“Forms of Future-Past: The Visual Rhetoric of Resistance in the Black Kirby Universe”
John Jennings, Professor of Visual Culture, SUNY Buffalo
Stacy Robinson, Artist | Thomas P. Johnson Distinguished Visiting Artists

Black Kirby is a collaborative "entity" that is the creative doppelganger of artists/designers John "Pitch" Jennings and Stacey "Blackstar" Robinson. The manifestation of this avatar is an exhibition and catalog of primarily works-on-paper that celebrate the groundbreaking work of legendary comics creator Jack Kirby regarding his contributions to the pop culture landscape and his development of some of the conventions of the comics medium.

Archaeology and African Futures
Jonathan Walz, Rollins College Department of Anthropology

Futures are reflections of contested histories and the potential for remade lives. Archaeologists typically study human behavior in the past or, alternatively, redress societal ills in the present through historical reflection and critique. The “archaeology” in this presentation draws from these traditions of practice but supersedes them. It is a way of knowing the world capable of exploring alternative futures (in the past and present). Archaeology’s relevance, I argue, must be expanded to address human interventions: “purposeful actions to change things from the way they are to what one imagine they should be” (Sassaman 2012, p. 253). Archaeology directly relevant to the human conditions and challenges of today and tomorrow is a critical, applied science. Cases drawn from world archaeology, including the archaeologies of Africa and the global African diaspora, fulfill this outlook.

Transnational Avatars
Vidhu Aggarwal, Rollins College Department of English

This talk/reading will address how media from multiple arenas – technological and mythological—combine to produce new machines of alienation and connectivity. “Avatar,” the word for our digital alter egos, and the name of the 2009 film using “cutting-edge” motion capture technology, comes from the word for the incarnation of Hindu gods into human fleshy form—a turn from physical embodiment to digital embodiment. This talk address shifts in language from childhood rhymes and myths to Silicon Valley and Bollywood. Learn More