

Censored student art inspires this art gallery's latest exhibit

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Pamela Dillon Contributing Writer 10:47 a.m. Friday, Aug. 25, 2017 What To Do

What To Do



“Same People, Different Stereotypes” a 36 x 48” collage by Dayton Stem School Students.
CONTRIBUTED

In early 2016, Dayton Regional Stem School art teacher Jenny Montgomery and history teacher Kevin Lydy challenged their ninth-graders to create artwork about racism and sexism in a class on social justice.

The “U.S. History Through a Black Lens” portion was shown at the Dayton Convention Center in February 2016. It was taken down due to objections by some tenants and guests after just two days.

>> [ACLU slams removal of student artwork \(May 2016\)](#)

Those works are now part of a broader exhibit at the Dayton Visual Arts Center.



“King’s Mile” diptych by Carris Adams of Chicago part of “Breathing Deeply, Pushing Back” at DVAC. CONTRIBUTED Contributing Writer

ABOUT THE DVAC EXHIBIT

“**Breathing Deeply, Pushing Back**” not only includes the students’ works, but also installations by three nationally-recognized guest artists in response to their art: Carris Adams, Juan-Si Gonzalez and Christina Springer. In addition, 14 local/regional artists’ pieces and works from Stivers School for the Arts are being shown.

“DVAC is thrilled to present this incredibly powerful show. The student work alone is impressive, but when shown side-by-side with works created specifically in response to the students’ works by Adams, Gonzalez, and Springer, the show takes on an entirely new and vibrant energy,” said DVAC executive director Eva Buttacavoli. “With undertones of race, gender, and inequality, these works present a visual conversation about the role of art and the artist in social activism. They not only speak to the viewer, but lure the viewer in to be a part of the dialogue.”



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The DRSS students created collages done in the silhouette style of contemporary mixed media artist Kara Walker. One is "Same People, Different Stereotypes," a 36 x 48" black and gray collage of four people with a superimposed "Labels" sword.

>> PHOTOS: [DVAC Art Auction 2017](#)





“Abuela Una” a mixed media sculpture by Christina Springer of Pittsburgh part of Breathing Deeply, Pushing Back” at DVAC. CONTRIBUTED Contributing Writer

THE GUEST ARTISTS

Guest artists Adams of Chicago, Gonzalez of Dayton, and Springer of Pittsburgh are known for pushing political, gender, and racial boundaries. Adams creates signs that point to inequality and resilience. One of her works presented is “King’s Mile,” an oil and acrylic diptych of King’s Town and Mile High Baptist Church signs.

“I appropriate markers in the landscape that many people take to symbolize ‘otherness’ and ‘whiteness,’” stated Adams. “Oftentimes these objects and language found in the landscape are not overt. However, once they are paired or grouped with other works... the viewer is made to confront an assumption about race, gender or class.”

Gonzalez is showing a mixed-media installation that includes a rocking chair, drums, objects and photographs representing hate and racism.

“This mental landscape explores how the physical, social, political and economic forces shape and reflect its culture and way of life,” stated Gonzalez.

Springer is showing relics from a future date, 3017, in which she imagines a non-white society.

“My work is a conjuring. It is a conversation examining our many layers. It is a marine archaeology expedition determined to excavate the wisdom and resilience of our saltwater African ancestors,” stated Springer.

WORK OF LOCAL ARTISTS

The juried portion includes works from Stivers and from 14 local/regional artists: Heidi Arnold, Luisa Bieri, Cynthia Bornhorst, Claire Bowman, Bing Davis, Mikayla Garberich, Morris Howard, Geno Luketic, Bethany Pelle, Christina Pereyma, Teddy Pierson, Katelyn Turner, Jennifer Wenker and Mary Beth Whitley.

“In selecting work for this exhibition, I was especially interested in works that challenge the viewer to slow down and think about what the work is saying,” stated guest curator Michael Casselli, Antioch College asst. professor. “While some choices are more obvious and accessible, I also chose pieces that don’t allow an immediate read within the context of the show. This is intentional and I hope that people who visit this exhibition take the time to consider how each piece is connected to the title of the exhibition ‘Breathing Deeply, Pushing Back.’”

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WANT TO GO?

What: “Breathing Deeply, Pushing Back”

Where: Dayton Visual Arts Center, 118 N. Jefferson St.

Opening Reception: 6 to 8 p.m. Friday, Aug. 25

Welcome Dayton Roundtable: 2 to 4 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 26

When: Continues through Sept. 22

Hours: 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday and 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Friday and Saturday

Gallery Talk: 5:30 to 8 p.m. Friday, Sept. 1

More Info: 937-224-3822 | daytonvisualarts.org

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