



An American City

Eleven Cultural Exercises

FRONT
International
Cleveland
Triennial for
Contemporary Art
1460 West 29th
Street
Cleveland, OH



FRONT International: Cleveland Triennial for Contemporary Art Announces Institutional Program Highlights for 'An American City'

Including major exhibitions and installations at Akron Art Museum, Cleveland Museum of Art, Museum of Contemporary Art Cleveland and Oberlin College

July 14–September 30, 2018

Press and Professional Preview Days: July 12–13, 2018

Cleveland, OH (January 30, 2018) – FRONT International: Cleveland Triennial for Contemporary Art announces institutional program highlights for the inaugural Triennial, titled *An American City*, running July 14 through September 30, 2018, at sites across Northeast Ohio. Adding to the public art commissions and projects announced in fall 2017, which will activate venues including Cleveland Public Library, Playhouse Square, SPACES, Transformer Station and the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland, the Triennial will engage the area’s most significant cultural and educational institutions to present



a series of exhibitions and projects throughout Cleveland. Participating sites highlighted here include Akron Art Museum, the Cleveland Museum of Art, the Museum of Contemporary Art Cleveland and Oberlin College. An additional set of presentations will be announced in the coming months.

Working in partnership with curators at each of these institutions, FRONT will debut new commissions and special exhibitions, with a number of national and international artists presenting significant projects and artworks to area audiences for the first time. The Akron Art Museum will host a group show of more than ten international artists in dialogue around the effects of consumer culture on urban life. The Cleveland Museum of Art will present new commissions in addition to works by artists that variously engage the museum's architecture, its community, and the history and contemporary landscapes of Cleveland as *An American City*. Museum of Contemporary Art Cleveland will host a series of projects that reflect the shifting landscape of the Rustbelt region at various points of time in America (both real and imagined) touching on themes of loss, renewal, power and resilience emerge as artists move between the personal and the social, and private and public space. Oberlin's contribution to FRONT underscores the architectural aspect of the American city, highlighting the area's rich architectural heritage, in particular the iconic modernist structures on Oberlin's campus.

“Collaboration is critical to FRONT's overarching program, and we have worked very closely with the curatorial partners at each institution,” said **FRONT Artistic Director Michelle Grabner**. “By facilitating connections among various distinct cultural voices and institutional frameworks, FRONT aims to inspire intersections and touchpoints to actively renew, redescribe and recontextualize contemporary aesthetic experiences.”

Program highlights for the Triennial include artist commissions and major installations presented throughout Cleveland's most significant cultural and educational institutions, listed alphabetically as follows:

AKRON ART MUSEUM

The Akron Art Museum will present an international group exhibition of video, installations, painting and sculpture that examines how consumer culture affects contemporary urban society. From the built environment—including urban planning and geology—to the sociology of neighborhoods both real and imagined, the exhibition offers a varied landscape of global viewpoints on the contemporary city. In sync with FRONT's investigation of the Midwestern city as both a concept and site, featured artists explore urban location as shaped by historical and current events in order to understand the sociopolitical forces defining the current moment. The



exhibition features work by Nasser Al Salem, Walead Beshty, Nicholas Buffon, Gerard Byrne, Sean Connelly, Jamal Cyrus, Woody De Othello, Maryam Jafri, Li Jinghu, Ad Minoliti, Katrín Sigurdardóttir and Visible Collective. Highlights include:

Gerard Byrne: 'In Our Time'

Irish video artist and photographer Gerard Byrne's 2017 immersive video installation *In Our Time* chronicles the daily routine of a disc jockey. The twelve-hour film features an array of sound including pop music, advertisements, conversation and talk show segments produced within the confined set of the sound booth. Byrne's theatrical time will be synced with gallery time throughout the cycle of the exhibition.

