NEW ORLEANS
AFRICAN AMERICAN
MUSEUM

2020 Annual Report
NOAAM Board Members

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The New Orleans African American Museum of Art, Culture and History (NOAAM) is dedicated to the preservation, presentation and interpretation of the African and African American culture and heritage of New Orleans and the African Diaspora.
Vision

NOAAM is a nexus for inspiration, learning and connection, serving our neighborhood, our city and visitors from around the world with immersive exhibitions and public programs that weave together historical analyses and contemporary reflections about how the peoples of the African Diaspora contributed to and continue to shape the culture of New Orleans and America. We provide opportunities for seasoned and emerging researchers to advance scholarly dialogue in the fields of art, culture and history. We reach beyond our campus by collaborating with under-resourced entities in a rapidly gentrifying area and create neighborhood tours and programs that empower residents to contribute to our storied past and enable visitors to engage respectfully with our unique community.

Core Values

We believe that Black New Orleanians contributed to and shaped the unique qualities of this city and thereby influenced the world through art and culture.

We believe that the contributions of African Americans and the development of black culture is paramount to American society and should be shared with a global community.

We believe that leading edge art and the artists are who create it are essential to a vibrant, forward thinking society and NOAAM works with artists sustainably.

We believe that museums and arts and cultural centers have a responsibility to its community, core constituents which includes social justice and equity.
A Letter from our Executive Director

GIA HAMILTON
To the New Orleans African American Museum community:

At NOAAM we recognize that 2020 has been a challenging year on a macro level and also acknowledge that many of you have been through trials and tribulations on a personal level. We send you so much strength and levity moving into 2021.

The New Orleans African American Museum ends this year with many successes under its belt, pushing progress, building capacity and truly fostering the experience of imagination, possibility and abundance through our programming, tours and educational opportunities.

Our world is shifting and our society requires change, which brings its own challenges. At the museum, we have had to shake off out-moded ways of thinking about cultural institutions and the power they hold and consider how to best use our resources and assets to serve you, our community.

When we say Black Museums Matter, it isn’t just a catch phrase but rather a call to action to support black institutions, black artists and protect black spaces.

This annual report is the first of many as we aim to be transparent about our work. We see national and global changes towards equity and a more cooperative society as a true opportunity to build a new museum model-one which serves, partners in actions and not just in words and one where the community holds the institution accountable for adding value.

This new museum model includes an internal culture that supports the full acknowledgement and development of staff, board and volunteers as well as reengages artists, creatives and culture bearers as our thought partners. Without these contributors, our field would cease to exist.
In this moment of naming the trauma, pain and oppression that many experience daily, we believe artists are best poised to help us imagine the new world we wish to live in. There are many issues to be addressed and we look forward to exploring them in our exhibitions, public programming, partnerships, digital platforms, experiments and pilots that allow the New Orleans African American Museum to be a space of deep and lifelong learning, an incubator of new ideas and a connector of people from many different communities.

Thank you for believing in us! Thank you for believing that this space is essential to the cultural landscape and thank you for continuing to support us in meaningful ways. Art, creativity, imagination, history, and culture contribute to the creation of a new world, a new way and I am very grateful to have served in this capacity this year.

Please continue to support the growth and work of the New Orleans African American Museum by donating.

"The role of the artist is to make the revolution irresistible" — Toni Cade Bambara
Micah Bazant is a visual artist who works with social justice movements to reimagine the world

With much sincerity and gratitude,

Gia M. Hamilton
Executive Director & Chief Curator
Problem

Our society values art as a commodity, but not creatives, culture bearers and artists themselves or the process of making and discussing art. In addition, museums are rooted in colonial and extractive practices that take work out of context of the community and place value and judgements based on a eurocentric cannon creating spaces of exclusivity, static and unresponsive spaces for the community.

Our Solution

- The New Orleans African American Museum has listened to the community and the field and have placed an emphasis on learning, connecting and community access.

- NOAAM makes an investment in young talent by creating pipelines using a fellowship model to support professional development.

- In addition, NOAAM focuses on audience experience and “equitable tourism” models to increase connectivity of the visitor to the unique history and culture of Black New Orleans and how it is connected to the diaspora.

