



MINNESOTA
MUSEUM of
AMERICAN ART

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The M Announces Upcoming Exhibitions and Programs

Recognizing that art is a tool for facilitating understanding across difference, the M is dedicated to amplifying the power of art and artists who represent diverse perspectives, identities, and lived experiences.

May 12, 2021—St. Paul, MN—The M is pleased to announce the upcoming exhibition and program schedule, which reflects the power of art to be a catalyst for important conversations during difficult times. Working in collaboration with a number of organizational partners, the M is bringing stories about the American experience from perspectives often underrepresented in art museums to the streets of downtown St. Paul.

Currently on view is *Outer Experiences: Black Life in Rural and Suburban Minnesota*, which is presented in partnership with the African American Interpretive Center of Minnesota (AAICM). The show brings visibility to Black life outside the Twin Cities and creates a bridge between urban and rural communities through photographs of Black Minnesotans from rural and suburban parts of the state. The photographs—on display through June 20, 2021—are brought to life by accompanying excerpts from their oral histories conducted by AAICM. “I think that it’s really important to introduce folks that are in the city to people that aren’t here, who are coming from rural and suburban areas,” says exhibition photographer Chris McDuffie.

“It’s just really timely. I hear and read a lot about division, nation-wide, and finding a way to bridge the experiences of Black people in urban and rural spaces, it’s important to really have that conversation now,” McDuffie adds.

An *Outer Experiences* coloring book, illustrated by artist Leeya Rosa Jackson, is inspired by McDuffie’s photographs as well as the lives of notable Black historical figures from Greater Minnesota and will be **available for pick up on Sunday, May 16**. Make sure you stop by 4th Street and Robert Street North to view the exhibition, meet curator JoJo Bell and photographer Chris McDuffie, as well as nab this limited-edition coloring book.

First introduced as an innovative way to present engaging exhibitions while remaining closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the M will continue to exhibit work in its window galleries as well as in the skyway, virtually, and at partner facilities, in anticipation of commencing construction work on the final phase of the M’s facility later this year.



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Emerging Curators Institute (ECI) fellow Michael Khuth—who will present his culminating exhibition, *Sutures*, for the program in the M's window galleries this fall—says of the opportunities these alternative spaces provide, “The new street-window mode of displaying works makes the art viewing experience less daunting and in turn more comfortable to the passerby. This aligns directly with my curatorial values of shaping experiences that feel welcoming to communities that have perhaps remained long excluded from art spaces.”

The M's proximity to the complex and storied Mississippi River has informed the development of *Many Waters: A Minnesota Biennial*, which explores the work of more than fifty artists and culture bearers with connections to the lakes, marshes, streams, rivers, and groundwaters of this region. A jury that included Matthew Fluharty, a visual artist, writer, and Executive Director of Art of the Rural; Dakota Hoska, Assistant Curator of Native Arts the Denver Art Museum; Laura Joseph, Curator of Exhibitions at the M; and Jovan C. Speller, a visual artist, curator, and Program Director at Metro Regional Arts Council selected these works from more than 800 submissions. In reviving its tradition of taking a snapshot of contemporary creative practices in the state, the M continues to seek ways to support Minnesota-based artists.

These exhibitions and programs highlight the M's ongoing efforts to take a collaborative approach to storytelling through art.

“We are grateful to work side-by-side with partners who bring alternative frameworks, new questions, and innovative ideas to the process. We are developing more and better tools, and different vocabulary along the way. As we work to expand access to the creative and curatorial processes, we continue to learn and shape the M's future,” says the M's Curator of Exhibitions Laura Joseph.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

The M's upcoming programs focus on expanding and complicating perceptions of place, identity, art making, and museum practices and are the result of creative partnerships with several local organizations—African American Interpretive Center of Minnesota, Emerging Curators Institute, Hallie Q. Brown Community Center, NewStudio Gallery, and Saint Paul Public Schools.

Outer Experiences: Black Life in Rural and Suburban Minnesota

Now through June 20, 2021

Window galleries, Robert Street North and 4th Street, and Skyway Ecolab Entrance, St. Paul

Outer Experiences, presented in partnership with the African American Interpretive Center of Minnesota (AAICM), explores the experience of being Black outside of the Twin Cities. Drawing from AAICM's archives and oral history project, it features photographs by Chris McDuffie alongside excerpts from interviews with Black Minnesotans who had formative experiences in rural or suburban parts of the state. *Outer Experiences* amplifies the voices of Black Minnesotans and the underrepresented histories that connect them to their homes. *Outer Experiences* is sponsored by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota.



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Coloring Book Pick-Up, Meet the Curator and the Photographer

In conjunction with *Outer Experiences: Black Life in Rural and Suburban Minnesota*
Sunday, May 16, 1:00–3:00 p.m.

Outside the M's entrance at 350 Robert Street North, St. Paul

The *Outer Experiences* all-ages coloring book, illustrated by artist Leeya Rosa Jackson, features images inspired by Chris McDuffie's photographs of the oral history narrators in the exhibition *Outer Experiences: Black Life in Rural and Suburban Minnesota*, as well as notable Black historical figures of Minnesota. Each coloring book includes a sticker designed by Leeya Rosa Jackson and a 12-pack of colored pencils. Learn more about the exhibition that inspired the coloring book from curator JoJo Bell and photographer Chris McDuffie.