Walead Beshty

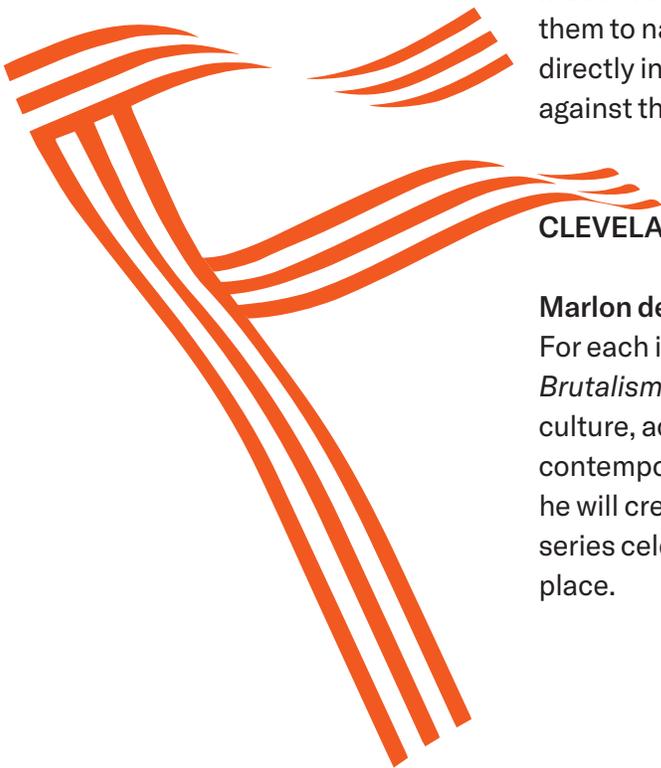
Walead Beshty is a multimedia artist who considers, among other topics, the fugitive in his photography and installation work. He will exhibit a suite of photographs made in the abandoned Iraqi Embassy in the former East Berlin, an architectural site evacuated after reunification. As a standing structure dedicated to a political entity (the DDR) that is no longer existent, the ruin is an example of urban entropy. The photographs are coupled with examples from his newest series of Office sculptures in an installation colored by the failed optimism of political and technological aspiration.

Katrin Sigurdardottir

Katrin Sigurdardottir mines the forms of architecture and archaeology in constructed installations, which often respond to specific built environments. Her FRONT project will be installed both in the gallery and at several dormant sites in Akron and Cleveland. It involves placing sculptures made of volcanic clay mined in Iceland, in the Northeast Ohio earth, allowing them to naturally evolve among the local flora. By positing these objects directly in the ground, Sigurdardottir contrasts the spans of geological time against the rise, fall and renewal of urban society.

CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART**Marlon de Azambuja: 'Brutalismo-Cleveland'**

For each iteration of his long-standing series of sculptural installations, *Brutalismo*, Marlon de Azambuja uses materials specific to the place and culture, acknowledging the visible and invisible systems that form the contemporary physical makeup of the local urban fabric. For this iteration, he will create a work made of materials gathered in Cleveland. This ongoing series celebrates both the legacy of brutalist architecture and specificity of place.



Agnieszka Kurant: 'End of Signature'

Agnieszka Kurant's *End of Signature* series is an ongoing exploration of collective intelligence, hybrid authorship and the power of social capital in our increasingly digitized and globalized world. Employing crowdsourcing and a number of data transformations, the artist creates collective signatures that give form to various communities, social movements or groups of people supporting a common cause, rendering visible the flow of social energies. This unique body of work engages with technology's role in the obfuscation of individual authorship and the decline of handwriting in our civilization, accompanied by its gradual replacement by keystrokes on technological devices. The newest iteration of *End of Signature*, commissioned for FRONT, combines signatures submitted by employees and trustees of the Cleveland Museum of Art, which are then aggregated into a single inscription form via software developed by the artist in collaboration with a professional computer programmer. The collective signature will be displayed on the museum's façade.

