adaptation that suggests new ways of living in a changing environment. A shared outlet will enrich and bring this work together and allow us as a group to engage the many Miami communities through research projects, public workshops, publications addressed to both academic and broad audiences, and an interactive social media and web platform.



National Endowment for the Humanities Public Humanities Implementation Grant (In Preparation)

Maximum ask: \$250,000

Tentative Project Title: Generating Stories:
Place, Race, and Memory in the Making of
Florida's Past

PI: Rebecca Friedman

Co-PI: Julio Capó, Jr. & Hadassah St. Hubert

Generating Stories focuses on the creation of a new podcast series and the curation of a series of public symposia in order to promote the important interpretive work that museums and other cultural institutions and

non-profits do in narrating the past. From cramped corners to expansive courtyards, places evoke memories and these evocations often translate into the building blocks of community narratives that become stories morphed into history. Nostalgia, whether reflective of real or fabricated pasts, undergirds the layered histories of place and race, including those told in museums, theatres and gardens in our own communities. How are histories of place and race generated and how do they change over time?

Our three project leads will travel to eight historic sites throughout Florida—from a Negro League Baseball Park in Jacksonville to the first public high school for Blacks in St. Augustine—to host important public

discussions about narratives of the past working with local cultural institutions and partners. The WPHL seeks to facilitate community discussions about the role of memory in shaping our understanding of race in site-specific histories and communities. How do memories, both speculative and substantiated by the historical record, reveal particular investments to the past from varied audiences? These conversations and visits will be recorded and edited as a podcast that would be made available for free on our and our community partner's websites.

Events and Programming

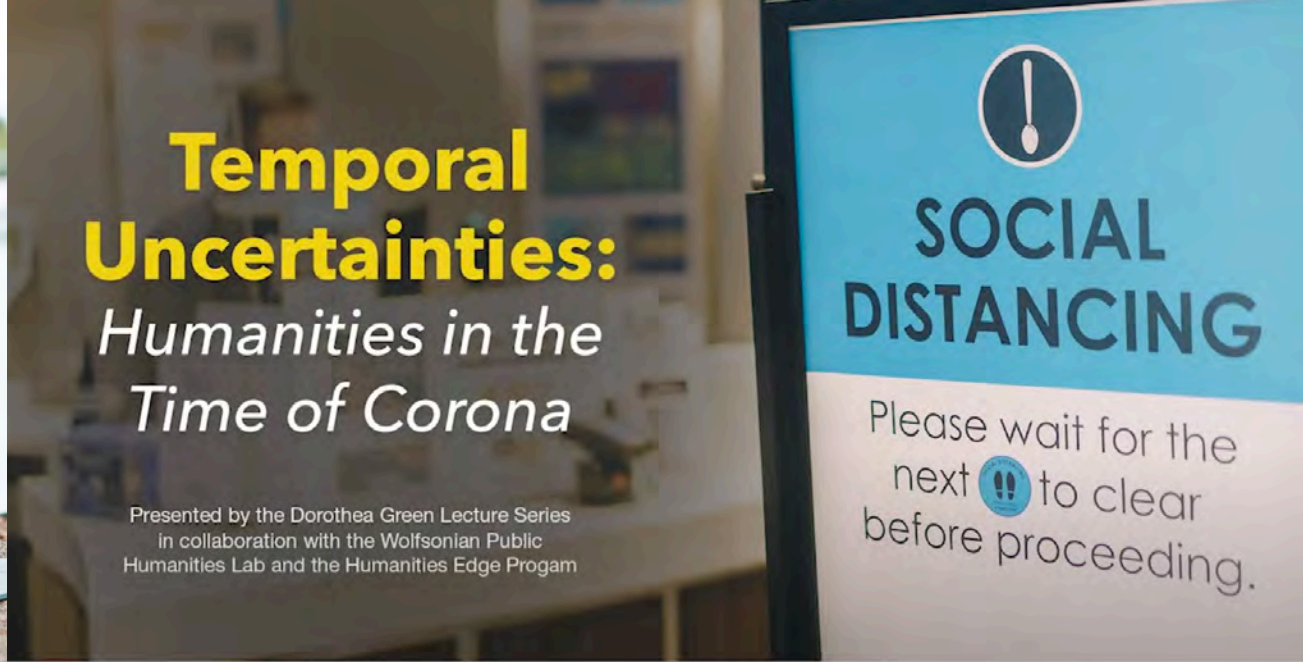


Faculty Development Seminar

In partnership with the Humanities Edge Program, the WPHL's Rebecca Friedman and Julio Capó, Jr. led a Faculty Development Seminar titled "The Public Face of Humanities: Engaging Communities" on November 18, 2019. It featured presentations from over a dozen participants dispersed throughout several colleges, programs, and units at FIU. Panels ranged from using Holocaust testimonies to enhance public history to building a sustainable local community garden in the historically Black neighborhood of Brownsville.



