

MMFA

Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MONTGOMERY MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS ANNOUNCES RE-OPENING OF ITS GALLERIES

Beginning October 15, the Museum is delighted to welcome everyone back to experience the changing exhibition *Ubhle Women: Beadwork and the Art of Independence*, explore its refreshed permanent collection galleries, and again engage in *in-person* programming out in the Caddell Sculpture Garden.



Photograph of the 2020 installation of the exhibition *Ubhle Women: Beadwork and the Art of Independence* at the Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts.

Montgomery, AL, October 8, 2020 – The Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts (MMFA) announces the continuation of a phased re-opening of the Museum. In this second phase, the Museum welcomes visitors back to its changing exhibition and permanent collection galleries in addition to its Caddell Sculpture Garden which reopened in mid-August. The dates of future phases—the re-opening of ArtWorks and the Museum’s café—have yet to be decided.

On Thursday, October 15—after six months of pandemic-necessitated closure—the MMFA reopens its doors to the changing exhibition *Ubhle*

Women: Beadwork and the Art of Independence, to its refreshed permanent collection galleries, and welcomes visitors to be a part of our first in-person programming outside in the Caddell Sculpture Garden.

CHANGING EXHIBITION

Ubhle Women: Beadwork and the Art of Independence

This dazzling exhibition features thirty-one works of bead art made by members of Ubhle (the word for “beauty” in the Xhosa language), an artists’ community situated on a former sugar plantation located north of Durban, South Africa. Local resident Bev Gibson and master beader Ntombephi Ntobela established the community in 1999 as a way for local women to achieve financial independence in a rising, post-Apartheid South Africa. Now internationally-known artists, these

women rose above the trials of poverty, AIDS, and abuse to create stunning works of art and to support themselves and their families. One particularly poignant testament to the true artistry of the work is *The African Crucifixion*—a monumental composition made of eleven large panels—commissioned for the Cathedral of the Holy Nativity, an Anglican cathedral located northwest of Durban. *Ubuhle Women: Beadwork and the Art of Independence* was developed by the Smithsonian Anacostia Community Museum, Washington, DC in cooperation with Curators Bev Gibson, Ubuhle Beads, and James Green, and is organized for tour by International Arts & Artists, Washington, DC. This exhibition is locally sponsored by Laura and Barrie Harmon with additional support provided by co-sponsors Linda and Sanders Benkwith, is on view through Sunday, October 18.

PERMANENT COLLECTION

Refreshed and redesigned galleries for the Museum's Blount Collection of American Art, including new labels to help visitors connect more meaningfully with the art.

A new installation of traditional African sculpture: *Authority Figures* speaks to objects representing spiritual and political power in traditional African cultures.

PROGRAMMING IN THE SCULPTURE GARDEN

Artful Yoga

Saturday, October 17, 9:30–10:30 AM

MMFA Members Free/Public \$5

Practice led by Breezeville Yoga. Suitable for adults of all levels; beginners welcome. Please bring your own mat and bottled water. In the event of inclement weather, this program will be canceled.

For your safety | To allow for ample social distancing, this class will be limited to 25 participants. Masks or face coverings are required for the duration of the practice. Registration required.

<https://mmfa.org/event/artful-yoga-pop-up/>

Reflections of the HeART

Saturday, October 17, 10 AM–2 PM

Sunday October, 18, 12:30–4:30 PM

FREE for ALL

Art-making led by MMFA docents, in the studio courtyard just outside of ArtWorks. Make a work of art, then add it to a collective display celebrating the healing power of creativity.

For your safety | Art-making stations will be socially-distanced and sanitized between users.

PANDEMIC PROTOCOLS FOR VISITING THE MMFA'S SCULPTURE GARDEN AND GALLERIES

We remain committed to serving our members and visitors in a safe and responsible manner, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

To this end: To facilitate **social distancing**, we have limited the number of people allowed in the building and established new traffic patterns; To address **cleaning and disinfection** of our facility, we have implemented new practices in accordance with CDC, EPA, and OSHA guidelines. Additionally, hand sanitizer will be available for visitors; And, all Museum visitors over the age of six are required to **wear a mask or face covering** during their visit. Please stay at home if you are feeling ill or have been

exposed to COVID-19 in the fourteen (14) days prior to your visit. All Museum staff have their temperature taken each day and are required to wear masks.

To limit touchpoints, water fountains have been disabled—so be sure to bring a personal water bottle to enjoy while in the Sculpture Garden.

NEW AMENITIES

Outdoor furniture located in the Sculpture Garden is the ideal place to relax or enjoy a picnic. Enhanced public Wi-Fi signal is great for casual web browsing or getting a little work done remotely.

MMFA BACKGROUND

The Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts was founded in 1930 by a group of local artists as place for both exhibiting art and space for art education. The original intentions of our founders—to exhibit and teach—continue to inspire and inform every action and activity here at the Museum which, since 1988, has shared the 277-acre Blount Cultural Park with our partners across the lake at the celebrated Alabama Shakespeare Festival.

Today’s MMFA visitors stroll art-studded grounds and permanent collection galleries. They see compelling changing exhibitions and learn about art by playing in our interactive gallery, Artworks, making art in its bustling studios, or by participating in other engaging events and programs. And, as of late September 2018, MMFA visitors can now relax and recharge in the serenity of our stunning new three-acre sculpture garden.

While the Museum’s collection is still home to the art of many of the regional artists who first established it, over time, it has become known for its strength in American art and Old Master Prints. Recent, important acquisitions of art made by African American and Asian artists and works inspired by images and themes related to the experiences of these groups represent the breadth and depth of the lives and concerns of those who now call Montgomery and the River Region home. Through the exhibition of this work as well as the programs and events that help connect our communities with it, the MMFA is recognized as a leading arts and cultural resource here in the state and Southeastern region.

The MMFA is a department of the City of Montgomery and is supported by funds from the City of Montgomery, with additional funds form the Montgomery County Commission and the Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts Association. Programs are made possible, in part, by grants from the Alabama State Council on the Arts.

GENERAL INFORMATION

WHAT: MMFA Galleries Reopen, On-site Programming Resumes

WHEN: Galleries reopen beginning Thursday, October 15.
Limited, outdoor programming resumes Saturday, October 17.

WHERE: Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts
Wynton M. Blount Cultural Park
One Museum Drive
Montgomery, AL 36117

INFORMATION: mmfa.org
334.625.4333
@MontgomeryMFA

HOURS:
Galleries, Mondays, Closed
Sculpture Garden, Tuesdays–Saturdays, 10 AM–5 PM
Terrace, and Store: Sundays, Noon to 5 PM

ArtWorks Remains closed. Reopening TBD.

Café Remains closed. Reopening TBD.

ADMISSION: Free! With ample, free parking.

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MEDIA CONTACT

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