

Media Contact:

Erica Corsano

617-510-1825

ecorsano@fiu.eduwww.frost.fiu.edu

Caption: Coconut Grove Art Festival Mural, 1967. History Miami Archives.

Frost Art Museum FIU presents “Place and Purpose: Art Transformation in Coconut Grove”

*The first scholarly exhibition examining the history of arts and culture in
Miami’s oldest neighborhood opens at FIU*

MIAMI (April XX, 2021) - On May 29, 2021, Patricia & Phillip Frost Art Museum FIU will present “Place and Purpose: Art Transformation in Coconut Grove.” For decades, Coconut Grove has attracted artists, writers, and musicians. Through a select group of visual artists, the Frost will tell the story of the Grove’s rich history and how the spirit of this community has contributed to the Grove’s reputation as a wellspring of creativity.

Coconut Grove established itself in the 1960’s as the local haven for a diverse group of artists, writers, musicians, and art galleries. Many artist-activist community leaders have left their marks on the Grove through the art and the spaces they created, such as the Miami Black Arts Workshop in historic Bahamian Coconut Grove. “Place and Purpose: Art Transformation in Coconut Grove” celebrates the role of a community as a creative space as well as a key driver behind a young city’s evolution.

“This exhibition plays tribute to a Miami community whose history and present are rich in art and culture, including the founding of the Miami Black Arts Workshop and the Coconut Grove Arts Festival,” said Museum Director Jordana Pomeroy. “Coconut Grove was home to artists like Annette Rawlings, who combined interests in fashion, painting, and ceramics; as well as Owen Lee, a prolific, self-taught artist who worked with paper, tapestries, and sail cloth; and countless artists that have worked, and many who continue to work, in the Grove. We are pleased and honored to share many of their works and to tell the story of this artistic mecca in Miami-Dade County.”

Some of the artists represented include Roland Woods, Jr., Robert McKnight, Donald McKnight, Dinizulu Gene Tinnie, and Pamela Kabuya Bowens-Saffo, among others. Community activists, as well as artists, these leaders created a powerful space in Coconut Grove through the MBAW, a venue that welcomed young people to learn about art and activism.

The Grove's rich history has contributed to the complex narrative of Miami as a home for myriad cultures and the arts. Community events such as the Coconut Grove Arts Festival (dating back to 1963), the Goombay Festival (established in 1977), and the King Mango Strut Parade (founded in 1982) became signature events of the Grove that continue today. While most art galleries have long since moved out of the Grove and today's prohibitive real estate prices discourage artists and musicians from living in the Grove, the neighborhood's legacy as an art haven remain.

"Coconut Grove possesses many untold histories, as does South Florida more broadly. This exhibition seeks to build a dynamic and unexpected narrative that honors artists affiliated with the Miami Black Arts Workshop and Grove House as well as artists who called Coconut Grove home for many decades," said Frost Museum Head Art Curator Amy Galpin. "Our exhibition hopes to honor this geographic space as a site for artistic transformation while revealing complex ways in which our communities morph and change."

The exhibition was made possible with support from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, the Art Dealers Association of America Foundation, PNC Bank, the Office of Miami Commissioner Ken Russell, the Coconut Grove Business Improvement District, and the members of the Patricia & Phillip Frost Art Museum.

The exhibition will be on display from May 29, 2021 — September 19, 2021, for more information, please visit frost.fiu.edu.

-FIU-

About the Patricia & Phillip Frost Art Museum FIU:

One of the largest art museums in Florida, the Patricia & Phillip Frost Art Museum at Florida International University was founded in 1977 and is the Smithsonian Affiliate in Miami. The museum's mission is three-fold: to be a campus resource for the entire FIU community; to offer interdisciplinary training in the arts for the next generation of artists and art historians; and to serve as a premier cultural destination for the residents of Miami, and visitors. The Frost is accredited by the American Alliance of Museums and is located on the FIU MMC Campus at [10975 SW 17 Street](#). Open Tuesday-Saturday 10:00 a.m. - 4:45 p.m., and Sunday noon-4:45 p.m. Closed on Mondays and most legal holidays. The Sculpture Park is open every day. Admission to the museum is always free. For more information, visit frost.fiu.edu.

About FIU:

[Florida International University](#) is a [Top 50 public university](#) that drives real talent and innovation in Miami and globally. High research (R1) activity and high social mobility come together at FIU to uplift and accelerate learner success in a global city by focusing in the areas of environment, health, innovation, and justice. Today, FIU has two campuses and multiple centers. FIU serves a diverse student body of more than 58,000 and 260,000 Panther alumni. U.S. News and World Report places dozens of FIU programs among the best in the nation, including international business at No. 2. Washington Monthly Magazine ranks FIU among the top 20 public universities contributing to the public good.