Central Library to exhibit replicas of racial justice murals from Downtown Indianapolis’ boarded-up storefronts

_Banners of artworks will also be available for the community to borrow for display_

INDIANAPOLIS - Photographs of more than 20 Murals for Racial Justice artworks, painted by artists of color this summer in downtown Indianapolis, have been turned into large banners that will go on exhibit in mid-October at Central Library. Later this fall, individuals and organizations can reserve the 3-feet by 5-feet vinyl banners, at no cost, through Indianapolis Public Library for display at public and private events.

The new community-engagement initiative, funded through the generosity of Glick Philanthropies, is a partnership between the Indianapolis Public Library’s Center for Black Literature & Culture and the Arts Council of Indianapolis. The project, managed by Danicia Monét, an artist, equity practitioner, and design researcher, will also include professional development opportunities for all Central Indiana artists and public conversations about equity in the arts and humanities.

“The Center for Black Literature & Culture was very excited when Danicia approached us about supporting this project,” said the center’s director, Nichelle M. Hayes MPA, MLS. “This is a conversation starter and hopefully a catalyst for positive change. Art is critical; it heals and inspires further creativity. Being able to capture this historical moment will help to educate people today and for many years to come.”

In June, 24 Indy-based artists were commissioned to create murals on downtown’s boarded-up storefronts as an immediate response to the worldwide protests calling for an end to police brutality. The Murals for Racial Justice project was initially organized by the Arts Council, Indianapolis Cultural Trail Inc., PATTERN, St’ArtUp 317, and cultural entrepreneur Malina Simone Jeffers. The original plan was to exhibit the murals along the Indianapolis Cultural Trail: A Legacy of Gene and Marilyn Glick, but the plywood’s fragility made it unsuitable for long-term outdoor display. To document the murals’ historic and artistic significance, PATTERN produced the high-quality images that are being reproduced on the vinyl banners.

More details on how the public can reserve and display the banners will be announced by Indianapolis Public Library in October. Digital images of the murals will also be part of the library’s permanent collection at digitalindy.org, along with the artists’ bios and community learning resources.
“These images helped us to see the world differently,” Monét said. “One of the guiding principles for this initiative has been memorialization and education. We want to keep pressing for systemic change in our local communities and encourage the public to learn more about why this work of justice and liberation is vital. None among us has the luxury to close our eyes to the inequities.”

“Ending systemic racism is the challenge of our lifetimes, and art has power to help combat the racial and economic disparities that must be addressed to build community and create opportunity for our neighbors,” said David Barrett, vice chairperson, president and CEO of Glick Family Foundation and president of Glick Housing Foundation. “We’re proud to support the Murals for Racial Justice project as the arts are essential to creating a vibrant and inclusive city.”

**Upcoming Murals for Racial Justice events & opportunities**

Free online professional development workshops are open to all central Indiana artists on Sept. 16, Oct. 21, and Nov. 18. Artists can register at [indyarts.org/artists](http://indyarts.org/artists).

Artists who created murals on boarded-up windows in downtown Indy this summer, but were not part of the original cohort of 24 artists working with the Arts Council, may submit their artwork for possible inclusion in the Central Library program. Interested artists can email Danicia Monét at [info@daniciamonet.co](mailto:info@daniciamonet.co) with the subject line, “Share My Mural.”

Free public virtual conversations called Equity in the Arts & Humanities, curated by [Blackspace Indy](http://blackspaceindy.org), will be Nov. 10, Jan. 12, March 9, and May 11. More information will be available at indyarts.org. Both programs were developed through community charrettes and conversations with the artists who created the murals, led by Monét.

**ADDITIONAL CONTACTS:**

Danica Monét, Murals for Racial Justice project manager, [info@daniciamonet.co](mailto:info@daniciamonet.co)

Nichelle M. Hayes MPA, MLS, Center for Black Literature & Culture, [nichellehayes@gmail.com](mailto:nichellehayes@gmail.com)

*The Center for Black Literature & Culture (CBLC)* at Central Library celebrates the rich heritage of those with African roots. Made possible by Lilly Endowment Inc. through a grant to *The Indianapolis Public Library Foundation*, the 3,990-square-foot CBLC explores the Black experience in Indianapolis through interactive displays, engaging programming, and a large collection of books and materials that showcase those who have transformed the world through their courage, talents, and activism.

*The Arts Council of Indianapolis* fosters meaningful engagement in the arts by nurturing a culture where artists and arts organizations can thrive. Read the Arts Council’s Equity Statement [here](http://indyarts.org/equity).

---