



Picturing Black Girlhood: Moments of Possibility
Express Newark, Feb 2022 - July 2022
Wall Text

Introduction

This international exhibition features over eighty-five Black women, girls, and genderqueer artists - ranging in age from 8 to 94 - who work in the mediums of photography and film and have a sustained practice exploring the theme of Black girlhood. Black girls are our most innovative cultural producers, community connectors, and trendsetters, but their contributions are rarely recognized and their lives are largely invisible in our dominant culture. In contrast, this exhibition considers Black girlhood as an essential stage of development, an integral moment of political awakening, an embattled site of representation, and a critical source of artistic inspiration throughout the globe.

By bringing together iconic image-makers, emerging artists, and young photographers (over half the artists in the show are under the age of 18), this show restages very intimate Black girl coming of age narratives made in the reifying lens of Black women and genderqueer artists and the real-time experiences and perspectives of Black girls themselves. The images made by Black women photographers and filmmakers are placed side-by-side those made by Black girls. The result: a disruption of traditional art world hierarchies and a centering of Black girls as subjects, artists, and agents of their own lives.

Comprising all three floors of Express Newark, *Picturing Black Girlhood: Moments of Possibility* is ambitious in scale and scope. It is an urgent response to the crisis of racism and heterosexism that Black girls continue to face, as well as a radical re-imagining of our world through their gazes and those of the adults that were once them. The intentional pairings and groupings of images that appear throughout this show encourage new interpretations of iconic images while retelling the history of contemporary photography and film through the eyes and experiences of Black girls.

Picturing Black Girlhood: Moments of Possibility was curated by Scheherazade Tillet and Zoraida Lopez-Diago.

COMMUNITY + SISTERHOOD:

Floor 2

ACCESS AND COLLABORATION

The Black women, girls, and genderqueer artists featured in *Picturing Black Girlhood* create images that actively resist the traditional white male gaze that has long dominated photography and film. Instead, they are grounded in the Black feminist ethics of care, collaboration, and access. Unlike conventional hierarchies between a photographer and his subject, the artists here embrace the intimacy and unusual access they have with their muses who more often than not are their daughters, best friends, sisters, mentees, collaborators, or even themselves. The results are unabashedly honest and up-close images

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that enable the viewer to bear witness to the complex rituals and relationships that constitute Black girlhood.

(Images from Left to Right)

Shanice Williams (b. 2007)

Me, Myself, and I, Granville, Jamaica, 2017

Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra

Courtesy of the Artist, A Long Walk Home, and the Granville Reading and Art Programme.

Stevia Ndoe (b. 2002)

Hair Fairy, 2020

Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra

Courtesy of the Artist.

Nydia Blas (b. 1981)

Gold Fabric from the series "The Girls Who Spun Gold", 2016

Archival Inkjet Print

Courtesy of the Artist and the Collection of Scheherazade Tillet.

Nona Faustine (b. 1977)

Blue Queen, 2016

Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra

Courtesy of the Artist.

Stevia Ndoe (b. 2002)

Sister, Sister, 2018

Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra

Courtesy of the Artist.

Danielle Nolen (b. 2000)

I love you over...and over, 2021

Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra

Courtesy of the Artist and A Long Walk Home.

A Long Walk Home

Founded in 2003, A Long Walk Home is a national-organization that empowers young people to use art to end violence against girls and women. Collaboration is at the heart of its practice and pedagogy, in which Black girls are encouraged to be photographers who see themselves and each other as their muses. Co-founder Scheherazade Tillet also sees many of these same girls as inspiration for her own work. Noticing the obvious absence of Black girls in white photographer Russell Lee's 1941 popular "Negro Boys on Easter Morning," Tillet's "Black Girls, Good Friday Morning, Westside Chicago" reimagines that iconic image by collaborating with girls from A Long Walk Home as a way of celebrating their leadership in their community and their city.

A Long Walk Home's curriculum focuses on self-portraits for the girls to understand who they are as leaders and connect their individual stories to larger social issues. In "What?," Shukurah Floyd consciously experiments with lighting to draw attention to the ways in which dark skin girls are often misrepresented in photography, including school pictures. By taking this

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image, Floyd wants to counter photography's long-held bias toward light skin tones and show the comfort she has in her own body with correct definition and light.

Scheherazade Tillet (b. 1978)

Black Girls, Good Friday Morning, Westside Chicago, Illinois, 2016

Archival Inkjet Print

Courtesy of the Artist.

Shukurah Floyd (b. 2006)

What?, 2019

Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra

Courtesy of the Artist and A Long Walk Home.

Lydia Corbey (b. 2002)

Together, Inspired by the Work of LaToya Ruby Frazier, 2019

Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra

Courtesy of the Artist and A Long Walk Home.

The Pandemic

During this unprecedented crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic, art organizations such as the Bronx Documentary Center and The Art Effect centered the voices of the Black girls who were enrolled in their classes, -thereby giving them the opportunity to express themselves and address their stress, anxiety, and isolation through photography. In these safe virtual spaces, the photography students were encouraged to document their daily rituals, their personal histories, and the intimate spaces they call home.

Savanah Juste (b. 2008)

Pandemic Scrapbook, 2020

Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra

Courtesy of Bronx Documentary Center.

[Scan to listen to Savannah Juste interview her mom during the quarantine.](#)

[QR CODE](#)

Savanah Juste (b. 2008)

Pandemic Scrapbook, 2020

Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra

Courtesy of Bronx Documentary Center.

Olivia Barker-Duncan (b. 2004)

Shadows, 2021

Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra

Courtesy of the Artist and the Art Effect.

Community

Faren Humes (b. 1989)

Liberty, 2019.

Film, 17 minutes

Courtesy of the Artist.

