

Art Mile

Ashley Cook

August 10, 2020

Art Mile is an exhibition that took place online from July 29 to August 5, 2020. It was founded in order to “champion Detroit’s vibrant and diverse arts community, by promoting public programs and online acquisitions.”¹ It is, however, worth acknowledging that Art Mile more so acted as an event featuring *Metro Detroit’s* vibrant and diverse arts community, as the galleries and project spaces that were represented in this exhibition span many different cities including Detroit, Highland Park, Mount Clemens, Birmingham, Bloomfield Hills, Wyandotte, Hamtramck, Ferndale, Northville, Rochester and Southfield.

To assist with the organization and coordination of programming and participation, Art Mile employed an essential advisory board comprising local community leaders, artists, curators, and art advocates. Under the guidance of Dr. Charles Boyd, Kresge Arts in Detroit Director Christina deRoos, artist and curator Jova Lynne, and Kresge Arts in Detroit Founding Director Michelle Perron, Art Mile was able to “safeguard its mission and to ensure its equitable management and execution.”²

In addition to this advisory board, the press inquiries were handled by Adam Abdalla, who is the president of Cultural Counsel and André Carlos Lenox who is the Senior Account Executive at Cultural Counsel, with Membership Inquiries being handled by Bridget Finn and Sara Nishikawa of Reyes | Finn.

The programming for this week-long event opened with an original DJ set by the self proclaimed “Grandson of Detroit Techno” Omar-S on Wednesday, July 29 from 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm Detroit time. This opening celebration was streamed from the Conant Gardens Party Store, where Omar-S spent his years growing up; it is both the mom and pop store run by his grandparents and the current home of FXHE Records.³

With over 50 different galleries and project spaces participating, as listed below, Art Mile was able to function as one of the few local exhibitions that has worked to highlight hundreds of artists’ work, presenting the broad scope of what is happening within the local art scene, in a simultaneous and relatively concise way.

2061. WORLD

with artist Wayne Curtis

333 Midland

with artists: Jan Brown, Betty Brownlee, Ann Smith, Doug Cannel, Mike Ross, Bob Piatek, Foster Willey and Pat Duff

48HR

with artists: Darius Baber, DDIDDYDOTMPEG, Gisela McDaniel, Marshall Sass, Odessa and Tony Rave

ARTWORK

with artists: Jose Arevinar-Gomez, Shingo Brown, Jetshri Bhadviya, Alphonso Cox, Lorena Cruz, Chelsea Flowers, Tim Johnson, Lauren Kalman, Megan Major, Shelly McMahon, Sabrina Nelson, Vanessa Reynolds, Casey Sayer-Brooks, Darryl Terrell, Wade Tullier, Bre’Ann White and Graem Whyte

Andy

with artists: Laura Quattrocchi and Kristina Beaty

Anton Art Center

with artist Jeanne Bieri

Art Mile

Birmingham Bloomfield Art Center

with artists: Ruth Koelewyn, Rose Ellis, Deborah Bowen, David Bartlett, Steve Miller, Barbara Baker, Russell Orlando and Christine Ritchie

Bryce Detroit

Bulk Space Artist Residency

with artists: Lorena Cruz, Ricky Williams, Laura Gibson, Gerald Collins and Sarah Blanchette

Cave Gallery

with artists: Feather Chiaverini, Ashley Cook, Jessica Frelinghuysen, Dylan Spaysky, Manal Shoukair, Lisa Tolstyka, Nolan Simon and Heather Anger

Cinema Detroit

Finding Happiness Detroit: Paula Guthat by Kim Stricker & Michael Pfaendtner

Collected Detroit

with artists: Lois Teicher, Michael Horner and Foster Wiley

Cranbrook Art Museum

with artists: Conrad Egyir, Carole Harris, Nick Cave, Marianna Olague, Ebitenyefa, Baralaye, Matthew Angelo Harrison, Maya Stovall, McArthur Binion and Allie McGhee

Cultural Counsel

Dabls Mbad African Bead Museum

with artist Olayami Dabls

Darkroom Detroit

with artists: Noura Ballout, Lizz Cardwell, Richard Haley, Chris Reilly, Rachel Elise Thomas and Bre'Ann White

David Klein Gallery

with artists: Emmy Bright, Susan Goethel Campbell, Scott Hocking, Mario Moore, and Marianna Olague

Detroit Artists Market

with artists: Taurus Burns, Carole Harris, Shirley Woodson, Ava East, Richard Lewis, Harold Neal and Saffell

DICKERSON ART GALLERY

with artists: Tim Tonachellas, Vic Leos, Mireille Ripleys and Gwendolyn Roths.

