

A scenic view of a coastal property. In the foreground, there are dense green bushes and a green metal fence. In the middle ground, several large, mature pine trees with thick trunks and dense green foliage stand prominently. To the left, a red lighthouse is visible on a rocky outcrop in the blue sea. In the background, a white building with a red-tiled roof and a green fence are visible. The sky is clear and blue.

# THE CULTURAL DIASPORA

A RESIDENCY FOR TEXT-BASED THEATER ARTISTS

FROM THE AFRICAN DIASPORA

AT THE CAMARGO FOUNDATION - 2022

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# ABOUT THE PROGRAM

The Cultural Diaspora residency was conceived by acclaimed African-American playwright Carlyle Brown and the Camargo Foundation to support accomplished Black playwrights with diverse cultural backgrounds, and to spark a dialogue about the disparate ways in which the African Diaspora experience has shaped their perspectives and creative output.

Led by co-curators Brown and Nigeria's celebrated theater director Chuck Mike, eight accomplished Black playwrights—four from Africa and four from the United States—convened at the Camargo Foundation in Cassis in the South of France in June 2018 to take part in the pilot edition of the Cultural Diaspora playwrights' residency. As expressed by Brown, "The idea for the residency was to bring together African and African-American text-based theater artists from opposite ends of the Africanist Diaspora to share work, ideas and strategies for surviving as Black artists, without the veil of a white/western filter, without having to explain themselves, without having to represent an entire group of people, but to explore their craft, their voice, and their African-ness in a beautiful, safe, supportive environment with likeminded individuals who express an interest in the African Diaspora as an influence on and factor in their craft, the content they create, their thinking, and world view."



# 2022 EDITION

The second edition of the Cultural Diaspora residency will take place in **May-June 2022**. Building on the experience gained with the first iteration of the program, the **duration of the residency has been extended from four to five weeks**, and the international **open call has expanded to include Black text-based theater artists from throughout the African Diaspora**, including countries bordering the Atlantic basin, Africa, the Americas, the Caribbean, and Europe as well as Black text-based theater artists outside of those boundaries whose work reflects an interest in the African Diaspora and Afro-Atlantic culture.



Femi Osofisan (Nigeria), participant in the 2018 edition, with Eva Doumbia (France).

# CURATORIAL STATEMENT (1)

BY CARLYLE BROWN  
PLAYWRIGHT AND PROGRAM'S CO-CURATOR



Carlyle Brown at Camargo in 2018.

There is a word in Yoruba, *Ashe'* as in *Amen* or *so be it*. It means the power to make things happen, the capacity to make change, to transform dreams into reality. It is that mysterious force that fuels the connection between all people of African descent, particularly those whose ancestors survived the horrors of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade. Those whose songs of lament became the blues and whose dances of joy in the face of despair have displayed their grace from the ballet to the boogie-woogie to Hip-Hop and beyond. Those whose suffering and labor financed the western world and whose art making, subversive and rebellious, created in oppressive, subjugating atmospheres shaped and transformed itself into one of the major cultural influences in the world.

The Atlantic Ocean is a cultural lake whose principal port is the West Coast of Africa from where it has been exporting its African-ness for hundreds of years, spreading across the Western Ocean in slave ships running before the trade winds through the Caribbean Islands to ports like Havana, Cuba, where it disperses its human cargo throughout the Americas. Torn away from their ancestral homeland, to be dislocated and rootless body and soul forever, they are the ancestors of every Black person born in the new world. To heal their psychic wounds, they mixed together their disparate ideas and beliefs and made a common culture. The manifestation of that common culture is the African Diaspora.

# CURATORIAL STATEMENT (2)

**BY CARLYLE BROWN**  
**PLAYWRIGHT AND PROGRAM'S CO-CURATOR**

This kinship and connection, this expanded sense of space, geography, history, and the imagination are the ingredients of the African-ness that shapes art making on all sides of the Atlantic basin, creating art in opposition to dominate cultures saturated in racism and colonialism. As Africana scholar Maboula Soumahoro notes “Africana studies, the academic discipline specializing in the systematic study of peoples of African descent globally through the prism of history, geography, and culture has emerged as a specific field rather recently... is an attempt to place the African continent at the center of all preoccupations... acknowledges Africa as the locale of all departures and ultimate returns.”

