



RESISTANCE TRAINING

ARTS, SPORTS, AND CIVIL RIGHTS

On view at the MSU Broad Art Museum
Aug. 19, 2023–Feb. 18, 2024

INTRO



I grew up playing sports. Baseball, soccer, basketball, lacrosse, backyard football—I loved them all, and still do. I also love to draw and take photographs, and to make things with my hands. I have always found meaning in visualizing something and then bringing it into being. In that way, the practice of arts and that of sports were never that different. They are and have been part of a lifelong pursuit of creativity, joy, and excellence not only within myself, but in communion with others in the power of what we can do together. Because both arts and sports do exactly that: bring people together.

This exhibition grows out of my own personal experiences and interests, but that is just the starting point. When I arrived at Michigan State University in late 2015, I was enamored with both the incredible artistic and intellectual offerings of the region and the fervor for athletics, the sense of Spartan pride. Growing up I was also taught that in all major societies throughout history, two of the primary pillars of any culture were the arts and athletics—however different those cultures may be. As such, these two crucial aspects of culture have always been intertwined.

Resistance Training: Arts, Sports, and Civil Rights sits exactly at that intersection, while also focusing on the ways that artists and athletes have long given voice to and been engaged in struggles for civil rights and social justice. There is a camaraderie between the work of artists and athletes that I sense often goes overlooked: a constant, incessant drive toward mastery, perfection in stroke, muscle memory, and skill. There is also deep study, intuition, and creativity. When we think of our culture today, and the culture we wish to cultivate for future generations, I am inspired not only by the artists in this exhibition but also the athletes and histories that have inspired them.

Furthermore, I am inspired by our legacies here at MSU and the many people today continuing the important work to advocate for civil rights and social justice, on and off the court, from and beyond the arena, the track, or the field. The story isn't always perfect; hardship and struggle are part of this exhibition too. But there is so much to celebrate and learn from—to pass on to future generations. Whether in the arts, sports, or in public service more broadly, there is a responsibility to open more doors than we close, to pave the way for others.

I hope you enjoy the exhibition and the many offerings in this brochure. I am grateful to all those who have contributed their voices, experiences, and ideas. As the artists and athletes have shown me, we are better, more multifaceted, and more interesting when we create together.



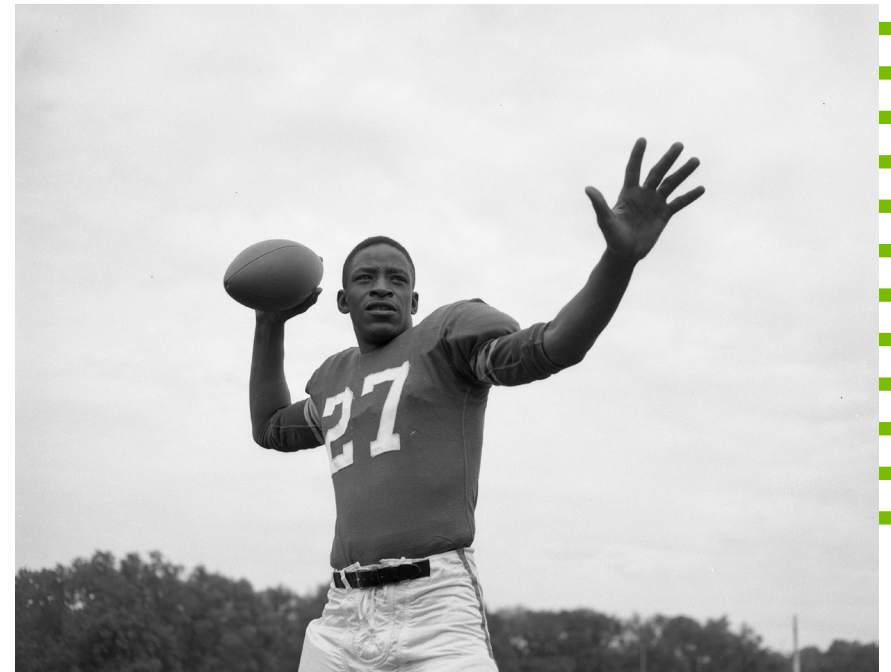
Steven L. Bridges
Interim Director &
Senior Curator and Director of Curatorial Affairs



1. *Three members of the softball team check on Sparty*, 1944. Courtesy Michigan State University Archives and Historical Collections.
2. Tyrrell Winston, *Prepare for Glory!*, 2022. Photo by PD Rearick. Courtesy of the artist and Library Street Collective.



