

For Immediate Release

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The Elements That Define Us *Contemporary Portraits of the Black Experience*

North Brentwood, MD (January 17, 2017) – Prince George’s African American Museum and Cultural Center (PGAAMCC) is proud to announce *The Elements that Define Us*, a Black contemporary portraiture exhibition, presented in conjunction with the University of Maryland David C. Driskell Center’s exhibition *Portraits of Who We Are*. *The Elements that Define Us* exhibition at PGAAMCC will be on display from Feb 2nd-May 25th, 2018.

The Elements that Define Us is a mixed media exhibition, highlighting color, materials, and composition style, that presents a contemporary perspective of the Black American experience. The exhibition will highlight portraits of the DC Metropolitan community and address the stylistic elements used to express the Black American experience locally and beyond. Curator Tomora Wright will focus on the compositional aspects of each piece, which lend symbolic meaning to the subject. Compositional styles and mediums in works of art are intentional and speak to Black American history, culture, communities, rituals, and lifestyles. In this exhibition, we want to give artists a chance to tell us the significance of their chosen artistic medium and how the elements they use play an important role in the stories they tell.

The Elements that Define Us will showcase 21 artist’s diverse perspectives of the Black experience. Wright carefully selected a group of multigenerational artists from the Greater Washington DC Area who excel in various mediums and styles. From mixed media collages to installations, from paintings to drawings and more, this exhibition presents a dynamic and multifaceted selection of work. Exhibition artists include:

Alonzo Davis	Al Burts	Tre Wilkes
Akili Ron Anderson	James Terrell	Elana Casey
Gina Marie Lewis	Toni Lane	Jamea Richmond Edwards
Chanel Compton	Jay Durrah	Curtis Woody
Taryn Harris	Egbert Evans	Michael Booker
Ulysses Marshall	Will Watson	Shawn Lindsay
Preston Sampson	Ronald Jackson	Zsundayka Nzinga Terrell

It is important to include Black artists in the Art History discourse, while also constantly redefining what it means to be a Black American artist in the 21st century. We often reference and draw inspiration from our history and artists who have paved the way, but artwork in 2018 is also undertaking equally challenging themes. PGAAMCC aims to highlight the current cultural climate and encourage continued dialogue. The artwork in *The Elements That Define Us* challenges viewers to see themselves in the composition of the pieces and recognize their own emotions through the artist’s hand. “Portraits are an intimate lens into the artist’s psyche,” Wright says. “In this exhibition, we will study the artists’ stylistic choices and impulses that ultimately help narrate unique stories, experiences, and emotions.”

Join us on **February 2nd** for the exhibition opening of *The Elements that Define Us*. In support of continued community growth in Prince George’s County, we look forward to your participation in supporting the arts and hope to see you there.

MORE ABOUT PGAAMCC:

Visitors can enjoy daily gallery tours of PGAAMCC’s permanent collection *Sharing Our Stories: Treasures from the Museum Collection* and *Footsteps to North Brentwood*, which feature artifacts and historical documents that explore the African American townships, schools, business, and communities that were developed in Prince George’s County. PGAAMCC also leads education outreach programs to Prince George’s County youth in grades K-12, which are currently serving over 4,000 Prince George’s County Public School students annually. **For more information, please visit our website at www.pgaamcc.org**