- NOAAM invests in educational programming that centers life learning programs for the entire family and changes the culture of the museum experience and thereby increases the number of museum goers and museum members who are invested in NOAAM’s long term success.
Giving to NOAAM 2019-2020

Corporate & Individual Support: $10,508.89
Individual Contributions: $18,195.00
Foundation and Trust Grants: $98,600.00
GiveNOLA Day: $18,673.53

NOAAM Income

- Admission, Memberships, & Group Tours
- Facility Rental & Event Income
- Corporate & Individual Support
- Individual Contributions
- Foundation and Trust Grants
- GiveNOLA Day
- Other Income

- Admission, Memberships, & Group Tours: 9%
- Facility Rental & Event Income: 8%
- Individual Contributions: 8%
- Foundation and Trust Grants: 44%
- GiveNOLA Day: 8%
- Other Income: 18%
- Corporate & Individual Support: 5%
Areas NOAAM is Addressing:
Museum Leadership and Organizational Structure

- Diversify the Board
- Cultivate alignment across the Organization
- Reorganize Values

Connecting with Communities

- Evaluate our Audience
- Engage Controversies
- Reach New Communities through Partnerships

Evolving Mission: Collections and Visitors

- Empower Education
- When Diversifying Collections, Commit to Curatorial Rigor and Transparency
- Cultivate Collaboration
Programming Metrics

Exhibitions to Date

Everywhere We Are | Everywhere We Go: Black Space and Geographies
April 11, 2019 - Present

PAPER MONUMENTS: Claiming Space by Colloqate Design
May 9 2019 - July 10 2019

Welcome to the Afrofuture: Ground Zero
September 12th - Present
(Kristina Kay Robinson remaining)

Unveiling History of the Past
An Ode to New Orleans Artists
March 5 - Present

Insitu
Online Exhibition Series
(Dominique McClellan)
August 13th -
Our Track Record
Since reopening in April 2019, NOAAM has...

- Hosted over 5,000 visitors
- Exhibited 5 visual arts shows
- Partnered with 15 arts, cultural and educational institutions
- Hosted over 66 events
- Reached over 17,000 people worldwide via our website and social media
Since reopening in April 2019, NOAAM has...

- Developed a fellowship pipeline for young curators, **AMPLIFY**
- Served visitors from **28** different countries
- Educated **38** tours groups of young people
- Created a reading room to be expanded with the New Orleans Public Library and the Historic New Orleans Collection
- Worked with **52** living artists through exhibitions and programs
Our Internal Successes
Since reopening in April 2019, NOAAM has...

Instituted new bylaws and term limits
Developed strategic partnerships with Treme cultural institutions offering admin support
Support 100% board giving participation

Launched the Brick Campaign for the historic campus
Launched the development of the year-round event community space The Freedom Garden in the lot next door
Registered 40% of the NOAAM permanent collection in our state of the art archival room

Completed all audits and 990s through 2019
Partnered with Backstreet Museum and Petit Jazz Museum to host the Treme Experience
Launched the National Advisory Committee
Secure dollars to complete our archival and collections department

- Equipment & Supplies
- Engagement support to ensure community knows our collection is open for lending and public use

Rigorous Exhibitions, Educational and Public Programming

- Production of 3-4 exhibitions per year including historic, solo, annual juried and collaborative exhibition.
- Signature BUILD A NATION educational program

Capacity Building

- AMPLIFY a fellowship program that supports young adults in their last year in highschool and matriculating college students seeking hands on-project based experience in careers in the arts in various departments including: general arts administration, curatorial, collections management, operations, event production, communications and outreach, fund development and education departments.

For a complete list of funding priorities and opportunities email Executive Director ghamilton@noaam.org
Partnership Opportunities

**NOAAM’s Exhibition Program** will feature four exhibitions per year: a solo artist show, an annual juried show, an historic exhibition and a collaborative or traveling exhibition.

**InSitu**, an online photography exhibition series by black contemporary artists, contextualizes responses to current issues facing humanity. *In situ* (ˌɪn sɪˈtjuː,ˌɪn səˈtiːoʊ/) is a Latin phrase that translates literally to "on site" or "in position." It can mean "locally", "on site", "on the premises", or "in place" to describe where an event takes place and can be used in many different contexts. For each exhibition, a black curator partners with a black photographer to create interviews, frameworks and “talk backs” around process, observations and reflections from the artists to the field.

