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Fort Wayne Museum of Art presents *Posing Beauty in African American Culture*
Exhibition explores topics of beauty and self-expression through photography

[FORT WAYNE, IN] — July 29, 2020 — The Fort Wayne Museum of Art is pleased to open its fall exhibition season with the national traveling exhibition *Posing Beauty in African Culture*, opening August 22 and continuing through October 18, 2020.

Posing Beauty in African American Culture explores the contested ways in which African and African American beauty have been represented in historical and contemporary contexts through a diverse range of media including photography, film, video, fashion, advertising, and other forms of popular culture such as music and the Internet. Throughout the Western history of art and image-making, the relationship between beauty and art has become increasingly complex within contemporary art and popular culture.

The first of three thematic sections, “Constructing a Pose,” considers the interplay between the historical and the contemporary, between self-representation and imposed representation, and the relationship between subject and photographer. The second theme, “Body and Image,” questions the ways in which our contemporary understanding of beauty has been constructed and framed through the body. The last section, “Modeling Beauty & Beauty Contests,” invites us to reflect upon the ambiguities of beauty, its impact on mass culture and individuals, and how the display of beauty affects the ways in which we see and interpret the world and ourselves.

Posing Beauty in African American Culture challenges contemporary understandings of beauty by framing notions of aesthetics, race, class, and gender within art, popular culture, and politics. *Posing Beauty in African American Culture* is curated by Deborah Willis and organized by Curatorial Assistance Traveling Exhibitions, Pasadena, California.

The FWMoA is collaborating with For Communities of Color, a local group which strives to educate, engage and empower black and indigenous people of color, led by Clydia and Sherry Early. Special programming includes a social media photography project featuring local people of color, as well as a Facebook Live presentation [on August 20 at 7pm](#) discussing the topic of beauty in Black culture. A Curator’s Tour of the exhibition will be offered September 3 at 12:15pm both at FWMoA and virtually on Facebook Live. The in-person tour is included with museum admission and masks will be required.

About the Fort Wayne Museum of Art: Beginning with art classes in 1888 given by J. Ottis Adams and later William Forsyth, the Fort Wayne Museum of Art has evolved into the primary resource for the visual arts in the region. Regularly exhibiting regional and nationally acclaimed artists, the FWMoA also boasts an extensive permanent collection of American Art. The Museum is committed to the collection, preservation, presentation and interpretation of American and related art to engage and educate broad and diverse audiences throughout the community and region, and add value to their lives. The Fort Wayne Museum of Art is accredited by the American Alliance of Museums and is funded in part by Arts United of Greater Fort Wayne. This activity made possible, in part, with support from the Indiana Arts Commission and the National Endowment for the

Arts, a federal agency. Additional support for this exhibition comes from the English, Bonter Mitchell Foundation, the Foellinger Foundation, and the Edward M. and Mary McCrea Wilson Foundation.