

NOMA

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REFLECTING ON NEW ORLEANS HISTORIES

NOMA Explores New Orleans' Complex Past, and Looks Into the Future

NEW ORLEANS, LA – The New Orleans Museum of Art (NOMA) presents ***Changing Course: Reflecting on New Orleans Histories***, an exhibition that celebrates the New Orleans Tricentennial by bringing together a group of seven contemporary art projects that focus on forgotten or marginalized histories of the city. Projects by artists **Katrina Andry, Willie Birch, Lesley Dill, L. Kasimu Harris, Skylar Fein, The Everyday Projects,** and **The Propeller Group** each shed light on the past while also looking towards the future, returning to defining moments in New Orleans' history that continue to frame art and life in the city today. *Changing Course* will be on view at NOMA June 29 through September 16, 2018.

“In New Orleans’ Tricentennial year, this exhibition will allow visitors to reflect on how our city’s histories have shaped our responses to present-day issues and concerns, while considering how the past can help spur evolution and change,” said Susan Taylor, NOMA’s Montine McDaniel Freeman Director. “During a year of celebration and remembrance, NOMA invites the city to consider how the act of commemoration can also be a form of forward thinking.”

Artist Skylar Fein’s installation *Remember the Upstairs Lounge* (2008) commemorates a 1973 arson at the Upstairs Lounge, a popular gay bar in the French Quarter, while also continuing the conversation around ongoing violence against LGBTQ communities, locally and nationally. The Propeller Group’s video *The Living Need Light, The Dead Need Music* (2014) offers a powerful meditation on the cyclical nature of time and history, drawing points of connection between the cultural traditions of New Orleans’ vibrant Vietnamese community and the fantastical funeral traditions and rituals of South Vietnam. Lesley Dill’s *Hell Hell Hell / Heaven Heaven Heaven: Encountering Sister Gertrude Morgan* (2010) pays tribute to the vital legacy of visionary New Orleans artist, preacher and poet Sister Gertrude Morgan. A new installation of woodblock prints by Katrina Andry addresses questions of racial and economic disparity and the uneven urban development in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina, and also considers the impact that past infrastructure projects, such as the construction of I-10, had on historically African American neighborhoods in the city. L. Kasimu Harris’ *War on the Benighted* (ongoing)

chronicles his work with New Orleans schoolchildren, which has resulted in photographs that place African American history at the center of a visual narrative that confronts stereotypes of youth and race and question the history of public education in New Orleans.

Two additional project components offer spaces for community reflection, serving as the beginning of a conversation about how these New Orleans histories impact different communities across the city. Willie Birch's installation will simultaneously address specific historical events and the development of a contemporary art-centered community he is creating in New Orleans' Seventh Ward. Presenting new multi-media works confronts this area's relationship with its slave-holding past while also documenting the creation of a more inclusive community today. The Everyday Projects, a collective of photojournalists who use social media to combat clichéd representations of communities worldwide, will bring their Pulitzer Center-sponsored curriculum to New Orleans with #EverydayNewOrleans, encouraging participants to use photography to share their unique perspectives on life in their neighborhoods throughout Greater New Orleans.

Changing Course is organized by the New Orleans Museum of Art and co-curated by Russell Lord, Freeman Family Curator of Photographs, Prints, and Drawings; Katie Pfohl, Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art; Brian Piper, The Andrew W. Mellon Curatorial Fellow for Photography; and Allison Young, The Andrew W. Mellon Curatorial Fellow for Modern and Contemporary Art.

Exhibition Programming

Exhibition-related programs will include curator-and-artist-led noontime talks featuring Willie Birch, Katrina Andry, Kasimu Harris, and Skylar Fein, gallery tours, artist perspectives, a lecture by Leslie Dill, an #EverydayNewOrleans round table, and *Picturing Us*, a five-documentary film series exploring the people and places that make New Orleans home.

Additional Information

[Press-approved images are available here.](#)

Facebook and Instagram: @noma1910

Hashtag: #nomachangingcourse

Website: www.noma.org

About NOMA and the Besthoff Sculpture Garden

The New Orleans Museum of Art, founded in 1910 by Isaac Delgado, houses nearly 40,000 art objects encompassing 5,000 years of world art. Works from the permanent collection, along with continuously changing special exhibitions, are on view in the museum's 46 galleries Fridays from 10 AM to 9 PM; Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 10 AM to 6 PM; Saturdays from 10 AM to 5 PM and Sundays from 11 AM to 5 PM. NOMA offers docent-guided tours at 1 PM every Tuesday - Sunday. The adjoining Sydney and Walda Besthoff Sculpture Garden features work by over 60 artists, including several of the 20th century's master sculptors. The Sculpture Garden is open seven days a week: 9 AM to 6 PM. The New Orleans Museum of Art and the Besthoff Sculpture Garden are fully accessible to handicapped visitors and wheelchairs

are available from the front desk. For more information about NOMA, call (504) 658-4100 or visit www.noma.org. Museum admission is free on Wednesdays for Louisiana residents, courtesy of The Helis Foundation. Teenagers (ages 13-19) receive free admission every day through the end of the year, courtesy of The Helis Foundation.

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