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'Art for August' at Hillman Library honors playwright's legacy

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Ten works are on display on the third floor of Hillman Library as part of the "Art for August" exhibit. (Photo from University Library System)

The "Art for August" exhibit, which can be seen now on Hillman Library's third floor, is a new initiative by the August Wilson House supporting local artists by commissioning original work that celebrates the legacy of the Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright.

Ten Pittsburgh-area artists created new works that pay homage to the influence of the work and life of Wilson, whose archive was acquired by the University Library System in 2019.

August Wilson House, a community and cultural center being developed in the Hill District home where the playwright lived as a child, selected the 10 artists from submissions made to a February 2021 request for proposals.

The 10 commissioned artists are:

- Brandon Jennings, illustrator
- Dominick McDuffie, artist/photographer
- Carlos Peterson, sculptor
- Charlotte Ka, paintings, mosaics, installations
- LaVerne Kemp, fiber artist, quilter
- David Pohl, illustrator
- Donna Ford, quilter
- Corey Carrington/Grits Capone, painter, poet
- Marlon Gist, painter, portraiture
- Jasmynie Miller, painter

The library is planning two events in conjunction with the exhibit.

From 4 to 6 p.m. Oct. 12, a "Photo to Fabric " workshop in the Text & conText lab, co-hosted with Center for Creativity, will feature one of the Art for August contributors, weaver and fiber artist LaVerne Kemp. She will be teaching the photo transfer process on fabric and participants will make small pillows featuring their photo on fabric embellished with sewing and re-cycled pockets. She also will discuss her artwork "Red Hot Jazz." Due to COVID-19 restrictions, this event will only be open to Pitt affiliates with an ID. Registration is required.

From 7 to 8:30 p.m. Oct. 21, a virtual panel discussion will feature three of the artists — Brandon Jennings, Dominick McDuffie, and Charlotte Ka. The discussion will focus on reclaiming Black/African-American stories and history and using these as points of inspiration. Amanda Awanjo, a doctoral candidate pursuing a degree focused on English literature and critical cultural studies, will moderate the panel.

This event is open to the Pitt community and general public. Registration is required.

More information on August Wilson House can be found at augustwilsonhouse.org.

More information on the artists can be found at augustwilsonbirthdaycelebration.com/art-for-august-artist-interviews.

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