

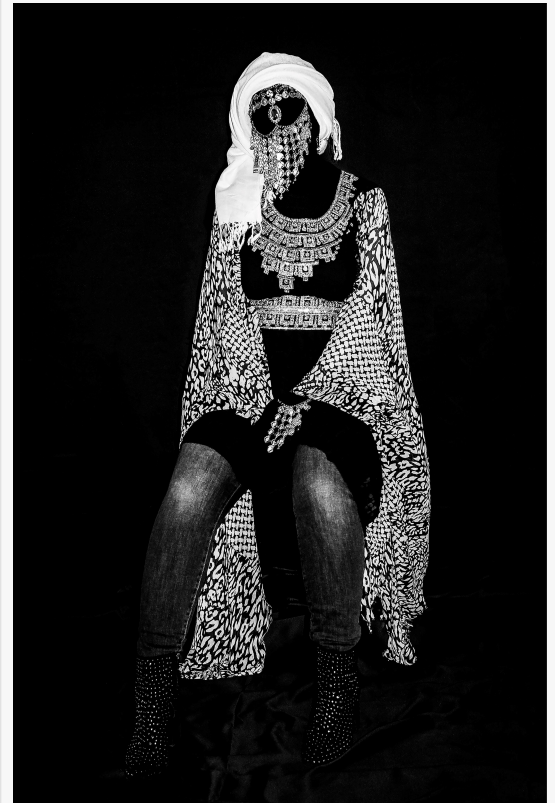
The Baltimore Office of Promotion & The Arts (BOPA) Receives Unprecedented National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Grant

BOPA receives the NEA's Grants for Arts Projects award. One of 1,251 awards totaling nearly \$28.8 million, this unprecedented support for Baltimore's art scene.

BALTIMORE, MARYLAND, UNITED STATES, February 23, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Baltimore Office of Promotion & The Arts ([BOPA](#)) has received the National Endowment for the Arts' ([NEA](#)) Grants for Arts Projects (GAP) award. This grant is one of 1,251 GAP awards totaling nearly \$28.8 million announced by the NEA as part of its first round of fiscal year 2023 grants. This unprecedented curatorial funding for BOPA's exuberant exhibitions will support contemporary art installations at two historic spaces: Gallery in the Sky at the Baltimore World Trade Center and the landmark [Bromo](#) Seltzer Arts Tower.

Curated by BOPA's Public Art and Curation Manager Kirk Shannon-Butts. This new slate of exhibitions are also funded by Maryland State Arts Council (MSAC). By activating these iconic spaces, BOPA is providing more exhibition opportunities to Baltimore based artists while carving out a niche in the booming national art scene with a coterie of formidable creatives working in plethora of mediums unfolding dynamic personal narratives.

In the spring, the Gallery in the Sky will host solo exhibitions by multidisciplinary artist Ariston Jacks, followed by installation artist Kim Rice in the fall. Using painting, printmaking, and photography, Jacks creates Afro-Futuristic images that inform and inspire with his cross-cultural aesthetic. Dissecting her own whiteness, Rice uses materials like zip ties, cardboard, and sticks to create her large-scale works meditating on institutional racism and the policies which continue to stifle the United States. The Opening Reception for Ariston Jacks' exhibition is Thursday, April 6, 2023, from 6:00PM – 8:00PM.



Yemeni Muslim Woman

Over at the Bromo Arts Tower the second iteration of the very well received "Emerge Baltimore" exhibition series entitled "This Is Baltimore Too" continues to provide a platform for rising artists to showcase their work in a solo exhibition. For 2023, "Emerge Baltimore" will include unsung senior artists in the programming. The Opening Reception for "This Is Baltimore Too" is Thursday, March 23, 2023, from 6:00PM – 8:00PM at the Bromo Seltzer Arts Tower.

Artist Anyssa Saleh, painter Greg Fletcher, and photographer Schaun Champion kick off Bromo. Saleh imparts her journey as a Yemeni Muslim woman navigating across the American Dream through her deeply moving photographs and videos. For 40 years, Fletcher has documented Baltimore's urban environment through his modern Impressionistic paintings. Photographer, Champion uses both digital and analog cameras to create intentionally cinematic vignettes of nature illustrating the drama within the familiar.



SUNson - Ariston Jacks

The second round of exhibitions includes the multimedia works of Qrcky, abstract figure paintings by Damani Washington, and sculptures from Murjoni Merriweather. Qrcky's work explores the relationship between Black diaspora sensibilities and urban spaces. Washington, who was born in Baltimore, fell ill while attending the Savannah Institute of Art and Design (SCAD). He went on to become a stay-at-home dad, raising his autistic daughter. Created over 15 years of parenting and shared with the public for the very first time, Washington's images are equally breathtaking and haunting. They unfold a moving narrative of a father's love, understanding, and great patience. Merriweather strives to address and eliminate stereotypes through clay portraits and video work. As a Black woman artist, she has

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Kirk Shannon-Butts

found that the best way to create and talk about Black culture is through art.

Rounding out the year at Bromo is the work of septuagenarian A.P. Douglass, the portraits of artist James 'Alpha' Massaquoi Jr., and Laurel Stewart's mixed-media paintings. Douglass uses assemblage and painting to depict familiar scenes taken from Baltimore City. Liberian American Massaquoi's richly textured drawings bring his subjects to life with warmth and global vibrancy. Stewart utilizes much of the natural world in her work, creating pigments from common local

rocks, pressing native plants, and incorporating the colors of the environment.

“‘Emerge Baltimore’ was so well received last year. ‘This Is Baltimore Too’ is the perfect continuation and a wonderful opportunity to showcase what is good and uplifting about Baltimore City. Baltimore houses so much talent with many unique voices. Ours is a city full of greatness, past, present, and future. I am happy to turn the spotlight on,” says curator, Kirk Shannon-Butts.

For more information about our upcoming exhibitions, contact Kirk Shannon-Butts at KSButts@promotionandarts.org.

Kirk Shannon-Butts
Baltimore Office of Promotions & the Arts (BOPA)
+1 917-545-4360

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Bromo Seltzer Arts Tower

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