

# Mint Museum Uptown in Charlotte, NC, Offers Exhibit Focused on Walls

The Mint Museum Uptown in Charlotte, NC, is presenting *W/ALLS: Defend, Divide, and the Divine*, on view in the Museum's Level 4 Brand Gallery, through July 25, 2021.

On Nov. 9, 2019, the world celebrated the 30th anniversary of the Berlin Wall coming down. Most can easily call up images from that exhilarating evening in 1989: young Germans in T-shirts and jeans destroying the concrete dividers with sledgehammers, armed soldiers looking on with stoic reserve, people rushing through holes and rubble to embrace their counterparts on the other side. The world saw the joy of people uniting, and as the end of the 20th century approached, the toppled wall felt like the dawn of a new age of reason. As the violence of World War II receded into history, it appeared that so, too, was the ancient, simple brutality of dividing people with walls.

And yet, the numbers offer a different narrative. When the Berlin Wall came down, there were 15 border walls around the world. As of May 2018, there were more than 77, according to Elisabeth Vallet, a geography professor at University of Quebec-Montreal. Over one-third of the world's nation states now define their borders with a barrier. And new walls keep going up.

This central issue is at the heart of an exhibition at the Mint Museum Uptown, *W/ALLS: Defend, Divide, and the Divine*.



SHAN Wallace, "The Makeover of Progress", 2019.

"I began working on this show three years ago, when Katie Hollander, the director of the Annenberg Space for Photography in Los Angeles, asked me to tell the story of the role of walls in human history through a photography exhibition," said Vallet. "The result went on view in October 2019 at the Annenberg Space for Photography in Los Angeles, a free exhibition space devoted to photography founded by Wallis Annenberg and the Trustees of the Annenberg Foundation in 2009. I am delighted that the exhibition is on view at The Mint Museum."

The exhibition explores various aspects of "walls," whether they are made of stone, steel, sand, or wire. The space is divided into six sections - Delineation, Defense, Deterrent, The Divine, Decoration, and The Invisible - with each section anchored by a central photo essay. Two of those essays were commissioned for the exhibition by the Annenberg Space for Photography. Magnum photographer Moises Saman documented the Peace Walls in Northern Ireland, while SHAN Wallace photographed Detroit's Eight-Mile Wall, a painted-over wall that was originally built to segregate a black community from an adjacent white community.

Walls aren't limited to a particular culture, region, or era. The exhibition features 130 images spanning six continents and 67 photographers of all stripes: commercial photographers, documentar-



Ami Vitale, "Ripple Effect", 2009. Photographer @amivitale

ians, photojournalists, artists, protestors, explorers, and in one case, a Tibetan Buddhist monk.

Some walls featured occur naturally, like the glacier in the Jango Thang plain. Others are constructed with intention, such as Linda Foard Roberts' aptly titled *Divided in Death* photograph that captures a low stone graveyard wall, delineating the buried bodies of the enslaved from the whites.

While many of the images in the exhibition connote division, some show unity. Consider the way neighbors converge before the stepwell wall in Jaipur, India, captured in Ami Vitale's *Ripple Effect*. Artist Swoon converted a wall into a canvas for a monumental art project that celebrates community at the site of Prevention Point, the groundbreaking addiction treatment center in Philadelphia. And during her work in Detroit, SHAN Wallace found families who chose to embrace the Eight-Mile Wall, rather than be hindered by the history embedded in the bricks and mortar.

Photographers have been shooting walls from the earliest days of photography. In fact, one of the first known photographs is Joseph Nicéphore Niépce's 1827 heliograph showing the monumental walls outside his window in Le Gras, France. And while walls may be built for one reason, they often stay up for another. The Moroccan city of Essaouira and the Croatian city of Dubrovnik once fortified their ports for protection; today, tourists visit them for their picturesque quaintness. The Western Wall in Jerusalem started as a retaining wall for King Solomon's Second Temple, but it has become one of the most holy sites for the Jewish people and is considered hallowed by many other religions.