Today this spiritual, resilient, ethereal aesthetic is like a restless virus seeking out welcoming hosts in places like Bahia, London, Accra, Toronto, Lagos, and Brooklyn. Born out of suffering and nurtured in oppression, it makes itself from the improvisational complexity and multiplicities of a collectively lived experience. We are seeking out storytellers, the New Griots who make their narratives out of an Afro-Atlantic point of view. New, intricate, expansive narratives that do not simply explain who we are but celebrate our return to ourselves. That explore and discover our African-ness. Narratives that are for ourselves as well as others, narratives where Black Lives don't simply matter, but are essential.

*Ashe'.*

# PURPOSE OF THE RESIDENCY



The Camargo Foundation offers Fellows an isolated retreat for the soul, nurtured by the natural beauty of its grounds and surrounding environment, to escape and create. Selected participants will be invited to Camargo to explore, experiment, write, and exchange. There will be weekly work sharing sessions of works-in-progress, two scheduled topical discussions on craft or the business or politics of writing facilitated by Brown and Mike, the possibility of staged readings of works-in-progress in partnership with acting students of Marseille, and networking opportunities with European theater professionals. And most importantly a *clean, well-lighted place* to work.

# ELIGIBILITY

- The program welcomes applications from Black text-based theater artists from the African Diaspora, including but not limited to: Africa, the Americas, the Caribbean, and Europe.
- Eligible applicants have an interest in the African Diaspora and Afro-Atlantic culture as an influence on and factor in their craft, work, and thinking.
- Eligible applicants are established or mid-career artists who assume primary responsibility for creating the texts of theatrical productions and/or performance. This program recognizes that practice is increasingly interdisciplinary (including performances that embrace a combination of live theater/dance/film, for example), can include both spoken and musical work, and can assume different scales and forms (from solo performances to storytelling to large-scale theatrical spectacle). This program is designed for artists who play a primary or exclusive role in creating the text component of live theatrical or performance work where spoken language is a critical and primary component, whatever the scale and form. Text creators, of course, may play additional roles, such as directing, designing, and/or performing without compromising their eligibility. Actors, choreographers, designers, directors, etc. who have not been a primary creator of texts, however, are not eligible to apply.
- Eligible applicants have had at least three different texts/performances fully produced at reputable venues for public audiences.
- Students enrolled in undergraduate or graduate degree programs at the time of application are not eligible to apply.
- Work developed during the residency may be in any language. In the interests of Camargo's interdisciplinary, multicultural community, eligible applicants are able to communicate well in English. A basic knowledge of French is useful, but not required.
- Playwrights who participated in the 2018 edition of the program are not eligible to apply.



# DURATION, GRANT, AND ACCOMMODATION

## DURATION

The program will take place from May 10 to June 14, 2022.

## PER DIEM & GRANT

Each of the eight participants will receive plane fare, local transport to and from the home airport and Camargo, and both a per diem allowance of US\$1,250 and a grant of US\$1,000 (making a total of US\$2,250 per artist) to participate.

## ACCOMMODATION

Each artist will be provided a furnished apartment. The apartments are intended as the workspace for writing and electronic media. Additional workspace at Camargo may also be available, such as the library or the open-air theater. Residents are expected to prepare their own meals.

## ACCOMPANYING FAMILY MEMBERS

Spouses/adult partners and dependent minor children may accompany fellows for short stays or for the duration of the residency. Accompanying children must be at least six years old upon arrival and enrolled in and attending school or organized activities outside the Camargo Foundation campus, during the week.



# HOW TO APPLY?

## DEADLINE

Applications must be submitted no later than **August 22nd, 2021** (midnight Paris time).

Late applications will not be reviewed.

