

STARworks Firefest 2017

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music by The Outliers, a beer garden, food trucks and a phoenix bonfire. Finale events, slide shows, demonstrations, live entertainment and observing artists at work are all included in the price of admission.

Daily admission is \$5. Children 12 and younger are admitted free. Open Studios and workshops will be additional costs. More information and a complete schedule of events can be found at (www.STARworksNC.org).

STARworks is seeking volunteers for FireFest. Volunteers are needed to help with check-in, gallery sales, answering questions, monitoring the entrance and directing attendees.

Volunteers who work three hours will receive free admission for the day and a coupon that can be used at Hot Glass, Cold Beer. Those interested in volun-

teering should contact Mary Holmes by e-mailing to (mary@centralparknc.org) or calling 910/428-9001.

Firefest is sponsored in part by the North Carolina Arts Council, the Town of Star, Charlotte Pipe and Foundry, Duke Energy, First Bank, Insurance Associates of the Triad, Sandy Ridge Assisted Living, Spruce Pine Batch, Uwharrie Bank and Wet Dog Glass.

STARworks is a project of Central Park NC, a non-profit organization dedicated to improving the economy of the region by focusing on the sustainable use of our natural and cultural resources.

STARworks is located at 100 Russell Drive in Star, just off I-73/74 in northern Montgomery County.

For further information call 910/428-9001, visit (www.STARworksNC.org), or e-mail to (contact@starworksnc.org).

STARworks in Star, NC, Features Works by Ibrahim Said

STARworks in Star, NC, is presenting *Shababik: New Ceramic Sculptures*, an exhibition of work by ceramic artist Ibrahim Said, inspired by the jug filters of ancient Egypt, will be on display in the STARworks Gallery through May 13, 2017.

Said is a ceramic artist from the Fustat area of Cairo, Egypt, who currently lives and works in Greensboro, NC. Fustat is historically known for its pottery industry. Said comes from a family of potters, with his father being his first teacher. He is inspired by the strong lines and bold shapes of ancient Egyptian works. He holds a Diploma of Technical School, Cairo and his work is featured in collections and exhibitions throughout the world.

Said's carvings are derived from Islamic jug filter designs, which were both functional and aesthetic. The filters were often built within the neck of the jug to filter impurities from the Nile River. The jug filters during the Fatimid Era (909 – 1171) featured beautiful floral, geometric, organic and calligraphic patterns. Said researched these filters and incorporated



Work by Ibrahim Said

their patterns into his forms.

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For further information check our NC Institutional Gallery listings or visit (www.starworksnc.org).

American Tobacco Campus in Durham, NC, Offers *Black On Black* Exhibition

The American Tobacco Campus in Durham, NC, is presenting the exhibit *Black On Black*, on view in the Reed Building Lobby, through Apr. 30, 2017.

The exhibition, which is in partnership with VAE Raleigh, features works by ten North Carolina-based artists of color and includes multimedia, paintings, drawings and mixed media works. The exhibition was curated by Linda Dallas and Mike Williams. Participating artists include: William Paul Thomas, Dare Coulter, Lamar Whidbee, Antoine Williams, Charles Williams, Jamila R. Davenport, André Leon Gray, Darryl Hurts, Carrie Nobles, and Saba Taj.

The curators of the exhibition worked with gallerist Kelly McChesney to install the works. Sponsored by VAE Raleigh and ArtsNow, the exhibition and programming are in association with the Art of Cool Festival, which takes place Apr. 28-30, and the Black On Black Project.

Black On Black exhibition statement: History and society haven't always been truthful or kind in the depiction of people of color. But whose depictions are they? *Black On Black* is an exhibition where curators of color asked artists of color to share their thoughts on identity in their own voice.

The following is a commentary written by Mike Williams.

"Black On Black.' What does it mean?"

"Usually, we define this in terms of crime. 'Black on black' is a shorthand



"Hauled Away / San Francisco 1968" by Charles Williams


to describe crime that's committed by African-Americans against other African-Americans."

"But in this exhibition, we turn the phrase on its head. We take the negative and redefine it. We showcase the perspectives of people of color about other people of color."

"This is people of color seeing - and celebrating - other people of color. This is who we are, in our own words. This is our depiction of us."

"There's a cycle, and it ends with what we've seen in Charlotte (NC) recently. Sadness turns into frustration, frustra-

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Triangle Art Works is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing services, support and resources to the visual and performing arts and creative industries.

Triangle Art Works can help you connect quickly and easily with the arts community to find arts-related groups, resources, jobs, and news.