Jessica L. Adler, Assistant Professor of History and Health Policy & Management, presents her research on humanities-based programming for veterans and the broader implications of university collaborations with community partners.



Calmness in Crisis

In response to the global pandemic of the novel coronavirus, the WPHL launched a series called Calmness in Crisis: Meditative Practices. This provided members of FIU and the broader community opportunities for meditation and reflection through several digital sessions with Miami Firm Body's Carlos Gonzalez Morales.

In May 2020, in response to the novel coronavirus, the WPHL teamed up with the Humanities Edge Program and the Dorothea Green Lecture Series for a webinar titled "Temporal Uncertainties: Humanities in the Time of Corona." The program featured Rebecca Friedman (Director, WPHL), Julio Capó, Jr. (Deputy Director, WPHL), Ana Menéndez (Director, FIU Humanities Edge Program), and Whitney Bauman (Associate Professor of Religious Studies at FIU) discussing concepts of temporality and the importance of the humanities in shaping our coronavirus present and future.





New Exhibition: HIV/AIDS Posters from around the Globe

The WPHL has partnered with The Wolfsonian-FIU to curate a new digital exhibition based on The Wolfsonian-FIU's one-of-a-kind collection of HIV/AIDS posters from over 40 countries (a donation of Henry S. Hacker and family). Co-curated by Julio Capó, Jr. and Shoshana Resnikoff, the exhibition is expected to go live early fall 2020 and will cover a broad range of topics, including how these visual objects conveyed distinct messages across place and time, including the regulation of behaviors, the shaping of family values, the sharing of indigenous knowledges, and the expression of nationalism.

Looking ahead into spring 2021, the WPHL plans to add an appendix to the digital exhibition that delineates key differences and parallels between the AIDS pandemic and the novel coronavirus pandemic, with an objective to acquire posters from around the world addressing preventative and educational measures for coronavirus.



Australia



Cuba



Luxembourg

Coffee & Conversations

In response to the novel coronavirus pandemic, the WPHL launched a weekly live 30-minute webinar titled Coffee & Conversations that finds WPHL faculty in conversation with leaders from museums and other cultural institutions.

Since April 9, 2020, the WPHL has hosted two seasons, fourteen distinct episodes, and over twenty guests. Dozens of audience members from across the United States tune in live every week and are encouraged to ask questions that are answered by our guests live on air. The recorded webinars are posted on the WPHL's website, as well as our newly created YouTube page, where they have received hundreds of hits.



[Check out our YouTube page.](#)



Season One: Cultural Institutions in Times of Crisis (April 9, 2020–June 11, 2020)

Addressed how museums and other cultural institutions were responding to the novel coronavirus and how audiences can best support them during this time

Season Two: Museums & Histories of Anti-Blackness (July 2, 2020–)

Addresses the significance of centering Black lives and experiences in museums and other cultural institutions, and the challenges of working against the powers at institutions that seek to erase, marginalize, or whitewash Black histories

Cultural institutions highlighted include:



Deputy Director Julio Capó, Jr. hosts an episode with leaders of cultural institutions based in Worcester, Massachusetts. Radio 97.9 FM simulcast this episode live on its air and website in July 2020.



Chantalle F. Verna, Associate Professor of History and International Relations, served as guest host in May 2020. She conversed with Sandy Dorsainvil, Manager of the Little Haiti Cultural Center and Caribbean Marketplace, on responses to the coronavirus pandemic and the ways the cultural center continues to serve the community.

Helping People Tell their Stories

The WPHL has worked on a number of projects to capture and archive the experiences of everyday life, with a keen eye to the changes caused by the global pandemic. Each of these humanities projects are centered on the art of storytelling.

Stories in the Time of Corona

The WPHL launched Stories in the Time of Corona immediately following the shutdowns caused by the novel coronavirus. The project sought to inspire members of our communities to reflect on daily life through poetry, prose, memes, photography, and other visual and audio formats. Prompts ranged from asking people how concepts of time, home, food, community, and productivity had changed since the pandemic.



"My home provides me with a haven from the challenges and perils of the physical world, a comfortable base from which I can virtually navigate the public spaces of my workaday life, and a means, when I need it, for me to safely escape into the real world outside and then retreat back into my domestic sanctuary.

During these days of sheltering in, however, I seldom leave home or return home. I am home. Or I am turning into my home. My home and I are one."

Excerpt from Jordana Pomeroy's (Director of the Patricia & Phillip Frost Art Museum) reflection on how her sense of home has changed since the beginning of the pandemic.



