

## LOCAL LEARNING @ NAEA 2015, New Orleans

Fellows Forum ~ Mardi Gras Indians: Masking Traditions of New Orleans  
Organized by Doug Blandy and Paddy Bowman  
*Featuring Cherice Harrison-Nelson*

Art educator, scholar, and traditional artist Cherice Harrison-Nelson advocates for preservation of Mardi Gras Indians, a unique, dynamic New Orleans tradition. A curator of the Mardi Gras Indian Hall of Fame and education director for the Mardi Gras Indian Guardians of the Flame, she works with young people in public schools and out-of-school settings to teach the history and cultural context of Mardi Gras Indians. She will ground the conference in the local learning that underpins this vital art form.

### SELECTED FOLK ARTS IN EDUCATION RESOURCES

**American Folklife Center** [www.loc.gov/folklife](http://www.loc.gov/folklife) [www.loc.gov/folklife](http://www.loc.gov/folklife) houses many digital collections from around the nation, including thousands of images.

**Chinavine** [www.chinavine.org](http://www.chinavine.org) is a multimedia site to educate English speakers of all ages about China's cultural heritage and includes interactive lessons in the **Eduvine** component [www.chinavine.org/participate/eduvine](http://www.chinavine.org/participate/eduvine). Doug Blandy is a key member of the Chinavine team.

**Folkstreams** [www.folkstreams.net](http://www.folkstreams.net) is a video-streaming national preserve of American folk culture documentaries with extensive background materials for each film. Use excerpts or entire films and the Educators Portal. See especially Alan Lomax's *Jazz Parades: Feet Don't Fail Me Now*.

**Folkvine** [www.folkvine.org](http://www.folkvine.org) gives users video, audio, and text options to explore folk artists, including bobble head dolls who represent real-life scholars.

**Local Learning** [www.locallearningnetwork.org](http://www.locallearningnetwork.org) advocates for inclusion of folk arts in education nationwide. Explore the new *Journal of Folklore and Education*, Vol. 1, "Dress to Express: Exploring Culture and Identity" and a Seasonal Round lesson on the homepage. In the Discovery Studio find Dress to Express Museum Modules and virtual residencies with NEA National Heritage Fellows. The library houses back issues of the *CARTS Newsletter*, useful articles for educators, and quarterly e-bulletins. Also find regional resources and tools for engaging young people in fieldwork and folklore, including the *Folk Arts Integration Handbook*. Contact Local Learning Director Paddy Bowman at [pbbowman@gmail.com](mailto:pbbowman@gmail.com)

**Louisiana Voices: An Educator's Guide to Exploring Our Communities and Traditions** [www.louisianavoices.org](http://www.louisianavoices.org) is a comprehensive interdisciplinary guide with lessons, essays, photos, video, and audio in public domain and adaptable for any region. See especially Unit VII on material culture and Unit IX on the seasonal round.

**Masters of Traditional Arts Education Guide** [www.mastersoftraditionalarts.org](http://www.mastersoftraditionalarts.org) by Paddy Bowman provides a multimedia approach to integrating the artistry of the NEA National Heritage Fellows across curricula.

**Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage** [www.folklife.si.edu](http://www.folklife.si.edu) has online curriculum guides, exhibits, and the *Smithsonian Folklife and Oral History Interviewing Guide* in the Education portal. In addition, **Smithsonian Folkways Recordings** <http://www.folkways.si.edu> features music lessons in Tools for Teaching.

## **NEW ORLEANS CULTURE**

**Backstreet Cultural Center** <http://www.backstreetmuseum.org> is a Mardi Gras Indian museum in the Treme, 1116 St. Claude Ave.

**Guardians Institute** [www.guardiansinstitute.org](http://www.guardiansinstitute.org) was founded in 2006 by Herreast J. Harrison in honor of her late husband, Big Chief Donald Harrison, Sr., and is dedicated to the development of youth through literacy, New Orleans' indigenous cultural arts, and West African and New World oral traditions. Learn more at [www.nola.com/homegarden/index.ssf/2015/02/a\\_tribute\\_to\\_the\\_big\\_chief\\_wit.html](http://www.nola.com/homegarden/index.ssf/2015/02/a_tribute_to_the_big_chief_wit.html),

## **Louisiana Folklife Program**

Mardi Gras Indians, essay by Michael Smith

[http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles\\_Essays/creole\\_art\\_mardi\\_indians.html](http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/creole_art_mardi_indians.html)

Louisiana's Traditional Cultures, essay by Maida Owens

[http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Maidas\\_Essay/main\\_introduction\\_onepage.html](http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Maidas_Essay/main_introduction_onepage.html)

Creole State Exhibit and Education Guide

[http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/CSE/creole\\_home.html](http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/CSE/creole_home.html)

**Mardi Gras Indian Hall of Fame** [www.mardigrasindianhalloffame.org](http://www.mardigrasindianhalloffame.org) preserves the indigenous culture of all who masquerade as Mardi Gras Indians through mutually beneficial collaborations among the tradition bearers, academic institutions, individuals, organizations, and communities to foster greater understanding of the unique tradition. Co-founded in 1998 by Dr. Roslyn Smith and Cherice Harrison-Nelson through the spirit of Big Chief Donald Harrison, Sr., the Mardi Gras Indian Hall of Fame works year-round to create community, honor, and educate about the individuals and groups who create and uphold the arts and culture of the Mardi Gras Indians of New Orleans.

**New Orleans and Me** [www.neworleans.me](http://www.neworleans.me) links to galleries, events, blogs, maps, and a trip planner that highlights the unique culture of neighborhoods and the city.