Luisa Lambri

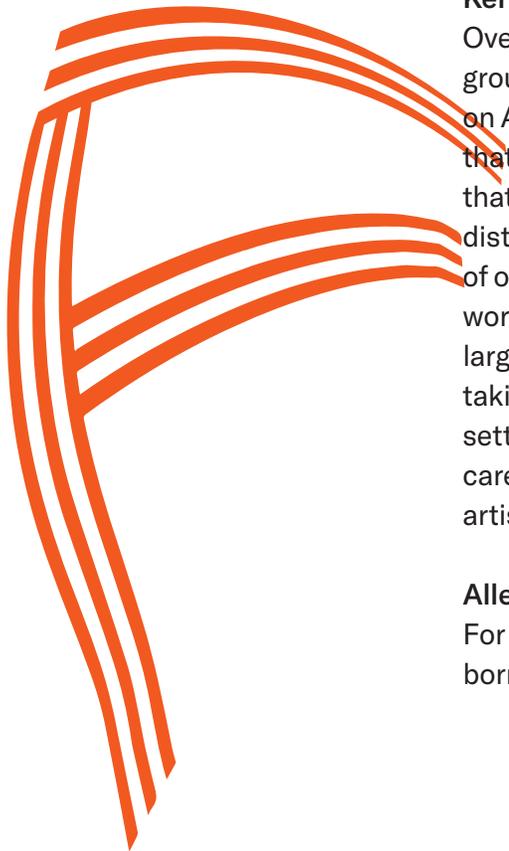
Continuing her investigation of spaces designed by eminent male architects, Luisa Lambri has produced a suite of photographs using architectural elements of the Cleveland Museum of Art as building blocks for her compositions. The series focuses on the structure and spaces of the museum's wing designed by Marcel Breuer in 1971 as an addition to the original 1916 building and the subsequent 1950s addition. Lambri's signature light-filled prints persist in offering close-valued, painterly impressions of austere modern architectural spaces.

Kerry James Marshall

Over the last thirty-five years, Kerry James Marshall has created a groundbreaking body of work that gives visibility to narratives centered on African American identity. Through his often monumental paintings that insert black protagonists into traditional Western art genres—those that have been structured around these figures' absence—Marshall has distinguished himself as one of the most acclaimed and influential artists of our time. Alongside his paintings, Marshall has an active practice making works on paper, which are the focus of this exhibition. The show features a large-scale twelve-panel woodcut print from 1998 that unfolds cinematically, taking the viewer from an aerial perspective of an urban grid into the intimate setting of a home. An array of drawings, spanning the arc of Marshall's career, will complement the woodcut and emphasize the process behind the artist's ongoing investigations of private and public space.

Allen Ruppersberg: 'Then and Now'

For his first presentation at the Cleveland Museum of Art, the Cleveland-born conceptual artist Allen Ruppersberg pays homage to his hometown



in a new body of work. Drawing on his interest in vernacular urban forms, Ruppertsberg will use local billboards as a tool for rediscovering the city he left for Los Angeles in the 1960s. Photographs taken from the vantage point of billboards across Cleveland—along the roadways by Lake Erie and the steel yards to the mouth of the Cuyahoga River—will be installed in light boxes, reminding viewers of the city's industrial past.

MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART CLEVELAND

Johnny Coleman

Johnny Coleman is an interdisciplinary artist and educator working in sound, sculpture, and installation based in Oberlin, Ohio. Delving into the history and heritage of African-Americans within the United States, Coleman combines found and hand-made materials, objects, and sound to re-imagine personal and collective narratives and redefine contemporary black experiences. Based on a new installation in and about Cleveland's Glenville neighborhood, Coleman will create an auxiliary presentation at MOCA Cleveland that extends his research and expands access to the stories he has uncovered.

Cyprien Gaillard: 'Nightlife'

Cyprien Gaillard's 3D film and audio installation *Nightlife* was shot in Cleveland, Los Angeles and Berlin. Like much of Gaillard's work, the film is a meditation on the ways in which traumatic events of history can be read in urban or 'natural' landscapes. Accompanied by a dub soundtrack, the film takes in a bomb-damaged sculpture in front of the Cleveland Museum of Art, the riotous swaying of trees in dark LA and a firework above Berlin's Olympiastadion. The final scenes return to Cleveland, to a German oak tree gifted to African-American gold-medalist Jesse Owens by Nazi organizers of the 1936 Olympic Games.

Lin Ke

Lin Ke is a multi-media artist who will create a digital experience in augmented and virtual reality in the galleries of the museum. Drawing inspiration from the city of Cleveland, the artist will develop the work as one of the Cleveland Foundation Creative Fusion artists in residence for the Triennial.

Josh Kline

Josh Kline's immersive dystopian installation at MOCA Cleveland is a major component of his 2017 project *Civil War*. MOCA's presentation of Kline's work is a monochrome ash-colored environment, featuring a group of gray sculptures that appear to be piles of concrete rubble. The life-size sculptures are made of hundreds of highly-detailed casts of broken and shredded everyday domestic objects including furniture, appliances, tools



and children's toys. Together, they form a dark sci-fi vision of America's middle-class aspirations as shattered ruins in the aftermath of a near-future civil war. Kline's larger project *Civil War* looks ahead to the possible consequences in the coming decades of deteriorating democratic institutions in the United States against a backdrop of mass unemployment due to automation and artificial intelligence.

