

Homemade, with Love: More Living Room

August 27, 2020- July 3, 2021

Curated by Blair Ebony Smith, PhD
Postdoctoral Research Associate in Art Education

"I choose the name homemade love because it is love that is not bought, not wrapped in fancy packaging with glib lines that often lie...Is usually done from the bottom up, with care, forethought, planning, and consideration for others....**Homemade goes a long way. Usually lasts longer than we do.**" - J. California Cooper, Author's notes in *Homemade Love* (book of short stories)

"What does it mean to have a sun-drenched intimate cathedral of space created for the questions Black girls want to ask? What does it mean to have a 21st century sacred place for their 400-year-old, my mother-was-not-inferior-and-I-am-not inferior-either attitude? What does it mean to have a shrine of a place for the way a Black girl wants to shake and move? This is not blasphemy. This is SOLHOT."- Nikky Finney, Poet, Excerpt from "Pinky Swear", in *Black Girlhood Celebration: Toward A Hip-Hop Feminist Pedagogy*

"I need to talk about living room
where I can sit without grief without wailing aloud
for my loved ones
where I must not ask where is Abu Fadi
because he will be there beside me
I need to talk about living room
because I need to talk about home" - June Jordan, "Moving Towards Home"

What would it mean to co-create homemade space for and with Black girls to activate their everyday creative dreams and livelihoods? *Homemade, with Love: More Living Room* is an exhibition featuring artists that visualize and sound everyday life, celebration, and creativity with Black girls and Black girlhood in mind and heart. This evolving installation makes room for celebration, creativity and imagination of Black girls, women, and femmes. *Homemade*, located in the contemporary gallery, also serves as an active studio art space for critical arts-based making sessions with Black girls and those who love them.

In the fall, we installed past artwork made during Saving Our Lives Hear Our Truth's (SOLHOT) sessions with Black girls locally at Urbana and Franklin Middle Schools; a portion of *Unheard Sounds, Come Through*, an installation by St. Louis-based artist Jen Everett; works by Black women artists in Krannert Art Museum's collection, including Carrie Mae Weems, Margo Humphrey, and Doris Derby; as well as two time-based films by student and filmmaker, Kamari Smalls. In addition, the installation includes personal Gees Build family quilt from the curator, a collection of children's books and theme-related texts and a listening station with records from her at-home collection.

Spring 2021, we added and installed film work by Tiffany Harris, Kamari Smalls, and New Orleans based artist, cyan cian. New film work will particularly explore Black girlhood and our varying relationships to ecosystems, nature, movement and bodily experience. Visual art by Seth E. Davis (mixed-media collage), Nimot Ogunfemi (mixed media collage), and Huey Metropolis (digital illustration) will accompany time-based media to explore themes of Black experience, life and creativity, with particular focus on diverse femme and girl identities.

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EXHIBITION CHECKLIST AND ARTIST INFORMATION

Krannert Art Museum Collection

Carrie Mae Weems (American, b. 1953)
Praise House (left) & Blessing and Healing Oil (right) from *Sea Island*
Wallpaper by Carrie Mae Weems, Looking High & Low
1992 (installation view)
21 x 21 inches



Margo Humphrey (American, b. 1942)
Lady Luck Says Come Take a Chance
20th century print (installation view)
22 1/4 x 30 1/2 in. (57 x 77cm)



Doris Derby (American, b. 1939)
Caretaker II
The Ingenue
1968 (installation view)
Silver gelatin print
21 x 21

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Saving Our Lives, Hear Our Truths (SOLHOT) Archives (2006-)
Mixed media collage, mural on fabric, printed images

Lanaiyah Boyd (American, b. 2006) 9th grade participant with SOLHOT
2021 (installation view)
Art Studio Mural sketched, acrylic paint

Interior Design Objects/Materials

Listening corner: (Chaka Khan, Brandy, Mother Nature, Regina Belle, Sade *Promise*, Aretha Franklin, Sweet Honey in the Rock, Thelma Houston, JJ Fad, Denice Williams, Lauryn Hill, Georgia Anne Muldrow);
3 Black Art Figurines; Furniture



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Library Section:

Kimiko's Story (1991), June Jordan
Love Child's Hotbed of Occasional Poetry (2020) Nikky Finney
Living Room (1993) June Jordan
Homemade Love (1995) J. California Cooper
New Life: New Room (1975) June Jordan
The Quilts of Gees Bend (2002) Jane Livingston et al.
Know and Remember (2012) Saving Our Lives Hear Our Truths
His Own Where (1971) June Jordan
Spin a Soft Black Song (1987) Nikki Giovanni
Origins of the Universe (2012) Mickalene Thomas
This is What I Know About Art (2020) Kimberly Drew
Brown Honey in Broomwheat Tea (1993) Joyce Carol Thomas

Gees Bend Quilt, Annie Pettway, Gees Bend, Alabama
Pettaway Family, 2011 (installation view); Courtesy Blair Ebony Smith



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Video Art and Installation by Jen Everett

Gestures

Produced by Jen Everett (American, b. 1981)

Color video, no sound

Running time: 00:52 seconds

www.jeneverett.com

Gestures by Jen Everett featuring footage exploring intimate portraits of the artists' girlhood and family in Michigan. Also on view by Everett is *Unheard Sounds, Come Through* an evolving installation that explores Black knowledge production and transmission through gestures of collection and arrangement of objects ranging from speakers, projectors, slide carousels, transistor radios and other objects that contain or emit in the form of sound, text, or image.



