

Newcomb Art Museum celebrates new exhibition by BMike Odums with free public reception

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Newcomb Art Museum is hosting a reception for the opening of its new exhibition Brandon "BMike" Odums: *NOT Supposed 2-BE Here* on Jan. 18 from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. The exhibition is the first solo show in a museum setting for BMike Odums, who is a New Orleans-based artist.

To celebrate the opening of the brand new exhibition, *Brandon "BMike" Odums: NOT Supposed 2-Be Here*, Newcomb Art Museum is hosting an exhibition reception on Saturday, Jan. 18 from 4 to 8 p.m. featuring music, catering, kids' art activities and an interview with the artist – all free and open to the public.

Opening on the Saturday prior to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day, the reception – and exhibition – is a celebration of the power of the individual, the community and shared legacy.

“In a space visited by students, and especially students of color, I’m conscious of the example I’m showing,” says BMike Odums. “If anything, I want to show them it didn’t require superpowers to get me where I am; it didn’t require some ‘beyond’ experience. I went to New Orleans public schools, I share a reality in common with most young people in New Orleans.”

Odums continues, “I remember one time a kid said, ‘I could do that,’ and I was like ‘Yes! And you could do even better.’ I know I benefitted from elders shedding light and my job is to continue to shed light. I just feel like I’m a part of that larger legacy of resilient people saying, ‘You can’t keep me out for long.’”

That idea of presence and who, or what kind of art, belongs in a museum is the central theme of ~~NOT~~ Supposed 2-BE Here, which is the first solo show in a museum setting for the New Orleans-based artist. The works presented wrestle with themes of heroism, cultural identity, and Blackness, as well as our region’s present-day ecological reality, and offer four different takes on inclusion – drawn across the historical notions of art, race, place, and accessibility.

Saturday’s celebrations kick off at 4 p.m. with art activities inspired by the exhibition and designed for kids of all ages that encourage them to tap into their own inner creativity. The evening reception begins at 5 p.m. and runs until 8 p.m., with music by DJ RQ Away and catering from Chef Ashley Jonique. At 6 p.m., guests will have the opportunity to hear from Odums in dialogue with Newcomb Art Museum director, Mónica Ramírez-Montagut, as he discusses his own trajectory as an artist, the impetus for the exhibition title, and themes present in the show during an engaging artist talk in Freeman Auditorium.

“BMike’s work is not only contributing to the field of art from an interdisciplinary perspective, he is also providing, through his public art, due visibility to individuals that deserve recognition for their great historical and current contributions in shaping our communities,” says Ramírez-Montagut. “Through this exhibition, and opening reception, the entire New Orleans and Tulane community can explore that work and experience for themselves the varied histories and futures celebrated through BMike’s art.”

The museum and its events are free and open to the public. Learn more by visiting newcombartmuseum.tulane.edu.