Martine Syms: 'An Evening with Queen White'

An Evening with Queen White finds the performer Fay Victor (as Queen White) in the midst of a set reminiscent of the Motown recording studios of the 1960s. Filmed in a single long-take, using a 360 degree camera rig centrally located, Fay moves freely, continually captured by the camera. Eschewing conventional VR, Syms explores how the audience can experience this kind of image environment without the use of a headset. *An Evening with Queen White* is exemplary of Syms' use of the monologue as a medium for exploring how voice, gesture, and persona are learned and performed. The script complicates the artist's own biography and points toward how strategies of performing oneself as a black woman in America are transmitted and crystallized across generations through both familial teaching and societal conditioning.

OBERLIN COLLEGE**Juan Araujo at the Weltzheimer/Johnson House, Oberlin College**

As a Cleveland Foundation Creative Fusion artist in residence, Juan Araujo will occupy the Usonian Weltzheimer/Johnson House designed by Frank Lloyd Wright, now owned by Oberlin College. Araujo has been dedicated to artistic appropriations since 1998. He began by creating paintings that investigated the history of art by reproducing artists' works found in books, in catalogues and online. Since 2004 he has engaged with architectural topics while keeping the same basic approach, focusing primarily on private residences built in the mid-20th century that exemplify Latin American modernism. Through the symbiotic relationship between the paintings and the buildings he has observed, Araujo informs the way we think about architecture and modernism in general. His FRONT project will explore these ideas through a diversity of media, sited at the house in addition to an offsite location on the college's campus.

Barbara Bloom at the Ellen Johnson Gallery, Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin College

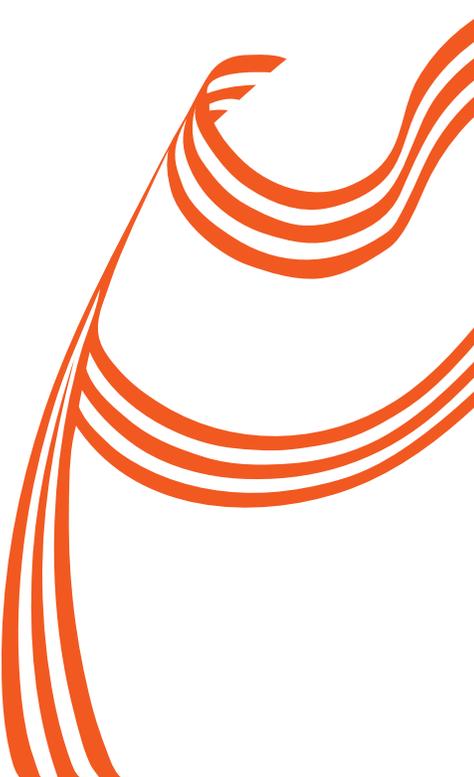
Barbara Bloom has conceived an exhibition responding specifically to the Ellen Johnson Gallery, designed by Robert Venturi in the 1970s. She will create one of her signature installations in this complex postmodern gallery, a space that screams "Architecture" with a capital A, presenting a carefully curated and placed selection of works, all of which depict architecture in



some form. The artist's selection from the museum's collection comprises paintings, prints, drawings and photographs from a wide range of cultures and periods. A variety of display devices will allow the viewer to navigate the space architecturally, and to experience these works as though they were breaking away from the two-dimensional plane and into space, thus highlighting their architectural essences.

Cui Jie at the Richard D. Baron '64 Art Gallery, Oberlin College

Cui Jie is considered a significant emerging voice of the Chinese "post-80s" generation, the first generation to grow up in mainland China in an entirely reformist era. Her technical mastery of the painted surface renders complex, architectonically layered works that source hyperbolic combinations of "idealized" urban architecture, finding commonalities that merge a sense of alienation common to both contemporary China and postwar Europe. City plans and multiple exposures are captured in layers of "sculptural impasto," slowly applied, masked and contained to embody the transformations of China's urbanscapes, namely Shanghai, Hangzhou and Beijing. A meticulous observer of reflected light and form, Jie emulates Wassily Kandinsky's exploration of synesthesia to merge the cadences of sound and color in her fantastical architectural compositions. During the Triennial, she will install a solo exhibition of recent work at the Baron Art Gallery, a space managed by the Oberlin College Art Department.