To Look Back and Wonder: A Conversation Between Sally Frater and Dr. Kelli Morgan

Co-presented with the Emerging Curators Institute

Wednesday, June 23, 6:00–7:30 p.m.

Zoom ([link forthcoming](#))

As museums around the world contemplate their continued relevance, curators Sally Frater and Dr. Kelli Morgan take a look back over their careers to-date as museum professionals who have worked to make institutions more equitable. In this conversation, the two experienced curators will discuss how they would advise their younger selves on navigating the often challenging environments of art museums.

Wise, Gifted, and Black: Art by the Magnificent Golden Agers

June 27–July 17, 2021

Window gallery, Robert Street North, St. Paul

As part of a seven-session residency led by teaching artists Nicole M. Smith and Lawrence El Grecco Waddell at Hallie Q. Brown Community Center, members of their group of women elders—known as the Magnificent Golden Agers—have created powerful collages, written reflections, poetry, and photographs that reflect discussions around the themes of Black identity and the intersection of art and activism. The collages and program documentation (a short video currently in production) will be on view at the M and on permanent display at Hallie Q. Brown Community Center. This is the second time the M and Hallie Q. have come together to host this engagement of the Golden Agers, who have come to embrace their identities as artists and creatives over the course of this project.

Art Kit Pick-Up

In conjunction with *Wise, Gifted, and Black: Art by the Magnificent Golden Agers*

Sunday, July 11, 1:00–3:00 p.m.

Outside the M's entrance at 350 Robert Street North, St. Paul

A free, all-ages art kit includes art supplies and activities to engage the exhibition from the comfort of home. Each kit includes a copy of Dr. Artika Tyner's *Joey and Grandpa Johnson's Day in Rondo*, an inspiring children's book that celebrates the legacy of the Rondo neighborhood, as well as "From Hurt to Healing," an intergenerational healing activity book created by the Irreducible Grace Foundation in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the murder of George Floyd.



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Saint Paul Public Schools (SPPS) 2021 Honors Visual Art Exhibition

June 27–July 17, 2021

Window gallery, 4th Street, St. Paul

The 2021 *Honors Visual Art Exhibition* celebrates the creativity and achievements of student artists from seven Saint Paul Public Schools (SPPS) high schools. The works on view, all made by SPPS Honors art students, demonstrate a variety of paths to artistic self-discovery—from technically disciplined to playful, from highly personal to globally minded—and showcase artworks created using a range of mediums, styles, and techniques. *Honors Visual Art Exhibition* is a long-standing collaboration between SPPS, the M, and Ordway Center for the Performing Arts. The program celebrates 30 years of extraordinary creative talent by more than 9,500 participating high school students. The events have included visual art exhibitions, vocal and instrumental performances, and spoken word poetry. Students are selected to participate through auditions and art submissions.

Many Waters: A Minnesota Biennial

July 24–October 2, 2021

Window galleries, Robert Street North and 4th Street, and Skyway Ecolab Entrance, St. Paul, and NewStudio Gallery, St. Paul

Presented in partnership with NewStudio Gallery in St. Paul, *Many Waters* is a look into some of the imaginative and dedicated ways that artists and culture bearers from across the state are engaging with water. Featured creative practices are based in both observation and engagement; some are solitary, while others are collaborative. *Many Waters* includes art in a wide range of media that, collectively, engage all the senses and foster conversation, awareness, a sense of care, as well as new ways of thinking about water and water stories through many different lenses, including ecological, social, political, historical, spiritual, and creative. The exhibition was juried by a panel that includes Matthew Fluharty, a visual artist, writer, and Executive Director of Art of the Rural; Dakota Hoska, Assistant Curator of Native Arts at the Denver Art Museum; Laura Joseph, Curator of Exhibitions at the M; and Jovan C. Speller, a visual artist, curator, and Program Director at Metro Regional Arts Council.

Sutures

October 30, 2021–January 29, 2022

Window gallery, Robert Street North, St. Paul

Curated by Michael Khuth as a culmination of his fellowship with the Emerging Curators Institute (ECI), *Sutures* centers an emerging generation of artists creating photo- and film-based artworks that complicate or expand upon still and moving images and their relationship with inheritance and memory. Featuring the work of Cheryl Mukherji, Prune Phi, Sopheak Sam, and Daniella Thach, this exhibition explores how these contemporary artists reappropriate imagery—drawing from family photo albums, national archives, media outlets, among other sources—to shape new ways of seeing their communities, nations, pasts, and futures. The first program of its kind in the region, the Emerging Curators Institute aims to foster critical dialogue around curatorial practice and provide opportunities for Minnesota-based emerging curators.



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Minnesota Museum of American Art is one of the oldest visual art organizations in Minnesota, with roots stretching back to the 19th century. Based in St. Paul, the M's work is guided by the belief that art should reflect and explore the complexity of the American experience. The M opened its new museum facility in the Historic Pioneer Endicott in December 2018.

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