Deborah Jack (b. 1970)

"Untitled" from series "History on our skin...", 2015

Archival C-Print on Fine Art Baryta Paper

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Courtesy of the Artist.

Brianna Sanders (b. 2004)

The Oldest Car on My Block, Inspired by the work of LaToya Ruby Fraizer, 2019

Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra

Courtesy of the Artist and A Long Walk Home.

Yvonne Michelle Shirley (b. 1982)

Miasia: The Nature of Experience, 2017

Video, 30 minutes

Courtesy of the Artist.

Quianna Brown (b. 2002), Tanazia Brown (b. 2006), Berlinda Fleurimond (b. 2006), Zarría Miller (b. 2004), DeViniece Scott (b. 2006), Lillianna Shea-Johnson (b. 2004)

Space that Binds Us, 2019

Video, 2 minutes and 38 seconds

Courtesy of the Artists and Perfect Ten.

CreativeSoul Photography

For over a decade, Kahran Bethencourt, photographer and co-founder of CreativeSoul has been capturing dynamic portraits of Black children that celebrate the beauty of their natural hair. In CreativeSoul's Atlanta-based studio, Kahran has collaborated with hundreds of Black families for their private collections as well as for campaigns for children's fashion and hair care brands. Her goal is to celebrate the elegance and regalness of Black children, particularly Black girls. Often blending West African, Afrofuturist, and Victorian aesthetics, these breathtaking visual narratives remind the children whom she photographs that they are both larger than life, and beautiful as they are.

Kahran Bethencourt (b. 1980)

Sophisticated Soul, 2017.

UV Inkjet Print on Vinyl

Courtesy of Kahran & Regis Bethencourt, CreativeSoul Photography.

Heirs, 2021

Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra

Courtesy of Kahran & Regis Bethencourt, CreativeSoul Photography.

Glory, 2019

Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra

Courtesy of Kahran & Regis Bethencourt, CreativeSoul Photography.

Modupeola Fadugba (b. 1985)

Dear Young Artist, 2021

Choreography by Kim Turner, Kamaria Carrington, and Kristina Hotaling-Paz; performed by the Newburgh Performing Arts Academy Senior Ensemble (Isobel Aviles Deliz, Leilani Bacchas, Edith Florencio, Nia Gilchrest-Spence, Leah Hall-Collins, Chantal Martinez, Daniela Moreno, Ariya Nelson, Kiera O'Shea, Adrianna Ochang, Natalie Robles) in an empty swimming pool; Newburgh, NY

Documentation video of live performance, 7 minutes and 30 seconds

Courtesy of the Artist and STRONGROOM, INC.

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Jeanne-Moutoussamy-Ashe

During the late 1970s and early 1980s, photographer Jeanne Moutoussamy-Ashe traveled to Daufuskie Island, South Carolina, a small sea island known for its Gullah history. The “Gullah” people were originally the descendants of enslaved Africans who worked on the rice, indigo, and Sea Island cotton plantations of the lower Atlantic coast. After emancipation and the Civil War, these communities were able to live in relative isolation on Daufuskie Island and retain many of their ancestral West African customs. Given the close-knit nature of this community, Moutoussamy-Ashe understood the importance of building relationships with the people she photographed, an intimacy that she thoughtfully captured here while documenting a pair of young girl cousins. The smiles and carefree gestures of the girls in the image demonstrates the sense of ease developed between the sitters and Moutoussamy-Ashe, and renders the momentary trust that they cultivated as timeless.

Jeanne Moutoussamy-Ashe (b. 1951)
Cousins, Daufuskie Island, SC, 1979
Dye Sublimation Print of Poly Satin Fabric
Courtesy of the Artist.

THE BALL

Starting in 2005 with Sylvia’s Place, New York City’s only emergency shelter for homeless LGBTQ+ youth, Samantha Box has spent almost two decades photographing LGBTQ+ youth of color there and bearing witness to their resilience, creativity, and community networks. As opposed to focusing on the trauma and despair of these homeless and gender-expansive youth, Box explores young Black girls coming of age within their chosen families and in the legendary Kiki scene, a lavish ball culture for mainly Black and Latinx LGBTQ youth that is rooted in love, acceptance, support, and ecstatic joy.

Samantha Box (b. 1977)
Performance, The HMI Awards Ball, 2014
UV Inkjet Print on Vinyl
Courtesy of the Artist.

HEAVENLY PLANE

From black and white to color, abstract to portraiture, each photograph on the staircase connects Black girlhood to the beauty of the natural world. Individually, they conjure up the cultural and geographical diversity of the African diaspora; together, they reveal fantasy, ephemerality, and ethereality as dominant themes in contemporary Black photography. As much as these images invoke a romantic past, they also mark an ascension into the world to come.

(Images from Top to Bottom)

Azariah Baker (b. 2005)
Reincarnate, 2021
Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra
Courtesy of the Artist and A Long Walk Home.

Deborah Jack (b. 1970)
Looking Out From series "What is the value of water if it doesn't quench our thirst for...", 2016
Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra
Courtesy of the Artist.

Zoraida Lopez-Diago (b. 1981)

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Meadwood I, 2018
Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra
Courtesy of the Artist.

Cyrah Joseph (b. 2005)
Connected, 2020
Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra
Courtesy of the Artist.

Zainab Floyd (b. 1997)
Flowers in Mount Vernon, 2016
Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra
Courtesy of the Artist.

Zainab Floyd (b. 1997)
Flowers in Mount Vernon, 2016
Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra
Courtesy of the Artist.

Zainab Floyd (b. 1997)
Flowers in Mount Vernon, 2016
Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra
Courtesy of the Artist.

Zainab Floyd (b. 1997)
She is a friend of mine. She carry me., 2020
Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra
Courtesy of the Artist.

