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Overjoyed: Reflections of Loved Ones **November 16th-December 15th 2024**

Lauryn Marshall is The Sanctuary's Fall/Winter 2024 Artist-in-Residence and in her first solo exhibition she showcases a collection of ceramic, soft sculptures, and painted works reflecting different points of reverence in Black culture.

The Sanctuary is pleased to present ***Overjoyed: Reflections of Loved Ones***, the first solo exhibition of St. Louis-born, Oakland-based artist Lauryn Marshall. On view from **November 16, 2024 to December 15, 2024**, the exhibition features new and previously-made paintings and sculptures by Marshall that highlight her exploration into memory and legacy. *Overjoyed: Reflections of Loved Ones* is the second exhibition hosted at The Sanctuary as part of their Artist-in-Residency program.

Upon entering, the first works featured are Marshall's diptych paintings: *Body Went Down, Soul Went Up* (2020-21) and *People are my cloth* (2020-24). Making its first appearance since Marshall's Senior Thesis exhibition *At Length* in 2021, *Body Went Down, Soul Went Up*, displays three Black male figures from Marshall's childhood at a cemetery. Centered around a nameplate with lyrics from Pharrell's "You Can Do It Too", one young man pours a bottle of Hennessy to the ground while the others hold their heads down in remembrance. It is a moment of intimacy where the viewer bears witness to a contemporary practice of libation and grieves together with the young men who have lost a loved one in their lives. *People are my cloth* follows a similar line of thought but offers an ancestral complement to the act of libation. Three of Marshall's ancestors on her maternal and paternal sides are shown in traditional African patterns clustered at the roots of a baobab tree. The eldest of the three pours from a basin into a river as the others remain as onlookers into the fantastical moment of reclamation for those affected by the Transatlantic Slave Trade. There is a resilience in both scenes where honor and graciousness is given as unpictured bodies return back to the earth.

Her remaining works in the space are all sculptural—ceramic vessels and crocheted plushies. "Vessel" is used loosely as it explores the human body and literal bottles through varying presentations in the medium of clay.

Kiss the Ring (2021), *Periodt* (2021), and *Deeply Rooted* (2024) are part of an ongoing series of hands emulating different moments in Black pop culture and reflect some of the nuances within the Black experience. *Kiss the Ring* portrays a masculine hand with its pinky up that is adorned by a large purple ring as an homage to Blaxploitation films. *Periodt* portrays a feminine hand with its fingers outstretched and wrist static; its long red nails pay homage to the late FloJo.



Deeply Rooted portrays two hands with its fingers becoming intermeshed to produce the sign “rooted or deeply rooted” in Black American Sign Language.

The remaining ceramic vessels also included are actualized in the form of liquor and soda bottles. *Chunk* (2019) began as the starting point for handbuilding cultural vessels out of clay. A Vess soda accompanied by a St. Paul sandwich and receipt listing the lesser-known histories in St. Louis serves as a token of reflection for unrealized pasts. *Hennessy* (2021), the accompanying ceramic for *Body Went Down, Soul Went Up*, inspired three new ceramics modeled after alcohol bottles. *5th of Hennessy, Wray and Neph*, and *Centenario* (2024) are mini vessels that are displayed as a trio and represent the liquors of cognac/dark liquor, rum, and tequila/light liquor that are often used for libation. They are hollowed to be used as “smoking vessels” where cones of incense are placed in the interior of each vessel and the rising smoke can flow freely out the top.

Following that thread of experimentation, *Comfy Cowries* (2024) came out of a return to memory. Marshall’s personal connection to slow crafts like crocheting developed through the time spent with her grandparents and familial elders. These crocheted, hand-stitched plushies are filled with recycled cotton and are presented in hues of taupe and cream. In its display, these soft shells are stacked and arranged in the window. Inspired by windchimes you might find in a store along the seashore, the plushies give nods to our connection to nature, water, and life.

ABOUT LAURYN MARSHALL:

St. Louis bred, SF Bay Area based multimedia artist Lauryn Marshall ([Art by Marshall](#)) uses color, figure and object composition, and fantastical elements as tools for storytelling to highlight the lived experiences of those from the African diaspora. Marshall comes from a line of Bahamian and Creole ancestry, peaking her interest in the many expressions of Blackness that exist in the world.

She dove into art at the early age of 2, coming from a long line of predecessors that were actively engaged in community building throughout the South. Though influenced and inspired by many role models within her family, Grandma Robbie was Marshall’s first art teacher and entrepreneurship mentor. At “Robbie’s Custom Leadergoods”, Marshall was inspired by the textiles her Grandmother created and it exposed her to different art mediums.

She is interested in connecting to community through visual art, creating ceramic and painted works to unearth the intersectionalities and subtleties of the Black experience. She encourages her viewers to make connections between what is present in contemporary culture versus its past representations in history. In 2017, she relocated to Oakland, CA to pursue higher education. She received her BA in Studio Art and Psychology from Mills College in 2021 and presently works with youth as an educator, mentor, near-peer and program coordinator. In addition to her personal work, Marshall is a muralist and often collaborates with Civic Design



Studio as a guest artist. She has assisted in murals located in Oakland, Berkeley, and San Francisco and has worked with talented Bay Area artists such as Tarika Lewis, Twin Walls Mural Company, Aerosoul, and Cece Carpio.

ABOUT THE SANCTUARY:

The Sanctuary is a 100% sustainable Black queer woman owned apothecary, apparel, home decor boutique and botànica located in the heart of Oakland's Grand Lake neighborhood. Their Artist in Residence (AIR) program awards residencies to approximately 4 local artists each year. Each residency lasts about 12 weeks and includes space to sell the artist's work in-store, an opening reception for a solo exhibit, solo exhibition of culminating work, a recorded artist talk, and space to host an optional workshop or class. The Sanctuary's AIR allows for exchange and collaborative relationships to develop within the Oakland community. Artists selected for this program are at all career stages and work in all visual art media, including drawing, painting, sculpture, photography, film, video, new media, installation.

VISIT THE SANCTUARY

3344 Grand Ave Oakland, CA 94610

<https://thesanctuary.energy/>

Wednesday-Sunday

12:00 pm-6:00 pm

PRESS CONTACTS

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