



SMU MEADOWS SCHOOL OF THE ARTS WELCOMES NEW FACULTY MEMBERS IN ART HISTORY, DANCE, AND MUSIC

Professor Roberto Conduru (Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro), Aaron Boyd (Escher String Quartet), and Desmond Richardson and Dwight Rhoden (Complexions Contemporary Ballet) Join the Faculty in 2017-2018

Dallas (SMU), September 26, 2017 – The Meadows School of the Arts at Southern Methodist University today announced that four notable artists and scholars have been appointed to faculty positions for the 2017-2018 academic year:

- Curator and art history professor **Roberto Conduru**, an expert in Brazilian art and architecture, has been named the Endowed Distinguished Professor of Art History, beginning spring 2018
- Violinist **Aaron Boyd** of the **Escher String Quartet**, and formerly on faculty at Columbia University, has been appointed director of chamber music and professor of practice in violin
- Founders of the New York City-based company **Complexions Contemporary Ballet**, **Desmond Richardson** and **Dwight Rhoden**, will teach advanced ballet courses in fall 2017 and spring 2018

“We are thrilled to welcome these distinguished artists and scholars to our faculty,” said Samuel Holland, dean of the Meadows School of the Arts. “At the Meadows School, we are always seeking the world’s foremost creative talent to work with our students, providing them with the tools and inspiration to hone their craft while preparing them for real-world opportunities. As instructors at Meadows, Roberto, Desmond, Dwight, and Aaron will challenge our students to think critically about their art and refine their own artistic voices through a rigorous academic and practical curriculum that is attuned to the interests and needs of our students.”

Prior to joining SMU, **Roberto Conduru** served as tenured professor of art history and theory at the Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro. A prolific writer, Conduru is an expert in modern and contemporary art and architecture in Brazil, with a focus on Afro-Brazilian art and Constructivist architecture. His interests also encompass global art history and contemporary debates in the visual cultures of Latin America and the transatlantic world. His current research focuses on art and slavery in Brazil since the 16th century. Conduru has taught graduate and undergraduate courses in Mexico, Colombia, and Uruguay and has also served as invited guest scholar at the Getty Research Institute (2012) and as president of the Brazilian Committee of Art History (2007-10). Conduru recently curated *Black*

Indices at Caixa Cultural, São Paulo (to open in October 2017). He also co-curated *Axé Bahia – The Power of Art in an Afro-Brazilian Metropolis* at the Fowler Museum at UCLA, Los Angeles (opened September 24, 2017), in collaboration with the Getty Institution’s Pacific Standard Time (PST) initiative. At Meadows, Conduru will anchor the art history Ph.D. program and teach courses in the art history of Brazil and West Africa.

Throughout his career, award-winning violinist **Aaron Boyd** has been a soloist, chamber musician, orchestral leader, recording artist, lecturer, and teacher, and is now director of chamber music and professor of practice in violin at SMU. Boyd is a violinist of the Escher String Quartet, an artist member of The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, and the founder of the Zukofsky Quartet (Quartet-in-Residence, Bargemusic). As a passionate advocate for new music, Boyd has worked on numerous commissions and premieres in concert and on record, including with composers Milton Babbitt, Elliott Carter and Charles Wuorinen. In his dual roles at Meadows, Boyd will oversee all student chamber ensembles, teach advanced violin students, direct the end-of-semester chamber music honors concerts, oversee the Peak Fellowship Ensemble-in-Residence program—a two-year chamber music fellowship—and mentor the Fellowship winners.

Widely regarded as pioneering choreographers, **Dwight Rhoden** and **Desmond Richardson** of **Complexions Contemporary Ballet** will bring their dynamic artistic vision to the dance division at Meadows, teaching two ballet classes and choreographing a new work for the students. Founded in 1994 by Rhoden and Richardson, Complexions is an award-winning dance company known for its innovative approach to choreography that presents a groundbreaking mix of methods and styles from hip-hop to modern dance to classical ballet. The company has received numerous awards, including *The New York Times* Critics’ Choice Award, and has toured the globe, performing at Lincoln Center and the Joyce Theater in New York, the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow, and most recently at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., as part of “Ballet Across America.” Celebrated for his choreography and wide-ranging collaborations with artists including Misty Copeland, Carmen de Lavallade, and Gus Solomons, Jr., Rhoden has created over 80 ballets for Complexions, as well as numerous other companies, including Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, The Arizona Ballet, Dance Theatre of Harlem, The Joffrey Ballet, New York City Ballet/Diamond Project, North Carolina Dance Theatre, and Mariinsky Ballet (St. Petersburg), among others. Richardson is a Tony-nominated actor and the first black American principal dancer of American Ballet Theatre. Rhoden and Richardson will teach Advanced Ballet and Men’s Ballet Technique in the fall and spring.

About the Meadows School of the Arts

The Meadows School of the Arts, formally established at SMU in 1969 and named in honor of benefactor Algur H. Meadows, is one of the foremost arts education institutions in the United States. The Meadows School offers undergraduate and graduate degrees in advertising, art, art history, arts management and arts entrepreneurship, communication studies, creative computation, dance, film and media arts, journalism, music and theatre. The goal of the Meadows School of the Arts, as a comprehensive educational institution, is to prepare students to meet the demands of professional careers. The Meadows School is a leader in developing innovative outreach and community engagement programs, challenging its students to make a difference locally and globally by developing connections between art, entrepreneurship and change. The Meadows School of the Arts is also a convener for the arts in North Texas, serving as a catalyst for new collaborations and providing critical industry research. For more information, visit www.smu.edu/meadows.

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