Samantha Box (b. 1977)
Isyss, at Sylvia's Place, soon after she arrived in New York City, 2006
Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra
Courtesy of the Artist.

Nona Faustine (b. 1977)
Arbores autumnales puella, 2016
Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra
Courtesy of the Artist.

Zoraida Lopez-Diago (b. 1981)
Meadwood II, 2018
Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra
Courtesy of the Artist.

COMING OF AGE + BLACK UTOPIA

Floor 3

THE BOX GALLERY

Black Utopia

Creating idyllic spaces and Black utopias that are free of racial violence have long been a source of African American artistic innovation and racial justice movements. In Nydia Blas's photograph, "Group #2" from the series "The Girls Who Spun Gold, the tableau of the four

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young women and a baby at play emphasizes the ordinary and the dignity of the everyday. By showing Black girls in bliss together, these tender moments of respite and release represent Black freedom in its purest form. Alongside the complex tapestry of Kim Hill's sculptural chair, "The Colored Chair," Blas challenges the viewer to seek solace in this sacred space, a world in which Black girls not only care for each other but can determine their own fortunes and fates.

In this space, we invite you to sit down and take a moment to focus on yourself, relax, and reset.

[Scan to enjoy the playlist created by the artists in the exhibition.](#)

[QR code](#)

Nydia Blas (b. 1981)

Group #2 From the Series "The Girls Who Spun Gold", 2016

UV Inkjet Print on Vinyl

Courtesy of the Artist.

Kim Hill (b. 1970)

The Colored Section, 2022

Macrame, metal, plastic & spray paint

Courtesy of the Artist.

Brooklyn Starks (b. 2005)

Untitled, Self-Portrait, 2019

Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra

Courtesy of the Artist and A Long Walk Home.

Shukurah Floyd (b. 2006)

Unbound, 2021

UV Inkjet Print on Vinyl

Courtesy of the Artist and A Long Walk Home.

Carrie Mae Weems (b. 1953)

May Days Long Forgotten, 2003-2004

Video Installation

Running time 7 minutes and 50 seconds

Courtesy of the Artist and Jack Shainman Gallery, New York.

WINDOW GALLERY

Adrienne Wheeler

The final garment in the window gallery is a dress sewn by Elizabeth Wheeler in 1942 for her eighth-grade graduation. Through her multi-generational artistic practice, mixed-media Newark-based artist Adrienne Wheeler engages with her mother's dress and the portrait of her mother's graduation to explore the making of memory and creation of sacred spaces, as seen in Wheeler's video "White Dress Narratives."

Adrienne Wheeler (b. 1957)

White Dress Narratives, 2022

Single Channel Digital Film, 1 minute and 10 seconds

Courtesy of the Artist.

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Elizabeth Moore Wheeler (b. 1928)
Photographer Unknown
Graduation Day, Morton Street Elementary School 1942
UV Inkjet Print on Vinyl
Courtesy of the Artist.

Savanah Juste (b. 2008)
Pandemic Scrapbook, 2020
Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra
Courtesy of Bronx Documentary Center.

The Ceremony

With couture garments drawn primarily from Black coming-of-age traditions, the window gallery traces pivotal moments of Black girls transitioning to adolescence or adulthood. Including a prom suit, a debutante dress, a Quinceañera gown, Miss Newark USA's beauty pageant evening wear, and a dress from a Kiki Ballroom competition (whose red stain is a stark reminder of the violence targeted at Black trans girls), these couture garments, paired with their elaborate accessories, exemplify the dreams, hopes, magnificence, and gender fluidity of Black girlhood.

(Images from Left to Right)

Elizabeth Moore Wheeler (b. 1928)
8th Grade Graduation Dress, Newark, NJ, 1942
Cotton Swiss Dot and Lace
Courtesy of the Artist.

Seyenah Lopez (b. 2000)
Quinceañera Dress and Crown, Hartford, CT, 2015
Courtesy of the Artist.

Mya Mirari (b. 1998)
Ballroom Dress and Trophy, New York, NY, 2021
Courtesy of Mel Taylor, Iconick, The Collection of The Iconic House of Juicy Couture.

Monfia Wright-Brown (b. 1999)
Prom Suit, Shoes, Cross Necklace and Gold Chain, Chicago, IL, 2019
Courtesy of the Artist and A Long Walk Home.

Chloe Mason (b. 2003)
Debutante Cotillion Dress, White Satin Gloves, Souvenir Journal, Sash Crown, and Pearl Necklace, South Orange, NJ, 2019
Courtesy of Carolyn "Cookie" Mason and Mark Mason, Sr.

Saddiyah Shakoor
Evening Gown, Sash, Crown, Newark, NJ, 2020
Fabric, Rhinestones, and Metal
Courtesy of the Artist, Alicia Blanks, and Miss Newark USA.

Denise Brown
Evening Gown, Sash, Crown, Newark, NJ, 2019
Jersey Knit Gown with Beaded Bodice, Rhinestones, and Metal

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Courtesy of the Artist, Alicia Blanks, and Miss Newark USA.

Lisa "Majiq" Farrar-Medina (b. 1991)
The Scholar, 2021
Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra
Courtesy of the Artist, Alicia Blanks, and Miss Newark USA.

Lisa "Majiq" Farrar-Medina (b. 1991)
Descendants, 2021
Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra
Courtesy of the Artist, Alicia Blanks, and Miss Newark USA.

Lisa "Majiq" Farrar-Medina (b. 1991)
Small Girl, Big World, 2021
Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra
Courtesy of the Artist, Alicia Blanks, and Miss Newark USA.

Lisa "Majiq" Farrar-Medina (b. 1991)
The Dream Chaser, 2021
Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra
Courtesy of the Artist, Alicia Blanks, and Miss Newark USA.