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tion to anger, anger to wrath and then, for some, violence. Then, when we're at our lowest, we're on display. Think right after Hurricane Katrina. Think right after Mike Brown was killed in Ferguson, Missouri. Think Charlotte right after what happened to Keith Lamont Scott."

"What we see today mirrors what would happen in the past when black men were routinely hung in the middle of the street and put on display. Now, there are just more eyeballs because media is so prevalent. But how do we get to this place, the end of this cycle? And how do we move beyond that?"

"Consider this: I'm African-American. I'm blessed to have had great interactions with law enforcement. I've also been questioned in my own neighborhood multiple times just for, you know, being in my neighborhood. I'll be jogging or mowing my lawn. Police will start driving slowly past me, staring like I'm a zoo animal. Neighbors have done the same thing."

"Are you the homeowner?' 'How long have you lived in this neighborhood?' I've been asked those questions on multiple occasions. In my own neighborhood. At my church building. I understand why. But it still stings, still leaves a sore spot on my heart."

"Couple those experiences with seeing African-American men murdered in the street over and over and over again. In my opinion, that's at least partly how we get to incidents like the protests in Charlotte and Ferguson. It's not that, as US Rep. Robert Pittenger of Charlotte suggests, protestors 'hate white people because white people are successful and they're not.' No, sir, not even close."

"I don't in any way condone violence. Not at all. There's no excuse for shooting at police, who are sworn to protect us. There's no excuse for shooting at our own people or anyone else. I urge for protesters to be peaceful."

"But can we at least - without condoning or judging - understand why sometimes, for some, it gets to the point where there seems to be no other alternative but violence?"

"Let's look for ways to interrupt the cycle and practice empathy. Let's understand each other better. The artists and works in this exhibition break down the figurative walls in society and speak to the frustration, anger, pride, history and beauty that people of color feel every day. The exhibition allows the conversa-

tion about our differences to continue in a respectful, meaningful and caring way."

"The need for such a conversation becomes greater every day, and VAE Raleigh is a catalyst in this."

"In this exhibition, we try to answer the following:

Whose perception defines people of color?

Why is there fear among many when it comes to people of color?

How can we help dismantle stereotypes?"

"Through artwork and community events, I think we can at least begin to answer these questions and look for solutions. We also hope to educate people on where we have been, where we are and where we need to go."

"The exhibition offers a historical perspective with works by André Leon Gray, Lamar Whidbee and Charles Williams, the latter's piece *Hauled Away / San Francisco 1968* explores the 1968 minority student protests in San Francisco. Antoine Williams and Jamila Davenport offer works that speak to the perceptions of people of color, with Davenport offering portraits of black men in front of the American flag. Saba Taj and William Paul Thomas show Muslim women and black men smiling and sharing moments of happiness in their works. Carrie Nobles and Dare Coulter show the beauty of black women and girls. Darryl Hurts' work seeks to motivate and inspire with artwork of minority celebrities such as Lauryn Hill."

"A huge part of VAE's mission is to show how accessible the arts community is. So as curators, Linda Dallas and I asked our programming committee to help with events related to 'Black On Black' that will hopefully not only open the doors, but keep them propped open so we can continue to share all that the arts community offers."

"Art is one of the best ways to express our thoughts, feelings and insecurities. We hope to keep the civil dialogue going in the right direction and art is one tool to do that."

"That's why we need *Black On Black*."

The Reed Building Lobby is located at 318 Blackwell Street at the American Tobacco Campus in Durham (beside Cuban Revolution). The building's viewing hours are Mon.-Fri., from 9am-6pm.

Learn more about the exhibition by visiting (artsnownc.com/blackonblack).

Claymakers in Durham, NC, Features Works by Mark Gordon

Claymakers in Durham, NC, is presenting *Material of Invention*, featuring the sculptural work of Mark Gordon, on view through Apr. 15, 2017.

Gordon's ceramic and mixed-media sculptures, shown in this exhibition echo ancient vessels, architectural fragments, bio morphology, or are composed of the simple, juxtaposition of three-dimensional geometries. In them, Gordon considers and develops his impressions of many modes of clay work - from brick making to primitive and contemporary pottery -

that he gathered in places as disparate as the Dominican Republic, Egypt, Spain, Brazil, and New Zealand.

"I consider clay work to be a mode of invention, an effort to pull form out of inchoate matter. I would say that my inspiration is often derived from an eclectic mix - nature and plant growth, animal skeletons, machinery, scrap yard treasures, and international travel," says Gordon.

Gordon serves as an associate professor of art at Barton College, in Wilson,

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