

ART + PRACTICE

PRESS RELEASE

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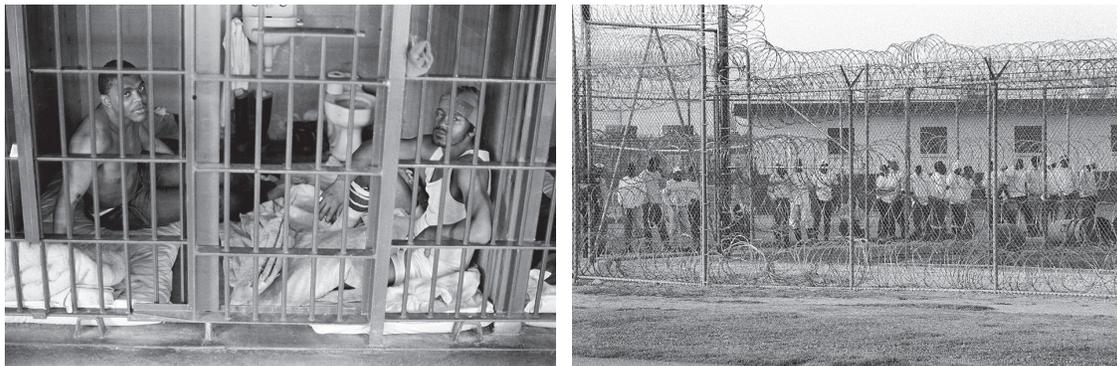
Art + Practice and the Frist Museum of Art Present *Slavery, The Prison Industrial Complex: Photographs* by Keith Calhoun and Chandra McCormick

Art + Practice: 3401 W. 43rd Place, Los Angeles, CA 90008

Dates of Exhibition: September 22, 2018 - January 5, 2019

Regular Hours: Monday - Saturday, 12:00 - 6:00 p.m.

Public Opening Reception: Saturday, September 22, 2018, 2:00 - 5:00 p.m.



Los Angeles, CA; August 29, 2018 - Art + Practice (A+P) and the Frist Art Museum present an exhibition with New Orleans-natives Keith Calhoun (b. 1955) and Chandra McCormick (b. 1957) in Leimert Park, Los Angeles titled *Slavery, The Prison Industrial Complex: Photographs* by Keith Calhoun and Chandra McCormick. The exhibition will be on view at A+P from September 22, 2018 through January 5, 2019.

For more than 30 years, Calhoun and McCormick have been documenting African American life in Louisiana. Since 1980, they have made regular visits to the Louisiana State Penitentiary at Angola to photograph life on the prison farm, which was founded on the consolidated land of several cotton and sugarcane plantations. *Slavery, The Prison Industrial Complex* includes 22 of their poignant, mostly black-and-white images and two videos, which record the exploitation of the men incarcerated within the maximum-security prison farm while also showcasing the prisoners' humanity and individual narratives. The exhibition sheds light on the cracks within our country's "criminal justice" system and restores visibility to a population often forgotten by the public at large.

"When A+P was approached by the Frist Art Museum to organize an exhibition with artists Keith Calhoun and Chandra McCormick, A+P jumped at the opportunity," said Allan DiCastro, Executive Director of A+P. "Having known Calhoun and McCormick since 2008 - when A+P's co-founder Mark Bradford installed his work in New Orleans as part of the New Orleans-based art biennial *Prospect.1* - A+P looks to Calhoun and McCormick's decades long work, both at

Angola and at their Lower 9th Ward community nonprofit art center called L9 Center for the Arts, as models for A+P and its mission. A+P is honored to further champion their work, making it accessible to South Los Angeles."