Jamaica Gilmer (b. 1981)
We Are the Aperture, 2018
UV Inkjet Print on Vinyl
Courtesy of The Beautiful Project.

PAUL ROBESON GALLERY

The Generations

Picturing Black Girlhood signature images, Doris Derby's "Rural Family Girlhood, Mileston, Mississippi" and Ángelina Cofer's "Nineteen, Chicago," were taken by artists more than fifty years apart, by Derby, a Civil Rights activist, Cofer, a Black Lives Matter and Me Too movement leader. While both of these images are invitations into the interior lives of Black girls, their points of divergence are also important. The distinctions from subject to self-portrait, rural to urban, and black and white to color do not undermine their shared themes of visibility and intimacy but they also enable us to see the differences when the Black girl's gaze is captured versus self-created.

Ángelina Cofer (b. 2002)
Nineteen, 2021
Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra
Courtesy of the Artist and A Long Walk Home.

Doris Derby (b. 1939)
Rural Family Girlhood, Mileston, Mississippi, 1968
Archival Pigment Print
Courtesy of the Artist.

Jeanne Moutoussamy-Ashe (b. 1951)
Girl in Screen Door, Edisto Island, SC, 1977
Dye Sublimation Print of Poly Satin Fabric

Picturing Black Girlhood: Moments of Possibility

Courtesy of the Artist.

Jeanne Moutoussamy-Ashe (b. 1951)
Braiding Hair, Daufuskie Island, SC, 1979
Dye Sublimation Print on Poly Satin Fabric
Courtesy of the Artist.

Jeanne Moutoussamy-Ashe (b. 1951)
A Little girl escorts her sister down the road, Edisto Island, SC, 1977
Dye Sublimation Print on Poly Satin Fabric
Courtesy of the Artist.

The Gaze

In her triptych, “Pecola’s Blues,” Adama Delphine Fawundu recalls the shy 11-year-old Black girl who is taunted for her dark skin, sexually victimized by her father, and tragically longs for blue eyes in Toni Morrison’s 1970 debut novel, “The Bluest Eye.” Through these theatrical self-portraits, Fawundu examines how Black girls live under constant racial and sexual surveillance, while often internalizing the oppressive gaze of others at the expense of their own self-worth.

Lorraine O’Grady, on the other hand, recenters the gaze of Black girls in her landmark series from 1983, “Art Is. . .”. For her performance piece, O’Grady hired a float and a crew of performers to ride on it, each carrying an empty gilded picture frame, to shouts of “Frame me, make me art!” and “That’s right, that’s what art is, We’re the art!” on Adam Clayton Powell Boulevard in Harlem. Inviting everyone, especially Black girls, to consider themselves to art, O’Grady had to kneel or stand at eye level with these children to capture their attention, a gesture that equalizes their gazes, while ensuring that Black girls are seen, valued, and ultimately elevated.

(Images from Left to Right)

Adama Delphine Fawundu (b. 1971)
Pecola’s Blues, 2012
Archival Pigment on Cotton Photo Rag Paper
Courtesy of the Artist.

Adama Delphine Fawundu (b. 1971)
Pecola’s Blues, 2012
Archival Pigment on Cotton Photo Rag Paper
Courtesy of the Artist.

Adama Delphine Fawundu (b. 1971)
Pecola’s Blues, 2012
Archival Pigment on Cotton Photo Rag Paper
Courtesy of the Artist.

Lorraine O’Grady (b. 1934)
Art Is. . . (Man with Rings and Child), 1983/2009
C-Print in 40 parts
Courtesy of the Artist and Alexander Gray Associates, New York

Lorraine O’Grady (b. 1934)
Art Is. . . (Girlfriends Times Two), 1983/2009

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C-Print in 40 parts

Courtesy of the Artist, and Alexander Gray Associates, New York

Black Royalty

Black royalty invokes magic, power, and the otherworldly. It differs from the more commodifying and harmful effects of traditional princess culture by reifying Black girls rather than infantilizing them. Whereas pink connotes a hyper-femininity and cutesieness associated with princesses; other colors, blues, brown, orange, and black invoke royalty here. Likewise, Tawny Chatmon's gilded images are reminiscent of works by Austrian painter, Gustav Klimt, and reaffirm the splendor and grandeur of Black girls. Invoking mythology and refusing pathology, these images elevate Black girls and our perceptions of them to their rightful place.

(Images from Right to Left)

Scheherazade Tillet (b. 1978)

Ángelina, Butterflies For Ma'Khia, from the series "The Black Girlhood Altar", 2021

Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra

Courtesy of the Artist.

Scheherazade Tillet (b. 1978)

Azariah and Camille, Madonna and Child, from the series "The Black Girlhood Altar", 2021

Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra

Courtesy of the Artist.

Scheherazade Tillet (b. 1978)

Jada, Temple Basket with Tobacco and Flowers, from the series "The Black Girlhood Altar", 2021

Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra

Courtesy of the Artist.

Jada Thompson (b. 2003)

Beautiful Black Queen, 2018

Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra

Courtesy of the Artist and A Long Walk Home.

Nydia Blas (b. 1981)

Honey Belly from the series "The Girls Who Spun Gold", 2016

UV Inkjet Print on Vinyl

Courtesy of the Artist and the Collection of Scheherazade Tillet.

(Images from Left to Right)

Tawny Chatmon (b. 1979)

It Was Never Your Burden to Carry, 2020

24k Gold Leaf, Acrylic on Archival Pigment

Courtesy of the Artist, and Galerie Myrtis, Baltimore.

Tawny Chatmon (b. 1979)

Best, 2020

24k Gold Leaf, Acrylic, Watercolor on Archival Pigment

Courtesy of the Artist, The Collection of Zuhairah Washington, and Galerie Myrtis, Baltimore.