Downriver Council for the Arts

Freep Film Festival

produced by the Detroit Free Press, exhibiting 12th and Clairmount.

Fringe Society

with artists: Ash Arder and Levon Kafafian

Galerie Camille

Habatat Galleries

with artists: Alex Bernstein, John Miller, Raven Sky River, Vivian Wang, Michael Janis, Deanna Clayton, Paul Stankard and Michael Behrens

Habibi House

Hamtramck Ceramck

with artists: Braden Baer, Amber Codiñera Locke and Benjamin Kenjiro Saginaw

Hard Gallery

with artists: Martyna Alexander, Casey Sayer Brooks, Mike Han, Meredith Miotke, Jabriel Najjar, Seemstress Bee, Rachel Elise Thomas and Vincent Troia

Hatch Art

with artists: Amy Sacka, Julian Wong, Melissa Jones, Christopher Schneider, Andy Malone, Carl Wilson, Nina Caruso and Melissa Jones

Heritage Works

Hill Gallery

with artists: Carole Harris, Allie McGhee, Michelle Andonian, and Addie Langford

Art Mile

K.O. Gallery

with artists: Ivan Montoya, Michael Burdick, Jordan River, Cydney Camp, Chrilz, Kelley Golden, Fatima Sow and James Braddok

K.OSS Contemporary Art

with artists: Mary Gillis, Larry Cressman, Cuppetelli and Men-doza, and Lynne Avadenka

Lawrence Street Gallery

with artists: Laura Whitesides Host & Arnold Berkman, Sherry Adams Foster & Lucy Layne

Light Box

with artists: Marcus Elliot, Bree Gant, Michael Malis, Erika "Red" Stowall, Joo Won Park and Chelsea Flowers

Live Coal Gallery

with artists: M. Saffell Gardner, Yvette Rock and Patricia Mil-lender

Mint Artists Guild

with artists: Bryan Wilson, Alexis Bagley, Prince Matthews, De'Shaia Ventour, Oluwaseyi Akintoroje, Lia Massey and Mi-chael Johnson

NEXT:SPACE

with artists: Nina Cho, Joe Parr, Paula Schubatis, Nicholas Til-ma and Colin Tury

NORA

with artists: Mike Andrews and Noah Elliot Morrison

Nicole Tamar Art Gallery

with artists: Mattie Armstrong, Andrew Blake, Martin Vargas, Lance Vincent and Inga West

Northville Art House

with artists: Jean Paul Aboudib, Robert Beras, Maria Latour, M.J. Seltzer and Daniel Geanes

Norwest Gallery of Art

with artist Asia Hamilton

PLAYGROUND DETROIT

with artists: Bakpak Durden, Bre'Ann White, Laura D.Gibson and Sydney G. James

Paint Creek Center for the Arts

with artists: Troy Anderson, Carlo Vitale, Shelley Malec Vitale, Kelley Haehl & Ryan Lack and Steve Czapiewski

Paper Street Press

with artists: Bakpak Durden, Cyrah Dardas, King Katz, Jannah Intifada and Lauren Williams

Paul Kotula Projects

with artists: Jason E. Carter, Jim Chatelain, Cynthia Greig, Laith Karmo, Kathleen McShane, Paul Schwarz and Peter Wil-liams

Popps Packing

with artists: Nell Riley, Chido Johnson, Faina Lerman, Michael Bizon and Christian Tedeschi, Josef Whyte, Lola and Daniel Nor-ris

Public Pool

with artists: Alice V. Schneider, Brian Krawczyk and Maria Prainito-Winczner

Reyes | Finn

with artists: LaKela Brown, Nick Doyle, James Benjamin Frank-lin, Nikita Gale, Marie Herwald Hermann and Maya Stovall

River's Edge Gallery

with artists: Laura Atkins, Amy Chenier, Johnny "Bee" Badenjok and Cory Scillian

Robert Kidd Gallery

with artists: Laurie Tennent, Donald Cronkhite, Dennis Wojt-kiewicz, Nancy Thayer, Lenore Gimpert, Charlie Auringer, Ge-rard Marti and Mick Fleetwood

