

**February 11, 2014**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT:** Emily Smith, Executive Director  
804.643.1708 or esmith@1708gallery.org

# THE HAIR CRAFT PROJECT

FEBRUARY 14 -  
MARCH 8, 2014



Richmond, VA - 1708 Gallery is pleased to present **The Hair Craft Project**, a collaborative exhibition that engages artists, hairstylists and scholars.

Led by artist Sonya Clark, **The Hair Craft Project** is based on the premise that hairdressing is the primordial textile art form—hairdressing is the earliest manipulation of fiber toward an aesthetic and functional purpose. Artists from VCU's Craft and Material Studies program have prepared canvases each hand stitched with threads to simulate hair growth. Local hairstylists were given a stitched canvas and the opportunity to braid them as skillfully and creatively as possible. Photographs that depict the stylists' signature styles created for the project will be shown in conjunction with the canvases. The project aims to break down barriers by crossing boundaries between hair salons and art galleries as sites of aesthetics, craft, skill, improvisation, and commerce.

The featured stylists include Kamala Bhagat, Dionne James Eggleston, Marsha Johnson, Chaunda King, Anita Hill Moses, Nasirah Muhammad, Jameika Pollard, Ingrid Riley, Ife Robinson, Natasha Superville, and Jamilah Williams.

Visitors to the exhibition are invited to cast votes for their favorite canvas and hairstyle. The winners of these People's Choice Awards, along with special juror awards, will be announced at the conclusion of the project.

## GALLERY TALKS

1708 Gallery will host two gallery talks and receptions during **The Hair Craft Project** exhibition. Join us and speakers Bill Gaskins and juror A'Lelia Bundles on **Thursday, February 27** at 5:30 p.m. and again with speakers Henry Drewel, Ruti Talmor, and juror Lowery Stokes Sims on **Thursday, March 6** at 5:30 p.m.



**The Hair Craft Project** is part of a larger collaborative exhibition, *Race, Place & Identity*. Eight Richmond-based arts and cultural organizations have partnered to facilitate community-wide conversations inspired by their respective exhibitions and programs. Participating institutions include Candela Books + Gallery, Anderson Gallery VCUarts, Black Iris, 1708 Gallery, Elegba Folklore Society, Reynolds Gallery, the Valentine Richmond History Center, and the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts.

Sonya Clark is the chair of the Department of Craft/ Material Studies at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, VA. Her work has been exhibited in over 250 museums and galleries in Europe, Africa, Asia, South America, Australia, and throughout the USA. She is the recipient of a Pollock-Krasner Award, a Rockefeller Foundation Residency in Italy, a Red Gate Residency in China, a Wisconsin Arts Board Fellowship, a Virginia Commission for the Arts Fellowship, a Smithsonian Artist Research Fellowship, an Virginia Museum of Fine Arts Award, a Civitella Ranieri Fellowship in Italy, and most recently as a United States Artist Fellow. For more information about Sonya Clark, please visit: [www.sonyaclark.com](http://www.sonyaclark.com).

1708 Gallery's 2013-2014 exhibition season is dedicated to Cindy Neuschwander and is generously supported in part by Jay Barrows, Molly Dodge and Bruce Schaub, Geraldine Duskin, Edward Elmore, Suzanna Fields and Richard Douglas, Susan and John Jamieson, Andrea Levine, Lucy Meade, John and Lisa Moerner, Vickie and Jim Quigg, Beverly Reynolds, Gabriel Ricioppo, Bill and Pam Royall, John Ryan and Wesley Chenault, Geoffrey and Jennifer Sisk, Chip and Lynn Spitzer, Maria Tabb, Rob Tarbell and Anna Von Gehr, Laura West, the Virginia Commission for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts.

**1708 Gallery** is a non-profit arts organization committed to presenting exceptional new art. 1708 Gallery is committed to providing opportunities for artistic innovation for emerging and established artists and to expanding the understanding and appreciation of new art for the public.

**PHOTO CREDIT:** All images by Naoko Wowsugi

###