What's the attraction of walls for photographers? Perhaps it's that, like photographs, walls are human constructs that describe and circumscribe space. And, like walls, photographs can represent hope or conquest. Both can be admired for their beauty and power, and both can make us feel protected or intimidated.

We constantly contend with walls, whether they are solid, porous, real, or imaginary. This photography exhibition invites you to reflect on the omnipresence of walls and to consider your own. Where do the barriers start in your life? And do you need them to live the life you want?

*W/ALLS: Defend, Divide, and the Divine* is generously presented by PNC Financial Services with additional support from The Mint Museum Auxiliary. Individual support from Laura and Mike Grace, Deidre and Clay Grubb, Leigh-Ann and Martin Sprock, and Betsy Rosen and Liam Stokes.

For further information check our NC Institutional Gallery listings, call the Museum at 704/337-2000 or visit ([www.mintmuseum.org](http://www.mintmuseum.org)).

# Central Piedmont Community College in Charlotte, NC, Offers Annual Student Show

Central Piedmont Community College in Charlotte, NC, will present the *2021 Annual Juried Student Art Show*, on view in CPCC's Ross Art Gallery, from Mar. 29 through Aug. 5, 2021.

Each year, Central Piedmont Community College's Visual Arts Department hosts the *Annual Juried Student Art Show*, Page 16 - Carolina Arts, March 2021

recognizing student works in ceramics, 2D and 3D design, drawing, jewelry, painting, photography, printmaking and sculpture.

Students who have works featured in the show receive a variety of awards, ranging from the Presidential Purchase Award; Foundation Purchase Award; first,

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second and third place awards; along with a variety of others. Each year, select student artwork is showcased in this celebratory exhibition, held during the college's Sensoria festival.

The juror for this year's *Student Show* is Sensoria artist Alice Ballard, a South-Carolina-based clay artist whose work is deeply inspired by the natural world around her. With an extensive background

# Harvey Gantt Center in Charlotte, NC, Offers Look Into Bank Of America Collection

The Harvey B. Gantt Center for African-American Arts + Culture at the Levine Center for the Arts is presenting *Vision & Spirit | African American Art Works From The Bank Of America Collection*, curated by Dexter Wimberly, on view through July 31, 2021.

*Vision & Spirit* is an exhibition composed of more than 100 paintings, prints, drawings, photographs, and mixed media works by 48 artists born in the 19th and 20th centuries. Highlighting key aspects of their lives, as well as the important objects they created, the exhibition focuses on these artists' strength and resilience as creative forces whose work continues to shape our understanding of the world.

In selecting work for the exhibition, guest curator Dexter Wimberly sought images and concepts that embody the exhibition's central theme of resilience. Throughout this process he continually reflected on the social and political times in which the works of art were created. The breadth of work in the exhibition includes portraits of unknown and well-known individuals, including influential figures such as Muhammad Ali, John and Alice Coltrane, and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. It also includes photographs taken during the Harlem Renaissance and The Civil Rights Movement, as well as intimate and quiet moments in early to mid-Century and contemporary Black life.

Seeking to balance the presentation of figuration and abstraction, *Vision & Spirit* also includes the work of several emerging or lesser-known contemporary African American artists to explore the idea that all art exists on a continuum, and that art being made today is both historically and psychologically influenced by art made in the past. *Vision & Spirit* offers us a cross-generational conversation and opens the door for greater discussions about the past, present and future of African Americans.

Dexter Wimberly is an independent curator and entrepreneur who has organized exhibitions and developed programs with galleries and institutions throughout the world including *The Third Line in Dubai*; Contemporary Art Museum CAM Raleigh in North Carolina; The Museum of the African Diaspora (MoAD) in San Francisco; Koki Arts in Tokyo; and the Museum of Arts and Design in New York City. His exhibitions have been reviewed and featured in publications including *The New York Times*, *Artforum*, and *Hyperallergic*; and have received support from The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts. Wimberly has also served as Director of Strategic Planning at Independent Curators International in New York City.

