



**MEDIA ALERT**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**December 2, 2020**

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**DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS’  
WILLIAM GRANT STILL ARTS CENTER**

Celebrates the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Black Doll Show  
***All Dolled up – A 40-year celebration of the  
William Grant Still Arts Center’s Annual Black Doll Show***

LOS ANGELES, CA – The City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs William Grant Still Arts Center (WGSAC) is pleased to announce All Dolled Up: A 40 Year Celebration of the William Grant Still Arts Center's Annual Black Doll Show. The exhibition will run December 12, 2020, through February 21, 2021, and will present a retrospective that reflects forty years of Black dolls presented at the WGSAC. We continue to honor the diversity and uniqueness of the Black community through an exhibition of historical, artistic, and commercial Black dolls.

All Dolled Up: A 40 Year Celebration of the William Grant Still Arts Center's Annual Black Doll Show will open online in December and roll out in three parts with three themes "Getting Dolled Up" December 12, 2020, "Going to the Club" January 9, 2021, and "The Gala" February 6, 2021.

This year's exhibition will be virtual. The show will be accessible through WGSAC's linked website:

[wgsac.wordpress.com/BlackDollShow2020](https://wgsac.wordpress.com/BlackDollShow2020)

In light of this difficult year with so much loss and COVID-19 still without a vaccine or a cure, the William Grant Still Arts Center will not be able to celebrate this favorite community event in person. Just because we can't host grand parties to celebrate the 40th Anniversary of this legendary exhibition does not mean the dolls can't get dressed up and celebrate.

This milestone exhibition will reflect on forty years of the community coming together to present Black Dolls in all of their forms. The collection will include dolls made of various materials -- carved, cloth, wood, metal, fabric, paper, corn husk, ceramic -- and dolls fabricated from found materials and assemblage dolls. There will be traditional dolls, rag dolls, baby dolls, porcelain dolls, manufactured dolls, representations of Black childhood, fantasy and mythology, Afrofuturism, and Black liberation, as well as LGBTQ+ dolls.



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In the past, our doll shows have embodied joy, play, ritual, and reinterpretations of gender and sexuality. They have affirmed identity, and some dolls have been reminders of repressive stereotypes. More than anything, the Annual Black Doll Show has attempted to exemplify through this artform the complexities and diversity of being Black while working to heal as a pedagogical tool.

Artists in this year's show include Pat Shivers, Floyd Bell, Adrienne DeVine, Ramsess, Adah Glenn, Pamela Boddie, Janice Webb, Uhuru Snatchpower, and many more.

As we do each year, we will be fostering the continuation of this amazing genre of art through workshops. Join us for three free virtual workshops. The first workshop is with Adah Glen on December 19, 2020, the second workshop on January 16, 2021, is with Nawili Gray, and the third workshop on February 13, 2021, is with Alek Tabu.

Website: [wgsac.wordpress.com/BlackDollShow2020](https://wgsac.wordpress.com/BlackDollShow2020)

Email: [wgsarts@lacity.org](mailto:wgsarts@lacity.org)

Phone: 213-855-9390

Opening Reception Party (virtual):  
December 12, 2020, 4-6 pm PST

Workshops (virtual with materials provided):  
December 19, 2020, with Adah Glen  
January 16, 2021, with Nawili Gray  
February 13, 2021, with Alek Tabu

**About the Black Doll Show**

The Black Doll Show at The William Grant Still Arts Center was started in 1980 by the Friends of William Grant Still Arts Center, with artist Cecil Ferguson as its first curator. Inspired by the "Black Doll Test" conducted in the 1940s by pioneering psychologists Mamie and Kenneth Clark, who concluded that many African-American children preferred playing with white dolls over Black dolls, The Black Doll Show at the Center is the longest-running display of Black dolls in Los Angeles. Collectors and doll artists return time and time again to offer dolls from their collections that fit with the year's theme. At its root, it is a time for community to come together to celebrate the collections and contributions each individual has made to doll making and collecting over the years.



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**About the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA)**

As a leading, progressive arts and cultural agency, DCA empowers Los Angeles’s vibrant communities by supporting and providing access to quality visual, literary, musical, performing, and educational arts programming; managing vital cultural centers; preserving historic sites; creating public art; and funding services provided by arts organizations and individual artists.

Formed in 1925, DCA promotes arts and culture as a way to ignite a powerful dialogue, engage LA’s residents and visitors, and ensure LA’s varied cultures are recognized, acknowledged, and experienced. DCA’s mission is to strengthen the quality of life in Los Angeles by stimulating and supporting arts and cultural activities, ensuring public access to the arts for residents and visitors alike.

DCA advances the social and economic impact of arts and culture through grantmaking, public art, community arts, performing arts, and strategic marketing, development, design, and digital research. DCA creates and supports arts programming, maximizing relationships with other city agencies, artists, and arts and cultural nonprofit organizations to provide excellent service in neighborhoods throughout Los Angeles.

For more information, please visit [culturela.org](http://culturela.org) or follow us on Facebook at [facebook.com/culturela](https://facebook.com/culturela), Instagram [@culture\\_la](https://instagram.com/culture_la), and Twitter [@culture\\_la](https://twitter.com/culture_la).

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