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**PAUL ROBESON GALLERIES' INAUGURAL SHOW AT EXPRESS NEWARK
A DYNAMIC EXPLORATION OF PORTRAITURE**

Newark, New Jersey -- Paul Robeson Galleries at Express Newark, Rutgers University - Newark is pleased to announce its forthcoming group exhibition, *Mirror Mirror*. The exhibition is an expansive take on portraiture, challenging the viewer's expectations of the genre. The exhibition is on view at The Main Gallery (54 Halsey Street, 3rd Floor) from February 19 through December 20, 2018. A free public reception will be held on March 1 from 6 to 8 o'clock in the evening.

"Portraiture is one of the most enduring and essential art forms, having a constant presence throughout art history," says Paul Robeson Galleries' Director and Chief Curator Anonda Bell. "The artworks in *Mirror Mirror* challenge dominant understandings of gender, race, age, social norms, technology, and beauty. The exhibition is meant to provoke curiosity and discussion rather than providing a definition of what constitutes a 'portrait'."

Mirror Mirror presents works in a variety of media from thirty-two international emerging and established artists and one artist collective: Manuel Acevedo, Zoë Charlton, Paolo Cirio, David Antonio Cruz, Kevin Darmanie, E.V. Day, Leah DeVun, Nona Faustine, Tatyana Fazlalizadeh, Anne-Karin Furunes, Phyllis Galembó, Chitra Ganesh, William Kentridge, Riva Lehrer, Ani Liu, Jessamyn Lovell, Hyphen-Labs (Carmen Aguilar y Wedge, Ece Tankal, Ashley Baccus), Peggie Miller, Anna Ogier-Bloomer, Polixeni Papapetrou, Patricia Piccinini, Wendy Red Star, Faith Ringgold, Kevin Blythe Sampson, María Verónica San Martín, Leo Selvaggio, Laura Splan, Dread Scott, Beat Streuli, Arne Svenson, Shoshanna Weinberger, Deborah Willis, and Martha Wilson.

Mirror Mirror plumbs the relationship between identity, cultural norms, and representation. In the most abbreviated of forms, a portrait is a depiction of a person, usually a face, occasionally a torso, sometimes more of the body, or even a symbolic presentation of an aspect of an individual's character. The artists in the show have approached the subject of portraiture in a multitude of ways. Historically, portraiture was utilized in service of the ruling classes, and some of the works in the exhibition explore the machinations of the powerful, touching upon the fraught histories of colonialism, slavery, American inference abroad, and eugenic practices. Photography is presented in both documentary modes and as a means to deconstruct representations of femininity, adolescence, and motherhood. Other artists work in non-traditional media, exploring the portrait painted by our data and bacteria, and radical possibilities of self-invention through new virtual and bio technologies. Taken as a whole, the works in *Mirror Mirror* communicate the connected nature of representation and self-determination.

The exhibition is accompanied by a 140-page illustrated catalog with essays from Susan Bright, Amanda Cachia, Nell Painter, Dorothy Santos, Jay Stanley, Anne Swartz, Jorge Daniel Veneciano, and Carla Christopher Waid, amongst others. *Mirror Mirror* includes a dynamic schedule of free, public and educational programs that include a performance of David Antonio Cruz's *green,howiwantyougreen*; artist talks from Kevin Darmanie, Riva Lehrer, Peggie Miller, Kevin Blythe Sampson, Laura Splan; curator tours; workshops, and more.



SPONSORS

The Paul Robeson Galleries' programs are supported, in part, by a grant from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State, a Partner Agency of the National Endowment for the Arts, The Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation and by private donations. Paul Robeson Galleries is supported by Express Newark, the Robeson Campus Center and the Cultural Programming Committee, Rutgers University - Newark.

ABOUT THE PAUL ROBESON GALLERIES

The Paul Robeson Galleries' mission and programming embody Paul Robeson's life-long commitment to unfettered artistic freedom, cultural democracy, and transnationalism. The Paul Robeson Galleries is dedicated to presenting art and cultural artifacts as well as educational and public programming in the spirit of the diverse metropolitan context of Rutgers University at Newark, the Greater Newark communities, and the northeast region of New Jersey. The Gallery's programs strive to: present arts and visual culture exhibitions and events of the highest quality; enrich the University arts programs with cross-disciplinary collaborations; provide gallery educational experience to local and regional communities; strengthen collaborative relationships with Greater Newark's artistic, cultural, and educational organizations; advance Paul Robeson's legacy of encouraging cross-cultural artistic freedom and cultural democracy; emphasize the role of arts and culture in the shaping and functioning of society; reflect the spirit of the University's diverse metropolitan context; and enhance the quality of life for the campus and Greater Newark communities.

ABOUT EXPRESS NEWARK

Express Newark is a university–community collaboratory in Newark's historic Hahne and Company building. A conceptual framework and an interdisciplinary learning space, Express Newark houses the Newest Americans; the Form Design Studio; the Design Consortium; Visual Means; Shine Portrait Studio; the Community Media Center; Scarlet Magazine; the Newark Print Shop; the Paul Robeson Galleries; and twenty-two resident artists in printmaking, photography, painting and video. At Express Newark, artists and community residents collaborate, experiment, and innovate in partnership with Rutgers University – Newark faculty, staff, and students with the goals of engaging in public work, creative practice, and democratic dialogue in order to promote positive transformation. Express Newark is co-directed by Victor Davson, founding director of Aljira, a Center for Contemporary Art, Newark's longest lived and most respected gallery, and Anne Schaper Englot, RU-N professor of architecture and humanities in the interdisciplinary Arts, Culture and Media (ACM) Department.

GETTING HERE

Paul Robeson Galleries at Express Newark is accessible by car and by public transit via the Path train to Newark Penn Station and New Jersey Transit to Military Park Station. For more details and information on patron services for visitors with disabilities, please visit our website: <http://artgallery.newark.rutgers.edu/about/visit/>.

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