



Sibyls Shrine: Taking Care
Kahmeela Adams
Nakeya Brown
Tara Fay
Tsedaye Makonnen
Alisha B. Wormsley
sarah huny young

About the Artists

Kahmeela Adams has been described as a “media maven” and a “reserved pop culture genius.” As an artist, film and photography have always been twin passions for Kahmeela. These art forms suit her introverted nature, as well as empower her to compose and capture special moments and tell stories. To challenge herself to be more extroverted, she began producing and hosting several podcasts.

Nakeya Brown holds a BA from Rutgers University and an MFA from The George Washington University. Her work has been featured nationally in recent solo exhibitions at the Catherine Eldman Gallery (Chicago), the Urban Institute for Contemporary Art (Grand Rapids), the Hamiltonian Gallery (Washington, DC). Brown’s work has been featured in TIME, New York magazine, Dazed & Confused, The Fader, The New Yorker, and Vice.

Tara Fay is an independent curator, producer, and conceptual performance artist. She is a board member and associate curator at Bunker Projects and is a member of Carnegie Art Associates and the Associated Artists of Pittsburgh. Her curatorial process is rooted in creating space for underrepresented Black and Brown artists. She has curated exhibitions for the August Wilson African American Cultural Center, Phosphor Project Space, Brew House Association, and Denison University.

Tsedaye Makonnen is an interdisciplinary artist whose studio, curatorial, and research-based practice threads together her identity as a daughter of Ethiopian immigrants and a Black American woman, as well as her experience as a doula and a mother. Makonnen is the recent recipient of a Smithsonian Artist Research Fellowship, DC Public Library Maker Residency, DC Oral History Grant and Art on the Vine’s Savage-Lewis Artist Residency (Martha’s Vineyard). She has performed at the Venice Biennale, Art Basel Miami, Chale Wote Street Art Festival (Ghana), and El Museo del Barrio, among other spaces.

Alisha B. Wormsley is an interdisciplinary artist and cultural producer. Her work is about collective memory and the synchronicity of time, specifically through the stories of women of color. Wormsley's work has been honored and supported with a number of awards and grants to support programs: The People Are The Light (part of the Hillman Photography Initiative), afronaut(a) film and performance series, Homewood Artist Residency, the Children of NAN film series and archive, and There Are Black People in the Future. Wormsley holds an MFA from Bard College and was awarded the Postdoctoral Research fellowship in art at Carnegie Mellon University.

sarah huny young is an award-winning creative director and visual artist primarily documenting and exalting Black womanhood and queer communities through portraiture and video. Her work has been featured in Pittsburgh City Paper, New York Magazine, and The New York Times. Huny received the Advancing Black Arts in Pittsburgh grant in 2016 and 2020 to execute AMERICAN WOMAN, a portrait and documentary series about Black American women.

About the Curator

Jessica Gaynelle Moss is an artist, independent curator and arts consultant to institutions and private clients. She has an extensive background in program management, production and fabrication, nonprofit leadership, community engagement and the advancement of equitable development. Jessica is committed to developing innovative, ethical and responsible solutions to improve the conditions that directly affect Black people, women and underrepresented artists. She received a bachelors in Fine Art from Carnegie Mellon University; a masters in Arts Administration, Policy and Management from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago; and a masters in Studies of the Law from the University of Pittsburgh School of Law.

About Sibyls Shrine

Sibyls Shrine is a first-of-its-kind artist residency program for Black women, womxn, trans women, and femmes who are mothers and identify as artists, creatives, and/or activists in Pittsburgh and beyond. The program, created by artist Alisha Wormsley in 2019, supports a population that has been faced, for centuries, with the intersecting oppressions of racism and sexism, on top of the rigors of motherhood and childcare. The urgent need for Sibyls Shrine is underscored by the release of the “Pittsburgh’s Inequality Across Gender and Race” report by the Gender Equity Commission of the City of Pittsburgh in 2019. Irrefutable data across multiple categories showed the numerous ways in which Pittsburgh is one of the worst places in the country for Black women to live. When compared to white men and women, life is exponentially more difficult for Black women in Pittsburgh, a reality that has long been experienced by many of us. By providing financial support, funding for childcare, groceries, cleaning assistance, opportunities for skill-sharing, self-care, safe spaces and mutual aid, this project creates a structure that directly addresses the systemic and structural factors that oppress Black womxn, promising to positively impact a population acutely in need.

Artist Alisha B. Wormsley serves as the project’s Creative Director, and works in collaboration with Jessica Gaynelle Moss as the Administrative Director and Naomi Chambers as the Community Artist Liaison. Wormsley, Moss and Chambers are all Pittsburgh-based Black creative mothers. The Office of Public Art provides additional support as the Sibyls Shrine collaborating organization.

About The Lab Presents

The Lab Presents celebrates the Lab @ Silver Eye collaborations, providing a space for artist’s work to be engaged with by our community. The Lab @ Silver Eye is the only workspace in the region where artists can access museum quality printing, scanning, and print finishing equipment for affordable DIY use as well as professional development opportunities. Experienced artists can apply for Lab Membership to access the Lab by reservation or during regular Lab hours. The Lab also offer workshops and full service printing, scanning, and framing.

