

# *The Black Schoolhouse Manual: Blueprints for Black Radical Education and Space*



Joseph Cuillier and Shani Peters, preliminary sketches for the initial The Black Schoolhouse design, 2019

## Part III in a Series of Programs Focusing on Themes of Black Radical Pedagogy

As the final program in the Black Radical Pedagogy Series, this discussion will celebrate the *Black Schoolhouse Manual*, which expands on and contributes to the legacy of Black community-built schools and the specific inspiration of the Black Panther Party's Liberation Schools. This project explores how contemporary architectural approaches can reimagine a blueprint for independent school building and looks to

demonstrate New Orleans as a context for recreating Tuskegee's "The Negro Rural School and its Relation to the Community" with the social, political, architectural, and ecological considerations of today. The new manual combines historical research on the Washington/Rosenwald Schools with contemporary research on social housing, low cost architecture, and Black radical pedagogy. This research is paired with architectural drawings and building instructions commissioned by architects and construction partners. The forthcoming publication *The Black Schoolhouse Manual* (Paper Machine, 2022) is supported in part by the [Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts](#). Speakers include Shani Peters and Joseph Cuillier of The Black School, Whawn Allen (WAACC), Ada Tolla and Guiseppe Lignano (LOT-EK) and Bryan C. Lee Jr (Colloqate).

## Program video

# About the Panelists

Joseph Cuillier is a multidisciplinary artist who examines language, space, abstraction, and Black radical pedagogies through social practice, installation, textile, and design. His practice at the intersections of education, visual art, and design centers on deconstructing histories to build counter narratives. Currently based in New Orleans, LA, Cuillier received a master's from Pratt Institute and previously held faculty positions at Parsons School of Design and Pratt Institute in New York City. Cuillier's work has been exhibited, collected, and presented internationally at the New Museum, NY; The Museum of Modern Art Library, NY; Bauhaus-Building Dessau, Germany; The Bronx Museum of the Arts, NY; Wallach Art Gallery, Columbia University, NY; The Rubelle and Norman Schafler Gallery, Pratt Institute, NY; among others. Cuillier has been an artist-in-residence/fellow at Sweet Water Foundation, IL via the Chicago Architecture Biennial, IdeasCity New Orleans, LA; Spillways Antenna.Works, LA; the New Museum, NY; The Laundromat Project, NY; and A Blade of Grass, NY. Cuillier is the co-director of The Black School and Black Love Fest with Shani Peters.

Shani Peters is a multidisciplinary artist based in New Orleans, LA. She holds a bachelor's from Michigan State University and a Master of Fine Arts from the City College of New York. Peters has presented work in the US and abroad at the New Museum, NY; The Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, NY; Seoul Art Space Geumcheon, South Korea; The National Gallery of Zimbabwe; and Bauhaus-Building Dessau, Germany.

Selected residencies include Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, NY; Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit, MI; The Laundromat Project, NY; and Project Row Houses, TX. Her work has been supported by Creative Capital, Foundation for Contemporary Arts, the Robert Rauschenberg Foundation, Rema Hort Mann Foundation, and the Joan Mitchell Foundation. Peters was a faculty member at The City College of NY, Pratt Institute, and Parsons School of Design before shifting her teaching focus to The Black School which she co-directs with Joseph Cuillier.

LOT-EK is an award-winning architectural design studio based in New York and Naples, Italy. Founded in 1993 by Ada Tolla and Giuseppe Lignano, LOT-EK has been involved with commercial, institutional, and residential projects globally. In addition, LOT-EK has conceived and executed exhibition design and site-specific installations for major cultural institutions and museums, including The Museum of Modern Art, NY; the Whitney Museum of American Art, NY; the Walker Art Center, MN; and the Guggenheim Museum. LOT-EK has achieved high visibility for its sustainable and innovative approach to construction, materials, and space through the adaptive reuse “upcycling” of existing industrial objects and systems not originally intended for architecture.

Whawn Allen Architects and Construction Consultants is a New Orleans-born and based, Black woman-owned and operated architecture and construction firm that provides both residential and commercial services. Allen’s breadth of expertise and years of experience navigating the regionally specific aspects of New Orleans building projects make her an

invaluable asset to this project.

Bryan C. Lee Jr. is an architect, educator, writer, and design justice activist. He is the founder/design principal of Colloqate Design, a nonprofit multidisciplinary design practice in New Orleans dedicated to expanding community access to design and creating spaces of racial, social, and cultural equity. He has led two award-winning youth design programs nationwide and is one of the founding co-organizers of the DAP (Design As Protest) Collective. He was noted as one of The Most Creative People in Business, Fast Company (2018), a USC Annenberg MacArthur Civic Media Fellow, and the youngest design firm to win the Architectural League's Emerging Voices Award in 2019.

## About the Black School

Based on the commitment to community building and our core principles of Black love, wellness, and self-determination, The Black School's mission is to promote and extend the legacy of art in Black radical histories by providing innovative education alternatives centered in Black love. Through youth art workshops, community wide events and programing, and our student staffed art and design studio, we use art to transform social realities while celebrating Black people's history and the beauty and ingenuity of our ever-evolving culture.

Since 2015, The Black School has led 120+ art workshops and sessions, has served 450+ students, held 3 Black Love Fests in NYC and Houston, TX, partnered with over 50 institutions and

individual artists respectively, and has trained and employed 20 Design Apprentices. In 2020-21 the organization crowdfunded \$317,000 to build The Black Schoolhouse in Joseph's hometown, New Orleans, LA.

This program is co-presented by Logan Center Exhibitions and the Center for the Study of Race, Politics and Culture at the University of Chicago. Additional support provided by the Graham Foundation.

This event is free and open to the public.

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#### Attend

**The Black Schoolhouse Manual: Blueprints for Black Radical Education and Space**

**December 7, 2021 6:00-7:30pm**

**Contact**

#### Related Artists

[Carrie Mae Weems](#)

#### Related Partners

[Center for the Study of Race, Politics and Culture](#)

[Reva and David Logan Center for the Arts](#)