Depth of Identity

Art as Memory and Archive
August 11- October 20, 2022,
Green Family Foundation Gallery
7200 Biscayne Blvd. Miami Fl.

Curated by the Diaspora Vibe Cultural Arts Incubator (DVCAI) curator, Rosie Gordon-Wallace and with financial support from the Green Family Foundation.

The Depth of Identity: Art as Memory and Archive offers a strident and compassionate investigation of the ideas and structures of otherness. The Depth of Identity: Art as Memory and Archive, will be presented at a time when Diaspora artists and voices are challenging social justice, celebrating identities, and re-activating and bridging communities post pandemic through contemporary art and scholarship. Globally recognized scholar, Alix Pierre, Ph.D. has designed this collaboration to provide a lens through which communities and community leaders internationally can begin to better understand themselves, their diversities, and their unlimited possibilities. The participating artist will begin a dialogue about the emerging complex creole nature of cities globally. The complexities and diversities represented by The Depth of Identity are emergent, and in many cases, ascendant, across the world. The exhibition will be grouped around themes that encompass identity and creole urban life stories, memory, politics, myth, religion, and culture.

Contact information:
Tanya Desdunes, DVCAI Executive Director
tanya@dvcaiteam.org
(786) 306-0191.

Rosie Gordon-Wallace, DVCAI President | Curator
rosie@dvcai.org
(305) 542-4277

Kim Yantis, DVCAI Exhibition Registrar
kimyantisartsdvcai@gmail.com
(305) 794 5662
About the Curator

Rosie Gordon-Wallace is a recognized curator, arts advocate, community leader and pioneer in advancing contemporary Caribbean diaspora art. She founded the Diaspora Vibe Cultural Arts Incubator (DVCAI) to serve as a local and global laboratory dedicated to promoting, nurturing and cultivating the vision and diverse talents of emerging artists from the Caribbean Diaspora, artists of color and immigrant artists. Twenty-six years later, DVCAI is recognized as a global resource and one of the region’s leading platforms dedicated to providing diaspora artists with a venue to explore and experiment with new forms and themes that challenge traditional definitions of the Caribbean and Latin American art. Her awards include the Knight Foundation Cultural Award, The African Heritage Cultural Arts Center Third Annual Calabash Amadlozi Visual Arts Award, International Businesswoman of the Year, One of South Florida’s 50 Most Powerful Black Professionals to name a few. In 2021, she was recognized by the Perez Art Museum Miami’s International Women’s Committee as International Woman of the Year. Her recent curations include Inter | Sectionality: Diaspora Art from The Creole City at The Miami Design District, and Illuminate Coral Gables: A City Looks to Light, city of Coral Gables, Florida, and more recently “Chromatic Cogitations” alumni artist in residence exhibition at Redline Contemporary Arts in Denver, Colorado, “I M(O)ther: Threads of the Maternal Figure” Katrina Coombs, at Sarasota Art Museum in Sarasota, Florida, and “ORDER MY STEPS: There are no answers here, move on”, Roscoe B. Thické III at Oolite Arts, in Miami, Florida.

Diaspora Vibe Cultural Arts Incubator (DVCAI) is a Miami-based 501(c)(3) organization. The mission of DVCAI is to promote, nurture and cultivate the vision and diverse talent of emerging artists from the Caribbean and Latin diaspora through our exhibition, artist-in-residence, international exchange and outreach programs that celebrate Miami-Dade’s rich cultural and social fabric.

www.dvcai.org
Green Family Foundation Founded in 1991 by Steven J. Green, former United States Ambassador to Singapore, the Green Family Foundation (GFF) is a private, nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting social programs that positively impact global health and alleviate poverty.

The Green Family Foundation’s mission is to make a positive and meaningful impact in communities both at home and abroad. We provide funding and resources to organizations that support education, global health and community development. GFF empowers under-served communities to fight the cycle of extreme poverty, leading to sustainable programs that improve lives.