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3. Wendy White, *Billie Jean (Title IX)*, 2023. Courtesy the artist.

4. *Willie Thrower*, 1950. Courtesy Michigan State University Archives and Historical Collections.

COMMUNITY VOICES

PERO DAGBOVIE

KAREN DENNIS

BETH MLYNAREK KAUFMAN

DARIEN HARRIS

JAMES C. PERKINS



PERO DAGBOVIE

Pero Dagbovie is a University Distinguished Professor of History and serves as vice provost for graduate and postdoctoral studies and dean of the Graduate School at MSU.

Between 1904 and the end of World War II, approximately thirty-three African Americans (eight of whom were Black women) graduated from what we now call MSU. During the modern Civil Rights Movement when MSU President John A. Hannah served as chair of the United States Civil Rights Commission, the Spartans were widely celebrated for their noticeable integration on the gridiron. Skipped by Black co-captains and a Black quarterback, there were nearly twenty African Americans on the legendary 1966 football team with eight starting on defense.

The Black presence in East Lansing during the early to mid-1960s was small but conspicuous. Six years later, Black students accounted for less than two percent of the total student population. The explicit recruiting of Black football players began in the early to mid-1950s. Yet, the gradual integration of football and other sports at America's first agricultural college predates the classical phase of the Civil Rights Movement. When contemplating MSU's history of integration in athletics, it's worthwhile to revisit the 1910s, 1920s, and 1930s.

In 1913, Norfolk, Virginia native Gideon Edward Smith, '16, became the first African American to play varsity football at Michigan Agricultural College. Through the end of the Great Depression, eight dexterous



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5. *Gideon Smith*, ca. 1910. Courtesy Michigan State University Archives and Historical Collections.

Black players followed in the multitalented tackle's footsteps: Harry C. Graves, Benjamin L. Goode, Holloway Smith, Chester Smith, Alvin Jackson, James McCrary, William H. Smith, and Albert Baker.

Collectively, they defied the odds and persevered, using sports as an avenue for demonstrating Black equality and excellence. In the mid-1930s, student-athlete-activists McCrary and Baker challenged the college's segregationist policies. Denied the opportunity to participate in their required "practice teaching" in East Lansing and Lansing public schools by a college administrator, they protested these discriminatory practices with the help of Baker's father, an attorney, and William Pickens, the prolific national field secretary for the NAACP. Their actions resulted in the college's first public statement against anti-Black discrimination issued by the State Board of Agriculture in June 1935.

Beyond the gridiron, there were other African American students who integrated MSU athletics. In the late 1910s, Delbert Prillerman, '17, played interclass tennis and Charles Johnson, '18, played interclass baseball. Talented Dairy Club member and herdsman Clarence E. Banks, '26, was a stand-out cross-country runner. During her senior year, Mabel J. Lucas, '27, became not only the first Black woman to earn a bachelor's degree in the applied sciences, but also the first to become a member of the college's Women's Athletic Association, making her mark on the interclass women's volleyball team.

Focusing on salient dimensions of the Civil Rights Movement, *Resistance Training* is a timely exhibit. When contemplating this rich history, it's important to remember the accomplishments of early twentieth-century African American student-athlete forerunners and their spiritual descendants of the 1940s and early 1950s who were "Black firsts" in their own ways like Harry Butler, Walter Arrington, Horace Smith, Donald S. Vest, Don Coleman, Ricky Ayala, and Dick Lord.



KAREN DENNIS

Karen Dennis is an alumna of Michigan State University and the first woman national champion in MSU athletic history. She recently retired as director of track and field, and cross country, at Ohio State University after 45 years of collegiate coaching.

Michigan State University afforded my mentors Mr. James Bibbs, Dr. Nell Jackson, and myself all with milestone “first” experiences. The early 1960s witnessed the beginning of the Civil Rights era throughout the country. In 1967 my hometown of Detroit, Michigan suffered a devastating riot in protest of racial injustice and inequality. In 1968, the athletic director at MSU, Mr. Biggie Munn, contacted my grass roots track and field club coach and highly successful high school coach Mr. Jim Bibbs to become the first Black coach of any sports program to lead the men’s track and field team.

