

Newcomb Art Museum to host free artist talk with LaToya Ruby Frazier

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LaToya Ruby Frazier, MacArthur Genius award-winning photographer, will give a talk, "Art as Transformation: Using Photography for Social Change," hosted by the Newcomb Art Museum at 6 p.m. on Oct. 2. Frazier, whose work "Flint is Family" is currently on view at the museum, will discuss how she has used photography to fight injustice. (Photo provided by Newcomb Art Museum)

Each day, we're bombarded by images: on billboards, on screens, in schools and in our bedrooms. These images, largely corporate in origin, carry power—power to shape, control, and constrain—even when they offer a fantasy, or an outright lie. For LaToya Ruby Frazier, whose work is currently on view in "[Flint is Family](#)" at the Newcomb Art Museum, photography is a battleground of representation.

“Through photographs, videos, and text I use my artwork as a platform to advocate for others, the oppressed, the disenfranchised,” says Frazier, an artist, activist, and MacArthur Genius awardee. “When I encounter an individual or family facing inequality, I create visibility through images and story-telling to expose the violation of their rights.”

We cannot control the material circumstances of our birth, our families or our economic circumstances. But in order to change society—to seed real change and cultural transformation, especially for the marginalized and the forgotten—we must change the picture we have of ourselves and our communities, argues Frazier.

In her talk, "Art as Transformation: Using Photography for Social Change," hosted by the Newcomb Art Museum on Wednesday, Oct. 2 at 6 p.m., Frazier will discuss how she has used photography to fight injustice—poverty, healthcare and gender inequality, environmental contamination, racism, and more—and create a more representative self-portrait. Drawing from her book "The Notion of Family" as well as from works of art by Frederick Douglass, August Sander, Julia Margaret Cameron, and Langston Hughes, she relates her conscious approach to photography, opens up more authentic ways to talk about family, inheritance, and place, and celebrates the inspirational, transformative power of images.

Free and open to the public, the talk begins at 6 p.m. in Freeman Auditorium. Following the talk the museum will remain open late for a free reception and a chance to explore the Frazier's current exhibition "Flint is Family," which is the result of Frazier's time spent living in Flint, Michigan with three generations of women observing their day-to-day lives as they endured one of the most devastating human-made, environmental tragedies in U.S. history: the lead contamination water crisis in their hometown. By collaborating closely with her subjects, Frazier rejected the voyeuristic photographs that emerged from outside media sources and instead captured intimate family moments along with the myriad challenges the community faced without access to clean water.

"Flint is Family" is on view at the Newcomb Art Museum through Dec. 14, 2019. Additional information on events and programs can be found at newcombartmuseum.tulane.edu.