GFF supports grassroots initiatives that provide quality care to those in need by focusing on prevention, education and treatment. The foundation empowers communities through grants that enable progressive organizations to help build self-reliance. Today, Kimberly Green, president, continues to advance her family’s vision.

www.greenff.org

Green Space Miami is the Green Family Foundation’s arts initiative and art space in the MiMo Historic District of Miami. Guided by the Foundation’s principles of inclusion, community empowerment and education, Green Space Miami centers historically marginalized stories at the intersections of lived experience, hosted in a space for dialogue. Green Space Miami’s mission is to be a catalyst for action around critical social issues, collaborating with community partners and educational institutions.
FEATURED ARTISTS
Aisha Tandiwe Bell is first generation Jamaican and ninth generation traceable Black American. Her parents met at City College. Conceived in Tanzania and born in Manhattan, she was raised Bobo Shanti Rasta spending her early childhood on Bobo hill in Bull Bay, Jamaica. Inspired by the fragmentation of our multiple identities, Bell’s practice is committed to creating myth and ritual through sculpture, performance, video, sound, drawing and installation. Bell holds a BFA, and an MS from Pratt and a MFA from Hunter College. Bell received a NYFA in Performance Art/ Multidisciplinary Work and has had artist residencies/fellowships at Skowhegan, Rush Corridor Gallery, Abron’s Art Center, LMCC’s Swing Space and Workspace, The Laundromat Project, BRIC, Wassaic Projects, Interlude and more. She has been a fellow with DVCAI on International Cultural Exchanges (Jamaica 2012, Surinam 2013, Antigua 2014, Guadeloupe 2015 and 17). The Museo De Arte Moderno’s Triennial 2014, The Jamaica Biennial 2014 and 17, The BRIC Biennial 2016, The Venice Biennial 2017, MoCADA, The Rosa Parks Museum, CCCADI, Columbia College, Space One Eleven, Welancora Gallery and Rush Arts are a few spaces where Bell has exhibited her work. Currently a 2022 Dieu Donne Workspace artist in residence, she lives in Brooklyn with her husband and two children.
Samo Davis is an interdisciplinary artist whose art practice includes sculpture, digital works and AR. Utilizing a variety of materials (such as paints, plastics, air-dry clay, and digital code), Samo’s practice centers on the creation of small, multi-dimensional “worlds,” which are meant to evoke the creative, physical, and psychological concepts of Growth, translating veins, vines, and systems to the figure as a way to visualize and explore their own questions, perceptions, and understanding about our human connection to art, nature, and technology. Having health issues as a child created a “person in a bubble” effect, inspiring Samo to look at world-building as an alternate way to analyze the world outside. As a “multi-cultural kid” that was born in Japan and who grew up in Tokyo, Singapore, and later, New York City, Samo’s inspiration references both their Japanese cultural background and exposure to the flora and fauna from the Singaporean landscape. Samo’s meticulous and repetitive process of creating organic materials blade-of-grass by blade-of-grass stems from the artist’s fascination with “kodawari”, the Japanese principle of the relentless unattainable pursuit of perfecting one’s craft.
Michael Elliott is typically known as a fine art painter, who nurtures his craft in the style of photorealism. Born in Manchester, Jamaica Michael had always been experimenting with different mediums and techniques in art through his early years. Realism became his preferred style during his tenure at the Edna Manley College of the Visual Arts and while attending, Michael developed a keen interest in photography to the extent that it also became an assisted medium in developing the look and feel of his paintings.
Yacine Tilala Fall is an interdisciplinary conceptual artist. She received a BFA from the Corcoran School of the Arts and Design. Using performance, sculpture, painting and natural materials, her work investigates identity, politics, and history through the lens of the body. Her work and practice speak to the human body and its entangled relationship with the natural environment. A Senegalese heritage and an American upbringing inform her repetitive and labor intensive art practice.
Grettel Arrate Hechavarría is a painter, mural painter, illustrator and graphic designer from Santiago de Cuba. She graduated in painting and drawing from the Provincial Academy of Plastic Arts José Joaquín Tejada of Santiago de Cuba. She holds a Bachelor of Art History from the Universidad de Oriente. She is a member of the Union of Writers and Artists of Cuba (UNEAC) and a member of the Association of Publicists of Cuba. Hechavaria has had 14 solo exhibitions in museums and galleries in Cuba and around the world.