A few years later in 1972, federal legislation referred to as Title IX became the law of the land. This law prohibited sex discrimination in any school or program that received federal funds. Dr. Gayle Mikles, the Director of Physical Education, in collaboration with the athletic director decided to hire someone to lead an emerging Women’s Athletics Program at MSU. In 1973, Dr. Nell Jackson was selected to become the first director of athletics for women and first women’s track and field coach for the Spartans.

In 1973, I entered Michigan State as an undergraduate majoring in Public Affairs Management. Reunited with my track and field coach Mr. Jim Bibbs, it didn’t take him long to encourage me to become a member of the women’s track team. In addition, the opportunity



to be mentored by a Black woman with impeccable athletic and academic credentials as Dr. Nell Jackson was exciting. In 1975, I became the first female national champion for MSU by winning the 220-yard dash at the Association for Intercollegiate Athletics (AIAW) for women championships. Despite operating on a shoestring budget, the AIAW thrived with 90% of its coaches and administrators being women.

Under the leadership of Dr. Nell Jackson I completed my undergraduate degree and was asked to assist her in the women's track and field program while pursuing a graduate degree in sports administration. She was grooming me to become an administrator, however, with the shifting ground of collegiate sports, the AIAW was dissolved in 1983 and replaced by the National Collegiate Athletics Association (NCAA). In 1982, 76 years after its inception, the NCAA began holding championships for women. Many women found the NCAA takeover of all collegiate sports bittersweet.

Women's sports programs were provided more funding; however, women were being demoted from coaching and administrative leadership positions only to be replaced by men. Dr. Jackson, a former track and field Olympian, Olympic team head coach, and academic scholar, left MSU in 1983 for an administrative position elsewhere. With her departure I was asked by the then-current athletic director to succeed her as the women's track and field coach. I didn't want to coach because my studies were to prepare me for a role in administration. But Coach Bibbs encouraged me to stay on for a year to assure program stability.

In retrospect the decades of the 60s and 70s were dichotomous and complex socially, culturally, and politically. The intersectionality of the era impacted my life and the lives of my mentors. We all experienced first-time opportunities at Michigan State. For me, I grew into a purposeful profession that both changed and challenged the trajectory of my life. Our 1982 women's track and field team won its first Big 10 team championship title. In 2022, after 45 years, I retired from coaching women and men.



**BETH
MLYNAREK KAUFMAN**

Beth Mlynarek Kaufman was one of the first women to join the Spartan Marching Band in 1972.

It all started with an article I came across in my local newspaper regarding the passage of Title IX. This legislation opened several opportunities for women to participate or engage in activities that previously were segregated. That included all-male marching bands and for some reason, MSU was cited as an example of one military-style band that would now be open to women.

The date was August 1972.

At that time, I was a competitive baton twirler and a student at Western Michigan University. The Bronco Band was eliminating baton twirlers and switching to "rifles" as the drum corps style came on the scene. Wanting to continue my twirling career and knowing that MSU also had an excellent Education program, I called the band office and asked if there might be a place for a twirler. I was granted an audition for the following day. Dave Catron, director of the marching band, and Dan Williams, twirler, held the audition on Adams Field and offered me a spot. After, Mr. Catron ushered me into the office to meet Ken Bloomquist, director of bands. His first words were, "Well young lady, you are going to be famous and infamous!"



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Years later, Mr. Bloomquist shared with me that he called a meeting of band officers after the announcement of Title IX to inform them of the forthcoming change. The men were opposed to accepting women. He was frank and emphasized that there would be no negotiation. It was obvious, however, that some of the men did not like this change. There would be some adversity, negativity, and skepticism from those not ready to accept women in the band. And there was. I reminded myself countless times to work hard, keep my head up, and never, never let anyone see me cry! But in the long run, those most opposed to my presence became some of my closest friends.

Every woman who has marched with the Spartan Marching Band has stories and memories to share. I wish I could hear them all. To the former and current, feature twirlers: I am so proud of you and honored that you continue to pass on the series routine and pregame traditions started in the seventies.



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7. Beth Mlynarek, first female twirler in the MSU Marching Band, 1972. Courtesy Michigan State University Archives and Historical Collections.

8. Lynne Charbonneau, saxophonist in the MSU Marching Band, 1972. Courtesy Michigan State University Archives and Historical Collections.



DARIEN HARRIS

Darien Harris is an alumnus of Michigan State University, where he was a four-year letterwinner for MSU football (2011–15). Currently, he is director of player relations and program advancement for the Spartan football staff.