## APPLICATIONS

Applications should be submitted via Submittable and can be accessed at: <<https://camargofoundation.submittable.com/submit>>

Applications must include the following:

1. **Proposal Name;**
2. **Proposal Summary** (up to 100 words): a brief summary of the proposed project that you would engage in during this exchange;
3. **Proposal Narrative and Relevance of Resources** (up to 1,000 words): please describe in detail the proposed project you would engage in during this exchange. Please articulate specifically how the resources provided by the Camargo Foundation will support your proposed project;
4. **A Rationale** for wanting to participate to the program (up to 500 words): please describe how your work expresses an interest in the African Diaspora as an influence on and factor in your craft, work, and thinking;
5. **A current CV**, including a list of plays/performances fully produced, with dates and venues;
6. **Work Samples**, either in the form of written work sample, audio recording, or video. Recent work is strongly encouraged, but applicants should feel that the samples represent fully accomplished and finished work; works in progress are strongly discouraged. All work samples should be drawn from work created in the last five years. Selection panelists will read at least 10 pages of all scripts and/or view up to 5 minutes of a recording. Applicants who choose to submit a full script or longer performance tape should specify which 10 pages (or 5 minutes) the panel should read (or view), and attach a short description. The applicant must be the primary creator of the submitted sample. Student work is not acceptable.
7. **Two References:** submitters whose applications manage to get to the final stages of review might be asked to provide recommendation letters from their referees at a later stage.

Technical questions about the application should be directed to <[apply@camargofoundation.org](mailto:apply@camargofoundation.org)>.

# ABOUT THE SELECTION PROCESS

## SELECTION CRITERIA

Selection is based on:

- The **quality** of the applicant's **writing**;
- The **significance of the project** or area of inquiry proposed;
- The quality and significance of the **professional accomplishments** of the applicant;
- The relevance of the **link(s) between the proposal and the African Diaspora**;
- The potential **impact** of the residency to shape and inform the writer's creative process and artistic vocabulary in both the short- and long-term;
- The ability of the artist to contribute to and **participate in a community of artists**, both in Cassis and in one's home country.

## THE SELECTION COMMITTEE

The Selection Committee is composed of Black professionals and artists who are working in the field(s) of theater and performance, as well as scholars and thinkers in Africana studies.

## RESULTS ANNOUNCEMENT

Applicants will be notified of decisions in **October 2021**. Applicants should not seek information about the status of their application. General information about the selection process will be available to all applicants. Please note that notifications are sent through Submittable, Camargo's submission management platform, and may be marked as spam. Please check your spam folder if you do not receive news by the end of October 2021.



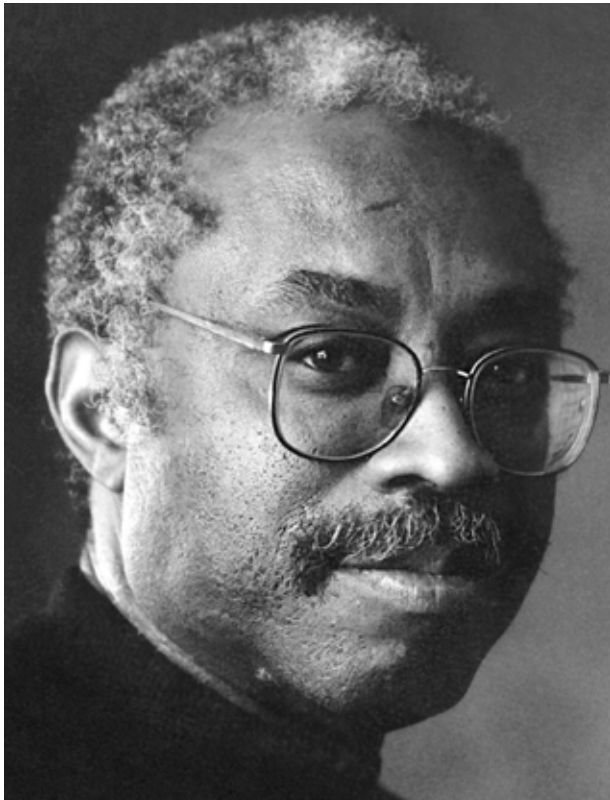
# ABOUT US (1)



## THE CAMARGO FOUNDATION

Founded by American artist and philanthropist Jerome Hill (1905-1972), the Camargo Foundation fosters creativity, research, and experimentation through its international residency program for artists, scholars, and thinkers. Since 1971 Camargo has hosted nearly 1,000 individuals working in the arts and humanities from all over the world. Located in Cassis, France, on the edge of the Mediterranean Sea, the Foundation offers time and space in a contemplative and supportive environment, giving residents the freedom to think, create, and connect.