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Nzingah Oyo (b. 1976)
Lerr (The Light), 2020
Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra
Courtesy of the Artist.

Nzingah Oyo (b. 1976)
Weurseuk (Luck), 2020
Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra
Courtesy of the Artist.

Sara Forbes Bonetta

Born in 1843 as Aina in Oke-Odan, a Yoruba village in West Africa, Sara Forbes Bonetta was sold into slavery at the age of five, only to be presented as a “diplomatic gift” to Captain Frederick Forbes who brought her to England in 1850 and offered her to Queen Victoria to whom she became a ward and the Queen’s goddaughter.

Within a year of each other, both British artist Heather Agyepong’s “TOO MANY BLACKAMOORS #3” and New Jersey native Ayana V. Jackson’s “S. Bonetta” began to invoke Sarah’s legacy as a way of revealing the intertwined histories of imperialism and photography, and the ways these two systems worked together to reproduce stereotypes of Black girls as racial Others. By rediscovering, re-sitting, and reimagining the original portraits made of Bonetta by British photographers in the 1860s, Agyepong; and Jackson release her from the constraints of being property of the Crown, while imbuing her with self-confidence and social autonomy that was denied to her real life.

(Images from Left to Right)
Ayana V. Jackson (b. 1977)
S. Bonetta, 2016
Archival Pigment Print on German Etching Paper
Courtesy of the Artist and Mariane Ibrahim Gallery, Chicago.

Heather Agyepong (b. 1990)
TOO MANY BLACKAMOORS #3, 2015
Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra
Courtesy of the Artist.

Heather Agyepong (b. 1990)
TOO MANY BLACKAMOORS #9, 2015
Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra
Courtesy of the Artist.

Paloma Boyewa-Osbourne (b. 2007)
Self Portrait (Side Profile), 2019
Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra
Courtesy of Bronx Documentary Center.

Danielle Nolen (b. 2000)
Silence, 2021
Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra
Courtesy of the Artist and A Long Walk Home.

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Inner Worlds

The photographs by Nydia Blas and Fabiola Jean-Louis appear tucked away in a corner, separated by gallery wall partitions that recreate the sense of protection and respect that Black girls should have in their everyday lives. These images reveal the inner worlds of Black girls – vulnerable and private spaces to which only they can enter, experience pleasure, and explore their identities on their own terms.

Leslie Hewitt (b. 1977)
Untitled diptych, 2004
Ink on Paper
Courtesy of the Artist and the Collection of Amy Goldrich.

Nydia Blas (b. 1981)
Resana with Mirror from series "The Girls Who Spun Gold", 2016
Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra
Courtesy of the Artist.

Fabiola Jean-Louis (b.1978)
Follow the Drinking Gourd, 2019
Archival Pigment Print
Courtesy of the Artist.

Left to Right
Qiana Mestrich (b. 1977)
OOAK Vintage Black Francue Doll II, 2017
Archival Pigment Print on Moab Lasal Exhibition Luster 300
Courtesy of the Artist.

Qiana Mestrich (b. 1977)
Sonneberg Black-Complexioned Bisque Doll by Gebruder Kuhnlenz, 2017
Archival Pigment Print on Moab Lasal Exhibition Luster 300
Courtesy of the Artist.

Leslie Hewitt (b. 1977)
Untitled diptych, 2004
Ink on Paper
Courtesy of the Artist and the Collection of Amy Goldrich.

Icons

The canonical images of Carrie Mae Weems's "Untitled (Woman and Daughter with Make Up)", LaToya Ruby Frazier's "Grandma Ruby and Me," and Lola Flash's "Tenzin," were selected because of their iconicity in the photography as well as Black feminist cultural studies. By situating these images in active conversation with 8-year-old Seneca Steplight-Tillet's video "Make Up Time," 12-year-old Jady N Miles's "Two Months After the Worst Day Ever," and 17-year-old Jada Rodriguez's "The Ball Ends at 5 am," a lineage is both acknowledged and interrupted by Black girls artists who are able to assert their own sexual and social agency in portraiture. Side-by-side, these images revel in the full breadth of Black girls and gender-expansive youth, on their own terms, and those of the people they will soon become.

Carrie Mae Weems (b. 1953)
Untitled (Woman and Daughter with Make Up), 1990
Silver Gelatin
Courtesy of the Artist and Jack Shainman Gallery, New York.

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Seneca Steplight-Tillet (b. 2012)
Make Up Time, 2020
Video, 38 seconds
Courtesy of the Artist.

Carrie Mae Weems (b. 1953)
Untitled (Woman with Daughter), 1990
Silver Gelatin Triptych
Courtesy of the Artist and Jack Shainman Gallery, New York.

LaToya Ruby Frazier (b. 1982)
Aunt Midgie and Grandma Ruby, 2005
Gelatin Silver Print
Courtesy of the Artist and Gladstone Gallery, New York.

LaToya Ruby Frazier (b. 1982)
Grandma Ruby and Me, 2005
Gelatin Silver Print
Courtesy of the Artist and Gladstone Gallery, New York.

Jadyn Miles (b. 2004)
Two Months After the Worst Day Ever, 2016
Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra
Courtesy of the Artist and A Long Walk Home.

LaToya Ruby Frazier (b. 1982)
Self-Portrait (March 10am), 2009
Gelatin Silver Print
Courtesy of the Artist and Gladstone Gallery.

Lola Flash (b. 1959)
Tenzin, 2008
Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra
Courtesy of the Artist.

Jada Rodriguez (b. 2003)
The Ball Ends at 5pm, 2003
Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra
Courtesy of the Artist.