Artists and athletes are some of the most recognizable and followed people in the world. Though many do not have a background in politics or civic engagement, they are routinely called upon to speak out on civil rights issues, represent marginalized groups in the ongoing battle for equality, and set an example for the youth on what is attainable when you chase your dreams.

When I think of the interconnectivity between the arts, sports, and civil rights, I see arts and sports as two of the most prominent expressions of culture, language, and connection in the world, meaning the creators of art and sport have influence over mass amounts of people. Influence and leadership go hand in hand. You cannot lead if people are unwilling to follow. Therefore, artists and athletes are classified as leaders, and whether they are engaging with their local neighborhoods or advocating for change across the globe, they directly affect the progress of social, racial, and equitable movements utilizing their influence.

The reason that artists, athletes, coaches, and entertainers alike have influence is because they garner an audience within their respective spaces, and as these patrons attend and leave the event space, the support for who or what they came to see carries on throughout

their daily lives. Conversations about what was just witnessed continue for years and years, whether it be memories of attending a championship game, the unveiling of an immaculate piece of artwork, or debating who the premier athletes or artists of an era are. Art and sport transcend generations through discussion, and nowadays discussions can be had with not only those within your immediate network, but also with those who you have had no prior association with using social media.

Often artists and athletes alike are opposed to criticisms they face about their performance or works by those who are, “not in the arena” (as Theodore Roosevelt famously alluded to in his passage, “The Man in the Arena”), and in many cases those feelings are justifiable. However, it is those supporters of the work that fill the stadiums, museums, and theatres who will also be the ones to carry out any calls to action for human rights that the artist or athlete either states verbally, or shows by example—how coaches/players treat each other, especially those who come from different backgrounds, or an artist’s willingness to work with and/or depict someone or a scene that differs from them culturally.

Using the power of influence, artists, and athletes alike, can and will continue to make a difference by facilitating conversations, inspiring change, and empowering others.



JAMES C. PERKINS

Professor James C. Perkins is the retired director of the Architectural Studies Center at Lansing Community College, among other appointments. He presently serves as advisor, patron, graphic artist, and archivist to the MSU Crew Club.

Since 1956, all students at Michigan State University have had the opportunity to become members of a crew, and to participate in the oldest and most unique form of collegiate competition: boat racing. At MSU, the tradition was spurred on by then-Athletic Director Clarence “Biggie” Munn in 1958. Less than two years after the acquisition of their inaugural “shell,” a group of dedicated student rowers, plus their coxswain, won honors for the first time at the Detroit Rowing Club. Propelling their heavy wooden behemoth of a boat over a 2,000-meter course in a little over six and a half minutes, the first of many victories was secured. The victory photograph taken on that day has survived as the oldest known photo from those early years and is the centerpiece of the trophy wall at the Crew Club Boathouse in Grand River Park on the west side of Lansing.

Since the 1960s the MSU crew club and varsity team have hosted the Head of the Grand, a fall regatta tradition that draws more than a thousand competitors and spectators to the banks of the Grand River. Each year a poster advertising the event (now affectionately referred to by participants as the HOG), is prepared and distributed. To advertise the 2017 regatta, I created a unique combination of a digital portrait and announcement poster. For this I chose to pay tribute to MSU alumna and recent Olympic Gold Medalist of the 2016 games in Rio De Janeiro, Emily Regan. By compiling multiple

digital images, a special victory portrait of Regan was created with images of MSU’s campus as the background. This portrait was all the more significant considering Regan’s background. As the story goes, Regan had never rowed competitively until stepping foot on MSU’s campus, where she not only excelled, but went on to write a new chapter of history for US women in the sport. The image included here is my homage to her and the sport we equally love.



Emily Regan
MSU Alumna 2010
“Sometimes when you combine green and white, you get gold!”

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10. Wendy White, *If I Can, You Can*, 2016. Courtesy the artist.

11. Young Joon Kwak, *Spartan Skin (Hand in Helmet)*, 2021. Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum, Michigan State University, purchase, funded by the Nellie M. Loomis Endowment in memory of Martha Jane Loomis, 2021.18.5. Photo by Biddle City Project.

12. Esmaa Mohamoud, *From the Ground We Fall*, 2019. Courtesy the artist and Kavi Gupta.

PROGRAMS

Engage further with the exhibition through these free public programs. Visit broadmuseum.msu.edu for the most up-to-date information. All events take place at the MSU Broad Art Museum unless otherwise noted.