PARTICIPATING ARTISTS & ARTISTS-IN-RESIDENCE AS OF JANUARY 30, 2018:

Nasser Al-Salem (Jeddah, Saudi Arabia)
Juan Araujo (Lisbon, Portugal)*
Eric Baudelaire (Paris, France and Rome, Italy)
Walead Beshty (Los Angeles, USA)
Dawoud Bey (Chicago, USA)
Barbara Bloom (New York, USA)
Candice Breitz (Berlin, Germany)
Thomas Boutoux (Paris, France)
Nicholas Buffon (New York, USA)
A.K. Burns (New York, USA)*
Gerard Byrne (Dublin, Ireland)
Juan Capistran (Los Angeles, USA)*
Johnny Coleman (Oberlin, USA)*
Sean Connelly (Honolulu, USA)*
Jamal Cyrus (Houston, USA)
Marlon de Azambuja (Madrid, Spain)
Woody De Othello (Berkeley, USA)
Willie Doherty (Derry, Ireland)

Casey Jane Ellison (Los Angeles, USA)
Elizabeth Emery (Cleveland, USA)*
Kevin Jerome Everson (Charlottesville, USA)
Harrell Fletcher (Portland, USA)*
Cyprien Gaillard (Berlin, Germany and New York, USA)
Dani Gal (Berlin, Germany)
Dale Goode (Cleveland, USA)*
Andy Holden (Bedfordshire, UK)
Sky Hopinka (Milwaukee, USA)
Maryam Jafri (New York, USA and Copenhagen, Denmark)
Cui Jie (Beijing, China)
Hao Jingban (Beijing, China)
Li Jinghu (Dongguan, China)
William E. Jones (Pasadena, USA)
Alex Jovanovich (New York, USA)
Lin Ke (Beijing, China)*
Agnieszka Kurant (New York, USA)
Luisa Lambri (Los Angeles, USA)
Guillaume Leblon (New York, USA)
Kerry James Marshall (Chicago, USA)
Laura Huertas Millán (Bogotá, Colombia and Paris, France)
Ad Minoliti (Buenos Aires, Argentina)
Sarah Morris (New York, USA)
Michael Oatman (Cleveland, USA)*
Erkan Özgen (Berlin, Germany)
djulie Ezelle-Patton (Cleveland and New York, USA)*
Michael Rakowitz (Chicago, USA)
Cheng Ran (Hangzhou, China)
Jennifer Reeder (Chicago, USA)
John Riepenhoff (Milwaukee, USA)*
Kay Rosen (Chicago, USA)
Allen Ruppersberg (New York and Los Angeles, USA)
Allan Sekula (Deceased)
Indrė Šerpytytė (London, UK)*
Yinka Shonibare, MBE (RA) (London, UK)
Katrín Sigurdardóttir (New York, USA and Reykjavik, Iceland)
Cally Spooner (London, UK)*
Julian Stanczak (Deceased)
Martine Syms (Los Angeles, USA)
Tony Tasset (Chicago, USA)
Jim Trainor (Chicago, USA)
Philip Vanderhyden (New York, USA)
Jan van der Ploeg (Amsterdam, Netherlands)
Visible Collective (2001-2007) (Various)
Barbara Wagner and Benjamin de Burca (Berlin, Germany)



Stephen Willats (London, UK)

Lauren Yeager (Cleveland, USA)*

Geographic references indicate locations where artists currently live and work.

* Indicates artists selected to participate in FRONT's Artist-in-Residence program, The Madison Residencies-with support from Cleveland Foundation's Creative Fusion program-will take place at the newly developed Glenville Arts Campus on the East side of Cleveland. The Madison Residency program will include international, national and local artists.

PRESS INQUIRIES

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[Image caption clockwise from top left: Luisa Lambri, *Untitled (The Met Breuer, #01)*, 2016, Pigment print, cm 90 x 72; Lin Ke, Screenshot of computer desktop in preparation for MOCA Cleveland Project, Courtesy of the artist; Cyprien Gaillard, *Nightlife (Film Stills)*, 2015, 3D motion picture, DCI DCP, 14:56 min, © Cyprien Gaillard, Courtesy the artist and Sprüth Magers; Marlon de Azambuja, *American Brutalism*, Industrial metal clamps and building material, 2015, Courtesy of the artist and Instituto de Visión]

Notes to the Editor**About FRONT**

FRONT International: Cleveland Triennial for Contemporary Art is an exhibition comprised of artist commissions, performances, films, and public programs that will launch its inaugural edition in July of 2017. An American City: Eleven Cultural Exercises, in collaboration with museums, civic institutions, and alternative spaces across Cleveland, Akron and Oberlin, will showcase an ambitious roster of projects, including performance and theater throughout the landscape and built environment. With a roster of national, international and area-based artists at all points in their career, FRONT will examine the ever-changing and politically urgent conditions of an American city.