Largely self-taught, Calhoun and McCormick began their artistic careers photographing festivals, second line parades, and neighborhood gatherings in New Orleans. In 2005, many of their negatives spanning three decades of work were damaged by hurricane Katrina's floodwaters. Years later, they printed the negatives and incorporated the mold and mildew blooms into the work, which produced abstract effects, shadows of other works, and layers of interpretation. "By co-opting the degradation on the negatives, Calhoun and McCormick embraced the enduring evidence of the harsh ramifications of the storm on New Orleans," notes Dr. Susan H. Edwards, Executive Director and CEO of the Frist Art Museum in her essay in the accompanying publication titled *Louisiana Medley*.

The post-Katrina recovery process led the couple to redouble their community engagement efforts. Their intimate understanding of prison culture and the importance of intervention before incarceration has informed their activism not only on behalf of individuals directly involved with correctional facilities, but also in their own New Orleans community, where they teach photography to at-risk youth and have made their studio a welcoming environment in the neighborhood.

"We are deeply honored that A+P is presenting Keith and Chandra's work and to be working with this notable Los Angeles-based nonprofit," said Dr. Edwards. "A+P's mission is perfectly aligned with their art and work with young people in New Orleans. The exhibition was well received in Nashville, TN, where conversations about mass incarceration and engaging youth with art continue," Dr. Edwards further stated.

A+P is the second venue of a national tour, which originated at the Frist Art Museum. After A+P's presentation, *Slavery, The Prison Industrial Complex* will travel to the Hilliard University Art Museum at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette and other institutions.

PUBLICATION

The Frist Art Museum has produced a hardcover book titled *Louisiana Medley* about the couple's work. Published by Lucia | Marquand, the publication includes 70 plates, a foreword by Dr. Deborah Willis, chair of the Department of Photography & Imaging at the Tisch School of the Arts at New York University, a career overview by Frist Executive Director and photography historian Dr. Susan H. Edwards, and an essay by Dr. Makeda Best, Richard L. Menschel Curator of Photography, Harvard Art Museums, that places the images of *Slavery, the Prison Industrial Complex* in the context of other prison photographs.

Copies for sale are available for purchase at Eso Won Bookstore in Leimert Park, Los Angeles.

Eso Won Books:

4327 Degnan Boulevard
Los Angeles, CA 90008

Art + Practice Exhibition Space:

3401 W. 43rd Place, Los Angeles, CA 90008
Free Admission | Regular Hours: Mon - Sat, 12:00 - 6:00 p.m.



PUBLIC PROGRAMS SERIES

On the occasion of *Slavery, The Prison Industrial Complex*, A+P will organize a series of 4 public programs. Admission to all programs is free and no RSVPs are required.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS SPEAKER LIST

- + **Tuesday, September 25, 7:00 p.m.:** *Reflecting on Angola* with Keith Calhoun, Chandra McCormick, Gary Tyler and Dhyandra Lawson
- + **Tuesday, October 2, 7:00 p.m.:** Artist Talk: Texas Isaiah
- + **Thursday, November 8, 7:00 p.m.:** Artist Talk: April Bey
- + **Thursday, November 29, 7:00 p.m.:** *Dancing Through Prison Walls: A Conversation* with Suchi Branfman and D. Sabela Grimes

Art + Practice Public Program Space:

4334 Degnan Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90008
Free Admission | Open for scheduled programs starting at 6:00 p.m.

ABOUT KEITH CALHOUN AND CHANDRA McCORMICK

Keith Calhoun (b. 1955) and Chandra McCormick (b. 1957) were both born and raised in the Lower 9th Ward of New Orleans, Louisiana. As a husband and wife team, they have been documenting Louisiana and its people for more than 30 years. They have captured the vibrant New Orleans music realm, which consists of brass bands, jazz funerals, social and pleasure clubs, benevolent societies, and the Black Mardi Gras Indians. In addition to recording New Orleans' social and cultural history, Calhoun and McCormick have also covered religious and spiritual ceremonies throughout their community, as well as river baptisms in rural Louisiana. They have created several photographic series devoted to preserving a vanishing way of life in Louisiana, including Louisiana dock workers, longshoremen, and freight handlers on the banks of the Mississippi River; sugarcane field scappers; cotton gin laborers, and sweet potato workers in East Carrol parish of Lake Providence, Louisiana.

