

★ **WORSHIP** ★

★ **WANT** ★

★ **FEAR** ★

★ **SPEECH** ★

★ **FOR** ★

★ **FREEDOMS** ★





Town Hall Discussion

at MOCA Cleveland

Saturday, November 5, 2016 at 3PM

Panelists:

Rev. Dr. J. Bennett Guess - Vice President, Council for Health and Human Service Ministries

Amanda King - Founder + Creative Director, Shooting Without Bullets

Jane M. Saks - Founding President + Artistic Director of Project&

Hank Willis Thomas - Artist + For Freedoms co-founder

Moderator:

Dan Moulthrop - CEO, The City Club of Cleveland

Sponsored by Deborah + Ronald Ratner

For Freedoms, the first-ever artist-run Super PAC, was formed to encourage art-based forms of political discourse and deeper engagement with the 2016 American Presidential election. Founded by artists Hank Willis Thomas and Eric Gottesman, this non-partisan effort declares that art — in all of its forms of expression — is a political act in itself.

Held in the round, this Town Hall discussion will be a collective conversation on political agency and activism, the role of art and artists in American politics, and what freedom means today in the context of the four essential human rights that President Roosevelt cited during his 1941 State of the Union address: freedom of speech, freedom of worship, freedom from want, and freedom from fear. We hope you will be part of the dialog.

Cover image: For Freedoms poster for exhibition at Jack Shainman Gallery



Rev. Dr. J. Bennett Guess

Vice President, Council for Health and Human Service Ministries

The Rev. Dr. J. Bennett Guess is a pastor and preacher who has spent a lifetime dreaming and scheming for a better world. An ordained minister in the United Church of Christ, he is Vice President of the Council for Health and Human Service Ministries, an association of 400 faith-based hospitals and health care centers, retirement and affordable housing communities, and providers of services to children, youth, families, older adults, and persons with disabilities.

Ben is a former Executive Minister and National Officer of the Cleveland-based United Church of Christ, which has 5,100 local congregations in all 50 states. A local church pastor in Kentucky for 12 years, Ben worked for the UCC's national headquarters from 2000-2016 in a variety of communication roles, including News Director and, later, as the UCC's Director of Publishing, Identity and Communication.

Ben is the first openly gay person to have served as an elected member of the UCC's Collegium of Officers (2011-2016). A lifelong advocate for racial, social and economic justice, he serves on the board of directors of the National LGBTQ Task Force in Washington, D.C., the nation's oldest LGBTQ rights organization. A graduate of Cleveland's Civic Leadership Institute, he is also a board member of the Museum of Contemporary Art Cleveland (MOCA).

Ben earned a B.A. degree in journalism from the University of Kentucky. He completed graduate studies in public administration and public policy at Murray State University and earned the Master of Divinity degree from Vanderbilt University. He completed his Doctor of Ministry degree at Chicago Theological Seminary, where he received the 2014 Distinguished Alumni Award.

Ben and his spouse, Jim Therrien, live in Cleveland's Edgewater neighborhood.



Amanda King

Founder + Creative Director, Shooting Without Bullets

Amanda King is a change agent in the Cleveland police reform process. She serves as the youth advocate on the Cleveland Community Police Commission. Amanda received her B.A. from Bryn Mawr College in Art History (2011) and is a J.D. Candidate at Case Western Reserve University School of Law (2017). She is an artist who uses her talents to create diverse ways to convey important social justice issues to the community.

Amanda is the founder and creative director of Shooting Without Bullets, a revolutionary youth advocacy program that focuses on identity development in black and brown teens in Cleveland through photography, open dialogue and expressive arts healing. She runs the program together with Makela Hayford and Shemariah Arki.

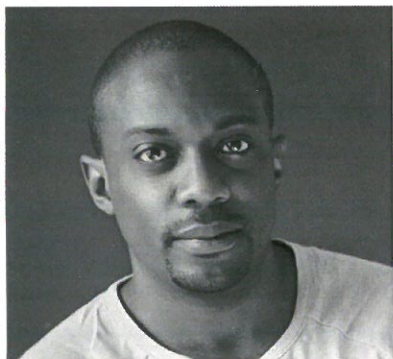


Jane M. Saks

Founding President +
Artistic Director of Project&

Jane M. Saks is a creative collaborator, arts producer, writer & educator who has worked to challenge and champion issues of gender, sexuality, human rights, race and power within the worlds of arts and culture, politics and civil rights, academia and philanthropy. She is Founding President and Artistic Director of Project& (projectand.org). In collaboration with artists, Project& creates new models of cultural participation and experience with social impact. She works with artists including Lynn Nottage, Claire Chase, Lynsey Addario, Hank Willis Thomas, Yance Ford, E Patrick Johnson, Kerry James Marshall and Tania Bruguera. She was the founding Executive Director, Institute for the Study of Women and Gender in the Arts and Media creating an award-winning Fellowship program, launching works that went on to win Pulitzer Prizes, MacArthur Genius Awards, Obie Awards and Guggenheims.