GRIEF AND LOSS

Many Black girls live at the intersections of oppression, making them vulnerable to multiple forms of violence and trauma. As a result, too many of them struggle with mental health issues and high rates of depression, all the while grieving in private, and beyond the purview of their families and friends. In other words, the themes of grief, loss, mourning, and death are also an all too common right of passage for Black girls.

Taking on those directly, Sophia Nahli Allison's Oscar nominated short, "A Love Song for Latasha" is an homage to Latasha Harlins, a 15-year-old African-American girl who was shot to death in a convenience store in South Central, Los Angeles. Allison makes the sensitive choice to not include the footage of Harlins's death taken by the store's camera, which was shown on

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national news and was later used in the trial of the woman who shot her. Instead, the film actively memorializes Harlins through the memories of her loved ones, her childhood mementos, and lushly lit re-enactments of her life. In a direct response to Allison's film, Jadyn Miles's photograph "Give Me My Flowers, While I Yet Live" links herself and the many Black girls who continue to see themselves in Latasha Harlins's story 30 years after her death.

[Scan to listen to Jadyn Miles's love song for Latasha Harlins.](#)

[QR Code](#)

Sophia Nahli Allison (b. 1987)
A Love Song for Latasha, 2019
Film, 19 minutes
Courtesy of the Artist and Netflix.

Jadyn Miles (b. 2004)
Give Me My Flowers, While I Yet Live, Artwork in Response Sophia Nahli Allison's A Love Song for Latasha, 2021
Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra
Courtesy of the Artist and A Long Walk Home.

Widline Cadet (b. 1992)
Sé Sou Ou Mwen Mété Espwa m #2 (I Put All My Hopes On You #2), 2021
Archival Inkjet Print, Inkjet Print, Artist Frame
Courtesy of Private Collection, the Artist, and Deli Gallery, New York.

Isyss Imani Williams (b. 2004)
Warm Spotlight, Artwork in Response Sophia Nahli Allison's Film, A Love Song for Latasha, 2020
Archival Inkjet Print
Courtesy of the Artist and A Long Walk Home.

Deborah Jack (b. 1970)
Little Girl Lost, 2004.
Archival C-Print on fine art paper
Courtesy of the Artist.

Dashara McDaniel (b. 2001)
Silent Scream (Self-Portrait), 2016
Archival Inkjet Print
Courtesy of the Artist and A Long Walk Home.

Azariah Baker (b. 2005)
Circumstance, 2019
Archival Inkjet Print
Courtesy of the Artist and A Long Walk Home.

The Wake

The photographer and activist Jeanne Moutoussamy-Ashe is also the widow of the legendary tennis player Arthur Ashe. Tragically, his mother died when he was only six, leaving him without a single photograph of her. Years later, Moutoussamy-Ashe did not want their daughter to suffer this same fate, and decided to publish a book of photographs that detailed her husband's last year, *Daddy and Me: A Photo Story of Arthur Ashe and His Daughter*,

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Camera. Now being shown only for its second time ever, Moutoussamy-Ashe's "Father and Daughter at his wake service (1993)" gives us a rare and private viewing of her six-year-old daughter's innocence and unknown territory of grief during her father's Arthur Ashe's funeral in 1993.

Jeanne Moutoussamy-Ashe (b. 1979)
Father and Daughter at his wake service, 1993
Archival Pigment Print
Courtesy of the Artist.

Protest

From the Civil Rights Movement to Black Lives Matter, Black girls have been on the frontlines of protests for social change, and powerful organizers in the movements, often recruiting boys, other girls, their parents, and ultimately their community into the movement. By centering Deborah Roberts's "Rosa Series," there is an intentional collapsing of time; Black freedom movements are not cast in a chronological order but as a cyclical and continuous forms of resistance. Doris Derby's intimate but powerful documentation of Black life during the Civil Rights movements is paired with images of Black Lives Matter protests by Sheila Pree Bright and Bronx Documentary Center student Fanta Diop, along with a photograph by Dashara McDaniel, layering history like a collage across three generations of Black girls who are on the frontlines of justice.

(Images from Left to Right)

Sheila Pree Bright (b. 1967)
Juneteenth Celebration, Atlanta GA from the Series "#1960Now", 2020
Archival Inkjet Print
Courtesy of the Artist.

Doris Derby (b. 1939)
Children Playing Dress-up, Indianola, Mississippi, 1968
Archival Pigment Print
Courtesy of the Artist.

Doris Derby (b. 1939)
Black-owned grocery store, Sunday, Mileston, Mississippi, 1968
Archival Pigment Print
Courtesy of the Artist.

Fanta Diop (b. 2003)
Black Lives Matter Protests, 2020
Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra
Courtesy of the Artist and Bronx Documentary Center.

Monfia Wright-Brown (b. 1999)
#SayHerName, 2016
Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra
Courtesy of the Artist and A Long Walk Home.

Monfia Wright-Brown (b. 1999)
#SayHerName, 2016
Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra

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Courtesy of the Artist and A Long Walk Home.

Deborah Roberts (b. 1962)
Rosa Series, 2018
Mixed Media on Paper
Courtesy of the Artist and Vielmetter, Los Angeles.

Doris Derby (b. 1939)
Member of the Southern Media Photographing a Young Girl Farish Street, Jackson, Mississippi, 1968
Archival Pigment Print
Courtesy of the Artist.

Fanta Diop (b. 2003)
Black Lives Matter Protests, 2020
Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra
Courtesy of the Artist and Bronx Documentary Center.

Dashara McDaniel (b. 2001)
#AllBlackLivesMatter, 2016
Archival Inkjet Print
Courtesy of the artist and A Long Walk Home.

Sheila Pree Bright (b. 1967)
The People's Uprising organization voter suppression and unite rally, Atlanta GA from the series "#1960Now", 2020
Archival Inkjet Print
Courtesy of the Artist.