Caroline Holder was born in England to a Jamaican mother and Barbadian father. When she was four years old, the family returned to the Caribbean, settling in Barbados, where she completed her formative education. Holder left the island after high school to study Design and Painting at York University in Toronto, and Art Education at McGill in Montreal. She relocated to New York City in the early 90’s where, except for a sojourn at NSCAD University, Nova Scotia, to complete an MFA in Ceramics, she has maintained a continuous studio practice, while teaching art at the Professional Children’s School. Holder’s primary medium is clay, from which she crafts object-sculptures combined with drawings and text. Her influences include a background in printmaking, a love of pen and ink drawing, experiences of intersectional identity as a Caribbean immigrant in North America, and the life-altering experience of late motherhood.
Kim Myung-Sik (Andy Kim) was born in Seoul in 1949, and studied Fine Arts at a Seoul university and graduate school. His first solo exhibition was held in Seoul in 1984. Since that time on, he has held more than 80 solo exhibitions in major global cities like Seoul, Tokyo, New York, Miami and Shanghai. The theme that he pursues throughout his works is the harmonious co-existence of nature and humanity. His intent in creating “East Side Story” is to present a story about human beings living with and within nature as an inseparable community.
**Izia Lee Lindsay** is a mixed media artist who explores with both digital and traditional media. His artwork addresses symbolism in Caribbean iconography that is rooted in tradition but interpreted with contemporary ideas. Lindsay uses bold, geometric shapes that juxtapose and intersperse to form his multilayered artistic pieces. The thematic whole is a cultural narrative reproducing the dualities of his turbulent, cosmopolitan, Caribbean life. His research examines material culture, indigenous societies and the ever-changing landscape of the Caribbean while his subject matter tackles issues of identity and class in a post-colonial society. Lindsay is currently a lecturer in Miami, Fla.
Suchitra Mattai born in Georgetown, Guyana is a multi-disciplinary artist of Indo-Caribbean descent. Her work explores how collective and individual memory and the space of myth and folklore allow us to unravel and re-imagine colonial histories and narratives. Using both her own family’s history and her research of colonial indentured labor during the 19th century, Mattai seeks to expand our sense of “history.” Suchitra received an MFA in painting and drawing and an MA in South Asian art from the University of Pennsylvania. Her recent projects include a commission for the Sharjah Biennial 14, “State of the Art 2020” at Crystal Bridges Museum, group exhibitions at the Art Gallery of Ontario, the San Antonio Museum of Art, Denver Art Museum and the Biennial of the Americas jointly sponsored installation, and a solo exhibition at the Boise Art Museum. Upcoming projects include solo exhibitions at Kavi Gupta Gallery and group exhibitions at the MCA Chicago and the John Michael Kohler Arts Center. Her works are represented in collections which include Crystal Bridges Museum of Art, the Denver Art Museum, and the Tampa Museum of Art. She is represented by Kavi Gupta Gallery (Chicago) and K Contemporary Art (Denver).
Bruno Metura is a Guadeloupean artist whose creativity is based on the observation of nature, humans and their cosmogony. Through his observation, he has the unique ability to create canvases that seek harmony in a whole; providing the visible in the multiplicity and diversity of senses which allows the viewer to turn and/or juxtapose the works he has created. It thus translates both the energy and the synergy that result from the worlds, and the distance to be taken in a reasoned way on their understanding of the Universe in accordance with the time scales. For Métura, creation in the act of painting is a journey into the foray of thought; he visits the sensitive being like a hymn that initiates and erases space. He transmits to the spectator what he is given, to engage in himself, to appreciate and recognize his dimension of man and woman.
Mazola Wa Mwashighadi was born on 9th April 1964 in Taita – Taveta District of Kenya. No one slept at all that night as the new born baby wailed as if to signify his displeasure on being ushered into a world of so much light in darkness. He has had his equal share of physical pain but it seems as if the philosophical bug had bitten him so early in life that he would grind the pain to gain. Maternal Grandmother was a Freed Slave who had been brought all the way from the present day Malawi to be sold in Mombasa, Kenya. By a stroke of luck slavery was abolished and the freed slaves were settled in Free Town, Mombasa. While working for a Missionary she met Mawala Ole Sang’oiri a Maasai from Taveta who too worked for another Missionary in Taita. This kind of lineage combined by being named after his Great Great Grandfather who was a’ Mundu Wa Fighi’ (Guardian of the community) and also involved in ‘Kuwada M’dumba’ (ceremonies for the sacrificing for rain) is what forms the basis of Mazola’s identity but does not define him.
