

We-Are-Familia Presents
SAFE SPACE
@ The Detroit Public Library
Opening Saturday, March 30, 2019
From 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM
Closing Friday, May 3, 2019

Detroit, MI: We-Are-Familia is thrilled to present SAFE SPACE at the Detroit Public Library, opening March 30, 2019 from 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM, running through May 3, 2019. The group exhibition will feature 24 local artists and designers and three installations by long-time We-Are-Familia members.

SAFE SPACE aims to extend the library's ability to foster community and celebrate Detroit's creativity in a space outside the canonical art-viewing realms, like stand-alone galleries or museums. The exhibition will be held at the DPL Galleria, a recently renovated, community-driven art gallery located within the Main Library.

Focusing on local Detroiters, We-Are-Familia has held an open call to attract active artists and designers, asking what "safe space" means to them. The list of exhibitors include creators who are native Detroiters and current residents who have migrated to the city from national and international locations. Their art and design contributions are helping shape the city's future at an exciting time—when possibilities are endless.

SAFE SPACE humbly hopes to illuminate Detroit's ethos. From a University of Michigan professor who is constructing an AI robot to a few inspiring artists from The Friendship Circle Soul Studio (a non-profit art studio and gallery that supports artists with special needs) or a young industrial designer who has been included in Sight Unseen's "American Design Hot List"—SAFE SPACE exhibitors bring spirited, diverse, real, ever-evolving, and undefinable energies to the walls and pedestals of the Detroit Public Library.

Along with Detroit-based artists and designers, SAFE SPACE will include three community-based installations by visiting artists which animate with participation. At the opening, a composer will score a soundscape with help from the audience, and a performance artist will prompt strangers to connect. Throughout the show, a projection will render viewers' avatars in real time.

The library is a public meeting place, where all ideas and forms of knowledge are welcomed and archived. It's a refuge for readers, believers, and doers to congregate, contemplate change, learn, and grow. The public library is a safe space.

We-Are-Familia is a group of artists and designers from around the world who work collaboratively. Together, they build community through the arts, which are multi-sensory and multi-linguistic. We-Are-Familia has exhibited at The Museum of Art and Design, New York City, Colette Paris, and at the Fountain Art Fairs in New York City and Miami. Past initiatives include a Keepsake Box project and multiple site-specific events that take over otherwise uninhabited spaces.

The Detroit Public Library is the fourth largest in the country; the first building opened during the Civil War, surprising the city with over 5,000 volumes of choice and rare works—free to the public. At the time, the *Detroit Free Press* wrote, "Its influences for good cannot be too highly estimated." Since then, its legacy is steeped in pursuit of social progress, such as being home to the first black president of the American Library Association Clara Stanton Jones. Opened in 1921, the Main Library was designed by Cass Gilbert, who also designed the US Supreme Court building and the Woolworth Building.

The Siren Hotel was listed as one of the "Best Designed Hotels of 2018" by *Surface Magazine*. We-Are-Familia thanks them for their generous in-kind support of this exhibition.

Instagram:

@we__are__familia
@detroitpubliclibrary
@thesirenhotel
#thesirenhotel
#safespacedetroit



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Exhibitors

Local Artists And Designers

Aaron Blendowski
Alex Youkanna
Aislinn Wendrow: Friendship Circle Soul Studio
Blake Jackson: Friendship Circle Soul Studio
Bre'Ann White
Chad Wentzel
Christian Mickovic
Elizabeth Youngblood
Jonathan Barnett: Friendship Circle Soul Studio
Laura Quattrocchi
Lauren Kalman
Marco Lorenzetti
Michael Christy
Nadiya I. Nacorda
Nina Cho
Osman Khan
OUIZI (Louise Jones)
Renee Rials
Sam Keller
Sarah C. Blanchette
Stephanie Harris: Friendship Circle Soul Studio
TMRWLND (Dereck Seltzer)
William Kang

The Dresner Foundation Soul Studio at the Friendship Circle Farber Center is a studio art program for adults with special needs that responds to each participant's unique physical and cognitive conditions. They encourage the creative growth of artists by helping to shape individualized paths to success in the world.

Visiting Artists

Baang x Jared Hoffman, Brooklyn
Megan M. Garwood, Detroit + LA
Mitchell Akiyama, Toronto

Curators

Jennifer Garcia

(Director of We-Are-Familia/Curator, NYC)

is a multi-disciplinary designer whose work has been featured in national publications, at The Museum of Art and Design, New York City, and The Museum of Design, Atlanta. Her commercial client roster includes Sony Music, The Gap, KidRobot, and the *New York Times*. In addition to her design work, Garcia is Director of We-Are-Familia, an art and design collective with diverse global membership.

Megan M. Garwood

(Assistant Curator/Performer, Detroit + LA)

spent the early part of her career working at blue-chip galleries, such as Marlborough, and now is a writer. Her writings have appeared in numerous publications, including the *Wall Street Journal*, and she has held editorial positions at *Chalet Magazine* and *Whitehot Magazine of Contemporary Art*. Her performance art has been exhibited with We-Are-Familia and at SPRING/BREAK Art Fair 2018, curated by Helen Toomer.

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