

SPOLETO FESTIVAL USA

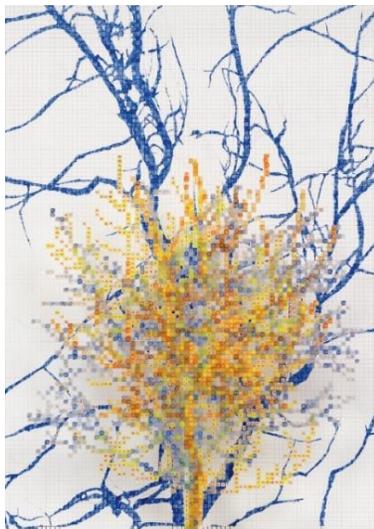
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Note: A high resolution digital image of the 2017 Spoleto Festival USA poster is available for download from our media photo gallery.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Spoletto Festival USA Unveils Official 2017 Poster

Featuring work by conceptual artist Charles Gaines



April 6, 2017 (CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA) — Spoleto Festival USA General Director Nigel Redden unveiled today the 2017 poster design featuring the work of Charles Gaines, an early pioneer of conceptual art. The piece, entitled *Numbers and Trees IV, Tree 3, Spike* (38 5/8" x 46 5/8", acrylic sheet, acrylic paint, Masonite) was originally created in 1988 and is part of Gaines's notable *Numbers and Trees* series. The Festival's 2017 poster is available for purchase for \$35 from the Festival's box office at the Charleston Gaillard Center (beginning May 1), online at spoletousa.org, or by calling 843.579.3100.

"Charles Gaines is an artist whom I admire greatly, and we are thrilled to have one of his most iconic works in our rich canon of visual art," says Redden. "Spoleto Festival USA has been rooted in Charleston since 1977, and the city comes alive each spring with an artistic vibrancy that is not unlike a tree blossoming anew with lush, radiant foliage. In this sense, Gaines's work perfectly symbolizes the Festival's relationship to Charleston itself."

Born in Charleston in 1944, Charles Gaines moved to the Northeast at a young age and graduated from Jersey City State University before earning a master of fine arts degree from Rochester Institute of Technology in New York in 1967. In the early 1970s, Gaines began exploring conceptual art, using a system of grids to frame his works. His expansive and ongoing *Numbers and Trees* series (which he began in 1986), for example, incorporates large black-and-white photographs of leafless trees overlaid with a gridded acrylic sheet. Colorful trees painted on acrylic sheets are then also added; each square of painted tree contains a tiny, hand-painted number determined by its location on the grid. A longtime arts educator beginning at historically black university Mississippi Valley State in 1967, Gaines accepted a professorial position in 1989 at California Institute of the Arts and has remained on the school's faculty since then. In recent years, Gaines has explored multimedia work such as *Manifestos 2* (2013), transforming major historical speeches into musical scores by assigning a note to each written letter. The artist has exhibited in The Whitney Museum of American Art, the Museum of Modern Art, the Studio Museum in Harlem, and UCLA's The Hammer Museum, among other prestigious institutions. He received a Guggenheim Fellowship in 2013.

Since 1977, Spoleto Festival USA's posters have featured work by influential artists such as Jonathan Green, Chuck Close, Jasper Johns, Sol LeWitt, Henry Moore, Elizabeth Murray, Bridget Riley, and Alex Katz, among others. A gallery of past posters available for sale can be found online at spoletousa.org. Spoleto Festival USA posters are limited editions and are not re-printed once they have sold out.