Unheard Sounds, Come Through is an evolving installation that explores Black knowledge production and transmission through gestures of collection and arrangement. This collection includes speakers, projectors, slide carousels, transistor radios and other objects that contain or emit in the form of sound, text, or image. The assemblage recalls the immaculately arranged interiors I encountered in the homes of my elders. The Black living rooms, basements and dens that were free, imaginative, private spaces. These spaces defied the flatness of unending resistance and dutiful representation. In this work, the objects are meticulously stacked and subject to reordering, calling attention to the informal and everyday yet complicated, rigorous ways that Black folks share information through rich, expansive creative traditions.



Jen Everett is an artist from Southfield, Michigan, currently based in Saint Louis, Missouri. Broadly, she is interested in the myriad ways Black people continue to produce and transmit knowledge in excess of formal structures. Her practice moves between lens-based media, installation and writing. Jen's recent work considers the relationship between rupture and Black interiority through an investigation of the materials we collect, the information we hold in our bodies and where the two may converge. Jen received an MFA from Washington University in St. Louis where she was a Chancellor's Graduate Fellow in the Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Arts. She earned a Bachelor of Architecture from Tuskegee University.

Video Art by Kamari Smalls



Celebrate (Produced by Kamari Smalls (American, b. 1995) *on view Fall 2020

Color video, sound, Running time: 08:52 seconds) observes birthdays along with the admiration of friendship and the self through differing expressions of color. This film also puts together smaller works created at different times for particular remembrances (April 25th and August 19th). This film was created through a gaze of love centering the moments that grasp your attention and forever move you when seen again.

Home (Produced by Kamari Smalls (American, b. 1995) *on view Fall 2020

Color video, sound, Running time: 08:17 second) is best described as the people and places that feel like home through captured glimpses of play, nature, love, and laughter. The film puts together smaller works that reveal an overall sense of value, valuing ourselves and those people and sights around us. The lives and experiences of Black girls and womxn remain in constant focus and are worthy of documenting. This film says I love you for you, thank you for these moments, and that I will always remember how you made me feel.



Glimpses (Produced by Kamari Smalls (American, b. 1995) *on view Spring 2021

Color video, sound, Running time: 06:02 seconds) is a film that creatively challenges displays of archiving while insulating the intimacies of Saving Our Lives, Hear Our Truths (SOLHOT) during *Homemade's* Studio Art Days in Fall 2020. The film shows that possibilities for imagining, play, and artmaking are activated beyond the exhibition by the presence of lil homies and homegirls. *Glimpses* is also a compilation of moving remembrances and a reminder that Black girls unlock the capacity in making dreams tangible.



Kamari Smalls is a filmmaker and movement artist from Utah who engages in archiving via the body and the practice of archiving through film work. Her work centers the experiences and epistemologies of Black women, girls, and femmes through expression. Expression that takes form in dance, play, and intimacy that's captured in her film work. Kamari's use of experimental approaches through dance and film allows for imagination to be the foundation to her artistry and for making other worlds with Black girls and women.

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Video Art by cyan cian

a prayer with the Clearing (Produced by Paris “cyan cian”, (American, b. 1996) Color video, sound, Running time: 08:34 seconds) is an experimental moving image meditation, offering a window into ceremony and lovemaking with Black ecology, time, and space. As visual collage, this piece is part of a series of current practices with Black land/space/futures and possibilities; listening and being with ancestral calling. *a prayer with the Clearing*, calls forth multilayered offerings of devotion and freedom with/in and through portals of remembering. *on view Spring 2021



Land acknowledgement: Bulbancha, Chitimacha + Choctaw territory, Okwata and “Big River/Father of Waters” - Also called and referred to as New Orleans, LA, Lake Pontchartrain + Mississippi River

paris “cyan” cian (www.pariscw.com) is a bodypoet, moving with/in choreographic practice through dance, poetry, drawing, sound, and film. Rooted in New Orleans, crossing between Los Angeles and London, her praxis oscillates at the intersections of Black girlhood futurity, ecological reimagination, centering re-memory and ritual/durational practices. Performance exhibitions/installations, practices, and organizing include Los Angeles Dance Festival, Ritual Knowledge, Contemporary Arts Center New Orleans, Eleanor D. Wilson Museum Virginia, Radical XChange, Saint Heron, BlackGirlGeniusWeek/SOLHOT, No)one. Art House LA, and Dancing Grounds. cyan cian received her BFA/BA in Dance with a concentration in social justice, gender women’s studies from Hollins University (2018) and is a current candidate in the Masters of Fine Arts in Choreography program at Roehampton University, London, U.K (2021).

