

Solidary & Solitary: The Joyner/Giuffrida Collection

December 19, 2018



Bethany Collins, *My destiny is in your hands* (detail), 2018. Blind embossed wallpaper. Photo: Zachary Balber. Courtesy of Bethany Collins and Locust Projects.

Solidary & Solitary: The Joyner/Giuffrida Collection

January 29–May 19, 2019

Opening: January 28, 7–8:30pm

Smart Museum of Art, The University of Chicago

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The Smart Museum of Art at the University of Chicago has commissioned Bethany Collins, Samuel Levi Jones, and Amanda Williams to create new work as part of the Chicago presentation of *Solidary & Solitary: The Joyner/Giuffrida Collection* (January 29–May 19, 2019).

Drawn from the collection of Pamela Joyner and Alfred Giuffrida, *Solidary & Solitary* is a major touring exhibition that offers new perspectives on the critical contribution that African American artists and artists of the African diaspora have made to the evolution of visual art from the 1940s through to the present moment. The Smart Museum's presentation augments the core exhibition with three commissions from Chicago-area artists, who will enrich and expand the exhibition's narrative:

Bethany Collins

Alabama-born, Chicago-based artist Bethany Collins fills the forty-foot wall in the Museum's lobby with a blind embossed wallpaper comprised of official state flowers. Drawn to the language of flowers, or floriography, the artist investigated flower dictionaries that regained popularity in the 19th century and allowed for the sharing of hidden messages through bouquets. According to these dictionaries the state flower of Delaware relays the message "I am your captive," while Louisiana's state flower, the iris, says "I burn for you," and the camellia of Alabama, "My destiny is in your hands." Operating in a space between love, power, ownership, and nationhood, this largescale "talking bouquet" will, as the artist states, "memorialize moments of repeated violence throughout American history."

About

These commissions are overseen by Alison Gass, Dana Feitler Director, and Jennifer Carty, Associate Curator of Modern & Contemporary Art. Support for Bethany Collins's commission has been provided by Lead Sponsor Barbara Fosco. Support for Amanda Williams's commission has been provided by Lead Sponsor the Ziegler-Orloff Family Fund. *Solidary & Solitary: The Joyner/Giuffrida Collection* is presented by The Helis Foundation and organized by The Ogden Museum of Southern Art and the Baltimore Museum of Art. Support for this exhibition has been provided by the Smart Museum's Feitler Center for Academic Inquiry Fund and by Principal Sponsor Mary Smart and the Smart Family Foundation of New York. Additional support has been provided by the Museum's SmartPartners. The exhibition is co-curated by Christopher Bedford, Dorothy Wagner Wallis Director of the Baltimore Museum of Art and Katy Siegel, Senior Curator for Research and Programming at The Baltimore Museum of Art and inaugural Eugene V. and Clare E. Thaw Endowed Chair in Modern American Art at Stony Brook University.