When:

July 14–September 30, 2018

Press and Professional Preview Days: July 12–13, 2018

Where:

Cleveland and Northeast Ohio



FRONT Presenting Partners and Venues

Akron Art Museum
Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin College
Canvas City Murals, Downtown Cleveland
Case Western Reserve University
Cleveland Clinic
Cleveland Institute of Art
Cleveland Museum of Art
Cleveland Public Library
Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland
Hingetown, Ohio City, Cleveland
The FRONT Porch, PNC Glenville Arts Campus
MOCA Cleveland
Playhouse Square
SPACES
Steamship William G. Mather, Great Lakes Science Center
St. John's Episcopal Church, Ohio City, Cleveland
Transformer Station
Weltzheimer/Johnson House, Oberlin College
West Side Market

Leadership**Fred Bidwell, Executive Director**

Fred Bidwell is a philanthropist, collector and community leader. After a 35-year career as an advertising and marketing entrepreneur, in 2011, he and his wife established the Fred and Laura Ruth Bidwell Foundation. In 2013, they founded the Transformer Station, a contemporary art space on Cleveland's West Side. Transformer Station alternates between acting as a venue for exhibitions curated by the Bidwells from their renowned collection of photo-based contemporary art and as a venue for exhibitions organized by the Cleveland Museum of Art. Fred Bidwell served twice as board president of the Akron Art Museum and currently on the board of the Cleveland Museum of Art and on the Visiting Committee of the Allen Memorial Art Museum.

Michelle Grabner, Artistic Director

Michelle Grabner is a celebrated American artist. Her work is in the collections of the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; Milwaukee Art Museum; Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago; DaimlerChrysler Collection, Berlin; Mudam Luxembourg; Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, DC; and the Victoria and Albert Museum, London. In November 2012, Grabner was selected as one of three curators to organize the 2014 Whitney Biennial in New York. She recently curated the 2016 Portland Biennial, a statewide exhibition in Oregon. Grabner is the Crown Family



Professor in Painting and Drawing at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. With her husband, Brad Killam, she co-directs the project spaces The Suburban, in Milwaukee, and the Poor Farm, in Little Wolf, Wisconsin. Grabner serves on the board of the Milwaukee Art Museum.

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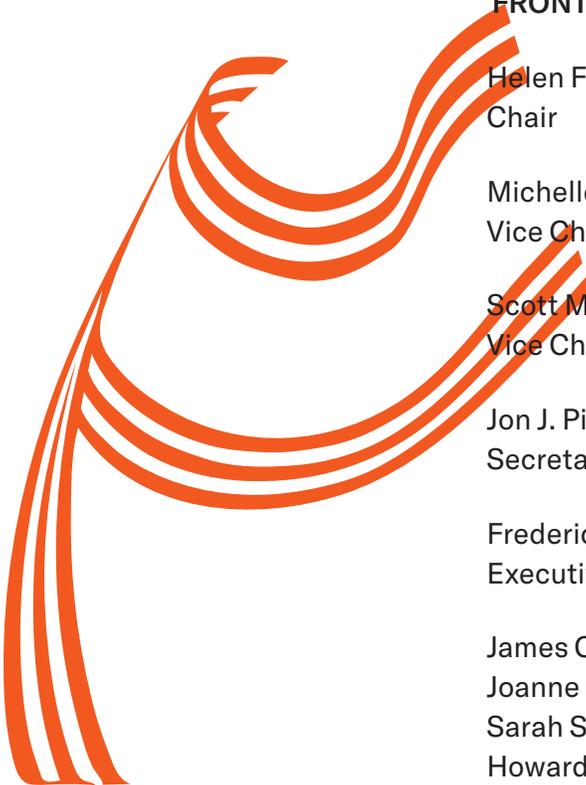
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