FALL OPENING PARTY

Friday, Sep. 8, 6–10pm

Experience the many offerings of your campus art museum! We invite you to explore our newest exhibitions while enjoying food, music, special guests, and activities for all.

HOMECOMING PERFORMANCE:

AND THOSE SPARTANS PLAY GOOD BALL

Friday, Sep. 22, 2–6pm + Saturday, Sep. 23, 12–4pm

While in line for the parade or on your way to tailgate before the game, stop by the MSU Broad Art Museum to experience a performance-installation work by artist mike durkin focused on the intersection between sports, art, and community building. This program is presented in collaboration with the MSU Department of Theatre.

MUSEUM TOUR: RESISTANCE TRAINING

Sunday, Sep. 24, 1–2pm

What's your sport story? Join Interim Director & Senior Curator and Director of Curatorial Affairs Steven L. Bridges for a special walkthrough of the exhibition.

FAMILY DAY: TEAM

Saturday, Oct. 7, 11am–3pm

First Saturday means Family Day at the MSU Broad Art Museum! Make creative connections with our exhibitions through free hands-on and interactive family fun throughout the museum. Family Day is generously sponsored by PNC.

(DE)TOUR: GAME CHANGERS

Thursday, Oct. 12, 6–7pm

Venture off the beaten path on a (de)tour as we discuss gender equality in athletics and the game changing legislation that empowered generations of women to shatter barriers and redefine the sporting landscape.

POWER OF INFLUENCE:

THE INTERSECTION OF ARTS AND SPORTS FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

Wednesday, Nov. 29, 6–7:30pm

Join esteemed alumni, sports leaders, artists, and MSU faculty as they gather in conversation to discuss how the arts and sports are powerful catalysts for social change.

THIS IS NOT A TOUR: RESISTANCE TRAINING

Sunday, Dec. 3, 1–2pm

Take an unconventional look at the exhibition with this offbeat, interactive tour.

AN EVENING WITH MAHMOUD ABDUL-RAUF

January 2024, exact date to be confirmed | MSU Erickson Hall

In the early 1990s, professional basketball player Mahmoud Abdul-Rauf made a choice: he would no longer stand for the American national anthem when it came on before the game. Learn more about Abdul-Rauf's decision at this lecture and conversation. This program is presented in partnership with the Muslim Studies Program and the MSU Libraries.

FAMILY DAY: LIFT

Saturday, Jan. 6, 11am–3pm

First Saturday means Family Day at the MSU Broad Art Museum! Make creative connections with our exhibitions through free hands-on and interactive family fun throughout the museum. Family Day is generously sponsored by PNC.

STUDENT NIGHT: KEEP CALM AND SPARTY ON!

Wednesday, Jan. 17, 7–9pm

Stop by the museum for an evening of Spartan spirit with art making, MSU trivia, and togetherness. Students must show their MSU ID upon entry. This event is brought to you by the MSU Broad Art Museum Student Creative Council.