Fanta Diop (b. 2003)
Black Lives Matter Protests, 2020
Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra
Courtesy of the Artist and Bronx Documentary Center.

Paloma Boyewa-Osbourne (b. 2007)
Pride, 2020
Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra
Courtesy of Bronx Documentary Center.

Shayane Telsaint (b. 2005)
"Back to the Earth" Image Transfer, 2018
Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra
Courtesy of the Artist.

Paloma Boyewa-Osbourne (b. 2007)
Pride, 2020
Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra
Courtesy of Bronx Documentary Center.

LaToya Beecham (b. 2003)
Thicker Than Water, 2021
Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra
Courtesy of Bronx Documentary Center.

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Tatiana Coleman (b. 2004)
Shoes, 2021
Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra
Courtesy of the Artist.

Allison Janae Hamilton (b. 1984)
The Hours, 2015
Archival Pigment Print
Courtesy of the Artist and Marianne Boesky Gallery, New York.

Widline Cadet (b. 1992)
Seremoni Disparisyon #1 (Ritual [Dis]Appearance #1), 2019
Archival Inkjet Print
Courtesy of the Artist and Deli Gallery, New York.

LaToya Beecham (b. 2003)
Thicker Than Water II, 2021
Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra
Courtesy of Bronx Documentary Center.

Ebony Patterson

In 2014, Ebony Patterson assembled fifty young people, led by Black girls, to march in the annual carnival on her hometown streets in Kingston, Jamaica. Each young person carried colorful 5-foot tall, ornate coffin-shaped structures, held up by wooden rods that they pulsated to rhythms of the live marching band that accompanied them. Six out of the original fifty coffins that were used for the performance, titled “Invisible Presence: Bling Memories” are present in the exhibition.

Linking the themes of protest and mourning, the performance also fused the working-class funerary aesthetic of bling funerals in Jamaica with the protest traditions of Carnival in Trinidad and Tobago that date back to the late 18th Century. The purpose of Patterson’s performance was to protest violence against Black girls, give voice to their plight, and render their invisibility visible. “You may not have noticed me when I was alive,” Patterson once recalled hearing a young woman at a popular funeral home in Kingston say. “But you will damn well see me as I leave.”

Ebony Patterson (b. 1981)
From the Series: Invisible Presence: Bling Memories, 2014
Fabric, acrylic paint, adhesive, crochet doilies, fabric appliques, fabric flowers, fringe, glitter, pinus palustris, lace, rhinestones, ribbon, tassels
Courtesy of the Artist and Monique Meloche Gallery, Chicago.

Ebony Patterson (b. 1981)
From the Series: Invisible Presence: Bling Memories, 2014
C-Print
Courtesy of the Artist and Monique Meloche Gallery, Chicago.

CARE + BEAUTY

(Floor 4)

HAIR

Picturing Black Girlhood: Moments of Possibility

The theme of beauty takes on a heightened significance in "Picturing Black Girlhood." Not only is this theme interwoven throughout the show, but it is prominently featured on the top floor to reveal beauty's power as an aesthetic and political category for Black girls. Many of these artists featured here openly reject the exclusion of Black girls from white beauty standards, while others celebrate how Black girls redefine it.

While natural hair has historically been an embattled site for Black girls in the United States and Europe, for over 5,000 years, Black hair has also been a source of creativity, originality, and self-expression. Braiding, in particular, is recognized to be both high art and an everyday hairstyle with Black women and girls transforming their hair into sculptural styles and intricate patterns. Over the years, getting braids—single plaits, cornrows, or any style that weaves together three strands of hair—has become a rite of passage for many Black girls throughout the globe, and demonstrates that our hair is our real crown, a symbol of beauty, strength, and identity that we show to each other and the world. Try making your own braid sculpture now.

Savannah Flowers (b. 2005)
On the Edge, Series I, 2019
Archival Inkjet Print
Courtesy of the Artist and A Long Walk Home.

Savannah Flowers (b. 2005)
On the Edge, Series II, 2019
Archival Inkjet Print
Courtesy of the Artist and A Long Walk Home.

Jada Thompson (b. 2003)
[In]Visible (Self-Portrait), 2017
Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra
Courtesy of the Artist and A Long Walk Home.

Nia Brown (b. 1998)
Whipped at the Roots From series "Relax", 2015
Gelatin Silver Print
Courtesy of the Artist and the Collection of Scheherazade Tillet.

Adama Delphine Fawundu (b. 1971)
Intersections II, 2018
Archival Pigment on Cotton Photo Rag Paper
Courtesy of the Artist.

Nia Brown (b. 1998)
Braids, from Series Relax (Selection), 2015
Gelatin Silver Print
Courtesy of the Artist and the Collection of Scheherazade Tillet.

Nakeya Brown (b. 1998)
Hot Comb & Mitten, 2014
Archival Inkjet Print
Courtesy of the Artist.

Rashida Bumbray (b. 1978)
Braiding and Singing (a point), 2020

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Single Channel Digital Film, 6 minutes and 47 seconds
Courtesy of the Artist.

Sheila Pree Bright (b. 1967)
Untitled #14 from the series "Plastic Bodies", 2003
Archival Inkjet Print
Courtesy of the Artist.

Sheila Pree Bright (b. 1967)
Untitled #15 from the series "Plastic Bodies", 2003
Archival Inkjet Print
Courtesy of the Artist.

Sheila Pree Bright (b. 1967)
Untitled #8 from the series "Plastic Bodies", 2003
Archival Inkjet Print
Courtesy of the Artist.

Sheila Pree Bright (b. 1967)
Untitled #16 from the series "Plastic Bodies", 2003
Archival Inkjet Print
Courtesy of the Artist.

