

Contemporary Arts Center Examines Legacy with Two Exhibitions Opening April 28



Robert O'Neal poses with his work. Courtesy of the Robert O'Neal Multicultural Arts Center.

Cincinnati, OH – April 6, 2023 – On April 28, 2023, the Contemporary Arts Center (CAC) will host a public reception to celebrate the opening of two exhibitions: the first career retrospective of Cincinnati artist and activist Robert O'Neal and an exhibition featuring proposals for monuments honoring under-recognized heroes conceived of by artist and writer Luis Camnitzer.

The evening will begin at 7:00 p.m. with a private reception and sneak preview for CAC Members. At 8:00 p.m. the reception will open to the public with a cash bar, music, photo booth, and the opportunity to contribute to a graffiti art mural facilitated by ArtWorks as part of their *New Monuments* initiative, which aims to reimagine and rebuild commemorative spaces that celebrate and affirm the historical contributions of the many diverse communities that make up Cincinnati and the United States.

Guests can further explore the legacy of Robert O'Neal at an Artist Talk held on May 18 from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. The talk will be moderated by the artist's daughter and Founding Director of the Robert O'Neal Multicultural Arts Center, Toilynn O'Neal Turner, and will feature a panel of individuals close to O'Neal's art and activism who can speak to his legacy and impact. The event will be free to CAC Members, with \$10 general admission.

ABOUT THE EXHIBITIONS

Robert O'Neal: Open to All | April 28 - October 8, 2023

Featuring more than 30 paintings, alongside drawings, prints, and photo collages, this exhibition is the first museum retrospective to explore the work of Cincinnati-based painter and activist Robert O'Neal, sometimes known as the unofficial "Mayor of Over-the-Rhine." It highlights O'Neal's longstanding interest in portraiture and documenting Black community life in Cincinnati's West End. Located in Level 2, Lower.

Curated by Stephanie Kang, independent curator and assistant professor at Rocky Mountain College of Art and Design, Denver. www.cincycac.org/robert-oneal

Robert O'Neal: Open to All is generously supported by DaSci Consulting Group, Eric & Jan Michele Kearney, Morse and Betty Johnson Family Foundation, Barbara Myers, Emily Hanako Momohara and Shawn Newman, and The Warrington Family: Warrington Foundation (Fran and Dan Bailey), Jens Rosenkrantz & Kay Hurley, and Drew Gores & George Warrington.

Luis Camnitzer: Monuments to Unknown Heroes | April 28, 2023 – June 16, 2024

Conceptual artist and pedagogue, Luis Camnitzer presents a series of posters by more than 100 artists depicting proposals for monuments to under-recognized heroes. Originally organized in the days following the pandemic, this visual archive captures various perspectives on the ways in which we memorialize, while raising questions about the socio-political and economic underpinnings that typically accompany the production of public monuments. Participating artists include Erika NJ Allen, Michael Coppage, Jesse Ly, and Sara Torgison, among others. Located in the Kaplan Hall Lobby.

Curated by Amara Antilla, CAC Senior Curator at Large. www.cincycac.org/luis-camnitzer

CAC receives Annual Exhibition Support from Gale and Dave Beckett, Helen and Brian Heekin, Belflex and Jason McCaw, Barbara Myers, Barbara Weston Sasser and Carol Weston Roberts, Ronnie and John Shore, and generous contributors to the CAC Exhibition Fund.

General operating support for the CAC is provided by The P&G Fund, The Johnson Foundation, ArtsWave, National Endowment for the Arts, and the Ohio Arts Council.

ABOUT THE CONTEMPORARY ARTS CENTER (CAC)

The Contemporary Arts Center is a catalyst for dialogue and discovery, driven by the art, artists, and ideas of our time. Through an innovative slate of exhibitions, performances, educational and community programs and partnerships, the Contemporary Arts Center (CAC) provides opportunities for encounter with trailblazing artists both local and global, with cultural thought leaders, and with one's own creative potential. Embedded in the fabric of its community and committed to lifelong learning, the CAC serves

as an integral forum where people can reflect, create, collaborate, and connect around a more inclusive and sustainable culture of tomorrow.

Since its founding in 1939, the CAC has been a champion of emerging ideas in contemporary art, hosting one of the first Midwest exhibitions of Picasso's *Guernica* in 1939; mounting an early exhibition of Pop Art in 1963; representing the United States at the São Paulo Biennial in 1975; and presenting—and successfully defending—the 1990 Mapplethorpe retrospective that became a lightning rod in the era's culture wars and propelled the CAC into the national spotlight. More recently, the CAC presented *Art and Race Matters*, the first comprehensive retrospective of Robert Colescott, one of America's most compelling and provocative artists. The exhibition was awarded a Sotheby's Prize in 2018 in recognition of curatorial excellence and its exploration of an overlooked and under-represented area of art history. Today, the CAC occupies the Lois & Richard Rosenthal Center for Contemporary Art, the first museum designed by architect Zaha Hadid and the first U.S. museum designed by a woman.

The CAC's mission and work are made possible thanks to ongoing support from ArtsWave, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Ohio Arts Council.

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For more information, please contact:

Local/Regional Media:

Kate Elliott | Director of PR & Communications

Contemporary Arts Center

513-919-5710

kelliott@cincycac.org

Tricia Suit | Game Day Communications

513-541-8580

tsuit@gamedaypr.com