SILENT STREETS

ART IN THE TIME OF PANDEMIC
APRIL 17 – NOVEMBER 28
MINT MUSEUM UPTOWN

MEDIA KIT
The Mint Museum’s upcoming *Silent Streets: Art in the Time of Pandemic* puts spotlight on works created in isolation by local, regional and international artists

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Charlotte, North Carolina (March 26, 2021) — When the city streets fell quiet in March 2020 due to Covid-19, followed by social justice reckoning across the country, people and communities were changed. The Mint Museum's newest exhibition, *Silent Streets: Art in the Time of Pandemic*, opening April 17 at Mint Museum Uptown, showcases thought-provoking works of art by regional, national, and international artists. From collage and comic strips to abstract painting, video and photography, the exhibition installations illuminate discord while also providing solace and insight in challenging times.

At the core of the show, which is presented by Fifth Third Bank, are commissioned pieces by North Carolina artists Amy Bagwell of Charlotte, Stacy Lynn Waddell of Durham, and Antoine Williams of Greensboro. Each artist created works during isolation that reflect how the pandemic and events of 2020 affected their worlds.

“In March 2020, we found ourselves looking at a depleted exhibition schedule, between pandemic-related shipping delays and budget cuts,” says Jen Sudul Edwards, PhD, chief curator and curator of contemporary art at the Mint. “The Mint’s President and CEO Todd Herman said, ‘Why don’t we reallocate those remaining spaces and funds directly to artists?’ I selected these three artists, confident we could do remote studio visits and it would still be a successful collaboration. By April, artists around the world were creating profoundly powerful and poignant work responding to all that was going on, and I realized the show could go beyond three North Carolina voices and become an international chorus.”

Bagwell, a poet and mixed-media artist, who has more than 20 public murals throughout Charlotte, produced three large-scale collages inspired by poetry she wrote during the pandemic. Mixed-media work by Williams addresses social injustice, systemic racism, and the objectification of Black labor and culture. And Waddell, working alongside a master quilter, used textiles to create flags that explore themes of representation and inclusion in symbols of power.

Also included in the exhibition is *As the Boundary Pulls Us Apart*, a short film by Charlotte-based artists Matthew Steele and Ben Gellar. The digital project enabled the two artists to collaborate and volley ideas from separate spaces, ultimately creating a piece that embodies a spirit of unity while being apart.

Additional installations include *Diary of a Pandemic* and *Pandemic Comics*. Through a collaboration between Magnum Photos and National Geographic, *Diary of a Pandemic* showcases images taken by photojournalists around the world stranded during the pandemic. *Pandemic Comics* highlights syndicated comics—*La Cucaracha*, *Liō*, *Curtis*, *Pearls Before Swine*, and *Tank McNamara*—that suddenly changed course, as long-planned strips were replaced with ones that related directly to the pandemic.

The one work that predates the pandemic—Gregory Crewdson’s *Funerary Back Lot* (2018-19) from his *An Eclipse of Moths Series*—eerily relays an aura of isolation and quiet destitution that feels consistent with the pandemic times, reminding us that these are human states, not temporary or conditional ones.
“Artists are often the first to respond and react to societal forces and create work that manages to encapsulate abstract concepts of emotion,” says Todd A. Herman, PhD, president and CEO at The Mint Museum. “I am excited to see the result of their efforts and to celebrate the necessary role that creatives play in healing communities.”

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**The Mint Museum**

Established in 1936 as North Carolina’s first art museum, The Mint Museum is a leading, innovative cultural institution and museum of international art and design. With two locations — Mint Museum Randolph in the heart of Eastover and Mint Museum Uptown at Levine Center for the Arts — the Mint boasts one of the largest collections in the Southeast and is committed to engaging and inspiring members of the global community.

**Fifth Third Bank**

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