Rebecca Friedman, Susan Gladstone (Executive Director of the Jewish Museum of Florida-FIU), and Julio Capó, Jr. at the Jewish Museum of Florida-FIU's exhibition, *Judith Leiber: Master Craftsman*, which honors the Holocaust survivor-turned-mega-designer's life, work, and legacy.

COVID-19 and the Jewish Experience

The WPHL is teaming up with The Jewish Museum of Florida-FIU to record and archive the stories of FIU's Jewish community. This is part of a project coordinated by the Council of American Jewish Museums and supported by the platform TheirStories. We will interview members of our community—from leadership to students and staff and faculty across the university—asking them what it means to be Jewish in the era of COVID-19. This effort represents a collective approach to preserving and interpreting stories and creating a necessary historical record of these times.



Miami Snapshots



This project is a collaboration with the FIU Honors College and led by Enrique Rosell (Honors College), Andrea Fanta Castro (SIPA) and Rebecca Friedman (WPHL).

This audio-visual project sent 12 FIU students a disposable camera to document their stories in these hectic and historic times of everyday life during a global pandemic. Students then write a reflection on their photography and perspective, which they then read as a voice-over we record to accompany their visual artistry. Each student then participates in an interview which becomes the cornerstone of a produced podcast. Twelve students were chosen from a pool of 88 applicants.

This program will be repeated every semester for the foreseeable future.

Looking Ahead



Book Talk with Matthew J. Pettway

On October 1, 2020, the WPHL will cosponsor a book talk with the African-American Research Library and Cultural Center in Fort Lauderdale. As part of the Broward County Library's free program series, "Cultural Conversations at the Center," Dr. Matthew J. Pettway (University of South Alabama) will present his new book, *Cuban Literature in the Age of Black Insurrection* Manzano, Plácido, and Afro-Latino Religion.

The Homes of Historic Coconut Grove

The WPHL is partnering with The Wolfsonian-FIU for their annual endowed lecture series, the Mark Mamolen Program Series on American Homes. This year, it will focus on the neighborhoods within Coconut Grove that make up the historic Bahamian communities with particular attention to domestic architecture, including structural design and interior home spaces.

Storytelling Symposium

In October 2020, the WPHL will co-sponsor a Storytelling Symposium in collaboration with Dr. Whitney Bauman, Associate Professor of Religious Studies at FIU, and an education group based in Ecuador called Pachaysana. This four-part seminar begins with an introduction to storytelling and is followed by instructive sessions on the following themes: knowing; justice and healing; and re-narrating the present.



Gregorio Millett, M.P.H.
Vice President and Director
of Public Policy, amfAR, The
Foundation for AIDS Research

Keynote Lecture with Gregorio Millett

To help unveil the new digital exhibition on HIV/AIDS posters from around the world, a collaboration between the WPHL and The Wolfsonian-FIU co-curated by Julio Capó, Jr. and Shoshana Resnikoff, the WPHL will host a keynote talk in fall 2020 with world-renowned researcher and epidemiologist Gregorio Millett. He is Vice President and Director of Public Policy at amfAR, The Foundation for AIDS Research. Millett, who has published extensively on HIV/AIDS and more recently on COVID-19, served as a Senior Policy Advisor in the White House Office of National AIDS Policy and was one of three principal writers of President Obama's National HIV/AIDS Strategy.



Breaking the White Ceiling

In fall 2020, the WPHL will work with partner SunServe, a non-profit social services agency that provides mental

health services, housing assistance, case management, and community outreach to LGBTQ+ communities and others, to host a public forum on race and leadership in the non-profit sector. Leaders from non-profits and social service networks will be invited to join this panel discussing race, especially experiences of anti-Blackness, in the shaping and management of these critical spaces.

The Scottsboro Boys and Histories of Anti-Blackness

The WPHL is a partner in a roundtable discussion based on The Wolfsonian-FIU's collection. National experts will participate in this important discussion on race in modern America and reflect on the collection's depictions of the Scottsboro Boys and what they reveal about structural racism and the fight for social justice, both then and today.

The Scottsboro Boys,
Workers' Library
Publishers, Inc, c. 1937.
From The Wolfsonian-
FIU Library Collection.



Graffiti Grrlz Rising

The WPHL partnered with the Museum of Graffiti in Wynwood to host a talk and book signing with Dr. Jessica N. Pabón-Colón (SUNY New Paltz) in March 2020 based on her ethnographic work with over 100 women graffiti artists. Her visit was postponed due to the novel coronavirus and we look forward to hosting a digital version of her talk in fall 2020 or spring 2021.

MUSEUM OF *GRAFFITI*



**Wolfsonian Public
Humanities Lab**

