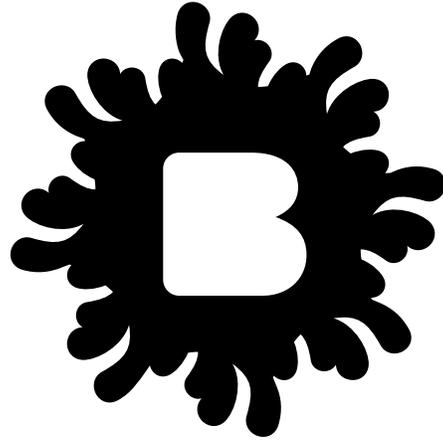


# Press Release



April 2016

## **Angela Davis to be Honored at the 2016 Sackler Center First Awards at the Brooklyn Museum on June 2**

### **Event to Feature Conversation with Gloria Steinem and Remarks by New York City First Lady Chirlane McCray**

### **Notable Artists and Celebrities Join Forces as “Artists in Support of Social Justice” in Solidarity with Davis**

Angela Y. Davis, feminist scholar activist for social justice and Professor Emerita at U.C. Santa Cruz, will be honored at the annual Sackler Center First Awards at the Brooklyn Museum. The awards ceremony and dinner reception will take place at the Brooklyn Museum on Thursday, June 2, from 6 to 9 pm.



Angela Davis. Image courtesy of Davis

Professor Davis is known internationally for her ongoing work to combat oppression in the United States and abroad. A Sorbonne-educated scholar and college professor, Davis rose to prominence in the 1960s as an outspoken activist for civil rights and other social issues. An iconic figure to this day, she remains a living witness to the historic struggles of the modern era and a vocal champion in the fight for economic, racial, and gender justice.

The annual Sackler Center First Awards celebrates women who have broken gender barriers and made remarkable contributions in their fields. The 2016 award will be presented to Davis by Brooklyn Museum Board Chair and founder of the awards, Elizabeth A. Sackler. The awards ceremony will include remarks by New York City First Lady Chirlane McCray, as well as a conversation between Davis and celebrated feminist Gloria Steinem, followed by a reception and seated dinner.

## **Brooklyn Museum**

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“Throughout the past five decades, Angela Davis has been an outspoken advocate for economic, racial, and gender equity,” says Elizabeth A. Sackler. “Angela is a force of nature whose extraordinary work against oppression has been constant and true. I am thrilled to honor her with the Sackler Center First Awards this year—a year ripe with active dialogue and vocal calls for justice and personal freedom.”

In a show of solidarity with Davis’s principles and in response to the Sackler Center’s call for social action, like-minded people from across creative disciplines are joining forces as “Artists in Support of Social Action,” a group composed of Marina Abramović, Ghada Amer, Ida Applebroog, Harry Belafonte, Tony Bennett, Dara Birnbaum, Judy Collins, Petah Coyne, Kasseem Dean (aka “Swizz Beatz”), Jane Fonda, Coco Fusco, Alan Gilbert, Guerrilla Girls, Harmony Hammond, Tony Kushner, Suzanne Lacy, Debra Lee, Shola Lynch, Wynton Marsalis, Audra McDonald, Marilyn Minter, Toni Morrison, Shirin Neshat, Jessye Norman, Lorraine O’Grady, Yoko Ono, Suzan-Lori Parks, Faith Ringgold, Carolee Schneemann, Joan Semmel, Cindy Sherman, Charles Simonds, Kiki Smith, Joan Snyder, Susan Stroman, Susan L. Taylor, Julie Taymor, Mickalene Thomas, Fred Tomaselli, Kathleen Turner, Kara Walker, Carrie Mae Weems, Ray Charles White, Martha Wilson, and Damian Woetzel.

To ensure that those working toward Davis’s goals are present at the awards ceremony, sponsored seat tickets have been provided to members of five social justice organizations: Brooklyn Community Bail Fund, Bard Prison Initiative, College and Community Fellowship, Women’s Prison Association, and Black Lives Matter.

