



Wil Haygood to headline Wexner Center's Director's Dialogue on Art and Social Change

2018 program to focus on the history of race and athletics in Central Ohio

July 30, 2018—Columbus, OH—On Monday, October 8, the Wexner Center for the Arts at The Ohio State University will present its tenth **Director's Dialogue on Art and Social Change**. Entitled ***Tigerland: Columbus at the Intersection of Sports and Race***, this year's edition of the annual event, which spotlights the role of the arts in fostering debate and discourse around contemporary issues, is centered around the soon-to-be-published book by Wil Haygood, ***Tigerland: 1968-1969: A City Divided, a Nation Torn Apart, and a Magical Season of Healing***.

Haygood's new book, (coming September 18 from Knopf), centers on the black athletes of Columbus's East High School during the 1968-69 school year. The players accomplished the miraculous feat of winning back-to-back Ohio state championships in basketball and baseball amid an atmosphere high in racial tensions, stoked by the rise of the civil rights movement and the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. in April 1968.

Tigerland: 1968 will be the launching point for a conversation about sports, race relations, East High School and Ohio State athletics, past and present. Joining Haygood in the conversation will be **Alice Flowers**, East High School's homecoming queen for 1968-69; **Jack Gibbs, Jr.**, a lawyer whose father was the first black principal of East High School and an accomplished Ohio State athlete; **Paul Pennell**, assistant coach of East High's basketball team and head coach of its baseball team during the 1968-69 school year; and **William Shkurti**, author of the 2016 book *The Ohio State University in the Sixties: The Unraveling of the Old Order* (Trillium Books).

The distinguished panel will be moderated by **Chris Bournea**, a writer and former journalist who worked with the Wex's Film/Video Studio Program on his recent directorial debut, the documentary *Lady Wrestler: The Amazing, Untold Story of African-American Women in the Ring*.

Sherri Geldin, who conceived the center's *Director's Dialogue* series, comments, "Wil Haygood is a nationally renowned historian, journalist, biographer, cultural commentator and film producer whose roots in Columbus run deep. I can think of no more fitting way to conclude my role as 'convener' of these dialogues than to preview the publication of his new book, and amplify its significance—not only with respect to local history, but in the context of a conversation about sports and race that has engulfed the entire nation."

The 2018 Director's Dialogue on Art and Social Change is presented in connection with **I, Too, Sing America: The Harlem Renaissance at 100**, a citywide initiative to engage the greater Columbus community in learning about and

celebrating the history, heritage, and global influence of the Harlem Renaissance. Haygood is organizing one of the project's signature events, an exhibition at the Columbus Museum of Art. More information about the programming partnership is available at cbusharlem100.org.

About Wil Haygood

Currently a Visiting Distinguished Professor in the department of media, journalism, and film at Miami University, Haygood spent nearly three decades as a journalist for the *Boston Globe* and the *Washington Post*. He's the author of numerous books including *The Butler: A Witness to History* (2013); *Showdown: Thurgood Marshall and the Supreme Court Nomination That Changed America* (2015); and *Sweet Thunder: The Life and Times of Sugar Ray Robinson* (2011). The *Butler* was later adapted into a critically acclaimed film.

Visitor Information

Tigerland: Columbus at the Intersection of Sports and Race, the 2018 Director's Dialogue on Art and Social Change, will take place at 7 PM on Monday, October 8 at The Wexner Center for the Arts at The Ohio State University. Admission is free but RSVP is requested at wexarts.org.

The Wexner Center for the Arts is located at 1871 N. High St. at 15th Ave. at The Ohio State University. Parking is available in the Ohio Union Garage, entered from High Street, and at the Arps Garage, located on College Road just north of the facility. The center is also on several COTA bus lines.

About the Director's Dialogue

Launched in 2006 and made possible by a lead endowment gift from an anonymous donor, the Director's Dialogue is designed to explore the crucial role of the arts as a springboard for discourse on contemporary issues and as a catalyst for social change. Building on a loose definition of "dialogue," each year's program convenes a conversation with multiple voices, drawing on the expertise of artists, academics, and opinion leaders in a variety of fields to address the most significant social issues of the day. Previous Director's Dialogues have elicited insightful conversations about gender bias, racial inequity, health care in America, climate change, urban unrest, sexual consent, and mass incarceration.

About the Wexner Center

The Wexner Center for the Arts is The Ohio State University's multidisciplinary, international laboratory for the exploration and advancement for contemporary art.

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