



MEDIA ALERT
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA ALERT

Date: January 13, 2023

Contact: Juan Garcia
Public Information Director
juan.garcia@lacity.org

**THE WILLIAM GRANT STILL ARTS CENTER
PRESENTS
FUN AND GAMES: THE 42ND ANNUAL BLACK DOLL SHOW
FEATURING
14 CONTEMPORARY ARTISTS**

Los Angeles - The William Grant Still Arts Center is proud to announce the next edition of the longest running annual exhibition in Los Angeles, ***Fun and Games - The 42nd Annual Black Doll Show***. The first in-person exhibition after two years online, *Fun and Games* is an exploration of ancestral games and how play can help people think deeper and archive histories.

This year's exhibition features dolls, quilts, games, and images/videos that fit the theme of historic games. Ethnographic studies in Africa allow people a peek into how games are part of social negotiations within various African cultures and Afro-Creole societies in the Americas. The investigation of games and social play indicates three main concepts in anthropological and archaeological theory: identity, agency, and power. In examining, through dolls, the history and culture of gaming in the Black diaspora, the exhibition highlights the ways the oppressed established in-group power dynamics and identity through games and play.

This year, the Center included new acquisitions including a collection of vintage and rare dolls donated by Sandra Campbell. The exhibition runs through February 18, 2023. For more information, please visit: [42nd Annual Black Doll Show Opening | The William Grant Still Arts Center \(wordpress.com\)](#).

Fun and Games - The 42nd Annual Black Doll Show

Featured Artists:

- Fana Babadayo
- Heather Hilliard Bonds
- Dr. Cynthia Davis
- Barbara Flemings
- Rosalyn Miles

Julie Robinson
Pat Shivers
Kimberly Wilfong Sigman
Tamika Spencer
Teresa Tolliver

Collectors:

NK Abstract
Selah Bailey
Sika Dwimfo
Ericka Nicole
William Ramirez

The Black Doll Show at the William Grant Still Arts Center was started in the 1980s by the Friends of William Grant Still Arts Center, with contemporary artist and curator Cecil Ferguson (1931-2013) as its first curator. The exhibition was inspired by a doll test conducted by Mamie and Kenneth Clark in the 1940s. The tests concluded that due to social stigmas, many African-American children preferred white dolls over black dolls. This test went on to become evidence in civil rights lawsuits. The Clarks became expert witnesses in *Brown vs. Board of Education*, helping to create the landmark decision to desegregate schools. This doll test was conducted again in 2006 by 17-year-old filmmaker, Kiri Davis, sadly with the same results. The Black Doll Show is an annual winter tradition at WGSAC as positive self-image remains just as necessary today for Africans and all people of color within the continent and in diaspora.

ABOUT THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS (DCA)

As a leading, progressive arts and cultural agency, DCA empowers Los Angeles' vibrant communities by supporting and providing access to quality visual, literary, musical, performing, and educational arts programming; managing vital cultural centers; preserving historic sites; creating public art; and funding services provided by arts organizations and individual artists.

Formed in 1925, DCA promotes arts and culture as a way to ignite a powerful dialogue, engage LA's residents and visitors, and ensure LA's varied cultures are recognized, acknowledged, and experienced. DCA's mission is to strengthen the quality of life in Los Angeles by stimulating and supporting arts and cultural activities, ensuring public access to the arts for residents and visitors alike.

DCA advances the social and economic impact of arts and culture through grant-making; public art; community arts; performing arts; and strategic marketing, development, design, and digital research. DCA creates and supports arts programming, maximizing relationships with other city agencies, artists, and arts and cultural nonprofit organizations to provide excellent service in neighborhoods throughout Los Angeles.

For more information, please visit culturela.org or follow us on Facebook at: [facebook.com/culturela](https://www.facebook.com/culturela), Instagram [@culture_la](https://www.instagram.com/culture_la), and Twitter [@culture_la](https://twitter.com/culture_la).

###