ARTIST TALK: WENDY WHITE

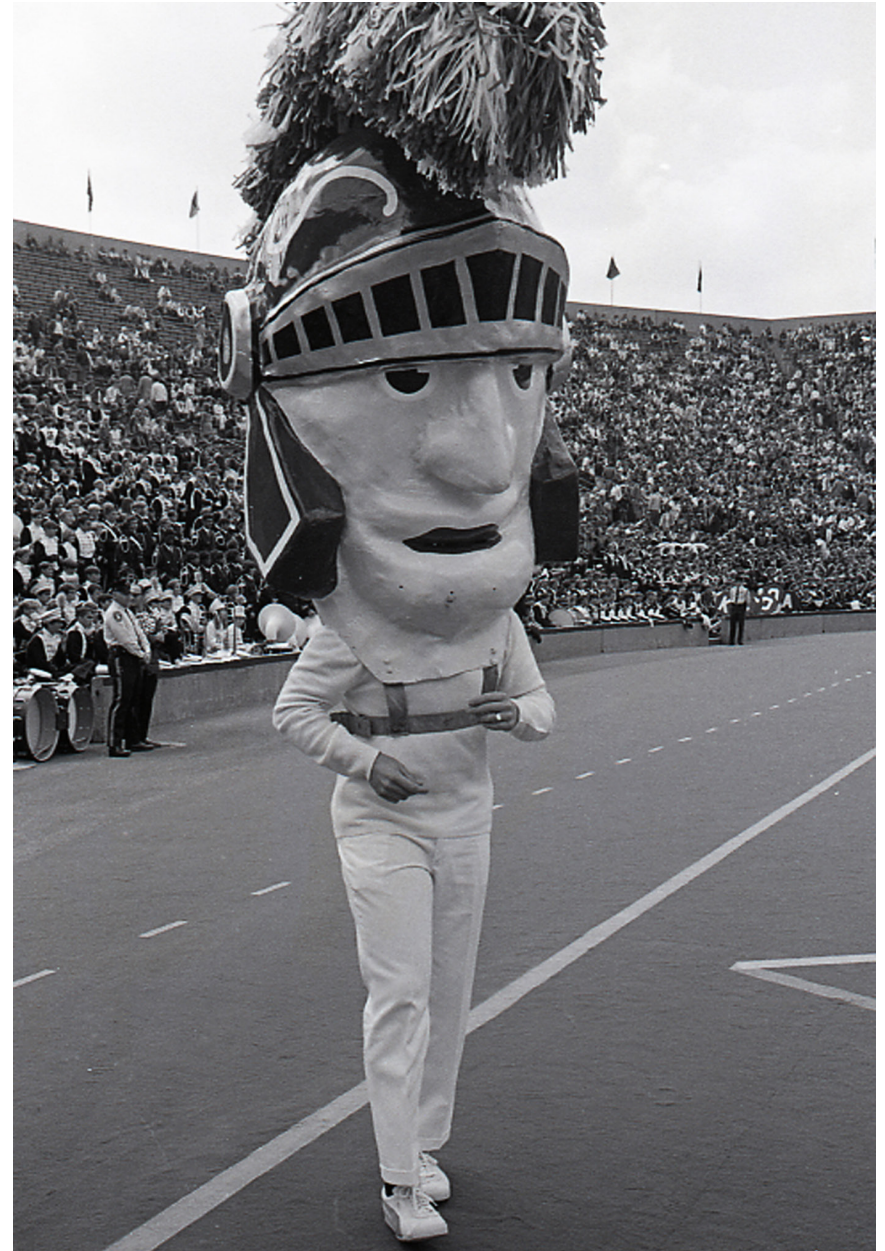
Wednesday, Feb. 7, 6–7pm

What do artists and athletes have in common? Gather with artist Wendy White as she draws parallels between the artist's studio and the field of play. From tennis stars to race car drivers, White's work is peppered with references to pop culture, sports, and the (often overlooked) legacies of victorious women.

BROAD UNDERGROUND FILM SERIES

Friday, Feb. 9, 7–9pm | MSU Wells Hall B122

This Broad Underground event presents experimental and avant-garde film and video screenings programmed in response to *Resistance Training*. The Broad Underground Film Series is an ongoing collaboration between the MSU Broad Art Museum and the Film Studies Program, Department of English at Michigan State University.





BE A CHANGEMAKER

Be a changemaker and speak out on issues that matter to you! Just like the artist and athlete voices shared in *Resistance Training*, your words and actions can inspire others to make a difference, too.

There are many ways you can support causes that matter to you:

EDUCATE YOURSELF

Stay informed. Continuously learn.

RAISE AWARENESS

Talk to people. Create something.

