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SAINT PAUL & MINNESOTA FOUNDATION AND MCKNIGHT FOUNDATION PRESENT “ART IN THIS PRESENT MOMENT”

Projects by Minnesota’s Black, Indigenous, and People of Color artists portray personal narratives addressing diversity, identity and today’s societal issues

St. Paul, Minn. – Nov. 10, 2020 – [The Saint Paul & Minnesota Foundation](#) (the Foundation) today announced that artistic projects from “Art in This Present Moment,” a Foundation initiative supported by the McKnight Foundation, can be viewed at [spmcf.org/art](#). The online gallery showcases the art of members of Minnesota’s Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities across the state of Minnesota.

“We are honored to share the work of these talented artists,” said Eric J. Jolly, Ph.D., president and CEO of the Foundation. “Historically, during challenging and turbulent times, artists have been on the forefront of expressing our community’s demand for change. Today, in the wake of COVID-19 and the aftermath of George Floyd’s tragic murder, Minnesota artists are continuing this tradition. It is imperative that we amplify their voices by supporting their work and, through their work, foster understanding and healing during these challenging times.”

“Art in This Present Moment” features the work of 50 artists who worked in a range of disciplines over a six-week period. Artists were selected by 12 nonprofits across the state. Each organization was granted \$5,000 to support new or in-progress projects.

“The arts connect people,” said Lee Sheehy, interim president of the McKnight Foundation. “Support for artists, particularly those who build connections within and beyond BIPOC communities, is important as we strive to create a more equitable tomorrow. It is an honor to recognize and support these artists.”

Editor’s note: Find background information and project images in the Foundation’s pressroom: <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/wjxclc3qdlwkveh/AACQSNx44cMdzLBx54QGL6qIa?dl=0>

Following are brief descriptions of the awarded artists and their projects; more at [spmcf.org/art](#); follow the artists at #ArtInThisMoment

- [American Indian Housing Organization \(AICHO\)](#) - A painted mural on a community center’s outdoor wall in Duluth’s Lincoln Park depicting Indigenous history through Anishinaabe symbolism by Moira Villiard and Michelle Defoe.
- [Brownbody](#) – A work-in-progress to score “Tracing Sacred Steps” by Thomasina and Charles Petrus, Tiyo Siyolo and composer Alex Shaw.
- [Catalyst Arts](#) – A collaborative Black/queer artists’ journey captured while traveling in an RV to follow their acting, writing and filmmaking dreams by Adja Gildersleve and Ashembaga Jaafaru.

- [Don't You Feel it Too?](#) – Movement, conversation and personal transformation featuring three artists seeking to build community by Demetrius McClendon, Xiaolu Wang and Heather Peebles.
- [Gizhiigin Arts Incubator](#) – A collaboration of two artists – an Ojibwe basket maker and a fellow canvas artist – reflecting their shared artistic upbringing in the White Earth Nation by Clyde Estey, Jr. and Kent Estey.
- [Indigenous Roots](#) – In partnership with City Mischief Murals, a mural celebrating four Twin Cities multicultural women dancers painted in traditional regalia by Thomasina Topbear, Joy Slika, Holly (Miskitoos) Henning and Charles (Wanisin) Garcia, with student artists Simone Tinker, AF Kimble and Cheyenne Gill.
- [Million Artist Movement](#) – Two projects were created featuring a Power Tree square symbolizing the need to bring initiatives together for liberation of Black people from artists who created the George Floyd vigil site ; and, in support of the PI Growers Collective at Frogtown Farms, a living art installation based on food sovereignty created by Stephanie Watts, Alejandra C. (Tobar Alatriz), Malia Araki Burkart, Marie Michael, Mamkwe Ndosu, Miré Regulus and Signe V. Harriday.
- [Monkeybear's Harmolodic Workshop](#) – A collaborative shadow puppet piece reflecting on stories from the uprising over George Floyd's murder in the Twin Cities, created by Ty Chapman, Andrew Young, Rebekah Crisanta de Ybarra.
- [Penumbra Theatre](#) – An original score for video written by Hannibal Lokumbe, the company's leading classical composer and jazz trumpeter, for a video tribute to George Floyd with contributing artists Brannen Temple, Reginald Carter, Jimmy Blazer, Colin Shook, Za' Nia Sephra and Lou and Sarah Bellamy.
- [Soomaal House of Art](#) – A collective of creative work from four emerging Somali artists Khadijah Muse, Kaamil A. Haider, Mohamed Samatar and Mohamud Mumin.
- [TruArtSpeaks](#) – Krump, a street dance expressing emotions in a non-violent manner was created and performed by artist Herb Johnson, III, and ceramicist Gabrielle Grier describes how her projects are filled with imagery, narrative and the essence of her identity.
- [Walker West Music Academy](#) – A song to bring empowerment and self-esteem while drawing people together by musician and Walker West instructor William E. Duncan.

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About the Saint Paul & Minnesota Foundation

The Saint Paul & Minnesota Foundation believes in the best of Minnesota and the power of its communities. With roots in Saint Paul and partners across the state, it is Minnesota's largest community foundation and the partner of choice for thousands of donors, nonprofits and community organizations. The Foundation aspires to create an equitable, just and vibrant Minnesota where all communities and people thrive by inspiring generosity, advocating for equity, and investing in community-led solutions. Visit: spmcf.org

About the McKnight Foundation

The McKnight Foundation, a Minnesota-based family foundation, advances a more just, creative, and abundant future where people and planet thrive. Established in 1953, the McKnight Foundation is deeply committed to advancing climate solutions in the Midwest; building an equitable and inclusive Minnesota; and supporting the arts in Minnesota, neuroscience, and international crop research. Visit www.McKnight.org