**UMD NEWS**

_University of Minnesota Duluth_

Immediate Release

**TWEED MUSEUM OF ART EXHIBITION | THRU JANUARY 25, 2022**

*Black Survival Guide, Or How to Live Through a Police Riot*

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The official press kit, including images and captions, can be found [here](#)

**Please use full captions in publication.**

**DULUTH, MN -**

Events on the verge of being lost are revealed again in this poignant and powerfully empowering exhibition titled *Black Survival Guide, or How to Live Through a Police Riot* (2018) on tour at the Tweed Museum of Art from the Delaware Art Museum. Generous support for this project provided by Art Bridges. Funded in part by The John T. & Elizabeth C. Adams Arts Fund of the Community Foundation, the advisory board members of the Tweed Museum of Art, and members of Duluth’s communities. This exhibit is on display through January 25, 2022.

The Tweed is both an academic/teaching and a communities’ museum, and as such, experimental in nature. This exhibit focuses on a core aspect of Tweed’s mission: Engagement with our Black audiences and consists of thirteen screen prints focused on police brutality and riots as part of a commissioned work for the Delaware Museum of Art and critically comments on Delaware’s 1968 Wilmington riots. The power of Thomas’ work, not just in light of the Duluth lynching in the 1920s and George Floyd’s murder and related social injustice in the US, thematizes the unspoken trauma of Black communities endured for centuries in/beyond Duluth. This is the first time Tweed specifically invites Duluth’s African American/Black communities. With support from the Art Bridges foundation, Tweed hired/paid two community members (Black/BIPOC communities) as coordinators (Carla Hamilton; Moira Villiard) who established a paid communities committee of BIPOC (majority of Black-identifying community members:
Henry Banks, Emanuel Eisele, Dudley Edmundson, Breanna Ellison, Diona Johnson, John Staine, Stephanie Williams, Stephan Witherspoon, Christina Trok, and Vince Trok) and address urgent themes, particularly in Minnesota’s primarily white Northland, focused on social justice, being Black, enduring trauma, and healing through the arts. The lynching in Duluth in 1920s is still very present in the communities. In addition, Black artists in Duluth’s community are not heard nor shown as they should be. Using Hank Willis Thomas’ art as a vehicle to bring Black communities together and engage through a cross-cultural dialogue through the power of the arts at the Tweed is crucial. This exhibit is accessible to all communities and all ages (from Middle School to High School; adults, seniors), including MN teachers, their students, in addition to home-schooled children and their parents thanks to the work of both project coordinators and community committee of BIPOC (majority of Black-identifying community members).

The committee of community members organized a BIPOC-oriented reception for Black Survival Guide, or How to Live Through a Police Riot on Sunday, December 12, 2021; was an opportunity for BIPOC community members to explore the exhibit, as well as participate in an impromptu storytelling workshop with local creative Diona Johnson (Di Jay) aka AfroGeode. Although the exhibit was open to the public on December 12 during regular hours, this specific event was intended to provide a cultural space for Black community members and their families.

In addition, the community committee is calling on Black artists/art groups with connections to the Twin Ports Community to propose an interactive art workshop (mediums: visual art, performance, written, etc.) reflecting on the themes of Thomas’ exhibit, Black Survival Guide, or How to Live Through a Police Riot. Youth participants will be in early middle school through high school ages, and the workshop will take place at the Tweed Museum of Art by January 25, 2022. The goal of the event is to celebrate local BIPOC voices in the arts and connect youth (particularly BIPOC youth) to Black artists on both a local and national scale (connecting the work of local artists with a field trip to the museum to experience the work of Hank Willis Thomas). The event will be set-up as a field trip for local schools to attend the exhibit and interact with selected artists, with the performing artist(s) set up in Tweed's lobby, and visual artist(s) setting up in the new Maker/Communities Space.

To mark 50 years since the city of Wilmington’s civil disturbances, following the death of Martin Luther King, Jr. on April 4, 1968, the Delaware Museum of Art commissioned artist Hank Willis Thomas in 2018 through the creation of a new work of art. Thomas’ work Black Survival Guide, or How to Live Through a Police Riot, sheds light on the city’s complicated nine-month long occupation by the National Guard and the community-changing public response.

The exhibit displays photographs that the artist Hank Willis Thomas obtained from the Delaware Historical Society. Thomas additionally uncovered a 13-page typewritten publication, produced during the historical period of the longest occupation of federal troops in an American city following the uprising after Dr. King’s murder, called “Black Survival Guide, OR How To Live Through a Police Riot.”

Thomas transformed multiple photographs and the text from the survival guide into a screen printed series on retroreflective vinyl - a material widely used in road signage. He printed the survival guide text black-on-white and the photographs were printed white-on-white, allowing museum viewers to see both text and imagery via a flash of light. With this rediscovery, the viewer is placed in the position of those who directly or indirectly experienced these events over 50 years ago.

During last year’s interview with writer Karen Chernick of Hyperallergic, Thomas stated “There was no other way to show the photographs with contemporaneous content that was designed to respond to this
police occupation. I’ve been working with retroreflective for a while because I love how it makes the invisible visible. And a lot of history, of course -- most of it if not all of it -- is invisible, truly.”

This important exhibition serves as a backdrop for the continued emotional strain of recent violent murders of Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) including Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, George Floyd and many others as a result of systemic racism.

**BIO - HANK WILLIS THOMAS**

HANK WILLIS THOMAS (b. 1976, Plainfield, NJ; lives and works in Brooklyn, NY) is a conceptual artist working primarily with themes related to perspective, identity, commodity, media, and popular culture.

