

# MMFA

Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **THE MONTGOMERY MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS CHANGES JUNETEENTH COMMEMORATION**

In deference to the Celebration of Life of the late County Commission Chairman Elton Dean planned for Saturday, June 18, the MMFA has rethought its Juneteenth commemoration.

**Montgomery, AL, June 14, 2022** – The Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts has altered its Juneteenth commemoration in recognition of the passing of County Commission Chairman Elton Dean. This change of plans comes at the request of Mayor Steven L. Reed, who asked that the Museum, a department of the City of Montgomery, modify its event, which coincided with the funeral services for Chairman Dean.

While the Museum is forgoing its large-scale Juneteenth celebration, more intimate commemorative programming will continue as scheduled at the Museum. Visitors are welcome to explore the exhibition *Lava Thomas: Homecoming*, which features portraits inspired by photographs of remarkable African American people that tackle issues of representation and memorialization. *Homecoming* exhibition curator Dr. Bridget R. Cooks and historian and activist Georgette Norman will host a conversation examining Cooks' book, *Exhibiting Blackness: African Americans and the American Art Museum*, via Zoom in the galleries surrounded by Thomas' stunning drawings. In addition to the installation, visitors can take self-guided tours throughout the Museum's collection of African American artists, from Edmonia Lewis' exquisite sculpture *Hiawatha's Marriage* (1868) and Amy Sherald's attention-grabbing print *Handsome* (2020) to Bayeté Ross Smith's *Got the Power: Montgomery* (2022) installation in the Garden, and many more. Local artist Milton Madison will also host this month's Open Studio, where artists come together to create art in the Museum's studio spaces.

Museum staff will relocate all in-person art activities, such as self-portraits, paper beads, and homemade tambourines, to the 7th Annual Juneteenth Celebration at the Rosa Parks Museum and, later in the day, to the City's Juneteenth Festival at Riverwalk Amphitheater. In addition to in-person activities, educators will also have take-home art activities for Juneteenth participants to enjoy later.

Support for Juneteenth is provided by lead sponsor Hyundai Motor Manufacturing Alabama, LLC and sponsor Coca-Cola. Annual support for events at the MMFA is provided by lead sponsors Lamar and

MGMWERX, with additional support from sponsors Gene and Ray Ingram and Margaret and Jimmy Lowder, and co-sponsors Confero, Mary Lil Owens and Bill Little, Renasant Bank, and Synovus Bank.

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## **ABOUT JUNETEENTH**

Juneteenth is a federal holiday in the United States that celebrates the emancipation of enslaved African Americans. Juneteenth's commemoration is held on the anniversary of June 19, 1865, when Army Major General Gordon Granger proclaimed freedom for enslaved people in Texas, the last state of the Confederacy with institutional slavery, due to the ratification of the Emancipation Proclamation. Originating in Galveston, Texas, Juneteenth has been celebrated annually on June 19 in various parts of the United States since 1866 as a celebration of African American culture. It became a federal holiday on June 17, 2021, the first new federal holiday since Martin Luther King Jr. Day was adopted in 1983.

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## **FOR YOUR SAFETY | COVID-19**

The MMFA remains committed to serving our members and visitors in a safe and responsible manner, especially during the evolving COVID-19 pandemic. According to your comfort level, all Museum visitors are welcome to mask and encouraged to practice social distancing during their visit. If you are feeling ill or have recently been exposed to COVID-19, please [refer to CDC quarantine guidelines](#) before visiting the Museum.

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## **MMFA BACKGROUND**

The Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts was founded in 1930 by a group of local artists as a 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 through 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 from 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.

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## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

**WHAT:** Juneteenth

**WHEN:** Saturday, June 18, 2022; 10 AM–2 PM

**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, ArtWorks, Mondays, Closed  
Sculpture Garden, Tuesdays–Saturdays, 10 AM–5 PM  
Terrace, and Store: Sundays, Noon to 5 PM  
Last entry at 4:45 PM

**ADMISSION:** Free! With ample, free parking.

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## **MEDIA CONTACT**

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