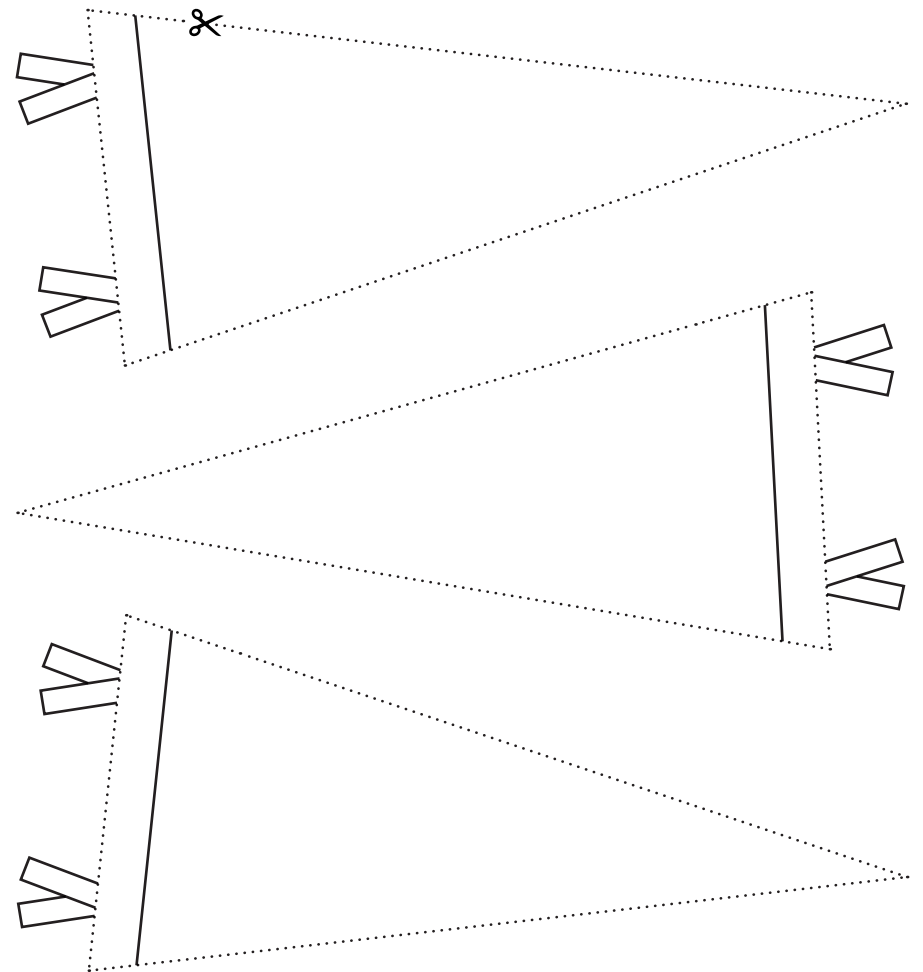
TAKE ACTION

Volunteer your time. Get involved in your community. Vote.

Imagine you are a professional athlete, a world-renowned artist, or a public figure. How would you use your popular status to make a positive difference? What would you stand for and why?

GET THE WORD OUT

Design a mini pennant to amplify your voice for change.



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



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MAHMOUD ABDUL-RAUF
TARA AKITT
SAMARA ASTER
MELANIE BAER SCHWARTZ
SAM BARBOUR
JOY BECKETT
LERATO BERENG
JEFF BERGMAN
ALYSSA BRUBAKER
ZOE BUCKMAN
LARHONDA BURLEY
ED BUSCH
MORGAN BUTTS
TOM CALLAS
BILL CASTANIER
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CATRIONA JEFFRIES GALLERY
APRIL CLOBES
CANDY COLEMAN
COMMONWEALTH
AND COUNCIL GALLERY
JJ AND ANTHONY CURIS
PERO DAGBOVIE
ANDRE DE KOCK
KAREN DENNIS
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JERRY EMIG
KOTA EZAWA
CARA FEENEY
HOLLY FLYNN
ARYN FOLAND
WINDE GEHRINGER

RACHEL GONZALES
MERIDITH GRAY
HALLIE GREANER
ALAN HALLER
DARIEN HARRIS
WESLEY HEROLD
MEAGAN HOGAN
GLENN KAINO
BETH MLYNAREK KAUFMAN
KAVI GUPTA GALLERY
YOUNG JOON KWAK
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TERRI MILLER
ESMAA MOHAMOUD
MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY
ART LOS ANGELES
THENJIWE NIKI NKOSI