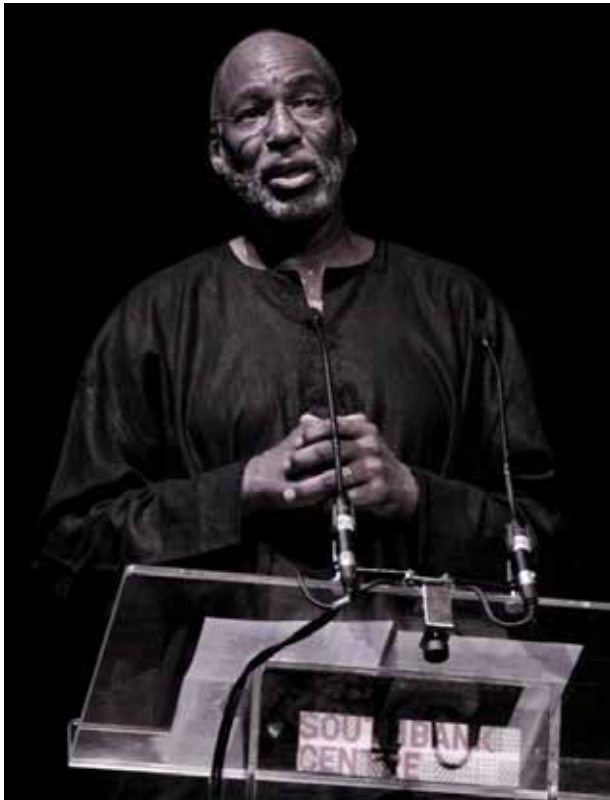
## ABOUT US (2)



### CARLYLE BROWN

Carlyle Brown is a playwright/performer, curator, artistic director of Carlyle Brown & Company, and a recent Mellon Foundation Playwright in residence at Illusion Theater in Minneapolis. His plays have been produced at theatres across the country and internationally. He is an alumnus of New Dramatists and a Life Time Core Writer at the Playwrights' Center. He has received numerous commissions, fellowships and awards including 2006 Black Theatre Network's Winona Lee Fletcher Award for outstanding achievement and artistic excellence, a 2009 Guggenheim Fellowship, a 2010 Otto Rene Castillo Award for Political Theatre, a 2010 United States Artist Fellowship, a 2018 William Inge Award for Distinguished Achievement in the American Theater, and a 2019 Hellen Merrill Award. A scholar and historian, Brown has been an artist in residence or visiting professor at several colleges and universities, and has worked as a museum exhibit writer and story consultant. He curated the 2018 Cultural Diaspora Residency at the Camargo Foundation in Cassis, France, and The Afro-Atlantic Playwrights' Festival at The Playwrights' Center in 2019. His solo shows include *The Fula from America: An African Journey, Therapy and Resistance*, and *Acting Black: Demystifying Racism*, created to inspire open and honest conversations about race and diversity.

## ABOUT US (3)




### CHUCK MIKE

Chuck Mike was born in Brooklyn, New York and has lived in Nigeria since 1976. A practical disciple of Wole Soyinka and former MacArthur Foundation Fellow he is a distinguished actor, producer, director, and theatre activist of enormous energy. Producer of four festivals/seasons of theatre for CAFTAN (Collective Artistes Festival of Theatre Arts Nigeria) he is founding director of The Performance Studio Workshop (Nigeria) and Collective Artistes (Nigeria and UK). His forte is «devising» Theatre for Development. Spaces of work range from villages across Southern, Western, and Eastern Africa to The Kennedy Centre, Lincoln Centre (USA), West Yorkshire Playhouse, The Royal Court (UK), MUSON Centre, and The National Theatre (Nigeria). Some of his main stage credits include: *The Gods Are Not to Blame*, *A Raisin in the Sun*, *Fences*, *Home*, *The Crucible*, *Makbutu* (after Macbeth), *Tegonni* (after Antigone), and *Death and the Maiden*. Chuck Mike also shares his off season time with teaching and has taught or conducted workshops at various institutions across the globe some of which include the Universities of Ife and Ibadan (Nigeria), Leeds, Oxford and The Royal National Theatre Studio (UK), Smith College, New York University (USA), and the University of Toronto. Currently he holds an Associate Professorship at the University of Richmond, Virginia, USA.



CAMARGO  
FOUNDATION

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