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## The Block Museum of Art unveils its latest exhibition, “A Site of Struggle: American Art against Anti-Black Violence”



The Block Museum of Art. Representatives from The Block invited Faculty Senate members to partake in visiting the upcoming exhibit, “A Site of Struggle: American Art against Anti-Black Violence.”

Katherine McDonnell, Reporter

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The Block Museum presented its latest exhibit highlighting Black artists’ creations and commentary on anti-Black violence at Wednesday’s Faculty Senate meeting.

Featuring works dating back to the 1890s, the exhibit, titled “A Site of Struggle: American Art against Anti-Black Violence,” investigates how artists subvert racism and violence in American history, Ellen Philips Katz Director Lisa Corrin said.

A group creation led by Janet Dees, a curator of modern and contemporary art, the exhibit showcases original works from Ida B. Wells, Melvin Edwards, Darryl Cowherd and other artists. Dees said she began working on the exhibit in 2016, beginning

with anti-lynching art from the 1890s and ending at the founding of Black Lives Matter in 2013.

“This is an exhibition that is rooted really in (fundamental) questions,” Dees said “One is how has art been used to protest, process, mourn and memorialize anti-Black violence in the United States?”

Dees said the exhibit was a collaboration between Northwestern graduate students, faculty and outside professionals. Corrin emphasized the importance of student input on the project because the content is relevant to the contemporary environment, and to the lived experiences of undergraduate and graduate students.

The Block Museum will have the exhibit on display from Jan. 26 to July 10 and will hold opening programming over Zoom on Jan. 29. Dees and Corrin said all are welcome and the museum will be closed to the public on Mondays and Tuesdays, allowing for reservations by NU students, faculty and staff.

Corrin said she hopes Faculty Senate members will encourage their colleagues and students to attend this exhibit, adding that she had not presented at a Faculty Senate meeting prior to Wednesday’s during her 10 years at NU.

“There is a very specific opportunity to engage your academic departments in a very particular way,” Corrin said.

Dees said the exhibit is unique considering The Block’s history. The museum will not offer tours, unlike other exhibits, and will feature a discussion guide to help audience members continue engaging with the art after their visit. She said graphic materials will be separate from the exhibit, so all community members can participate no matter their comfort level. The exhibit will also feature a quiet space, offering museum-goers a chance to reflect on their thoughts and experiences.

Faculty Senate members shared their gratitude for The Block’s work in educating community members through art. Communication Prof. Kyle Henry said he was glad to have the opportunity to showcase the exhibit to his students, and hopes other faculty members will do the same.

“(The Block) is one of the most forward-facing units on our campus in terms of community engagement,” Henry said. “If you’ve ever attended programs, it’s one of the few places where scholars, students and the general public can have conversation.”