

D.C. Artist to Celebrate 'Homecoming' in New Exhibit, Dialogue

Also: A D.C. artist honors her early years of learning and growth, and a gallery celebrates its anniversary with a retrospective featuring works by 10 African artists

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After a 16-year artistic sojourn in Los Angeles, February James is returning to her D.C. roots.

"Homecoming (I'm Coming Home)," which opens Feb. 10 at the CulturalDC Mobile Art Gallery at Randall Recreation Center in Southwest, D.C., James explores topics such as personal identity.

"We are excited to work with February James on this important exhibition, her first solo exhibition in the District. We are welcoming her back to Washington, D.C., with this accessible exhibition and a celebration to match our excitement about her work," said CulturalDC Executive Director and Curator Kristi Maiselman.



The homecoming vibes will be real as the Feb. 10 opening will include food trucks, sounds by DJ Groovy Gene, and a performance by the Eastern High School Marching Band.

In "Homecoming (I'm Coming Home), James, whose work is also currently on display at the Rubell Museum DC, examines the journey from adolescence to adulthood through the lens of friendships, environments and habits.

On Feb. 15 curator Larry Ossei-Mensah will chat with the artist, diving deeper into her

work and journey.

Ossei-Mensah knows a lot about using art to explore life and cultural themes.

“Cross Currents,” co-curated by Ossei-Mensah and Micki Meng, is a vibrant art exhibition at studio and art space Four One Nine in San Francisco, California. The show, which closes Feb. 16, is intended to capture the essence of Black and Asian cultural synergy, but the conversation doesn’t stop in San Francisco.

With intersections between “Cross Currents,” and “Homecoming (I’m Coming Home),” the conversation between James and Ossei-Mensah is poised to further the curator’s hope to bridge connections across the country.

James’ ethereal portraits, executed in oil pastel and watercolor, explore themes of authenticity and facade, resonating with the “Cross Currents” exhibition’s exploration of identity. Her work provides a perfect segue into some of the themes highlighted in San Francisco.

Ossei-Mensah’s chat with James promises to explore the artist’s practice, her sources of inspiration, and the significance of her return to D.C. The curator’s global experience in organizing exhibitions, paired with his commitment to redefining perceptions through contemporary art, make him the ideal interlocutor for this dialogue.

This artist talk in D.C. not only serves as an extension of the “Cross Currents” exhibition, but also exemplifies the broader conversation about cultural fusion and identity in art. It underscores the interconnectedness of these narratives across different cities and communities.

Just as “Cross Currents” brought together nationally renowned artists from diverse backgrounds in San Francisco, this conversation in the nation’s capital highlights how artists like James contribute to arts education and dialogue, while heightening D.C.’s positioning as an art and cultural hub.

The Feb. 15 talk with James and Ossei-Mensah is a bridge to the ongoing dialogue about the interplay of different cultural narratives in the art world, which is an essential conversation for the times.

Doors open at 6:30 p.m. and the talk, which runs from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m., is anticipated to attract an audience of over 100 guests.