Calhoun and McCormick's images have been shown widely at institutions including the African

American Anacostia Museum (Smithsonian Institution); the Brooklyn Museum; the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; the Louisiana State Museum; the New Orleans Museum of Art; the Ogden Museum of Southern Art as part of *Prospect.3: Notes for Now* and the 56th Venice Biennale. Calhoun and McCormick's work is in the permanent collections of the New Orleans Museum of Art, the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, and the Louisiana State Museum.

CREDIT

Slavery, The Prison Industrial Complex: Photographs by Keith Calhoun and Chandra McCormick is curated by Dr. Susan H. Edwards, Executive Director and CEO of the Frist Art Museum and Katie Delmez, Curator at the Frist Art Museum.

This exhibition is presented by the Frist Art Museum and Art + Practice.

ABOUT ART + PRACTICE

Conceived and founded by artist Mark Bradford, philanthropist and collector Eileen Harris Norton, and activist Allan DiCastro, Art + Practice (A+P) is a private operating 501(c)3 foundation based in Leimert Park, Los Angeles. A+P has two areas of focus which together embody its commitment to supporting the needs of its local foster youth while also providing the community with access to free, museum-curated contemporary art:

- + A contemporary art program which consists of an exhibition space for museum-curated contemporary art and a public program space for moderated art lectures and discussions organized to coincide with exhibitions on view
- + A space where foster youth may receive life-skills training, access to housing opportunities, and individualized education and employment support via its foster youth service collaborator, First Place for Youth

The organization occupies a nearly 20,000-square-foot campus in Leimert Park, from which it directs its programs and activities. Admission to all exhibitions and public programs is free and open to the public.

A+P INFORMATION

Admission to all exhibitions and public programs is free and available to the public. To learn more visit www.artandpractice.org.

Hours: Monday - Saturday: 12:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

A+P's exhibition space is located at 3401 W. 43rd Place, Los Angeles, CA 90008.

Ample metered parking available.

ABOUT THE FRIST ART MUSEUM

The Frist Art Museum was established in 2001 as a non-collecting institution with a mandate to bring the art of the world to Nashville. The Frist has partnered with many national and international museums, including the Centre Pompidou, the British Museum, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, the Whitney Museum of American Art, and the Baltimore Museum of Art to present works ranging from ancient Egyptian treasures to impressionist paintings and contemporary photographs. The Frist has also organized other traveling exhibitions such as *Carrie Mae Weems: Three Decades of Photography and Video* and *Nick Cave: Feat*. It has received prestigious grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Institute of Museum and Library Services, the Warhol Foundation, and the Samuel H. Kress Foundation. Admission is free to visitors 18 and younger.

Throughout these endeavors, the Frist's goal is to offer different viewpoints, cultures, and time periods and to inspire people through art to look at their world in new ways.

FRIST ART MUSEUM INFORMATION

Admission is free to visitors 18 and younger and is otherwise ticketed. To learn more, visit www.fristartmuseum.org.

Hours: Mon – Wed, 10:00 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.; Thurs – Fri, 10:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.; Sat, 10:00 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.; and Sun, 1:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

PRESS CONTACTS

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artandpractice.org

CREDITS

Keith Calhoun, *Two by six-by-eight foot cell at Angola Prison*, 1980. Image courtesy of the artist.

Chandra McCormick, *Work Call, men behind barbed wire fencing to go to work in the fields of Angola*, 2004. Image courtesy of the artist.

Self-portrait of Keith Calhoun and Chandra McCormick.

Portrait of Dhyandra Lawson. Photo by Eric Minh Swenson.

Self-portrait of Texas Isaiah.

April Bey in her studio. Photo by Eric Minh Swenson.

Suchi Branfman works with incarcerated individuals as part of her project *Inside Outside*. Photo by Cooper Bates.

Portrait of D. Sabela Grimes. Photo by Shizuka Takamura.