

NEWS RELEASE
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USF Contemporary Art Museum to Receive \$50,000 Grant from the National Endowment for the Arts

(TAMPA, FL – June 07, 2022) The USF Contemporary Art Museum, part of the Institute for Research in Art in the USF College of The Arts, has been approved for a \$50,000 Grants for Arts Projects award from the National Endowment for the Arts to support *Poor People's Art*. This project will present a social history of the experience of underrepresented and underserved communities in the US since 1968. Individually and collectively, the artists included in *Poor People's Art* tell a story of intersecting injustices of race, class, immigration status, healthcare systems, food insecurity, and gender issues. USFCAM's project is among 1,125 projects across America totaling more than \$26.6 million that were selected during this second round of Grants for Arts Projects fiscal year 2022 funding.

"The National Endowment for the Arts is proud to support arts and cultural organizations throughout the nation with these grants, including USF Contemporary Art Museum, providing opportunities for all of us to live artful lives," said NEA Chair Maria Rosario Jackson, PhD. "The arts contribute to our individual well-being, the well-being of our communities, and to our local economies. The arts are also crucial to helping us make sense of our circumstances from different perspectives as we emerge from the pandemic and plan for a shared new normal informed by our examined experience."



Anonymous, *No More Hunger USA Placard*, 1968. Division of Political History, National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution.

For more information on other projects included in the Arts Endowment grant announcement, visit arts.gov/news.

Poor People's Art: A (Short) Visual History of Poverty in the United States January – March 2023, USF Contemporary Art Museum

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. is well known for his "I Have a Dream" speech, yet much less emphasis is placed on his campaign to seek justice for America's poor, "The Poor People's Campaign." It was a multi-cultural, multi-faith, multi-racial movement aimed at uniting poor people and their allies to demand an end to poverty and inequality. Fifty-three years after Dr. King's death, the Reverend William Barber II launched a contemporary push to fulfill MLK's ambitious brief—one that calls for a "revolution of values" that unites poor and impacted communities across the country. The exhibition *Poor People's Art: A (Short) Visual History of Poverty in the United States* (Spring 2023) represents a visual response to Dr. King's "last great dream" as well as Reverend Barber's recent "National Call for Moral Revival."

Spanning more than 50 years, the exhibition is in two parts: **Resurrection (1968-1994)** in the museum's West Gallery, and **Revival (1995-2022)** in the East Gallery. **Resurrection** includes paintings, photographs, films, sculptures, posters, books, and ephemera made by a radically inclusive company of American artists, from Jill Freedman's photographs of Resurrection City, the tent enclave that King's followers erected on the National Mall in 1968, to John Ahearn's plaster cast sculpture *Luis Fuentes, South Bronx* (1979). **Revival** offers contemporary engagement across a range of approaches, materials, and points of view. It includes video from photographer Dawoud Bey (*8.15.63*, 2013, from "The Birmingham Project") as well the sculpture *Companion Species (Calling Back, Calling Forward)*, 2021), Seneca Nation artist Marie Watt's meditation on the collaborative nature of Native American culture. Conceived in a declared opposition to poverty, racism, militarism, environmental destruction, health inequities, and other interlocking injustices, this exhibition shows how artists in the US have visualized poverty and its myriad knock-on effects since 1968.

Poor People's Art is curated by Christian Viveros-Fauné, CAM Curator-at-Large; organized by the USF Contemporary Art Museum.

Poor People's Art is supported in part by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts; the Stanton Storer Embrace the Arts Foundation; the Lee & Victor Leavengood Endowment; the USFCAM ACE (Art for Community Engagement) Fund Patrons; and the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Arts and Culture and the Florida Council on Arts and Culture.

ABOUT USF CONTEMPORARY ART MUSEUM

USF Contemporary Art Museum (USFCAM) organizes and presents significant and investigative exhibitions of contemporary art from Florida, the United States and around the world. Serving as a teaching laboratory, USFCAM's curatorial and socially engaged initiatives and educational programs are designed to present the students, faculty, and community with current issues of contemporary art practice, and to explore the role of the arts in society. USFCAM publishes relevant catalogues, presents critically recognized traveling exhibitions and commissions new projects by national and international artists. USFCAM maintains the university's art collection, comprising more than 5000 contemporary art works. USF Contemporary Art Museum is accredited by the American Alliance of Museums.

Visit our website at cam.usf.edu



John Ahearn, *Luis Fuentes, South Bronx*, 1979. Plaster and acrylic, 14 1/2 x 9 1/2 x 15 1/2 in. © John Ahearn. Purchased 1984 with funds provided by Florida's Art in State Buildings Program (FS.255.043), University of South Florida Collection.



Marie Watt, *Blanket Stories, Great Grandmother, Pandemic, Daybreak*, 2021. Reclaimed blankets and cedar, 108" x 38 1/4" x 40" in, Jordan Schnitzer Family Foundation.



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