

## Meet 'The People's' Art Curator

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- Fresh from an unprecedented National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) grant award, art curator, Kirk Shannon-Butts is shaking up the establishment and making waves on the national art scene for his vibrant curatorial undertakings and daring exhibitions for the Baltimore Office of Promotion and the Arts (BOPA). Unfolding a diversity of artists

personal narratives through a spectrum of art mediums across BOPS's galleries at the Bromo Seltzer Arts Tower, School 33, and Baltimore World Trade Center in Baltimore, Maryland, Shannon-Butts' "Emerge Baltimore" artists series is a big hit. The Summer slate of "Emerge Baltimore - This is Baltimore Too" artists exhibitions opens on June 22nd at the Bromo Seltzer Arts Tower.

“

Art must be engaging, informative, captivating, and digestible. I curate exhibitions to reflect the people through the lens of the artist's personal narrative. It is a creative spectrum.”

*Kirk Shannon-Butts*



Art Curator Kirk Shannon-Butts

BOPA was selected by the NEA to receive a Grants for Arts Projects (GAP) award. This grant is one of 1,251 GAP awards totaling nearly \$28.8 million that was announced by the NEA as part of its first round of fiscal year 2023 grants. Since 2015, Shannon-Butts has been creating cultural and social impactful contemporary art exhibitions across Baltimore city. He has introduced and placed Baltimore based artists Stephen Towns, Monica Ikegwu, LaToya Hobbs, Ernest Shaw, Jr, Bria Sterling-Wilson, Jill

Orlov, Kei Ito, Will Watson on the national radar, curated Time cover photographer Devin Allen's first gallery show, and blue-chip contemporary artist Derrick Adams' first solo exhibition in his hometown, Baltimore.

With each BOPA gallery expressing its own identity based on architecture, aesthetics, and proximity to community, Shannon-Butts has demonstrated a puncheon for matching the art, media, narrative, and artist with the space drawing huge crowds. "I curate exhibitions that present American stories that have been often left out of mainstream museums, galleries, and art centers. Visibility and reflection are crucial for establishing a welcome environment and an impactful experience. Presentation is a portal to success. Today's exhibitions must provide an ombre effect just like an artist's palette," says Shannon-Butts. With less than 2% of curators in the USA being African American, it has been quite a journey in the artworld and art scene. This "People's Curator" with his people focus curation is unfolding stories that is rapidly changing the landscape of Art, Culture, and Society.

After ten years working at Conde Nast as a Fashion Market Editor at Glamour magazine in New York City, Shannon-Butts relocated to Baltimore in 2015 where he met and orchestrated a media campaign for emerging artist Stephen Towns' first exhibition in Baltimore. The exhibition was a sellout. Having traveled all across the United States, North America, South America, Asia, the Caribbean, Europe, and Africa, his practical and inclusive approach to curating propels emerging, unsung, and undiscovered artists and provide a viable platform to showcase their unique narratives in art and their personal journey through the art world and life.

The Opening Reception for "Emerge Baltimore - This is Baltimore Too" Summer edition is June 22nd at the Bromo Seltzer Arts Tower. For more information, contact Kirk Rae at [kirk@flickeria.com](mailto:kirk@flickeria.com) and 917.545.4360.

Kirk Rae  
Flickeria  
+1 917-545-4360

[email us here](#)

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Art Curator Kirk Shannon-Butts



Historic Bromo Arts Tower in  
Downtown Baltimore City

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