His work has been exhibited throughout the United States and abroad including the International Center of Photography, New York; Guggenheim Museum Bilbao, Spain; Musée du quai Branly, Paris; Hong Kong Arts Centre, Hong Kong, and the Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art, Netherlands.

Solo exhibitions of his work have been featured at Portland Art Museum, Portland, OR; Crystal Bridges Museum of Art, Bentonville, AK; SCAD Museum of Art, Savannah, GA; California African American Museum, Los Angeles, CA; Philadelphia Photo Arts Center, Philadelphia, PA; Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland, OH; The Art Museum at the University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY; The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, Ridgefield, CT; Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, NY; Baltimore Museum of Art, Baltimore, MD; Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, Kansas City, MO, and the African American Museum, Philadelphia, PA, among others.

Major group exhibitions of his work include the 2017 inaugural show at Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa, Cape Town, South Africa; P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center, New York, NY; The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York, NY; Zacheta National Museum of Art, Poland; Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco, CA, and the 2006 California Biennial at the Orange County Museum of Art, Orange County, CA.


His collaborative projects include *Question Bridge: Black Males, In Search Of The Truth (The Truth Booth), The Writing on the Wall,* and *For Freedoms.* In 2017, *For Freedoms* was awarded the ICP Infinity Award for New Media and Online Platform. Thomas is a recipient of the Gordon Parks Foundation Fellowship (2019), The Guggenheim Fellowship (2018), AIMIA | AGO Photography Prize (2017), Soros Equality Fellowship (2017), Aperture West Book Prize (2008), Renew Media Arts Fellowship from the
Rockefeller Foundation (2007), and the New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship Award (2006). He is also a member of the Public Design Commission for the City of New York.


In 2019, Thomas unveiled his permanent work "Unity" in Brooklyn, NY. In 2017, “Love Over Rules” permanent neon was unveiled in San Francisco, CA and “All Power to All People” in Opa Locka, FL.

Profile photo by Andrea Blanch.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT THE FOLLOWING LINKS:
https://www.d.umn.edu/tma/
https://www.hankwillisthomas.com/
https://hyperallergic.com/583425/hank-willis-thomas-black-survival-guide/
https://delart.org/event/black-survival-guide-or-how-to-live-through-a-police-riot/
https://artbridgesfoundation.org/exhibitions/marketplace/black-survival-guide-or-how-to-live-through-a-police-riot/
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TWEED MUSEUM OF ART
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
Tweed Museum of Art, University of Minnesota Duluth, functions as an art collecting and teaching institution that promotes learning through collection stewardship, research, and by presentations in the visual arts for the engagement program of the University and surrounding communities. https://www.d.umn.edu/tma/

DELaware ART MUSEUM
The Delaware Art Museum in Wilmington, Delaware has served as a primary arts and cultural institution for over 100 years in Delaware. Visit https://delart.org/

ART BRIDGES
Art Bridges connects new audiences to great American Art, by supporting museums of all sizes with the creation of collection-based exhibitions. Visit https://artbridgesfoundation.org/

COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
The Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation promotes private giving for the public good. By fostering generosity, civic engagement and inclusiveness, striving to be a catalyst in regional philanthropy. https://www.dsacommunityfoundation.org/

MINNESOTA STATE ARTS BOARD
The Minnesota State Arts Board is a state agency that stimulates and encourages the creation, performance, and appreciation of the arts in the state. http://www.arts.state.mn.us/

UMD
University of Minnesota Duluth integrates liberal education, research, creative activity, and public engagement and prepares students to thrive as lifelong learners and globally engaged citizens. With an enrollment of over 10,000
undergraduate and graduate students, the Duluth campus offers 15 bachelor’s degrees across more than 150 majors and minors, and graduate programs in 24 fields. Visit [d.umn.edu](http://d.umn.edu)

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**COVID-19 protocols**
The Tweed Museum of Art and UMD College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences (CAHSS) will follow the University of Minnesota guidelines, which will always be based on state and federal scientific data and advice from University of Minnesota public health and medical experts.

The most recent update for the UMN systemwide campuses will not require social distancing nor indoor event capacities, however masks are required indoors and encouraged for outdoor events, regardless of vaccination status.

Face Covering Protocol: [https://safe-campus.umn.edu/return-campus/face-coverings](https://safe-campus.umn.edu/return-campus/face-coverings)

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**Store:** 218-726-6139
**Email:** [tweed@d.umn.edu](mailto:tweed@d.umn.edu)
[https://www.d.umn.edu/tma/](https://www.d.umn.edu/tma/)

**HOURS:**
Tuesdays from 10 AM until 7 PM
Wednesdays, Thursdays from 10 AM until 3:30 PM
Saturdays (12/11) 10 AM until 2:30 PM; (12/18) 10 AM until 3:30 PM

**Closed on the following days/holidays:**
Dec. 22nd; Dec. 23rd, Dec. 25th; Dec. 30th; Jan. 1st
The regular schedule resumes again on Tue, Jan. 4th.

This project generously supported by [Art Bridges](https://www.artbridges.org)
Black Survival Guide, or How to Live Through a Police Riot is organized by Delaware Art Museum, Wilmington, Delaware. Support for this exhibition is provided by Art Bridges.

This activity is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a Minnesota State Arts Board Operating Support grant, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund—the Minnesota Historical and Cultural Heritage Funds through the Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment, and the Minnesota State Legislature.

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