

# Hidden in Plain Sight: Telling Inclusive Stories

## MODERATOR

### Frank Mitchell

Toni N. and Wendell C. Harp  
Historical Museum at the  
Dixwell Community House

Frank Mitchell is a cultural organizer in visual arts and public humanities committed to following the histories often ignored by our monuments, civic spaces, and cultural institutions. He is The Amistad Center for Art & Culture's Curator at Large and Curatorial Adviser for the Toni N. and Wendell C. Harp Historical Museum at New Haven's Dixwell Q House. Mitchell is a consultant to the forthcoming Mystic Seaport exhibition *Entwined:*

*Freedom, Sovereignty, and the Sea*; for Connecticut Public Radio's spring 2024 radio series *Unforgotten: Connecticut's Hidden History of Slavery*, Mitchell is editorial consultant.

His curatorial projects include the exhibitions *Love Overflowing: HOME and the Décor of Freedom*, *Timeless: Telling Our Neighborhood Stories—Chapter 1: Constance Baker Motley*, *Finding Freeman(s)*, *The Nutmeg Pulpit: Hartford's Talcott Street Church & Black Community Formation*, *Afrocologies: American Reflections*, *Beyond the New Township: Wooster Square*, and *Soulfood: African American Cooking and Creativity*. Publications include the catalog *Afrocologies: American Reflections*, the anthology *African American Connecticut Explored*, and the culinary study *African American Food Culture*. He has taught at the University of Connecticut, Trinity College, and the University of the Arts.

Mitchell began work in museums as a programmer for The Anacostia Museum and The Studio Museum in Harlem. A graduate of The University of Michigan's PhD program in American Culture, he has a Master of Arts degree in African-American Studies from Yale University, and a Bachelor of Arts degree from Bowdoin College. Mitchell serves as vice chair of the CT Humanities board, treasurer of the New England Foundation for the Arts board, and a member of the Elm Shakespeare Company and the Eli Whitney Museum boards.



## PANELISTS

### **Philippe Halbert** Wadsworth Atheneum

Philippe Halbert is the Richard Koopman Associate Curator of American Decorative Arts at the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art. A graduate of the College of William and Mary and the Winterthur Program in American Material Culture, he received his doctorate in the history of art from Yale University. At the Wadsworth, he most recently curated *New Nation, Many Hands*, a cross-section of objects from the permanent collection that reflect emerging American identities in the wake of independence and the ongoing fight for freedom.



### **Mike Keo** Hartford Foundation for Public Giving

Mike Keo is a Cambodian American storyteller who leverages personal and community narratives to spark conversations about equity, inclusion, anti-racism, and collaboration. As the founder of #IAMNOTAVIRUS, Mike successfully advocated for the passage of the No Hate Act nationally and two AAPI K-12 history curriculum in Connecticut. He is a Senior Communication Officer at the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving. He currently serves on Governor Lamont's Hate Advisory Crimes Council and the board of the National Cambodian Heritage Museum in Chicago. Mike's contributions have been recognized through various honors, including 2023's 40 Under 40 Connecticut, Hometown Hero, and a recipient of a Community Award from the Connecticut Asian Pacific American Bar Association. He resides in West Hartford with his wife and two children.

## **Steven Peters** Smoke Sygnals

Steven Peters is a culturally and socially active citizen of the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe and partner at the Native American creative agency SmokeSygnals. He is responsible for the development of historical exhibits, content and interactive attractions that challenge historical myths. His work can be seen on Newbury Street in Boston, the Box Museum in Plymouth England, the Museum De Lakenhal in Lieden, and the National Museum of the American Indian and Provincetown Museum. In addition, he provided the creative direction for the traveling exhibit "Our Story: 400 Years of Wampanoag History, an exhibit that has been featured in Time Magazine, New York Times, BBC Radio and many other national and international publications for its ability to correct historical inaccuracies.