### **About the Sackler Center First Awards**

The awards were inaugurated in 2012, honoring fifteen women in celebration of the fifth anniversary of the Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art at the Brooklyn Museum, to focus on and celebrate the outstanding contributions of women in diverse fields.

Previous recipients of the Sackler Center First Awards are Miss Piggy, Anita F. Hill, Julie Taymor, Associate Justice Sandra Day O’Connor, Marin Alsop, Connie Chung, Dr. Johnnetta B. Cole, Wilhelmina Cole Holladay, Sandy Lerner, Lucy R. Lippard, the late Chief Wilma Mankiller, Toni Morrison, Linda Nochlin, Jessye Norman, Judith Rodin, Muriel Siebert, Susan Stroman, and Faye Wattleton. Recipients of Sackler Center First Awards each receive a glass sculpture created by Judy Chicago.

To purchase tickets for the awards ceremony and/or dinner, email [firstawards@brooklynmuseum.org](mailto:firstawards@brooklynmuseum.org) or call 718.501.6589. Proceeds will benefit the Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art.

### **About Angela Y. Davis**

Angela Y. Davis is an active student, teacher, writer, scholar, and activist/organizer. Her political activism began when she was a youngster in Birmingham, Alabama, and continued through her high school years in New York. But it was not until 1969 that she came to national attention after being removed from her teaching position in the Philosophy Department at UCLA as a result of her social activism and her membership in the Communist Party USA. In 1970, she was placed on the FBI’s Ten Most Wanted list on

false charges, and was the subject of an intense police search that drove her underground and culminated in one of the most famous trials in recent U.S. history. During her sixteen-month incarceration, a massive international “Free Angela Davis” campaign was organized, leading to her acquittal in 1972.

Through her activism and scholarship over many decades, Davis has been deeply involved in movements for social justice around the world. She is a vocal proponent of the twenty-first-century abolitionist movement, urging her audiences to think seriously about the possibility of a world without prisons. Her work as an educator—both at the university level and in the larger public sphere—has always emphasized the importance of building communities of struggle for economic, racial, and gender justice.

Davis's teaching career has taken her to San Francisco State University, Mills College, and U.C. Berkeley. She has also taught at UCLA, Vassar College, Syracuse University, the Claremont Colleges, and Stanford University. Most recently, she spent fifteen years at the University of California Santa Cruz, where she is now Distinguished Professor Emerita of History of Consciousness—an interdisciplinary Ph.D. program—and of Feminist Studies. She has also lectured throughout the United States as well as in Europe, Africa, Asia, Australia, and South America.

Davis is the author of nine books, including *Abolition Democracy: Beyond Prison, Torture and Empire* and *Are Prisons Obsolete?*, about the abolition of the prison-industrial complex; a new edition of *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*; and a collection of essays entitled *The Meaning of Freedom*. Her most recent book of essays, *Freedom Is a Constant Struggle: Ferguson, Palestine, and the Foundations of a Movement*, was published in February 2016.

A founding member of Critical Resistance, a U.S. organization dedicated to the dismantling of the prison-industrial complex, she also works internationally with Sisters Inside, an abolitionist organization based in Queensland, Australia, that works in solidarity with women in prison.

### **About the Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art**

The Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art is a nexus for feminist art, theory, and activism. It is the permanent home of *The Dinner Party* by Judy Chicago, its Feminist Art and Herstory galleries display critically acclaimed exhibitions, and its Forum is a venue for lectures and a platform of advocacy for women's issues. In 2012, the Sackler Center inaugurated the Sackler Center First Awards to honor women who have broken gender barriers and have made outstanding contributions in their respective fields. In the spring of 2014, the Sackler Center began its ongoing public program series “States of Denial: The Illegal Incarceration of Women, Children, and People of Color.”

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