Rotland Press

with artists: Ian Huebert, David Lynch, Peter Williams, Lynn Crawford and Bill Harris

SOUTHFIELD

with artists: Taylor Stewart, Ronald R. Santos, Alex Lemke and Henry JH Crissman

Scarab Club

with artists: Diana Alva, Robert Beras, Kristen Canda, Rita Dickerson, Michael Anthony Garguilo, Sajeev Vadakoottu Visweswaran, Carl Wilson and Elizibeth Youngblood

Shylo Arts

with artists: Marcellus Armstrong, Cyrah Dardas, Clare Gatto, Lehna Huie, Meg Kelley, Jova Lynne, Sara Nishikawa and Alberte Tranberg

Signal Return

with artists: Henrik Drescher and Lesley Dill

Simone DeSousa Gallery

with artists: Neha Vedpathak, Kylie Lockwood, Tyanna Buie, Jova Lynne, Michael Luchs, Meghan Heeres, Iris Eichenberg and Timothy van Laar

Soul Studio

with artists: Jacob Barron, Fabian Israel, Blake Jackson, Adam Sturtevant, Jonathan Barnett, Megan Donley and Austin Denoyer

The Carr Center

with artists: Geri Allen, Marcus Belgrave and Bruce Bradley

Unit 1:3583 Dubois

Art installation by Anders Herwald Ruhwald

Wasserman Projects

with artists: Nancy Mitchnick, Virginia Rose Torrence, Adrian Wong, Marela Zacarias, Michael Scoggins, Ken Aptekar, Jack Henry and Alejandro Campins

Wayne State Art Collection

with artists: Gordon Newton, Shiva Ahmadi, Farah Al Qasimi, Gilda Snowden, Peter Williams, Brenda Goodman and James Chatelain

The breadth of work included in this online exhibition is telling of the dynamics of the local creative scene. As this event was coordinated on a mass scale, it was up to the participating galleries and art spaces to curate the works that they felt best represented their programming, the times we are living in, our location, or whatever they felt like talking about...Below is a selection of works that attempts to represent this breadth, while also taking into account quality of technique, critical thought, insight, conceptual experimentation and longevity of practice.



Gucci Model Sitting, 2020 - Betty Brownlee with 333 Midland (Image courtesy of Art Mile)



Dabls MBAD African Bead Museum - Olayami Dabls (Image courtesy of Art Mile)



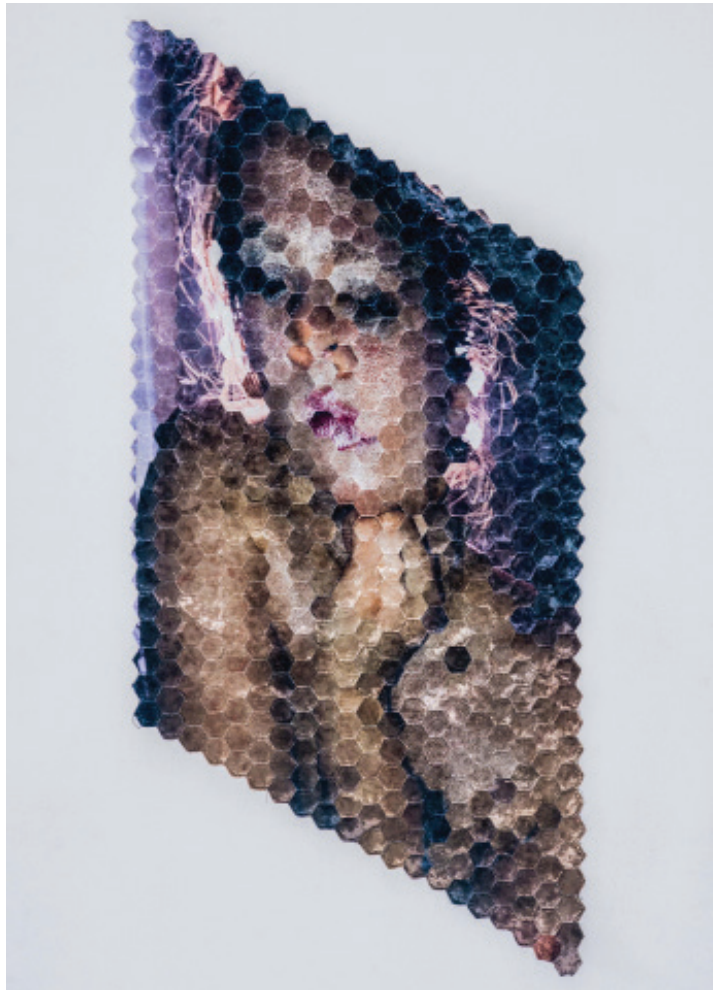
Deity III, 2020 - Bre'Ann White with ARTWORK (Image courtesy of Art Mile)