Location: B. Wall 6 - Single
Cara Star Tyner (b. 2007)
"Old Childhood Memories", 2021
Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra
Courtesy of Bronx Documentary Center.

[Scan to listen to Cara Star Tyner interview her best friend during the quarantine.](#)

[QR CODE](#)

The Twerk Mirror

Whether it is in their bathrooms, bedrooms, or watching their own reflections in TikTok videos, Black girls use mirrors to practice Twerk moves as a radical form of self-expression. The term "twerk" comes from the New Orleans' early 90s bounce scene, while the movements themselves are traced to West African ceremony practices. Choreographed or improvised, individually or in a collective, Twerking provides girls with an opportunity to enjoy their bodies, embrace pleasure, and reclaim their sexuality and girlhood.

[Scan to listen to the special twerk playlist and show off your best moves in the mirror.](#)

[QR CODE](#)

Scheherazade Tillet (b. 1978)
Mirror, Mirror, Twerk, 2021
Acrylic Glass
Courtesy of the Artist.

Kiri Laurelle Davis

In 2005, Kiri Davis, a 17-year old girl enrolled in the Reel Works Teen Filmmaking program in Brooklyn, NY, debuted her powerful documentary, "A Girl Like Me." The film went viral, reaching millions of viewers and sparking a larger cultural conversation about the oppressive beauty standards that Black girls must confront everyday.

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In the film, Kiri recreates the famous “doll test” experiment, first conducted by psychologists Kenneth and Mamie Clark in the 1940s in which they asked Black children to choose between identical black and white dolls. In the original experiment, the majority of the children chose the white dolls. When Kiri repeated the experiment over sixty years later, 15 out of 21 children also chose the white dolls over the black, giving similar reasons as the original subjects, associating white with being pretty or good and black with ugly. The sobering results were impossible to deny and then caused the viewer to consider “what really has changed?”

Kiri Laurelle Davis (b.1988)
A Girl Like Me, 2005
Film, 7 minutes and 16 seconds
Courtesy of the Artist.

Ciara Binns (b. 2006)
Self-Portrait, Granville, Jamaica, Inspired by the works of LaToya Ruby Frazier, 2017
Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra
Courtesy of the Artist, A Long Walk Home, and the Granville Reading and Art Programme.

Amachi Smith-Hill (b. 2003)
Wholeness, Inspired by the work of LaToya Ruby Frazier, 2019
Archival Inkjet Print
Courtesy of the Artist and A Long Walk Home.

Leila Zachary (b. 2002)
Leila's Photo Sequence Video, 2019
Film, 14 seconds
Courtesy of the Artist and The Art Effect.

Kellie Marty (b. 1998)
Girls Loving Girls, 2016
Archival Inkjet Print
Courtesy of the Artist and the Collection of Scheherazade Tillet.

THE BEAUTIFUL PROJECT

The photographer Jamaica Gilmer, founded The Beautiful Project (now led by Khayla Dean) in 2004, a North Carolina-based collective of Black image-makers using photography, writing, and care to create spaces for Black women and girls. Growing up with a mother of the 1960s who taught her about the relationship between beauty, power, and racial freedom, Gilmer committed herself to amplifying the voices of Black girls and women, encouraging them to shape those conversations about identity, politics, and culture that are often about them but without them present. The Beautiful Project cultivates Black identity, fosters sisterhood, and embraces Black girls within a loving community.

Displaying only a sliver of the work that the collective has created in the last 18 years, taken by Black girls (ages 8 to 15) who are in the program or alumnae of it, as well by their adult mentors, including, Gilmer whose work on the third floor and Arielle Jean Pierre on this floor, the intergenerational dialogues between the photographers is an essential part of their practice and pedagogy. Their vision is for artists who “boldly and unapologetically create images of black girls and women photographers just as they are, daring them and the world that engages them to see the many, varied ways every black girl is, indeed, beautiful.”

Arielle Jean Pierre (b. 1990)

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Training Day, 2010
Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra
Courtesy of the Artist and The Beautiful Project.

Ahmadie Bowles (b. 2003)
Sibling Bonds II, 2019
Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra
Courtesy of the Artist and The Beautiful Project.

Ahmadie Bowles (b. 2003)
Sibling Bonds I, 2019
Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra
Courtesy of the Artist and The Beautiful Project.

Aline Siteo A. Sy (b. 2007)
Self Portrait, 2019
Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra
Courtesy of the Artist and The Beautiful Project.

Lacquen Tolbert (b. 2008)
Self-Portrait, 2019
Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra
Courtesy of the Artist and The Beautiful Project.

Ángelina Cofer (b. 2002)
Nineteen, 2021
Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra
Courtesy of the Artist and A Long Walk Home.

Danielle Nolen (b. 2000)
I choose how I'm portrayed, Inspired by Carrie Mae Weems's "Black Man Holding Watermelon," 2017
Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra
Courtesy of the Artist and A Long Walk Home.

Kaleica Douglas (b. 2005)
Verdant Glow
Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra
Courtesy of the Artist and The Art Effect.

Alliyah Allen (b. 1996)
Shaleia from series "Reclaim", 2018
Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra
Courtesy of the Artist.

Shukurah Floyd (b. 2006)
"I said don't smile mum", 2021
Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra
Courtesy of the artist and A Long Walk Home.

Zilah Harris (b. 2000)
Kitchen Table Series, Inspired by work of Carrie Mae Weems, 2016
Archival Inkjet Print

Picturing Black Girlhood: Moments of Possibility

Courtesy of the artist and A Long Walk Home.

Fanta Diop (b. 2003)

Black Lives Matter Protests, 2020

Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra

Courtesy of the Artist and Bronx Documentary Center.

Samantha Box (b. 1977)

Untitled, Sylvia's Place, 2006

Digital C-Print Mounted on Sintra

Courtesy of the Artist.