

CONTACT INFORMATION

BlackRock Center for the Arts
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GERMANTOWN, MD — December 29, 2020 – BlackRock Center for the Arts announced today that a photo from our exhibiting artist, Cheriss May, was selected for CNN 2020: The year in pictures. CNN’s online, interactive gallery selects the photos that shaped 2020 in the news, entertainment, and sports. The image selected, **“I CAN’T BREATHE”** (archival pigment print), is part of her solo exhibit **Beyond the Protest**.

“From the hundreds of thousands of photos that have captured this historic year, it feels surreal to have one selected for CNN’s gallery,” said May. “But it’s not just that I had a photograph selected. It’s the fact that is this particular image, with all of its layers and complexities which reflect the layers and complexities of racial injustice in America.”

BlackRock partnered with the award-winning portrait and editorial photographer in late September to curate the body of work. May’s 35 images center around the intersection of race, politics, and protests in the wake of the national reckoning on racial injustice.

“We are so proud Cheriss’ work is getting the recognition and exposure it so rightly deserves by being included in CNN’s 2020 gallery,” said Lynn Andreas Arndt, BlackRock CEO. “As we stand witness to such a historic year, we remain ever committed to creating a more connected, empathetic, and creative world through the arts and community service.”

May’s work was also included in the 2020 Year in Picture exhibit by WOMEN PHOTOGRAPH, a non-profit dedicated to the elevation of voices of women and nonbinary visual journalists. The photo selected for this exhibit was **“YOUTH PROTEST”**, an image capturing kids taking a stand with other families and friends after the murders of Ahmaud Arbery, George Floyd, and Breonna Taylor, by protesting in their neighborhood in Washington, DC, US.

Beyond the Protest full exhibit can be viewed virtually on BlackRock’s website through Thursday, December 31. Signed prints are available for purchase by contacting our Gallery Director, Anne Burton (aburton@blackrockcenter.org).

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BlackRock Center for the Arts

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blackrockcenter.org | [@blackrockcenter](https://www.instagram.com/blackrockcenter) | [facebook.com/blackrockcenter](https://www.facebook.com/blackrockcenter)

ABOUT CHERISS MAY

Cheriss May is a portrait and editorial photographer based in Washington, DC. Her work tells the stories of marginalized people and issues — the "hidden figures" — and currently centers on the intersection of race, politics, and protest in the wake of the national reckoning on racial injustice. Her work has appeared in O Magazine, The White House Historical Association, The New York Times, Bloomberg, Time, ABC News, The Today Show, and MSNBC. Cheriss' work is featured in a permanent exhibit: MFON's "In Conversation: Visual Meditations on Black Masculinity" at the African American Museum in Philadelphia.

Cheriss is also the president of Women Photojournalists of Washington and is an adjunct professor at Howard University, her alma mater. She was selected as an Adobe Education Leader for her commitment to creativity in the classroom, and she trains and speaks to educators across the country. As an advocate for diversity and inclusion in the media industry, she is often commissioned to speak about inclusive storytelling. Originally from Kansas City, MO, Cheriss earned her BA in Communications and Advertising from Howard University in Washington, DC.

ABOUT BLACKROCK CENTER FOR THE ARTS

BlackRock Center for the Arts is a nonprofit cultural arts center in the heart of Germantown, Maryland. Our mission is to bring inspiring performing and visual arts experiences to diverse audiences in a welcoming and intimate setting, providing opportunities to explore, celebrate and engage in the arts.

RESOURCES AND LINKS

Beyond the Protest Exhibit

blackrockcenter.org/cheriss-may-beyond-the-protest/

Cheriss May Website

cherissmay.com

2020: Year in pictures (CNN)

cnn.com/interactive/2020/specials/year-in-pictures/

2020: Year in pictures (WOMEN PHOTOGRAPHY)

womenphotograph.com/news/2020-year-in-pictures

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