

PRESS RELEASE

Minneapolis Institute of Art to Reopen January 28 Advance Reservations Required

New exhibitions include recent acquisitions from the Souls Grown Deep Foundation, quilts by L'Merchie Frazier, photographs of Africa by Todd Webb

Minneapolis Institute of Art
2400 Third Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55404
artsmia.org



A featured artwork part of "In the Presence of Our Ancestors: Southern Perspectives in African American Art."

Thornton Dial, American, 1928-2016. *Royal Flag* [detail], 1997-1998, American flag, toy doll, toy bull, string, fabric, industrial sealing compound, oil, enamel, spray paint on canvas mounted on wood. The Ethel Morrison Van Derlip Fund and Gift of the Souls Grown Deep Foundation from the William S. Arnett Collection 2019.16.8

MINNEAPOLIS—January 21, 2021—The Minneapolis Institute of Art (Mia) will reopen to the public on Thursday, January 28. Advance reservations are required; capacity is limited to no more than 150 visitors in the building at a time, per the Stay Safe MN order. Free ticketed time slots can be reserved [online](#) or by phone starting today. Walkup tickets will not be available.

Several new exhibitions will be on view when the museum reopens. These include:

- "In the Presence of Our Ancestors: Southern Perspectives in African American Art" brings together methods of visual storytelling and ancestral memory through the individual practices of artists from the "Black Belt" region of the American South—a term that refers to the region's black soil, as well as the legacies of African Americans who shaped its social and agrarian culture. Spanning from Louisiana to Florida, and the mid-20th century to the present, the highlighted artists document rural life and traditions of metalwork, funerary and yard art, and quilt making. The artwork on view is part of a recent acquisition from the [Souls Grown Deep Foundation](#), which is dedicated to documenting, preserving, and promoting the contributions of African American artists of the South and the cultural traditions in which they are rooted. "In the Presence of Our Ancestors" is curated by inaugural Souls Grown Deep Foundation intern Starasea Nidiala Camara, a student at the University of Minnesota Twin Cities, in collaboration with Mia's BIPOC Curatorial Advisory Committee—Keisha Williams, Bayou Bay, Anniessa Antar, Tamira Amin, Frederica Simmons, Victoria Myers, Minna Jain, and Jeanine Pollard—with interpretation by visiting local artists through the Transcontinental Dialogue Project. The exhibition was made possible through generous sponsorship from Bank of America.

Mia



L'Merchie Frazier. "I Matter", 2016. Pieced nylon fabrics and machine stitching. 40 in. x 30 in. © L'Merchie Frazier. Photo: Craig Bailey/Perspective Photo. L2020.129.10.

- "Freedom Rising: I Am the Story / L'Merchie Frazier" showcases the work of L'Merchie Frazier, a fiber artist, quilter, historian, innovator, poet, and holographer. According to Frazier, "This exhibition continues my work and conversations, concerned with equity and justice, called *The Quilted Chronicles* and its Target Series. It examines the lives and legacies of African-descended people, including children and their communities across centuries of memory, places, and activism." This exhibition is part of a larger initiative, *We Are The Story*, organized by the [Textile Center](#) and the [Women of Color Quilters Network \(WCQN\)](#). It was curated by WCQN founder Carolyn Mazloomi, who conceived of the project when Minneapolis became an epicenter for nationwide protests following the police killing of George Floyd.



Todd Webb. American, 1905-2000. *Untitled (44UN-7930-609), Somaliland (Somalia), 1958 (detail)*. Archival pigment print. 20x20 inches (image). 22x22 inches (sheet). © Todd Webb Archive. L2020.85.81.

- "Todd Webb in Africa: Outside the Frame" presents a recently recovered photographic series taken by American documentary photographer Todd Webb in 1958. Commissioned by the United Nations to document emerging industries and technologies in Ghana, Kenya, Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia), Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), Somalia, Sudan, Togo, and Tanganyika and Zanzibar (both now Tanzania), these early color photographs went largely unused by the U.N.'s publications. Their neglect or suppression by the organization mandates a closer investigation and animates our interpretation of the images, as well as our attempts to understand Webb's intentions in creating them. Webb's photographs present an outsider's view onto the social, political, and cultural dynamics on the continent at a critical period between colonialism and independence. Resisting stereotypical or exoticizing frameworks, Webb, who was white, created images of countries on the cusp of change. At the same time, his photographs raise important questions concerning photographic agency and power, racial and national privilege, and the ways in which Euro-Americans conceived of

modernization at a crucial period in Africa's history. The exhibition was curated by Casey Riley, curator and head of the Department of Photography and New Media at Mia, in collaboration with Aimee Bessire and Erin Hyde Nolan, authors of the book *Todd Webb in Africa: Outside the Frame* (Thames & Hudson, January 2021).

- The latest exhibition from the Minneapolis Artists Exhibition Program (MAEP), "[Nicole Havekost: Chthonic](#)" explores the simultaneous joy, sublime embarrassment, and disorderly beauty of the human body through large-scale anthropomorphic sculptures. The figures included in "Chthonic" range in height from five to 14 feet and feature details that suggest a human body stripped of artifice, illusion, and proportion. Rochester-based Havekost is a 2013 and 2018 recipient of the Minnesota State Arts Board's Artist Initiative grant. Generous support for MAEP is provided by the McKnight Foundation, with additional support from RBC Wealth Management.
- "[Saul Steinberg: Visual Verse](#)" highlights the work of Saul Steinberg (1914–1999), widely known for his decades of drawings in *The New Yorker* magazine. He thought of himself as an author who drew. Whether studying the pulse of urban life, the limits of language, or the history of art, Steinberg had a knack for destabilizing his audience, gently reorienting them to his off-kilter point of view. This installation celebrates The Saul Steinberg Foundation's gift of eight works, giving Mia a representative selection from his mature career.

In addition, "[Rembrandt in Conversation](#)," which shows several of Rembrandt's prints in dialogue with artwork that triggered his interest, has been extended through March 21. "[Vision 2020: Jess T. Dugan](#)," an exhibition of portraits recognizing the dearth of complex, human-centered storytelling about the lives of transgender and gender-expansive older adults, will remain on view through April 25.

"We look forward to welcoming visitors back to the museum," said Katie Luber, Mia's Nivin and Duncan MacMillan Director and President. "The new exhibitions offer so many artworks to discover, and, of course, favorites from our permanent collection always delight and inspire. The lower attendance capacity also means visitors will have plenty of space to explore the galleries and the opportunity to engage in very personal, meaningful experiences with the artwork."

For more information on Mia's Covid-19 health and safety measures and the most updated exhibition calendar, please visit artsmia.org.

Press Contacts

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About the Minneapolis Institute of Art

Home to more than 90,000 works of art representing 5,000 years of world history, the Minneapolis Institute of Art (Mia) inspires wonder, spurs creativity, and nourishes the imagination. With extraordinary exhibitions and one of the finest art collections in the country—from all corners of the globe, and from ancient to contemporary—Mia links the past to the present, enables global conversations, and offers an exceptional setting for inspiration.

General admission to Mia is always free. Some special exhibitions have a nominal admission fee.

Museum Hours

Thursday-Sunday 10am–5pm
Monday-Wednesday Closed

For more information, call + 1 612 870 3000 or visit artsmia.org