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Video Art by Tiffany Harris

Becoming (2021) Tiffany Harris (American, b. 1986) Color video, sound, running time: 08:54 seconds)

*on view Spring 2021 an experimental film highlighting the seemingly mundane aspects of Black girls lives in Central Illinois. Documenting a process of vulnerability, self-reflection, and imagination, *Becoming* embraces nature as a way to interpret Black girlhood. To do so, the filmmaker translates nature shapes and symbols into Black girl hair practices. The central concept of node or supporting stem points on plants and trees functions as a metaphor for world making and healing.

Tiffany Octavia Harris is a born and raised southern girl from the Atlanta, GA metro area. She is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Education Policy, Organization and Leadership and Gender and Women's Studies graduate minor at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Tiffany's research interests concentrate on intergenerational pedagogies, southern studies, and speculative fiction. In other words, she is dedicated to centering "marginalized" voices by embracing alternative techniques to offer insight regarding world-making. Tiffany's craft is rooted in her experiences as a former teacher in Atlanta Public Schools, but more importantly as an active homegirl with Saving Our Lives, Hear Our Truths (SOLHOT), a collective celebrating Black girlhood. Black girlhood, as practiced in SOLHOT, supports Tiffany in unconventional ways of knowing to imagine a world which engages full humanity, especially for those persons relegated to the margins. For the *Homemade, with Love: More Living Room* exhibition, the alternative techniques background she brings includes ethnodrama performance experience, DIY photography curation, gardening and hiking as traditional ecological knowledge, and experimental filmmaking practices.



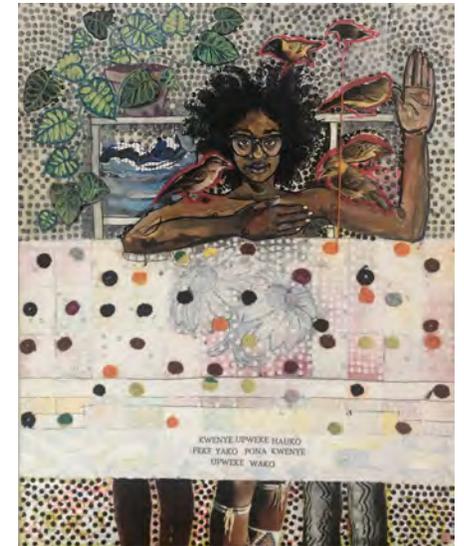
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Contemporary Visual Art installed in Spring 2021

Nimot Ogunfemi (American, b. 1993)
(2020)
Sewing Healing
Mixed Media (paper, acrylic)
36 x 18 in (91 x 45 cm)

Made in the context of COVID-19, this piece explores the interconnected relationship between woman and nature. Dots sewn onto the canvas are the culmination of a three month long auto-ethnographic ritual in which the artist visually assessed her spiritual well-being by responding daily to the question: Is all well with your soul? The artist uses kanga, a traditional east African cloth which embodies the personal/political continuum to enact spoken medicine.

Nimot “Ogunfemme” Ogunfemi is an African/American community member, artist, educator healer and student at the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign, where she is in her fourth year of doctoral study in Counseling Psychology. Her practice and research center around spiritual well-being, arts-based methods, indigenous knowledge and other ways to address the mental health implications of liberation.



Huey Metropolis (American, b. 1997)
(2021)
The Source Wall
Digital illustration printed/mounted on foam
8x10 ft

Huey’s artwork is narratively driven healing practice. It is a jump into memory to see who conquers what, a question of forming living myth. Golden Era Hip-Hop meets Silver Age Comics visuals. He is endlessly gathering new ways to perceive the world via collage and allegory—a nod to biomythography.

His work attempts to unearth lost black histories using fevered illustrations, quick gestures, embodied elements of charcoal, pastels and crayons. Huey also incorporates drifting thoughts scrawled as graffiti, architectural marks, and vintage artifacts. His haptic, childlike energy, vibrant colors, black superheroes and time-traveling artifacts are all methods used in order to create new universes. He aims to raise everyday black occurrences to the level of an epic narrative, a structured story that weaves the personal and historical with the mythical. Within this epic he calls the black viewer to imagine the greatest version of themselves.



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Seth Davis (American, b. 1989)
(2020)

Mixed media collage

Coming of Age is a mixed media collage inspired by my teenaged bedroom. Using a combination of images from my bedroom, Jet Magazines and the late 90s and early 00s, I recreate the feeling of a Black gay boy coming into one's sexual self.

Dr. Seth E. Davis is a scholar, artist, workshop facilitator, and filmmaker.

Dr. Davis earned his Doctorate in Composition and Cultural Rhetoric and a Certificate of Advanced Study in Women and Gender Studies from Syracuse University. He also earned his Master's in Communication Studies from Ball State University and his Bachelor's in Speech Communications and Theatre from Tennessee State University. His research examines practices of reading, throwing shade, and pulling trade as "fierce literacies" and ways Black queer people create community. Dr. Davis is a native of Memphis, Tennessee and his hobbies include painting, yoga, and fighting White supremacist patriarchy. Dr. Davis is also currently working on his first documentary *Trade*, which focuses on masculinity, hook up culture, and sex work in the Black queer community.

