

## [Ethics and Aesthetics: Vodou's commitment to Activism and Change](#)

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Type:

Call for Papers

Date:

September 19, 2019 to September 21, 2019

Location:

Florida, United States

Subject Fields:

Religious Studies and Theology, Art, Art History & Visual Studies, Black History / Studies, Latin American and Caribbean History / Studies, Philosophy

**Call for Papers: KOSANBA 2019**

**ETHICS AND AESTHETICS**

**VODOU'S COMMITMENT TO ACTIVISM AND CHANGE**

**Duke University, Durham, North Carolina**

**19-21 September 2019**

*Presented in collaboration with the Duke University Forum for Scholars and Publics*

Colloquium XIII

*Occurring under the aegis of Milokan (the assembly of the Iwa),  
and dedicated to the late scholars, writers, activists, and educators  
Rachel Beauvoir-Dominique and Florence Bellande-Robertson*

The Thirteenth Colloquium of the Congress of Santa Barbara (KOSANBA) will examine Vodou's transformative potential through the lens of ethics and aesthetics. Our use of these two branches of philosophy, however, ventures beyond reflection and into the realm of social change. Under the aegis of, and in the spirit of Milokan (the assembly of the Iwa in all 21 nations) the Colloquium calls on presenters from various disciplines and all African derived spiritual practices of Africa and the African Diaspora—Vodou and Vodun, Ifá-Orisa, Burkinabé traditions, Akan traditions, Santería and Lukumí, Candomblé, Umbanda, Hoodoo and Conjure, and many others. The 2019 Colloquium will additionally honor the lives and legacies of two elders who have passed to the other side but who continue to live with us in spirit: Rachel Beauvoir-Dominique and Florence Bellande-Robertson.

This year's Colloquium explores the ethical and artistic powers of Vodou and other Africana religions on a global level in the interest of social change. Similar to its many

sister traditions, Vodou serves not simply as a spiritual practice, but also as a philosophy, a cultural orientation, and an ethical code of being in the world. In this age of globalization and digital connectivity, we seek to explore what the transmission of sacred knowledge will entail. As scholar-practitioners become more involved in the co-creation of knowledge, how do we determine the parameters of which knowledge can be shared with the public, either in personal exchanges or in online communities? In the interest of institution building, how might we envision Africana religions playing a key role in educating the next generation in the classroom, the temple, and the home? In view of the vibrant legacies of African and African Diasporic visual and performance traditions, we wish to investigate the changing roles of the artist as ritual makers and religious participants, considering how priests and priestesses serve as both art commissioners and creators. We ask what are the ethics of aesthetics in collecting, caring for, researching, and exhibiting/performing sacred art forms in private homes and public spaces? KOSANBA invites individual papers, but encourages panels arranged by the participants. The Program Committee prioritizes work that addresses the following themes among other relevant topics aligned with this year's conference:

- The intersections of sacred arts and healing
- The communitarian ethos of ritual practice/service
- Religious arts and education in classrooms, museums, and/or temples
- Africana religions and the movement for environmental justice
- Performing the sacred—embodiment, gesture, and power

#### SUBMISSION GUIDELINES:

- Paper abstracts should be circa 250 words, to a maximum of 300.
- Panel proposals (maximum three presenters) should include a panel abstract of maximum 300 words to accompany the panelists' individual abstracts.

- Please email the proposal as a Word document to [KosanbaConference@gmail.com](mailto:KosanbaConference@gmail.com).
- Do not include your name or other identifying details on the proposal itself. Instead, use the body of your submission email to provide your name, contact information, and the title of your paper.
- Only paid members of KOSANBA may present at the Colloquium. Membership information will go out with letters of acceptance.
- The deadline for submissions is **June 10**. Letters of decision will go out July 10.

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