**BUILD A NATION** is a comprehensive, community engaged educational program for life learners at NOAAM. Rooted in notions of Equity, Inclusion and Diversity, BUILD A NATION provides opportunities in three areas of focus that tie life skills together with culture bearing and history. Craftsman and Trade partners with master artisans like metal smiths, carpenters and masons etc, to teach the history of black tradesman and the contribution to the unique local architect as well as workshops on building and talks that delve into untold narratives about these sought after trades today. Curatorial, Art History and Studio offers participants an opportunity to learn art history from the african diasporic perspective grounding many black arts movements in political, civil rights and human rights issues across the globe. It allows the development of writing, speaking and curatorial skills to emerge and promotes the creation of new scholarly works about black artists and the contemporary black arts movements. It also provides studio quality art classes which encourages creativity, use of new materials and portfolio building. Finally, partnering with the Black Business School, participants are able to learn financial literacy, wealth building and entrepreneurial skills needed to launch products and service driven businesses with a focus on arts and cultural businesses.
**Conversations, Culture and Calas** is a uniquely New Orleanian speaker series that creates intimate opportunities to learn from subject matter experts, local scholars and cultural bearers across generations. Next generation leaders are paired with seasoned leaders to share with the public a discussion or interview rooted in the idea of passing the baton in honor of our cross-generational richness. Each session spans a range of subjects drawing from like culinary arts, African American traditions, movement work, politics, agriculture, history, art and education. Each talk is catered by a local chef who introduces his/her version of the traditional Creole dessert calas (fried rice dumpling) and a new dish to share with the audience.

**Free Saturdays at NOAAM** provides a festival like experience for the whole family once a month at the museum aimed at welcoming seasoned and new museum goers. With markets, arts education, workshops, music and performance and talks, NOAAM provides a place to connect, learn and support the cultural community. NOAAM partners with black owned food trucks, black farmers and black businesses to increased equity initiatives and to host BUILD A NATION which provides intensive style workshops in three distinct areas of focus.

**AMPLIFY** a fellowship program that supports young adults in their last year in highschool and matriculating college students seeking hands on- project based experience in careers in the arts in various departments including: general arts administration, curatorial, collections management, operations, event production, communications and outreach, fund development and education departments.

**The Freedom Garden** will transform a currently inhospitable vacant lot next door studded with concrete elements into a sustainable, COVID-appropriate, community space for year-round events, pop-up retail, food vendors, shaded seating areas, and education aligned with NOAAM’s mission. As NOAAM will host the reception center for our city's triennial Prospect 5 artists and visitors in Fall 2021, the Freedom Garden may feature new commissions from local and national artists who wish to depict our history as well as reimagine the future of blackness in our city and America. Having secured significant in-kind services from the Engineers Without Borders-NOLA and Dana Brown & Associates, NOAAM is raising funds to remove existing foundations and paving and install sustainable landscaping and stormwater management.
**Tremé Experience** offers half day and full day tourist experiences in New Orleans’ Tremé neighborhood (historically called Bulbancha before colonization), the oldest black neighborhood in the United States. A half day begins with a walking tour starting at Congo Square in Armstrong Park and stops at Back Street Cultural Museum, St. Augustine Church and Petite Jazz Museum ending at the New Orleans African American Museum and lunch catered by Lil Dizzy’s at the NOAAM. The full day experience takes visitors for a walk down the 5,000 year old Chitamacha trail (Bayou Road) to visit Le Musee de Free People of Color, Katrina Memorial Museum and to the black-owned businesses along Bayou Road.

**Treme Card** if you are a Treme resident, we care about supporting our neighbors and one way that we do this is by partnering with the local Historic Treme Neighborhood Association to offer its members and Treme Residents with proof of residency a free annual membership which gives free admission to the museum plus discounts on VIP events and a discount in the NOAAM concept store coming September 2019.

**Museum Takeover**, a community engagement program that allows creatives to utilize the museum space for experimental and progressive programming and its sister component, an educational workshop series for educators looking to create culturally relevant curricula within the public, private and parochial school models.

**Treme Heroes**, a murals project. Sponsor a local muralist to produce a LIVE painting of a contemporary or historic Treme figure who paved the way or is preserving the culture by sponsoring the local artists honorarium and materials fee. All work becomes a part of the NOAAM permanent public works collection and offers the sponsor a permanent name placement and outdoor placard.

**Dinner, Discussion and a Movie**, a monthly dinner and film series. Black film, cinema and videography doesn't get the critical discussion it deserves from the community it seeks to depict. With Dinner Discussion and a movie NOAAM facilitates discussions after a film or video screening while enjoying the discourse of a diverse community.
Wall of 300 - Brick Campaign

Purchase a personalized permanent brick to be installed on the Wall of 300 on the corner of Governor Nicholls and North Villere Street. The funds raised will go directly to helping restore and reopen our historic campus!

Over $16,000 raised to date. To add your name and purchase a brick, go to noaam.org/support

NEW ORLEANS AFRICAN AMERICAN MUSEUM

#BLACKMUSEUMSMATTER

Generous support for NOAAM comes from

We give thanks to all our partners, donors, and sponsors!