Oddly Familiar, 2020 - Graem Whyte with ARTWORK (Image courtesy of Art Mile)



Butterflies, 2018 - 2020 - Tim M. Johnson with ARTWORK
(Image courtesy of Art Mile)



You look like you lost weight. Ladies love hearing that!, 2019 -Sarah Blanchette with BULKSPACE (Image courtesy of Art Mile)



What's Going On..., 2020 - Alphonso Cox with ARTWORK
(Image courtesy of Art Mile)



Yonder, 2018 - Conrad Egyir with Cranbrook Art Museum
(Image courtesy of Art Mile)



Untitled (Norwalk & Lumpkin), 2020 - Hamtramck Ceramck
(Image courtesy of Art Mile)



Dark Povera- Manufactured Primitives, 2019 - Matthew Angelo Harrison with Cranbrook Art Museum (Image courtesy of Art Mile)



Artwork # 4 (*Tide*), 2020 - Vincent Troia with HARD GALLERY
(Image courtesy of Art Mile)



Moonhorn in My Studio, 1985 - Allie McGhee with HILL Gallery
(Image courtesy of Art Mile)



Fast Life, 2020 - Bryan Wilson with Mint Artist Guild
(Image courtesy of Art Mile)



Interchange (A,i), 2020 - Paula Schubatis with Next Space
(Image courtesy of Art Mile)



Deanira and Hercules, 2020 - Maria Prainito-Winczner with Public Pool (Image courtesy of Art Mile)



Fenkell For Sale, 2017 - Asia Hamilton with NORWEST
(Image courtesy of Art Mile)



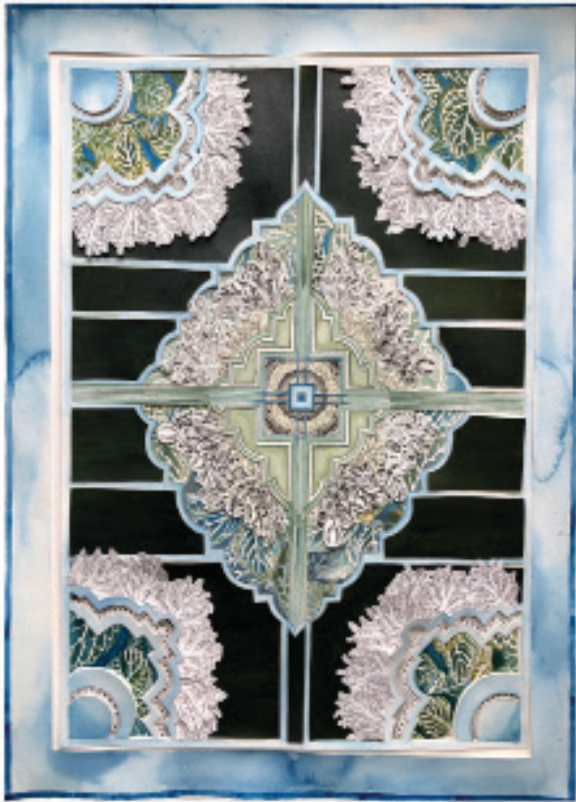
SARGAS, 2020 - James Benjamin Franklin with Reyes | Finn
(Image courtesy of Art Mile)



Blue Flower, 2020 - Taylor Stewart with SOUTHFIELD
(Image courtesy of Art Mile)



Door Knocker Composition with Three Gold and Nefertiti Heads, 2020 - LaKela Brown with REYES | FINN (Image courtesy of Art Mile)



Aban, 2020 - Cyrah Dardas with SHYLO ARTS
(Image courtesy of Art Mile)

As a compliment to the online exhibition, Art Mile also organized a week of public programs featuring virtual museum tours, panel discussions, artist studio visits and film screenings.

