

PRESS INQUIRIES

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Art Center Sarasota's New Exhibitions:

January 25-March 2

Brian V. Jones: “Looking for Home”

Artist Talk on Thursday, February 8, 5:30-7 p.m.

Featuring a new body of photographic work that explores the layered personality of the city of Sarasota.

Carole Lyles Shaw:

“Black Women: Music of the Heart & Soul”

Artist Talk on Friday, January 5, 5:30-7 p.m.

Textile collages that celebrate Black women singers, songwriters, and composers.

Christopher Skura: “Social Studies”

Featuring a dynamic group of paintings and drawings that represent a snapshot of living in New York City throughout the Covid-19 pandemic.

Annual Juried Members Show

Juror Critique with Paul Toliver: Thursday, February 1, 2 p.m.

Showcasing the diverse and vibrant artwork of Art Center Sarasota members.

The opening reception for all exhibits is Thursday, January 25, 6-8 p.m.

(December 19, 2023) Art Center Sarasota’s 2023-2024 exhibition season continues with four exhibits, January 25-March 2. In “**Looking for Home**,” Brian Jones presents a new body of photographic work that explores the layered personality of the city of

Sarasota. (*Artist Talk is Thursday, February 8, 5:30-7 p.m.*) In “**Black Women: Music of the Heart & Soul**,” Carole Lyles Shaw celebrates Black women singers, songwriters, and composers who played groundbreaking roles in the history of many music genres, from opera to country to hip-hop. The work is grounded in traditional forms of quilt-making but presented through a contemporary lens with color, pattern and content. (*Artist Talk is Friday, January 5, 5:30-7 p.m.*) In “**Social Studies**,” Christopher Skura presents a dynamic group of paintings and drawings that represent a snapshot of living in New York City throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. The much-anticipated “**Annual Juried Members Show**” is juried by Paul Toliver and shines a light on the many talents of Art Center Sarasota members. (*A juror’s critique with Toliver is Thursday, February 1, 2 p.m.*) **The opening reception for all four exhibits is Thursday, January 25, 6-8 p.m.** All works on display are available for purchase. *Art Center Sarasota, 707 N. Tamiami Trail, Sarasota. For information, visit www.artsarasota.org or call 941-365-2032.*

“**Looking for Home**” is photographer Brian V. Jones’ exploration of Sarasota through the eyes of a Black photographer in search of a place to call home. A writer and an adjunct professor in liberal arts at Ringling College, Jones says that this project, which started in 2019, is “In many ways anyone’s search for home; exploring the idiosyncratic locations that define place, space, light and human dynamics.” He adds that this is a personal quest to “find the elusive elements that make one plant deep roots in a location both foreign and familiar.” Jones has devoted most of his life to making images. “Photography, for me, is a conversation with life,” he says. “It’s about color, shades of gray, and nuanced black and white. I am a child of light. My

photography is an exploration of symbols, beauty, design, and scale.” Jones became supervisor of photography for Howard University’s Moorland-Spingarn Research Center and served as an adjunct professor at several universities. He retired as professor emeritus in 2019 having been a full professor for over two decades. His projects have included major essays documenting D.C.’s Connecticut Avenue, The Black Churches Project, a survey of Afrocentric historic sites and commercial assignments. Jones’ work is collected privately, and by the Smithsonian American Art Museum, The NY Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, the Albin O. Kuhn Collection at UMBC and Colgate University.

In “**Black Women: Music of the Heart & Soul**,” Carole Lyles Shaw, an award-winning textile artist, author, lecturer and teacher, celebrates Black women singers, songwriters, and composers who played groundbreaking roles in the history of many music genres, from opera to blues to hip-hop. Her work is grounded in traditional forms of quilt-making but presented through a contemporary lens with color, pattern and content. “These works are what I call ‘spirit portraits,’” says Shaw. “A spirit portrait is a textile collage based on the techniques of quilt-making while drawing on the design elements typically found in painted portraiture. A spirit portrait represents the essence of an individual within their personal and historical context. I consciously employed different design styles, including vintage and Afrofuturism, to celebrate the individual’s importance in a contemporary light. I make each portrait unique by incorporating thematically relevant new and repurposed fabrics and embellishments to create these one-of-a-kind works.” Shaw has lectured about modern and art-quilting for groups and conferences in the U.S., UK, Canada and Australia. In 2020, she launched her highly

successful modern quilt and art-quilt virtual classes that attract students from the U.S., Canada, UK, Ukraine, Portugal and Australia. Shaw's work is in the permanent collection of the Rocky Mountain Quilt Museum, as well as in private and corporate collections. She has exhibited nationally and internationally and was featured as one of five designers in the "Makers Issue" of "American Patchwork & Quilting" magazine.

