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Storytellers Institute at Skidmore to open Monday



Thomas Allen Harris will present his new documentary, Through a Lens Darkly: Black Photographers and the Emergence of a People, at 7 p.m. June 9 at Skidmore. Photo provided

Posted: 05/31/15, 1:00 AM EDT

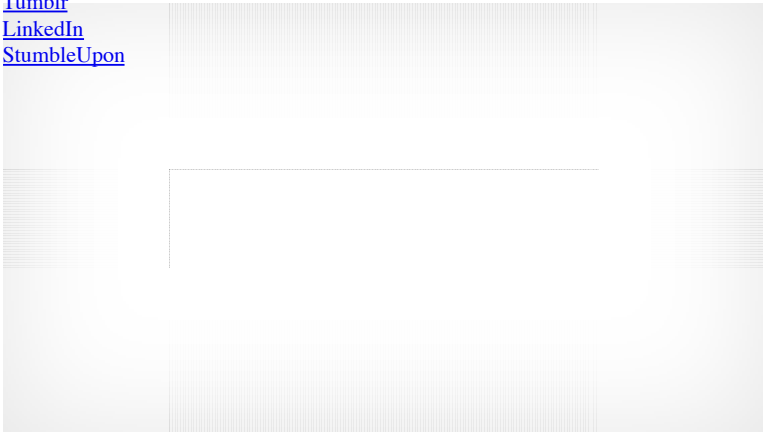
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SARATOGA SPRINGS > Family will be the theme of the inaugural Storytellers Institute scheduled Monday to July 2 and sponsored by the John B. Moore Documentary Studies Collaborative at Skidmore College.

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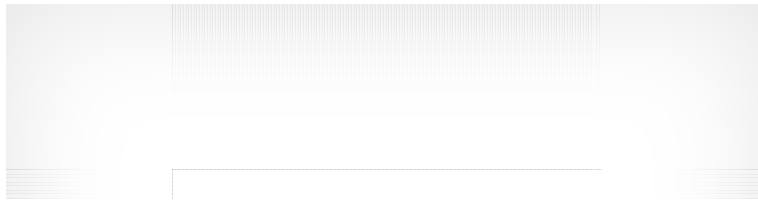
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The institute is an academic-artistic summer program for the documentary arts in which professionals work alongside Skidmore faculty and students.

According to MDOCS director Jordana Dym, “The importance of family to self and community is universal, although what makes a (good) family and a family’s role in society are always changing. There’s an amazing body of work by scholars and artists about family matters that institute members will mine in seminars, master classes and projects.”

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Series highlights will be keynote programs featuring award-winning film director Thomas Allen Harris on June 8 and 9 and sound documentarian Jim Metzner on June 15 and 16. In addition, institute fellows will lead four Friday evening programs and one Tuesday evening gallery opening showcasing their engagement with family matters. All events are free and open to the public.

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#### Family Photos: A Source for (H)stories

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The public is invited to join Harris at 7 p.m. June 8, for a screening and discussion of his new documentary *Through a Lens Darkly: Black Photographers and the Emergence of a People* in the Payne Room of Skidmore's Tang Teaching Museum and Art Gallery.

The first documentary to explore the American family photo album through the eyes of black photographers, it probes the recesses of American history to discover images that have been suppressed, forgotten, and lost.

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Harris will explore Capital District family stories in two interactive events.

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On June 9, from 2:30-4:30 p.m., Harris and his team of interviewers invite Saratoga-area community members to share their family story by bringing their photos to the Payne Room of the Tang Teaching Museum. (email [mdocs@skidmore.edu](mailto:mdocs@skidmore.edu) if you would like to participate; interviews last 15-20 minutes.)

At 8 p.m. June 9, Harris and Capital District families will participate in a Digital Diaspora Family Reunion Road Show in the Payne Room of the Tang Museum. The event brings to life area stories – and those gathered from the audience during the evening – in an interactive performance that builds connections among neighbors, friends and relatives.

#### Sound and Story: Hearing a New World

Jim Metzner's "Magic of Sound" gets under way at 7 p.m. June 15, in Filene Recital Hall. Known as the voice of *Pulse of the Planet*, a syndicated public radio program, Metzner has for 40 years searched for and shared sounds that enlighten, inform, and celebrate life. He will explain how sounds can convey a sense of a place, an activity, a mood, a person, or a family.

On June 16, early risers are invited to join Metzner at 7 a.m. on a sound walk in Skidmore's North Woods. After a brief introduction, participants will do some sound recording of their own (bring your smartphone) and then discuss what they heard over lunch. Space is limited so email [mdocs@skidmore.edu](mailto:mdocs@skidmore.edu) if you'd like to participate.

On Fridays in June institute fellows will give presentations centered on family.

The schedule is:

June 5, Yvonne Welbon kicks off the Storytellers Institute with a showcase mediating on the role of family in her films, 7 p.m., Davis Auditorium, Palamountain Hall. Welbon's more than 20 films showcase autobiography and family.

June 12, Carolyn McCartney screens her documentary film *Wanda the Wonderful* at 7 p.m. in Davis Auditorium. *Wanda the Wonderful* is a mixed-genre documentary Western that tells a story about sacrifice, family, the American West, what it means to forge your own way, and the realities behind a glamorous and exciting lifestyle.

June 19, Evan Roberts is a filmmaker and educator based in Austin, Texas, and the founder of Audio Heirlooms, an oral history production company. He is the writer/director of award-winning short films (*33 Teeth*, *Yeah*, *Kowalski*) and the short documentary *Arvind*. Roberts will screen the film at 7 p.m. June 19, in Davis Auditorium.

June 26, Jonna Mckone is a radio producer, documentarian and artist. As a journalist, she has worked on stories ranging from efforts in eastern

Kentucky to put former coal mines to economic use to the intersection of youth graffiti culture and galleries in Washington, D.C. She is currently at work on a film that explores the relationships between memory, artifact and her own familial history. She will host an opening of an exhibition of her work in Skidmore’s Case Gallery at 7 p.m. June 26.

In addition, at 7 p.m. Tuesday, June 16, institute associate fellows Chris D. Moore, Nicky Tavares, and Adam Tinkle will have an opening exhibition of their work in Case Gallery.

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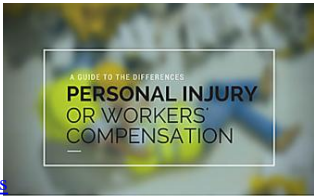
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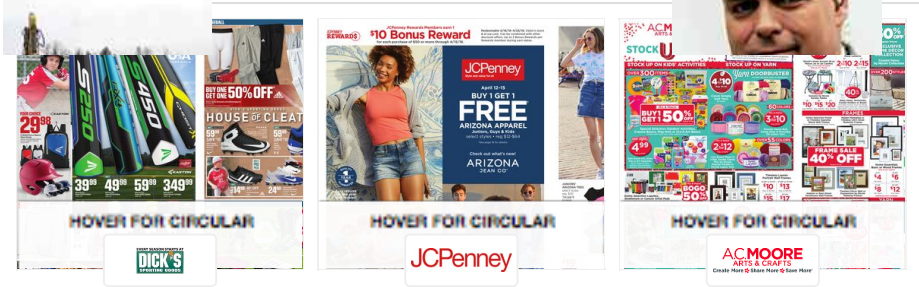
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