Sibyls Shrine: Taking Care

Due to the fatal COVID-19 virus, many people across the country have had to isolate and quarantine in their homes since early March 2020. Spending so much time alone and inside, away from our families and our communities, has had adverse effects on mental health. These lasting effects could ultimately lead to depression, substance abuse or self-harm. During these isolating times, trapped inside of our own individual silos, it is of paramount importance for all of us to find ways to take care of ourselves.

Self care is the practice of taking an active role in protecting one's own well-being and happiness, particularly during periods of stress. These practices have been clinically proven to reduce stress, anxiety and depression, improve concentration, minimize frustration and anger, increase happiness, improve energy, and more. Self care practices are especially critical for Black women in the US, and specifically in Pittsburgh, where so many social and environmental factors present challenges to our physical and mental health, and well-being. We give so much of ourselves to others, and yet we often fail to focus on our own care and healing. But what does it look like when Black women are taking care of themselves?

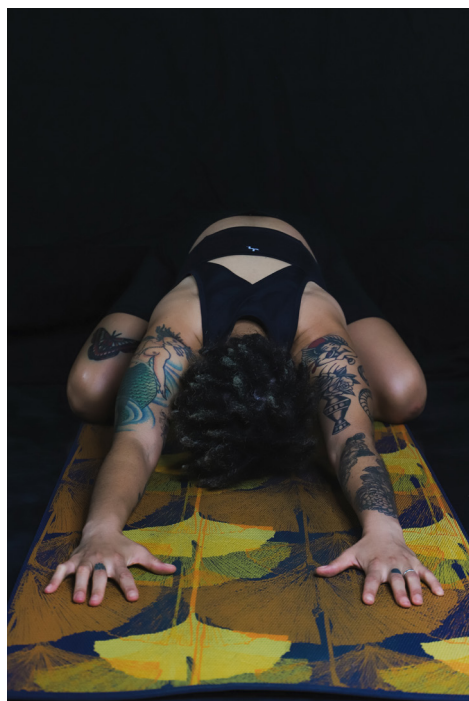
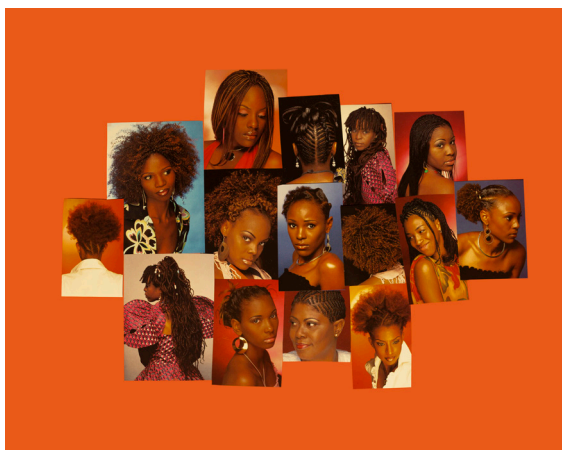
Sibyls Shrine: Taking Care features a collection of images from Alisha Wormsley, Kahmeela Adams, Nakeya Brown, Tara Fay, Tsedaye Makonnen, and sarah huny young which highlight how some Black women in our local community are finding ways to demonstrate care towards and for themselves. There are many healthy ways of dealing with emotions, like writing, playing music, prayer, meditation, exercise, calling your mother, or being in nature. Each of the photographs featured in *Sibyls Shrine: Taking Care* present a practice of self care that is unique to the individual and their specific needs.

Self care could be taking a moment to tend to your physical appearance, like getting a well deserved mani-pedi, selecting a new style for yourself from one of the iconic hair posters at the beauty salon, or getting fully pampered with a beat face in a luxurious setting. It could also look like a more restorative process such as cleaning your house in an effort to clear your mind, establishing a routine vinyasa yoga practice, or simply making an effort to tune out all the noise, close your eyes and breathe deeply. Self care practices look different for everyone.

Sibyls Shrine: Taking Care presents a diverse collection of Black women demonstrating care for themselves in a multitude of ways— in their

own personal spaces, their homes, beauty salons, nail salons, and even at the laundromat. As we begin to make an effort to prioritize our care, preserve our health and practice well-being in a world that doesn't always seem to care about us, ask yourself: what does self care look like for me?

— Jessica Gaynelle Moss, Curator



Images, top to bottom: Nakeya Brown, *DMV Passions Part II*, from the series, *X-pressions: Black Beauty Still Lives*, 2020; Kahmeela Adams, *Release*, 2020; Tsedaye Makonnen *My Eyelids Say Rest II*, 2020; Opposite left to right: Tara Fay, *Tara and Tim*, 2019; sarah huny young, *Opulence*, 2020; Cover image: Alisha B. Wormsley, *The People Are The Light: White Sheets*, 2017



Alisha B. Wormsley

*The People Are The Light:
White Sheets*

2017
Archival Pigment Print
16×24'

On request



Kahmeela Adams

Release

2020
Archival Pigment Print
16×20'

On request



Nakeya Brown

*DMV Passions Part II, from
the series, Xpressions: Black
Beauty Still Lives*

2020
Archival pigment print
16×12'

On request



sarah huny young

Opulence

2020
Archival pigment print
20×16'

On request



Tara Fay

Tara and Tim

2019
Archival pigment print
11×14'

On request



Tsedaye Makonnen

My Eyelids Say Rest II

2020
Archival Pigment Print
16×20'

On request



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