

VISUAL ARTS

Celebrate the Fourth With the New Art Exhibition 'F.R.E.E.'

The Goldmark Cultural Center addresses emancipation through art.

BY LAUREN WILLIAMS | PUBLISHED IN ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT | JULY 5, 2019 | 12:46 PM



Image courtesy Goldmark Cultural Center

It is hard to imagine a world where we aren't instantly flooded with notifications and information as soon as anything, newsworthy or not, happens. But for slaves in the deepest parts of the Confederacy, the news that they would no longer be subjected to bondage took more than two years to reach them.



June 19, 1865, when an order was issued in Galveston officially freeing the state's slaves. Juneteenth celebrates this day. And a new exhibition at the Goldmark Cultural Center explores what impact slavery and emancipation have had on ensuing generations.

Curated by Missy Burton and Evita Tezeno, *The Flagrant Rules of Ensued Emancipation (F.R.E.E.)* features their works as well as those of nine other African-American artists from the Dallas area: Jennifer Cowley, J. LeShae, Tyra Goodley, Valerie Gillespie, Tschaner Sefas, Aileen Collins, Kanyi Muraguri, Terrell Weathersby, and The Unknown.

As you walk into the room, the first thing you see is simply one word: "How?" Additional inquiries arise throughout the exhibit, such as "Are those your thoughts you're thinking?" and "What would the world be like if everyone were truly free?" The goal is to provoke insight into the present as well as the past.

"We still struggle for freedom daily, on individual levels," Burton says. She urges viewers to think broadly about the images presented. In reference to a piece by Evita Tezeno titled "I Ain't Pickin' No Mo' Cotton," Burton urges viewers to ask themselves if the lady in the drawing is actually picking cotton or if, perhaps, the artist was referencing something else entirely. "Maybe she was mad because her grandson was rolling around on the rug and getting lint in his Afro," she suggests with a laugh.

Chin-Chin Yeh, owner and director of the Goldmark Cultural Center, sees the exhibition as the first of its kind for the facility. "In some ways, it feels very different, even though we have had magnificent artists," she says. "It feels different because it is such an intellectually challenging subject."

The Flagrant Rules of Ensued Emancipation (F.R.E.E.) is showing through July 12, 2019, in the John H. Milde Gallery located in The Goldmark Cultural Center. Gallery hours are 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. Saturday showings are by appointment only.

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