In "**Social Studies**," Christopher Skura presents a dynamic group of paintings and drawings that represent a snapshot of living in New York City throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. The artist explains that, in 2020, he began a routine of drawing every day in sketchbooks. "Out of these small drawings have come many sculptural ideas," says Skura. "Drawing quickly with paint markers, Sharpie's and colored pencils, my natural, hardwired shapes have become more pronounced. The goal is to work within a flow-state to achieve a direct expression." He adds that the style of his most recent work "is influenced by the street art that blanketed my New York City neighborhood during lockdown. The images reference psychology, structural systems, emergence theory and the architecture of the human body. Each work imagined is a psychological 'sculpture-portrait' of personalities that I encounter. Some of these forms are organic and plant-like but others suggest the machinery of a man-made environment. This duality reflects my visual experiences growing up in the lush Florida landscape and my current life living and working in New York City."

Skura is a graduate of Ringling College of Art and Design and New York University. He studied ceramic sculpture with Peter Gourfain at Greenwich House Pottery in New York City, drawing with Mark Barnett, Nicki Orbach and Leonid Gervits at The Art Students League of New York, stained-glass design and construction at The

Peters Valley School of Craft, painting and ceramics at The Florida Gulf Coast Art Center in Belleair and philosophy with Paul Edwards at The New School University. Other experience working in the studios of artists John Chamberlain and Hunt Slonem and staff positions at The Guggenheim Museum/ SoHo and Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York University's Art Museum/ Grey Art and The Ringling Museum of Art, gave him the unique opportunity to fabricate, construct and install many artworks for other national and international artists. Skura's work has been included in many exhibitions throughout the United States. In 2011, Skura and clay artist Julie Knight, built JAKPOT Ceramic Studios in the Catskill Mountains outside of Woodstock, NY.

The much-anticipated **Annual Juried Members Show** shines a light on the many talents of Art Center Sarasota members. Juror Paul Toliver is a passionate advocate in promoting all forms of art and is particularly motivated to uplift artists of the African Diaspora. He previously served as chair of the African American and Caribbean Arts Council of the Seattle Art Museum and was a member of the Seattle Art Museum's board of trustees. He chaired 4 Culture, a King County government entity to benefit artists and arts organizations in Seattle, WA. Toliver moved to Sarasota in 2017 and currently serves as chair of the Arts and Culture Committee of the Manasota Chapter of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History. He served as a board member of the Suncoast Black Arts Collaborative (SBAC) and was elected the committee chair for the 2022 SBAC "Visions in Black" art exhibition at Art Center Sarasota. Most recently, Toliver acted as juror and judge for the 2023 Embracing Our Differences annual art exhibit in Sarasota.

Art Center Sarasota's exhibitions are paid for, in part, by Sarasota County

*Tourist Development Tax revenues and the State of Florida Department of State,
Division of Cultural Affairs.*

Photo captions

Brian Jones:

“Canned Ham Vintage” (2023; digital photography)

“Market Day” (2023; infrared digital photography)

“View from the Hyatt” (2022; digital photography)

Carol Lyles Shaw

“Victoria Spivey Black Snake Blues” (2023; fiber art)

“Jazz: Sassy Red Shoes” (2023; fiber art)

“MC Sha Rock, Hip-Hop Queen” (2023; fiber art)

Christopher Skura

“Clowntown” (2023; ink and pencil on paper)

“Ghost Machine” (2023; acrylic, ink, pencil and flashe on paper)

“New Noir” (2021; ink on paper)

About Art Center Sarasota

Founded in 1926, Art Center Sarasota serves as the first and oldest visual arts organization in Sarasota. Art Center Sarasota is admission-free and open to the public; our mission is to bring together creatives and the broader public to increase understanding of our human condition, support wellbeing, and build community connection through the universal language of art.

Art Center Sarasota

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Gallery Hours

Monday-Friday: 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Saturday: Noon-5 p.m.