She is a published poet collaborating with artists including Kerry James Marshall, Jim Hodges, and Inigo Manglano-Ovalle. She is the creator, author, producer, co-producer on original creative works including "Sweet Tea: Gay Black Men of the South," "Congo: Women Portraits of War," JOMAMA JONES/RADIATE. Recent work: conceived/curated "Working in America," multi-media initiative (working.org); traveling photo exhibition, 10 part NPR radio series with Radio Diaries on "All Things Considered" & "Morning Edition," and online archive, Your Working Story, inspired by Studs Terkel's book "Working" (1974), "Just Yell/Poetry as Self-Defense" Youth Response to Violence with Cheryl Pope, "OUT/Let – The Reading Project," in collaboration with Lynn Nottage, "PAN" 100 flute orchestra in collaboration with Claire Chase and Marcos Balter. She serves on Cultural Advisory Council City of Chicago, LGBT Pride Action Tank, Trustee/Nathan Cummings Foundation, Center Race and Ethnicity in America, South Africa Constitutional Court Artworks/Architecture Committee, Radio Diaries. She is an invited lecturer at civic, cultural and educational institutions, visiting critic Yale University, and Regional Judge for the White House Fellows.



Hank Willis Thomas

Artist + For Freedoms
co-founder

Hank Willis Thomas is a photo conceptual artist working primarily with themes related to identity, history and popular culture. He received a BFA in Photography and Africana studies from New York University and his MFA/MA in Photography and Visual Criticism from the California College of Arts. He has exhibited throughout the U.S. and abroad including, the International Center of Photography, Studio Museum in Harlem, and the Baltimore Museum of Art, among others. Thomas' work is in numerous public collections including The Museum of Modern Art New York, The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, The Whitney Museum of American Art, The Brooklyn Museum, The High Museum of Art and the National Gallery of Art in Washington DC.

His collaborative projects have been featured at the Sundance Film Festival and installed permanently at the Oakland International Airport, The Birmingham-Shuttlesworth International Airport, The Oakland Museum of California, and the University of California, San Francisco. He is a member of the Cause Collective, a team of artists, designers and ethnographers whose current work includes transmedia projects *Truth Booth* and *Question Bridge: Black Males*. He is also and a recipient of the New Media grant from Tribeca Film Institute and New Media Infinity Award from the International Center of Photography for his transmedia project, *Question Bridge: Black Males*. Recent notable exhibitions include Hank Willis Thomas at the Cleveland Museum of Art and *Repetition and Difference* at the Jewish Museum in New York. He sits in the Public Design Commission for the city of New York. Thomas is represented by Jack Shainman Gallery in New York City and Goodman Gallery in South Africa.



Dan Moulthrop

CEO, The City Club of Cleveland

Dan Moulthrop is CEO of The City Club of Cleveland, one of the nation's great free speech forums. Founded in 1912, The City Club convenes over 120 programs every year on just about every issue and topic of importance to Northeast Ohio.

He was a co-founder of The Civic Commons, a Knight Foundation project creating a social media environment designed for civil civic dialogue. Prior to that, he was the host of Sound of Ideas on 90.3 WCPN ideastream.

Dan serves on the board of the Teacher Salary Project, the advisory boards of Facing History New Tech High School and Borderlight, and was a member of the Leadership Cleveland Class of 2014.

Dan is also co-author, with Dave Eggers and Ninive Calegari, of the best-selling book *Teachers Have it Easy: The Big Sacrifices and Small Salaries of America's Teachers* (The New Press, 2005), which provided the basis for the 2011 documentary "American Teacher." He's an award winning local public radio host, a former high school teacher and a graduate of UC Berkeley's Graduate School of Journalism. He lives in Shaker Heights, Ohio, with his wife and three children.

About For Freedoms

For Freedoms an artist-run super PAC founded by artists Hank Willis Thomas and Eric Gottesman. The project encourages art-based forms of political discourse to advocate for deeper public engagement surrounding the 2016 presidential election. Together with a group of some 50 artists, For Freedoms draws inspiration from Franklin Delano Roosevelt's articulation of the freedoms that underscore civil society: freedom of speech, freedom to worship, freedom from fear, and freedom from want. For Freedoms projects have included performances, exhibitions, meetings, programs, visual art-as-ad campaigns, and various forms of inclusive activism. Projects have occurred in Chicago, San Francisco, New York, Houston, New Orleans, Kansas City, Boston, and now Cleveland.



Learn more at forfreedoms.org.