Prior to his curatorial career, Wimberly was the managing partner and CEO of the advertising agency, August Bishop, representing a diverse array of clients, including Adidas, The Coca-Cola Company and, HBO. Wimberly is a Senior Critic

in art and religious studies, her art evokes a sense of meditative calm and appreciation for natural forms and colors.

For further information check our NC Institutional Gallery listings, contact Amelia Zytka by e-mail at ([amelia.zytka@cpcc.edu](mailto:amelia.zytka@cpcc.edu)). Follow us on Instagram and Facebook at Central Piedmont Arts and our blog at (<http://blogs.cpcc.edu/cpc-cartgalleries/>).



James VanDerZee (American, 1886-1983. "Couple in Raccoon Coats, Harlem", 1932. Gelatin silver print, 5/75. Bank of America Collection.

at New York Academy of Art. He is also the founder of ART WORLD CONFERENCE, a business and financial literacy conference for visual artists. He and ART WORLD CONFERENCE co-organizer, Heather Bhandari were recently listed in the *Observer's* "Arts Power 50: Changemakers Shaping the Art World in 2019."

You can read an essay from curator Dexter Wimberly about this exhibition's inspiration at this link (<https://www.ganttcenter.org/public/assets/CuratorEssay-Vision&Spirit.pdf>).

Artists with works featured in this exhibition include: Henry Clay Anderson (1911-1998), Benny Andrews (1930-2006), Chelle Barbour (b. 1964), Romare Bearden (1912-1988), Dawoud Bey (b. 1953), John Biggers (1924-2001), Willie Birch (b. 1942), Beverly Buchanan (1940-2015), Kevin Cole (b. 1960), Willie Cole (b. 1955), Allan Rohan Crite (1910-2007), Dewey Crumpler (b. 1949), Roy Decarava (1919-2009), Murry DePillars (1938-2008), Lawrence Finney (b. 1963), Charles Gaines (b. 1944), Sam Gilliam (b. 1933), Mike Henderson (b. 1943), Earlie Hudnall Jr. (b. 1946), David Huffman (b. 1963), Oliver Jackson (b. 1935), Rashid Johnson (b. 1977), Jacob Lawrence (1917-2000), Willie Little (b. 1961), Juan Logan (b. 1946), Whitfield Lovell (b. 1959), Kerry James Marshall (b. 1955), Julie Mehretu (b. 1970), Gordon Parks (1912-2006), Corey Pemberton (b. 1990), Martin Puryear (b. 1941), Faith Ringgold (b. 1930), Mario Robinson (b. 1970), Betye Saar (b. 1926), Raymond Saunders (b. 1934), Robert Sengstacke (1943-2017), Jamel Shabazz (b. 1960), Lorna Simpson (b. 1960), Chuck Stewart (1927-2017), Robert Tomlin (b. 1955), James VanDerZee (1886-1983), Raelis Vasquez (b. 1995), Carrie Mae Weems (b. 1953), Charles White (1918-1979), Fred Wilson (b. 1954) and Ernest C. Withers (1922-2007).

New works were acquired for the exhibition from these artists: Raelis Vasquez, Corey Pemberton, David Huffman, Mike Henderson, Dewey Crumpler, Chelle Barbour and Murry DePillars.

For further information check our NC Institutional Gallery listings, call the Center at 704/547-3700 or visit (<https://www.ganttcenter.org/>).

# Harvey Gantt Center in Charlotte, NC, Offers Exhibit on Public Art

The Harvey B. Gantt Center for African-American Arts + Culture at the Levine Center for the Arts in Charlotte, NC, is presenting *Lift Every Voice*, organized by Brand The Moth and BlkMrktClt, on view through Mar. 13, 2021.

The connection between art and community is the key thread for public art. That connection becomes even more critical when art serves as a vehicle for

dialogue. Public art is inherently designed for the public – not just to consume – but to experience and engage. What the artist creates, the viewer makes their own. And while there may be a life and death cycle to this transitory form of art, this further reinforces the humanity it reflects.

The Black Lives Matter mural painted on June 9, 2020, created a safe space for

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