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Opening Reception: *Recoloration Proclamation: Flag, Funerals, Fires, and Future*
A John Sims Project
M&T Fourth Friday, March 27, 2020, 5:00-8:00pm



BUFFALO, NY - Buffalo Arts Studio is pleased to announce our next exhibition, *Recoloration Proclamation: Flag, Funerals, Fires, and Future, a John Sims Project*. Buffalo Arts Studio will exhibit *Recoloration Proclamation*, Sims' 20-year multimedia project that explores the complexity of identity, cultural appropriation, and visual terrorism through Confederate iconography in the context of African-American culture. This exhibition will be on view from March 27-May 15, 2020, with an opening reception from 5:00-8:00pm on M&T Fourth Friday, March 27, 2020.

An artist and mathematician, John Sims grew up in Detroit and now lives and works in Sarasota, FL. *Recoloration Proclamation* features recolored Confederate flags and large-scale installations that confront the Confederate flag in the context of white supremacy politics and visual terrorism, while also addressing the need for ritualistic healing. Sims believes that art is a vital element in the making of history, as well as a fundamental vehicle for envisioning a future that embraces a sense of hope, deeper "seeing" and expanded humanity.

Sims introduced himself and his work to community leaders at a video conference hosted by Erie County Legislature Chairwoman Honorable April Baskin and Buffalo Arts Studio on February 26, 2020. Speaking about the project, Sims offered, "Buffalo, like Detroit, has a special relationship with the politics of race,

social justice and the plight and victories of the working class. Even with our shared history of underground railroads and civil rights organizing, we still feel the repressive romanticism and racist forces of the Civil War and its Confederate iconography. My twenty-year-long project, *Recoloration Proclamation*, seeks to arrest and bring to justice the terrorist symbols connected to American slavery and racism while searching for portals of transformative healing, as we continue the journey toward an inclusive and just society.”

The work has evolved over time, functioning as a twenty-year call and response between the artist and his audiences. Curator Shirley Verrico notes, “It was very interesting to hear John Sims speak about the way each iteration of the project is unique, not only because of where it is presented, but because Sims considers audience reactions and adapts the work to reflect these considerations.”

After listening to Sims speak about his work, artist and activist John Baker (Buffalo, NY) said “John Sims creative explorations *Burn and Bury*, *Recoloration Proclamation*, and *AfroDixie Remixes* challenge society's taboo surrounding conversations about the Confederate flag. Conceptually, Sims's art evokes self reflection and compelling social dialogue about white supremacy, racism, visual abuse and yes, historical pride. He makes us consider WHY is this symbol still relevant years after representing the worst time in American history?”

Buffalo Arts Studio is partnering with Hallwalls Contemporary Art Center who will present Sims' performance *AfroDixie Remixes*, in Asbury Hall on Wednesday, April 29, 2020. This live reading performance will feature remixed tracks of the song “Dixie” reinterpreted by a variety of musicians through the lens of a number of African-American musical styles (Spiritual, Blues, Gospel, Funk, Hip Hop, etc.)



John Sims, *The Urn*, 2018, metal and ashes



Buffalo Arts Studio



Artist John Sims (all photos courtesy of John Sims)

High resolution images are available upon request

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Buffalo Arts Studio is a not-for-profit arts organization whose mission is to provide affordable studio space and regular public exposure for regional, national, and international artists through exhibitions, and to enrich the community with art classes, mural programs, and public art. Buffalo Arts Studio is located at 2495 Main Street, Suite 500, Buffalo, NY 14214. The gallery is open Tuesday-Friday, 11 a.m.-5 p.m and Saturday, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Buffalo Arts Studio receives major support from:

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