

Mesa Community College Art Gallery presents exhibits honoring Black history and women's history

By [Tom Maxedon](#)

Published: Wednesday, February 28, 2024 - 5:05am

 [Download mp3 \(1.97 MB\)](#)

North Town Neighborhood Documentary



The Mesa Community College Art Gallery is hosting a reception from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 28, on its Southern and Dobson campus.

The event will welcome patrons to two separate exhibits focusing on Black History and Women's History.

The first exhibit examines the racist past of Mesa and is titled, "Matriarchs of Washington Park the African American Women Who Persevered through Racism

We use cookies on this site to enhance your user experience. Please review our [privacy policy](#) for more information.

OK

It's curated [by documentarian Bruce Nelson](#) and honors the perseverance of Black women who lived in what was a segregated, one-square-mile neighborhood just north of downtown Mesa.

"As Black families moved into Mesa in the turn of the century, early 1900's, they were forced to live in this neighborhood. Mesa even had segregated schools until 1953," said gallery coordinator Tracey Blocker.

Hear Tracey Blocker's interview with Tom Maxedon

0:00 / 5:03

The exhibit includes paintings and mannequins clothed in period dress.

The formerly segregated tract is now know as the Washington-Escobedo Heritage Neighborhood.

Fetaured artists include: Todd Bailey, Brie Bartz Bordeaux and Carla Keaton.

"Their works honor how the community thrived with the efforts of strong women such as Veora E. Johnson, Velma Alston, Lillie Mae King, Gladys Boston, Clara McPherson, Minnie Briscoe, Finder Anna Raglin and Louise Harrington," according to a separate release.



Antoinette Cauley

Antoinette Cauley poses in front of the finished mural.

We use cookies on this site to enhance your user experience. Please review our [privacy policy](#) for more information.

The second exhibition, titled “Future Matriarchs, the next generation of Matriarchs” is curated by MCC alum, and artist-in-residence, Antoinette Cauley.

Blocker said, “That is a group exhibition with artists working in a variety of media including painting, film, fibers, illustration, even ceramics.”

Cauley is a Black woman who grew up in the Valley and has received international acclaim as an artist. [She created a multistory mural of writer and activist James Baldwin](#) on a downtown Phoenix building in 2020.

According to the same release, "featured artists are Mia B. Adams, Shaunté Glover, Khandra D. Howard, Carla Keaton, Brianna Noble, Rhyan Johnson, Camryn Simone, Shoreigh Williams, Rae Wilson and Zybrena."

Recently based in Germany, Cauley stated prior to the gallery opening, “There were many powerful and creative pieces among the submissions for this exhibit, which shines a light on pressing issues and realities Black women and their respective communities face today. These works call into question important social and political issues that, if properly addressed, could lead to a more hopeful future for Black American communities.”

The exhibits run until April 1, 2024.

More stories from KJZZ

- [Artist Antoinette Cauley: Made in Arizona](#)
- [It's Black History Month, and NPR's Ayesha Rascoe talks about HBCUs](#)



We use cookies on this site to enhance your user experience. Please review our [privacy policy](#) for more information.



[Education](#)

[Arizona History](#)

[Arts + Entertainment](#)

[Race + Diversity](#)

We use cookies on this site to enhance your user experience. Please review our [privacy policy](#) for more information.