Kurt Nahar, started his art education at the Nola Hatterman Art Academy in Suriname in 1993. From 2000 – 2002 he continued his studies at the Edna Manley College for the Visual and the Performing Arts in Jamaica. Since those critical two years in Jamaica, Kurt Nahar uses his art to express his thoughts and emotions on various subjects related to questionable social and political circumstances in Suriname and in other countries worldwide. He believes that artists have a responsibility to expose their viewers to the social reality. He does so in a bold and often confrontational manner and thus hopes to increase awareness and stimulate discussion about the sensitive subjects that he brings to light. Political injustices, social inequality, the widespread abuse of power, and also sexuality, are among his main themes. His technique is inspired by the methods of his predecessors from the era of Dadaism. The use of collage techniques and simple objects are characteristic for his art. As is his striking way of playing with words and language. Kurt has participated in exhibitions, art projects in various countries and residencies at various institutes such as Diaspora Vibe Gallery in Miami, the Vermont Studio Center in Vermont, the Joan Mitchell Center in New Orleans, all in the USA, the ‘Rijksakademie’ in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, and the ‘Vrije Universiteit’ in Brussels, Belgium. Since 2018 he participates in the yearly international cultural exchange (ICE) projects of Miami based DVCAI (Diaspora Vibe Cultural Arts Incubator).
Julian Pardo is a multidisciplinary artist from Bogotá, Colombia, living and working in Miami, Florida. At the age of 18, Julian and his family uprooted themselves from their native country of Colombia to escape the violence due to personal threats by guerrilla groups over water irrigation plans that his mother, a social leader, had planned to put into action. Pardo received his Bachelor of Arts Degree from Florida International University while studying art history. Pardo’s practice incorporates sculpture, photography, performance, and installations. His creative and unique artwork reflects life experiences designed to convey his love and concern for nature and those who wish to speak on its behalf. His artwork often leads the viewer to raise questions or begin a conversation about labor-intensive work, land and water pollution, agriculture, politics, and family dynamics. Pardo’s artistic intention is to inspire the viewer to cultivate awareness that encourages discussions to open up commentary to face social discrimination, political injustice, and the role we play knowingly or unknowingly in the destruction and abuse of Mother Earth.
Dhiradj Ramsamoedj’s artworks are based on carefully thought-out concepts, many of which are meticulously worked out in old textbooks. His oil and acrylic paintings, while usually featuring ordinary people in everyday circumstances, often include subtle symbolisms which are in fact critical commentaries on multiple controversial issues affecting society today. His three-dimensional sculptures and installations are made up of many small parts reference the fragmented make-up of our diverse Caribbean societies. Of these, his man-sized Flexible man textile sculptures and his Adjie gilas installation have been included in several important international exhibitions. His most recent artworks address the key social narratives and the economic and political complexities that challenge the sustainable growth and development of his richly diverse home country, Suriname. Dhiradj Ramsamoedj received his formal art education as well as his teachers training in Suriname and has enjoyed enriching art experiences in other countries regionally and in Europe.
Asser Saint-Val, originally from Haiti, moved to South Florida, where he earned B.F.A.s in painting and graphic design from the New World School of the Arts. His art has been exhibited in Florida and New York and throughout the Caribbean and is represented in numerous private collections. Saint-Val is a painter, sculptor and installation artist. His quasi-figurative images, by turns humorous and grotesque, bring together ideas, people and incidents central to modern debates about the definition and valence of neuromelanin. Rendered in a blend of traditional art mediums and a wide range of unconventional, organic materials — coffee, chocolate, ginger and, tea among them — his pictures, objects and environments are a surreal fantasia on such loosely linked themes as under-recognized African American inventors, the politics of sexual desire, and the complex aesthetics, narratives and metaphors that attach to the organic compound neuromelanin.