Two keynote panel discussions were held:

Between Labor and Love

Held in conjunction with ARTWORK, a special exhibition hosted by Art Mile that showcased works of art made by Detroit’s art workers, curators Jova Lynne and Tizziana Baldenebro engaged in a conversation with two of the exhibiting artists, Sabrina Nelson and Graem Whyte, encouraging active consideration of the role of the art worker in Detroit as well as other places around the world, to explore new models of art production and labor. ³

Prioritizing Black Collectors

Moderated by Dr. Charles Boyd (art collector and MOCAD Board Member), with panelists Allison M. Glenn (curator and Associate Curator of Contemporary Art at Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art), Gardy St. Fleur (private art dealer, consultant and collector, who has been described by the New York Times as “a liaison to the art world” for the NBA’s aspiring collectors), and Tylonn J. Sawyer (a Detroit-based figurative artist and educator whose work centers around themes of individual and collective identity, race, history, and pop culture.) ⁴

Three film screenings took place:

Liquor Store Theatre by Maya Stovall is a conceptual art and anthropology video project featuring the artist dancing near the liquor stores in her neighborhood in Detroit, in an effort to initiate conversations with her neighbors. “Stovall uses the project as a point of departure for understanding everyday life in Detroit and the possibilities for ethnographic research, art, and knowledge creation.” ⁵

In Media Res: Detroit Artists in Motion, curated by Lucy Mensah, presented a selection of films and video artworks including the pilot episode of Ahya Simone’s *Femme Queen Chronicles*, “an award-winning comedic web-series about the lives of four black trans women as they navigate through



Untitled (Y), 2019 - Virginia Rose Torrence with Wasserman Projects (Image courtesy of Art Mile)

life in Detroit”, also including works by Bree Gant, Melanie Manos, Empress Nikoleta and Troy Ramos. ⁶

12th and Clairmount was presented by the Freep Film Festival with an introduction by Brian Kaufman. This documentary was produced by the Detroit Free Press, and is an intimate work film that unpacks the summer of the 1967 Detroit riot/ rebellion, and give us an up close view by using Detroiters’ home videos and a mix of other archival material. “Using more than 400 reels of home movies donated by Detroiters, along with a tapestry of archival materials, including footage from WXYZ-TV’s vaults, *12th and Clairmount* transports viewers back in time to explore the causes and aftermath of perhaps the most pivotal moment in Detroit’s history.” ⁷

And lastly, Art Mile held a virtual museum tour called *LOCAL AXIS*, which is “an abstract study in movement, sound, and time.” This video series connects Detroit-based artists with influential cultural spaces around Detroit, encouraging the participating curators and artists to explore these important spaces through an “intimate, experimental lens that weaves together artistic practice, ancestry, and Detroit history.” The pilot episode of *LOCAL AXIS* features Bree Gant, who is a multidisciplinary artist and dancer in Detroit, as she engages in conversation with curator Olayami Dabls about his museum, Dabls Mbad African Bead Museum. ⁸

Art Mile was unique in that it was one of the first fully online events of its kind that took place for the city and suburbs of Detroit. There have, however, been a few other events that have also worked to highlight the communities of artists locally, some even taking place on an annual basis, including:

Detroit Art Week, an annual event that was founded in 2018 by Mmani Olu and Aleiya Lindsey and produced by OLU + Company

Dlectricity, produced by Midtown Detroit, was initiated in 2012, and was also held in 2014 and 2017.

Detroit Design Festival, an annual event founded in 2011, produced and programmed by the Detroit Creative Corridor Center

Detroit Month of Design, an annual event organized by Design Core Detroit in September of each year.

and

Detroit Art Book Fair, an annual event that takes place at Trinosophes in Detroit’s Eastern Market Neighborhood; founded in 2013.

1 Artmiledetroit.com. 2020. Art Mile | Detroit Digital Art Exhibition. [online] Available at: <<https://www.artmiledetroit.com/>> [Accessed 11 August 2020].

2 Artmiledetroit.com, *About*, 2020

3 Artmiledetroit.com, *Opening Celebration with Omar-S*, 2020

4 Artmiledetroit.com, *Kaynote Panel: Between Labor and Love*, 2020

5 Artmiledetroit.com, *Kaynote Panel: Prioritizing Black Collectors*, 2020

6 Artmiledetroit.com, *Maya Stovall: Liquor Store Theatre*, 2020

7 Artmiledetroit.com, *In Media Res: Detroit Artists in Motion*, 2020

8 Artmiledetroit.com, *12th and Clairmount*, 2020

9 Artmiledetroit.com, *Local Axis: Dabls African Bead Museum*, 2020