

THE MILLIONWOMANMARCH

E X H I B I T I O N

Summer 2020

**1603 E. North Ave
Baltimore, MD**

THE MILLION WOMAN MARCH EXHIBITION

(MWM) serves as both a retrospective and a celebration of the organizing efforts and missions of the seminal 1997 March for Black Women held in Philadelphia. In partnership with— and on the grounds of— the National Great Blacks In Wax Museum, the show transforms a shipping container into an immersive sensory experience by juxtaposing archival audio-visual materials and historical artifacts with new and recent works by contemporary artists. MWM aims to create a living platform for the legacy of the march by continuing to advance intersectional empowerment for generations to come.

Oral histories from original march organizers and participants provide a foundational soundtrack for moving through the exhibition, while local contemporary artists Katelyn Brown, Latoya Hobbs, Aiesha Myles, and Asrianna Simmons-El visualize personal expressions of Black Womanhood today.

Looking into the future, fiber flags created by students from Western High School and curator Imani Haynes address the current issues that may impact the future of Black Womanhood. As curator Imani Haynes states: “These three notions of time bridge the stories of the past, make connections to the present and seek expression from the future generation of women by creating a space for intergenerational dialogue.”

As America commemorates 2020 as “The Year of the Woman”—reflecting on how far women have come over the past 100 years—it is crucial to recognize the women who have been historically excluded based on their cultural, ethnic, and racial backgrounds. MWM injects itself into the conversation of present-day Feminism, foregrounding the voices of Black women as integral to American society. The exhibition is driven by the lack of academic scholarship on the 1997 Million Woman March and the erasure of the vital role of Black Women in advancing women's rights.

**Hours of Operation
BY APPOINTMENT**

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About the Artists

Katelyn Brown explores the Black woman experience through digital photography and mixed media. A self-taught artist, Brown draws on influences including Carrie Mae Weems, Mickalene Thomas, and James Baldwin to weave vast definitions of Black womanness together with threads of self-love as a revolution, personal vulnerability, and introspection. Brown currently lives in her home city of Baltimore, MD, wherein 2018 she received her MFA in Photographic + Electronic Media from Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA).

LaToya M. Hobbs uses figurative imagery in her paintings and prints to address the ideas of beauty, cultural identity, and womanhood as they relate to the African Diaspora. Born in North Little Rock, AR, and currently living and working in Baltimore, MD, Hobbs has exhibited nationally and internationally; her work has also been featured in *Transition: An International Review*, a publication of the W.E.B. Dubois Institute for African and African American Research at Harvard University. Hobbs received her BA in Painting from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock and her MFA in Printmaking from Purdue University; she currently teaches painting at Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA).

Aiesha Myles uses vibrant colors and references to Black urban culture to create artworks designed to exude the Black feminine and feelings of home. Born in Detroit, Michigan to a Muslim-American mother, then adopted by her aunt prior to moving to Maryland in 2000, she graduated from the University of Maryland Eastern Shore (UMES) with a BA in Mass Communication. Since 2016, she has been teaching herself the techniques of commercial art and creating painted and printed works in a variety of mediums.

Asrianna Simmons-El focuses her work on connections between African and African-American cultures, emphasizing the Goddess-like qualities of the Black woman. Identifying as a Pan-African womanist, and inspired by the works of Whitney Austin, Watson Mere, and Harmonia Rosales, she uses a variety of formats including drawing, design, and digital illustration. Born and raised in Baltimore County, MD, Simmons-El currently attends MICA; her work has been featured at the Montpelier Arts Center, Goucher College, and the Reginald F. Lewis Museum.

FOUNDED IN 1844, WESTERN HIGH SCHOOL is the oldest public all-girls high school remaining in the United States. Their motto, “We have received light; let us give forth light,” is exemplified through the brilliance of the students, hard work of the teachers, and commitment to excellence by the administration.

The students of Ms. Shanelle Middleton’s African-American History course have collaborated with the curator, Imani Haynes, on a five-month workshop where they co-developed a fibers installation expressing their vision for the future of Black Womanhood.

Featured Student Artists

Alyssa Canada, Rah’Jay Creek, Aniya Dawson, Kassey Edwards, Jasmine Epps, Justise Fleming, Nasha Glass, Kayla Greener, Cierra Johnson, Desiree Lane, Deshane Mercado, Kayla Rogers, Madeleine Sanzenbacher, Gynia Saunders, Imani Winchester, and Nijae Scribner.

About the Curator

Imani Y. Haynes is a Curator, Exhibit Designer, Historian, and Art Administrator. In 2014 she graduated from Savannah State University with a B.A in History; she currently attends The Maryland Institute College of Art working on her M.F.A in Curatorial Practice with a concentration in Critical Studies. During the time between her degrees, Imani has worked as a curator and museum educator for The National Great Blacks In Wax Museum and a historian and grant manager for The Baltimore National Heritage Area. She has also worked at The National Capital Parks and Planning Commission as the museum and history program assistant and assistant curator at the James E. Lewis Museum of Art. Imani’s mission is to curate the stories of those who are often silenced or ignored by society.

About the Designer

Rheagen King is a creator and way shower with a BFA in Graphic Design and Book Arts concentration from the Maryland Institute College of Art. Her work centers around connection, and creating experiences through writing, design, and bookmaking. Some of her most notable projects include *Libertine*, a kink harness wear line, and *Erose*, a dating culture and romance journal. Today, she collaborates with companies to create brand experiences, ranging from lingerie boutiques to radical art collectives. She’s currently working on a coffee table book about consciousness and a journal on sacred sexuality.