Autumn T. Thomas is an interdisciplinary artist currently working in wood sculpture. Her work challenges the boundaries of visual literacy: hundreds of cuts placed into the wood transforms it into soft, twisting forms, mimicking the endurance required to thrive amidst the oppression and marginalization of women of color; each cut represents a time in which Thomas felt cut down by society. Minimal in design, Thomas’ work personifies analogous, brown bodies as whispering forms of subversion, affecting prejudice by way of perception and visual literacy. Thomas is sponsored by Diaspora Vibe Cultural Arts Incubator and National Performance Network. She received her MFA in Book Arts and Printmaking from The University of the Arts, Philadelphia in 2017 and her BFA in Visual Communication from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 2015. She lives and works in Denver, CO.
René Tosari received his art education at the ‘Nationaal Instituut voor Kunst & Cultuur’ in Suriname, at the ‘Academie Beeldende Kunsten’ in Rotterdam and at the ‘Gerrit Rietveld Academie’ in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. Up until 2014, when he permanently settled in Suriname, René Tosari divided his time equally between the two countries of Suriname and the Netherlands, in both of which he has been very active in the arts. Early in his career Tosari often created highly engaged, politically and socially motivated graphical art works. The artist is especially well known for his unique style and technique, in which the combined use of oils and acrylic paints, gives his paintings a unique texture and mystical appearance. Also quite recognizable are his organic shapes and sharply outlined figures. Themes related to nature, the environment, agriculture, but also ancient signs and symbols, appear regularly in his work. He combines them with elements from his own artistic signature, Tosari combines these elements and themes and creates compositions that speak their own universal visual language.
Stephanie J. Woods is a multimedia artist from Charlotte, NC, currently based in Albuquerque, NM, where she is an Assistant Professor of Interdisciplinary Art at UNM. In 2021 Woods was announced as the Gibbes Museum 1858 Prize winner of Contemporary Southern Art and attended a life-changing residency at Black Rock Senegal located in Dakar. Woods is also the recipient of several other residencies and fellowships, including the Fine Arts Work Center fellowship, ACRE Residency, the McCall Center for Art + Innovation, Ox-Bow School of Art and Artists Residency, and Penland School of Craft. She has also exhibited her work at Smack Mellon, located in Brooklyn, NY, and Tiger Strikes Asteroid, also located in Brooklyn, NY. Her work is featured in the permanent collection at the Virginia Museum of Fine Art, located in Richmond, VA, and she has been featured in BOMB Magazine, Art Papers, Burnaway, and the Boston Art Review.
Kim Yantis has a background in visual art, cultural programs production, and management. Yantis holds an MFA from Florida International University and a BFA from Moore College of Art and Design for Women. Kim has attended specialized seminars from the Kennedy Center’s DeVos Institute on Capacity Building, Board Development, and Marketing for the Arts. Based in Miami, Florida for twenty years, she has worked as an Instructor at Florida International University and Miami Dade College, and served as Cultural Arts Curator for the Deering Estate from 2012-2018. In 2019, Yantis became a professional member of both the Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP) and Grant Professionals Association (GPA). Operating as “Kim Yantis Arts” since 2019, she advises organizations and individuals on programs and strategies. She is a grant writer who actively supports the creative community and serves annually as a volunteer panelist, reviewing and rating grants for the Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs’ Grant Programs.
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Curator:
Rosie Gordon-Wallace

DVCAI 2022 committee team members:
Kim Yantis, Izia Lindsay and Danielle Coates

ReadyTex Art Gallery, Paramaribo, Suriname:
Monique Nouh Chaia Sookde

Writers:
Alix Pierre, Ph.D. and Niama Safia Sandy

Performance Artists:
Yacine Tilala Fall
Kim Yantis

Design:
Izia Lindsay, M.F.A.

Public Relations:
Yvette Harris

Arts Marketing:
Font Squared F2

Photography:
Roy Wallace

Cover image:
Kim Myung-Sik

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Executive Director

Rosie Gordon-Wallace
Founder / President / Curator

Andrea Orane, MPH CAP
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Attorney

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Steven J. and Dorothea Green
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Executive Director