

**Thursday, September 12, 2019**

**8:30 am – 6:30 pm**

**Ford Foundation Center for Social Justice**

*Convening partners:* Center on Democracy and Organizing, Community Change, Demos, the Ford Foundation, and the Open Society Foundations

*Emcee Lisa García Bedolla Vice Provost for Graduate Studies and Dean of the Graduate Division, University of California, Berkeley*

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**8:30 am** BREAKFAST  
*Level-B Foyer*

**9:15 am** PERFORMANCE AND OPENING REMARKS  
*Ford Family Auditorium*

**“Puertopia”**

Denice Frohman *Poet and Performer*

**Welcome**

Tom Perriello *Executive Director, Open Society-U.S.*

Maria Torres-Springer *Vice President, US Programs, Ford Foundation*

**Introducing the Realizing Democracy series**

Ethan Frey *Program Officer, Ford Foundation*

Emma Oppenheim *Program Officer, Open Society-U.S.*

**Framing the current context**

Sabeel Rahman *President, Demos*

**10:00 am** **Civil society: What would it take to make civil society a source of countervailing power?**

*Framing questions:* In the context of a more racially and ethnically diverse society, can civil society remake itself to serve as an effective counterweight to the great concentration of wealth and power in our economic and civic life? More specifically, is people-powered collective action too fragile and/or too ensconced in a culture of protest to be a viable alternative to concentrated power? What institutional and relational capacities do we need to build to make people-powered action a strategic, effective response to entrenched concentrations of power?

DaMareo Cooper *Executive Director, Ohio Organizing Collaborative*

Arisha Hatch *Managing Director, Campaigns, Color Of Change*

Chuck Mingo *Pastor, Crossroads Church (Cincinnati)*

*Moderator Hahrie Han Inaugural Director, SNF Agora Institute, Johns Hopkins University*

### 11:10 am PRESENTATION OF ARTWORK

#### Remarks

Cleo Barnett & Grace Kim *Amplifier*

*Note:* The series planners commissioned Amplifier and its network to prepare works of art reflecting on the themes and values of the Realizing Democracy series. Amplifier is a design lab that builds art to amplify the voices of grassroots movements.

### 11:20 am BREAK, GALLERY WALK, AND LUNCH

[Susan Berresford & Nelson Mandela & Gallery Walk on 11th Floor Overlook](#)

During the break, participants are invited to tour the artwork and continue the discussion on the 11th-floor overlook. (Please pick up your lunch and find a seat by 12:15 pm for the next discussion.)

### 12:30 pm **Economy: Private power, public power, and the limits of democratic control**

*Framing questions:* Liberal democracy has always rested on the assumption that markets and government would work in mutually reinforcing ways. That cyclical relationship between government and the economy has been lost, but is there any hope of rebuilding it in ways that recover the foundations of moral capitalism and meet the challenges of inclusion in the 21st century? What changes to our politics, policy, and economics need to be made? What are the central economic power fights that will move us to a new political economy?

#### DISCUSSION #1

**Felicia Wong** *President and CEO, Roosevelt Institute*

**Anat Admati** *George G.C. Parker Professor of Finance and Economics, Stanford University Graduate School of Business; Author, The Bankers' New Clothes: What's Wrong with Banking and What to Do About It (2013)*

**Chris Hughes** *Co-chairman, Economic Security Project; Co-founder, Facebook*  
**Moderator Sabeel Rahman** *President, Demos*

#### DISCUSSION #2

**Alison Hirsh** *Political Director, 32BJ SEIU*

**Lauren Jacobs** *Executive Director, Partnership for Working Families*

**Erica Smiley** *Co-Executive Director, Jobs With Justice*

**Moderator Sabeel Rahman** *President, Demos*

### 1:50 pm BREAK

2:05 pm

### **Government: Good governance or inclusive populism?**

*Framing questions:* What are the root causes underneath the institutional failures of our crises of democratic legitimacy, extreme inequality, and market failure? What kind of *policy and governmental structures* are needed to govern an inclusive, multiracial society and produce more equitable outcomes? What kinds of *politics* will it take to shift our foundational institutions toward justice?

Can our *politics* articulate some form of inclusive populism that can shift government responsiveness to grassroots constituents, strengthen governance, and produce greater equity? Is the current populist moment destructive, corrective, both, or neither?

#### **DISCUSSION #1**

**Alex Hertel-Fernandez** *Assistant Professor, International and Public Affairs, Columbia University; Author, State Capture (2019)*

**Jamila Michener** *Assistant Professor, Government, Cornell University; Author, Fragmented Democracy (2019)*

*Moderator Dorian Warren* *President, Community Change*

#### **DISCUSSION #2**

**Helen Gym** *Councilmember, Philadelphia City Council; Vice Chair, Local Progress*

**Lorella Praeli** *President, Community Change Action*

*Moderator Dorian Warren* *President, Community Change*

3:30 pm

BREAK

3:40 pm

### **Is democracy on the side of freedom?**

*Framing questions:* In 1935, W. E. B. Du Bois wrote of the project of American democracy: “The true significance of slavery in the United States to the whole social development of America, lay in the ultimate relation of slaves to democracy. What were to be the limits of democratic control in the United States? If all labor, black as well as white, became free, were given schools and the right to vote, what control could or should be set to the power and action of these laborers? Was the rule of the mass of Americans to be unlimited, and the right to rule extended to all, regardless of race and color, or if not, what power of dictatorship would rule, and how would property and privilege be protected?”

Dangerous levels of concentrated political and economic power underlie multiple and compounding crises—of democratic legitimacy, wealth inequality, the carceral state, racialized and gendered injustice, and a fast-warming climate. What can we learn from the intended and unintended consequences of previous expansions in the economic and political aspects of American democracy? How should we understand the limits of democratic control and frontiers of democratic expansion today? How might we remake civil society, government, and the economy if we aspire to realize a vision of democracy and justice for all, including for those never fully included in either the economic or political aspects of an already fragile democracy?

**Elizabeth Hinton** *John L. Loeb Associate Professor of the Social Sciences, Departments of History and African and African American Studies, Harvard University; Author, From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime (2016)*

**Megan Ming Francis** *Visiting Associate Professor of Public Policy, Harvard Kennedy School; Author, Civil Rights and the Making of the Modern American State (2014) and The Price of Civil Rights (2019)*

**Astra Taylor** *Documentarian, Writer, and Organizer; Author, Democracy May Not Exist, but We'll Miss It When It's Gone (2019)*

**Moderator Aziz Rana** *Professor of Law, Cornell Law School; Author, The Two Faces of American Freedom (2010)*

**4:30 pm**

### CLOSING

On behalf of the series co-convenors, **Lisa García Bedolla** will outline next steps for the Realizing Democracy series and invite participants to reflect on the day's discussion and identify future priority topic areas.

**Lisa García Bedolla** *Vice Provost for Graduate Studies and Dean of the Graduate Division, University of California, Berkeley*

**5:00 pm**

### RECEPTION

**11th floor overlook**

Following the close of the event, participants are invited for a cocktail reception on the 11th-floor overlook.