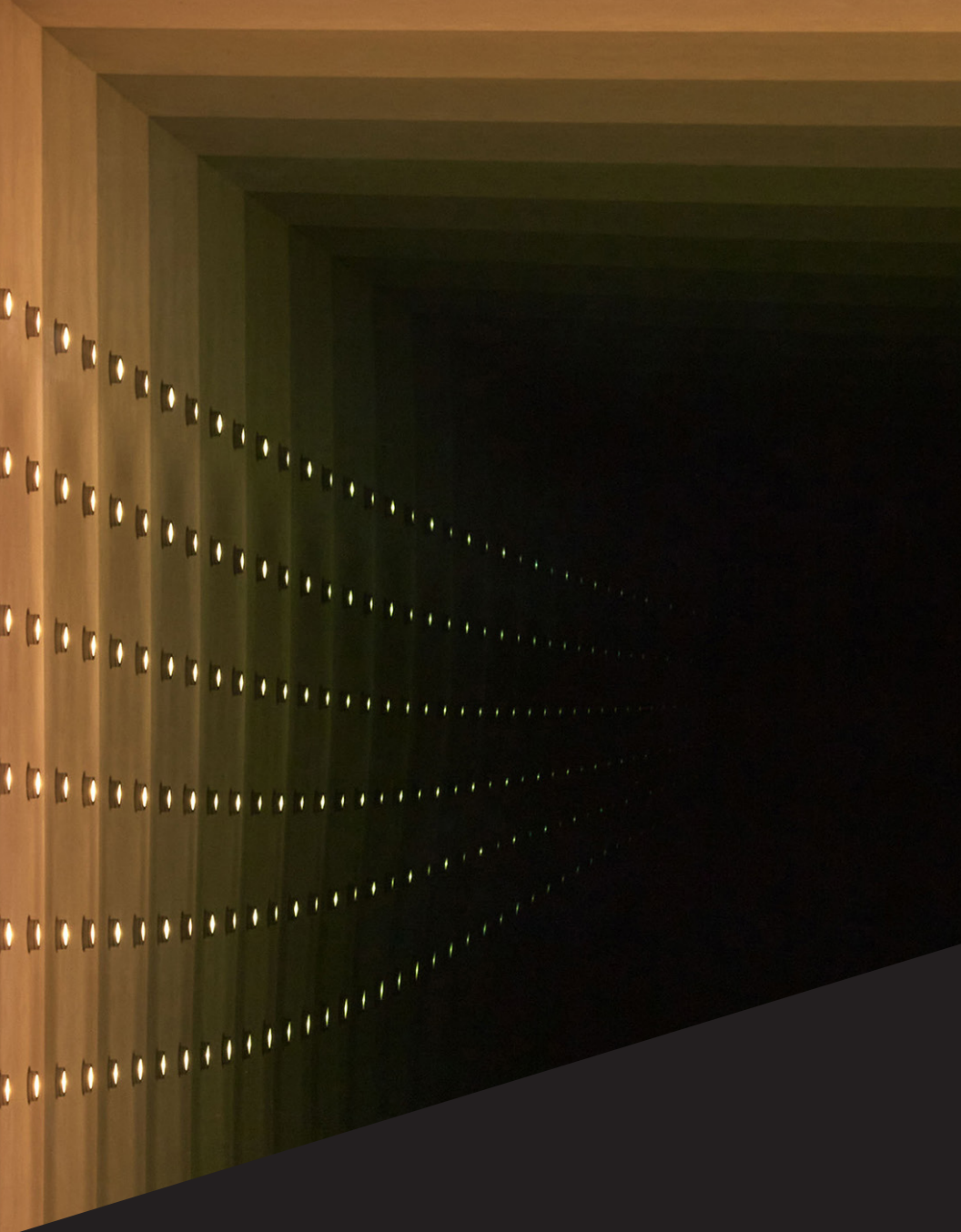
DEVAN OWENS
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POPPY TRIVEDI
DIVYA VICTOR
MAYA WASHINGTON
HANK WILLIS THOMAS
TYRRELL WINSTON
MARY WORRALL
WENDY WHITE
TERESA WOODRUFF

14. *Magic Johnson in a game against Kentucky, 1978.* Courtesy Michigan State University Archives and Historical Collections.

Cover: Glenn Kaino, *Salute (Lineage)*, 2019. © Glenn Kaino, courtesy Pace Gallery.

Resistance Training: Arts, Sports, and Civil Rights is organized by the Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum at Michigan State University and curated by Steven L. Bridges, Senior Curator and Director of Curatorial Affairs, and Thais Wenstrom, Curatorial Research and Administrative Assistant. Major funding for this exhibition is provided by the Alan and Rebecca Ross Endowed Exhibitions Fund, the MSU Federal Credit Union, and the Eli and Edythe Broad Endowed Exhibitions Fund, with additional support from Professor Charles Gliozzo.

The Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum at Michigan State University (MSU Broad Art Museum) connects people with art through experiences that inspire curiosity and inquiry. Presenting exhibitions and programs that engage diverse communities around issues of local relevance and global significance, the MSU Broad Art Museum advances the University values of quality, inclusion, and connectivity. Opened on November 10, 2012, the museum was designed by Pritzker Prize-winning architect Zaha Hadid and named in honor of Eli and Edythe Broad, longtime supporters of the university who provided the lead gift.



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Always free + open to all.