

“Hands Up, Don't Shoot: Artists Respond”

A Visual Art Exhibition Presented by the Alliance of Black Art Galleries

Freida L. Wheaton, Founder and Exhibition Curator

Who is the Alliance of Black Art Galleries?

The **Alliance of Black Art Galleries** (the Alliance) was founded August 20, 2013 in St. Louis, Missouri. The organizers expressed a shared focus of exhibiting culturally relevant art and supporting artists whose career aspirations would benefit from broader exposure in galleries. The three primary reasons for starting the Alliance were: (1) to identify areas of cooperation and collaboration; (2) to share information of mutual interest; (3) and to express and demonstrate publicly the mutual support the galleries have for each other.

There are eight Founding Member Galleries: **10th Street Gallery** (Pat Smith Thurman and Solomon Thurman); **14th Street Artist Community Gallery** (William Burton, Jr. and Robert A. Ketchens); **Bentil's Jah'z Art Private Gallery** (Sami Bentil and Annetta Vickers-Bentil); **Exodus Gallery** (Carlton Mitchell); **Gya Community Art Gallery** (Dail Chambers); **L. D. Ingram Gallery & Studio** (Lois D. Ingram); **Portfolio Gallery and Educational Center** (Robert A. Powell); and **Salon 53, a private residential art gallery** (Freida L. Wheaton). Freida L. Wheaton is the Founder of the Alliance.

The **Hands Up, Don't Shoot: Artists Respond** arts initiative is the second thematic exhibition of the Alliance, the first being a commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the founding of St. Louis. The Alliance received the **St. Louis Magazine 2014 A-List Award** for arts collaboration.

Why this Exhibition?

The Alliance issued the call in August 2014 under the banner **Hands Up, Don't Shoot: Artists Respond**. The Alliance invited visual artists to respond to the killing of 18-year old Michael Brown, Jr. in Ferguson, MO and to the worldwide reaction of the public, law enforcement and the media. This historic awakening, with Ferguson, MO as “ground zero” compelled Freida L. Wheaton, founder of the Alliance, to initiate St. Louis artistic documentation of the ensuing events as protest art.

“Protest Art” has historically been a means of documenting social and political movements, and we are calling upon all artists to bring their voice – visual art – to the Movement. We are recording what future generations will view as “Ferguson:” not the St. Louis County municipality, but a 21st Century Movement for law and justice.

What issues were artists asked to consider?

The artists interpreted the Michael Brown killing and Ferguson without restrictions. Within the context of **Hands Up, Don't Shoot** the overriding issues were civil rights, voting, oppression, justice issues, prosecutorial conduct, free speech, racial disparities, police brutality, community empowerment, the right to assemble, and other issues.

What is your expectation? What does the Alliance hope will happen as a result of this Exhibition?

The Alliance hopes that all St. Louis area residents and visitors to the City will seek out this art at the 18 venues. We expect that the Venues will be a destination point; and that the City - and that includes Ferguson - will be a destination point because of **Hands Up, Don't Shoot: Artists Respond**. Consequently, the Exhibition will be another basis for positive, meaningful dialog.

Hands Up, Don't Shoot: Artists Respond Art Exhibition

We expect that generations in the future will be able to look back and see this art as telling a story; that the 2055 viewer would feel the pain, the horror, the disbelief, the passion, the regret, the same feelings and questions we are having today, and that the art will speak to them about law and justice.

What about other forms of art?

The Exhibition will include visual art only: paintings, drawings, collage, photography, sculpture, and new media (films digital experiments, etc.). Other art forms have been fundamentally engaged in the Ferguson issues from the beginning: spoken word, poetry, dance, theater, and music. The Alliance appreciates the other art forms and they will be presenting at each of the opening receptions for *Hands Up, Don't Shoot: Artists Respond*.

Who are the Artists?

The artists are from across the country, with most being from the St. Louis and Kansas City areas. Participating artists includes artists from Illinois, Iowa, California, Texas, Maryland, New York, Tennessee, Georgia, North Carolina and New Mexico. A complete list of *Hands Up, Don't Shoot: Artists Respond* artists will be available October 6th. The *preliminary list* of artists is as follows:

Eugenia Alexander	Melvin Jefferson	Byron D. Rogers
Omenihu Amachi	Christopher Jerry	Sonié Joi Ruffin
Walter Andrade	Alan Johnson	Sean Starowitz/Lauren Tweedie
Anna Asche	De'Joneiro Jones	Phil Shafer
Sharon Attaway	Erica Jones	Lamont Shannon
Howard Barry	Robert A. Ketchens	Patricia Silva
Jenna Bauer	Venise Keys	Sun Smith-Foret
Annetta Vickers-Bentil	Katrin Butler Powell	Dustin Spagnola
Sami Bentil	(Kuumba)	Street Cred
Michael K. Bisbee	Joseph LaMarque	Krystal Sutton
Salicia Black	Bill Murphy	John Sutton
John Blair	Linda Lighton	E. Joy Sutton
William Burton, Jr.	Deborah Nelson Linck	Serhat Tanyolacar
Vickie Caldwell	Gundía Lock-Clay	Teamworks Unlimited
Kenneth Calvert	Tony Lockett	Ryan Tenney
Jon Calvert	Dave Loewenstein	MwazaCarol Thompson-
Aaron Cecil	Karen Louis	Robinson
Darryl Chamberlain	Maya Isabella Mackrandilal	Lance Omar Thurman
Dail Chambers	Darnell Malone	Pat Smith Thurman
Myles Cheadle	Sandra Marchewa	Solomon Thurman
Kevin Cole	Jonathan Mayers	Michael Toombs
Briana Collier	Hayveyah McGowan	Joy Lalita Wade
Stajah Curry	Hugh Merrill	Tianxin Wang
Dennis Redmoon Darkeem	Bill Murphy	Doretha Washington
Dion Dion	Margaret Nicholson	Keith Westbrook
Najee Dorsey	Glenn North	Freida L. Wheaton
Laura-Harris Gascogne	Lola Ogbara	Jerod A. Wheaton
Jarred Gastreich	P31	Darryl White
Johnny Ray Gill	Elisa Peebles & the New York Group	Paige Whitehead
B. Curtis Grayson, III	Edna Patterson-Petty	Don Wilkison
David Griffin, Jr.	Jerry Prettyman	Jacquelyn Williams
Sheri "Purpose" Hall	R2C2H2 Tha Artist	Bruce Allen Wilson, Jr.
Lenard Hinds	(Ronald C. Herd III)	Ronald Young
Jerald Ieans	Janet Riehl	
Lois Ingrum	Marilyn L. Robinson	
Daniel Jefferson		

Where can the art be seen?

The *Hands Up, Don't Shoot: Artists Respond* visual art exhibition is making history by the sheer number of venues being utilized for one exhibition. We know of no other such artistic collaboration in the arts in the City of St. Louis (inclusive of St. Louis County and Ferguson) or the State of Missouri - - or in any other state. Venues are art galleries, public libraries, universities, and cultural institutions. The Alliance appreciates this outpouring of support.

This Exhibition may be seen at **18 venues** in St. Louis City and County, including in the City of Ferguson, MO. Ferguson itself has been deemed a venue. Eighteen is the number of years Michael Brown, Jr. lived. Each venue represents one year of Michael Brown's life. Fifteen of the 18 venues are exhibiting October 17 - December 20, 2014.

The remaining three venues will exhibit *Hands Up, Don't Shoot: Artists Respond* during **Black History Month, February 2015**. Venues 16, 17, and 18 exhibiting new art will be announced in January.

What are the venues for October 17 - December 20, 2014?

The venues with exhibitions opening October 17, 2014 are:

10th Street Gallery

419 N. 10th Street, St. Louis, MO 63101
Reception Friday, 10/17, 6-8pm

14th Street Artist Community Gallery

2607/09 14th Street, St. Louis, MO 63106
Reception Friday, 10/17, 6-9pm

Exodus Gallery

5075 Delmar Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63108
Reception and films Saturday, 10/18, 5-7pm

Ferguson Municipal Public Library

35 N. Florissant Rd., Ferguson, MO 63135
Reception Friday, 10/17, 1:30-3 pm

The Griot Museum of Black History

2505 St Louis Ave, St Louis, MO 63106
Reception Saturday, 10/18, 2-4pm

L. D. Ingram Gallery & Studio

4937 Washington Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63108
Reception Saturday, 10/18, 3-5pm

Portfolio Gallery & Educational Center

3514 Delmar Blvd, St Louis, MO 63103
Reception Friday, 10/17, 5-7pm

Regional Arts Commission

6128 Delmar Blvd, St Louis, MO
Reception Saturday, 10/18, 4-6pm

Saint Louis University Museum of Art

3663 Lindell Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63108
Reception Friday, 10/17, 5-7pm

Scott Joplin House State Historic Site

2658 Delmar Blvd, St Louis, MO 63103
Reception and films Saturday, 11/15, 3-6pm

**St. Louis Community College - Florissant Valley
Gallery ADMIN**

3400 Pershall Rd., Florissant, MO 63135
Gallery Talk & Reception Wednesday, 11/19, 1:30 pm

**St. Louis Public Library at Central
Carnegie Room**

1301 Olive St., St. Louis, MO 63103
Reception Friday, 10/17, 3-5pm

University of Missouri at St. Louis - Gallery FAB

201 Fine Arts Building, Normandy, MO 63121
Reception Saturday, 10/18, 1-3pm

Vaughn Cultural Center

3701 Grandel Square, St Louis, MO 63108
Reception Friday, 10/17, 7-9pm

The City of Ferguson (deemed a Venue)

Ferguson, Missouri 63135