

MAKES ME WANNA HOLLA: ART, DEATH & IMPRISONMENT

LOGAN CENTER GALLERY

JULY 7–SEPT 10, 2023

Logan Center Exhibitions, the Center for the Study of Race, Politics, and Culture (CSRPC), and the Pozen Center Human Rights Lab (HRL) at the University of Chicago are pleased to present **Makes Me Wanna Holla: Art, Death & Imprisonment** featuring 2022-23 “Artist for the People” Practitioner Fellows **Dorothy Burge** and **Michelle Daniel Jones** with **Mourning Our Losses**.

Ms. Burge and Daniel Jones completed year-long fellowships co-hosted by CSRPC and HRL that explored the injustices of the carceral system. Their work engages critical race and human rights issues by looking back at forgotten, ignored, or suppressed stories and people. This exhibition asks: “Who gets remembered?”

Ms. Burge presents a series of quilted portraits depicting incarcerated survivors of Chicago police torture. This work is titled **Won't You Help to Sing These Songs of Freedom?** Each quilt is coupled with newly collected oral histories, artwork, family photos, and poems compiled by students at the

School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Also included are quilts that pay homage to two African American trans women who were murdered in Chicago in 2022; a life-size portrait of Alfred Woodfox, one of the Angola 3 who survived four decades of solitary confinement; and other portrait quilts that demonstrate acts of resistance and resilience.

As both curator and artist, Daniel Jones presents the Mourning Our Losses (MOL) Traveling Memorial, **We Shall Remember**. This exhibit immerses attendees in a multi-sensory experience of COVID-19 in prisons using sound, statistics, and the artistry of those currently and formerly incarcerated that speaks to the horrors of the pandemic. MOL highlights the moral cost of mass incarceration while honoring the lives of all who died while living or working behind bars.

FEATURING “ARTIST FOR THE PEOPLE” PRACTITIONER FELLOWS DOROTHY BURGE & MICHELLE DANIEL JONES WITH MOURNING OUR LOSSES



About Dorothy Burge

“Artist for the People” Practitioner Fellow Dorothy Burge is a fabric and multimedia artist and community activist who is inspired by history and current social justice issues. She is a self-taught quilter who began creating fiber art in the 1990s after the birth of her daughter, Maya. Dorothy is a native and current resident of Chicago, and is a descendant of a long line of quilters who hailed from Mississippi. Her realization that the history and culture of her people were being transmitted across generations in this art form inspired her to use this medium as a tool to teach history, raise cultural awareness, and inspire action. Dorothy received her Master of Arts in Urban Planning and Policy and her Bachelor of Arts in Art Design from the University of Illinois at Chicago. She is a member of Blacks Against Police Torture and Chicago Torture Justice Memorials; both are cultural collectives seeking justice for police torture survivors. Dorothy is also a member of the Women of Color Quilters Network. Her work will be featured in the Smithsonian’s permanent collection, and she was named a 2020 Field and MacArthur Foundation Leaders for a New Chicago recipient. Dorothy received a 2017 Robert Rauschenberg Foundation Artist as Activist fellowship and is an Illinois Humanities Envisioning Justice Commissioned Artist.



About Michelle Daniel Jones

“Artist for the People” Practitioner Fellow Michelle Daniel Jones, ABD, is a sixth-year doctoral student in American Studies at New York University. Michelle’s dissertation focuses on creative liberation strategies of incarcerated people in Alabama. Michelle’s fellowships include Beyond the Bars, Charles Warren Center for Studies in American History at Harvard University, Ford Foundation Bearing Witness with Art for Justice, SOZE Right of Return, Code for America and Rendering Justice with Mural Arts Philadelphia. As an artist, Michelle finds ways to funnel her research into literature, theater, visual art, and photography. Michelle is co-editor with Elizabeth Nelson of a new history of Indiana’s carceral institutions for women with incarcerated and formerly incarcerated colleagues titled, *Who Would Believe a Prisoner? Indiana Women’s Carceral Institutions, 1848–1920*, published in 2023. Michelle co-authored a play with Anastazia Schmid, “The Duchess of Stringtown,” which was produced in Indianapolis and New York; and her artist installation about weaponized stigma, *Point of Triangulation: Intersections of Identity*, toured nationally, with a permanent public mural dedicated in October 2021.



About Mourning Our Losses

Mourning Our Losses (MOL) was created in April 2020 by a volunteer group of educators, artists, students, and organizers—many formerly incarcerated—committed to the release of people from prisons, jails, and immigration facilities across the United States during the COVID-19 pandemic. Viewing incarcerated people as multifaceted human beings is at the core of our work. While we refuse to dehumanize incarcerated individuals the way the prison system does every day, we are deliberate in exposing the conditions they endured behind bars, which often led to their deaths. Our memorials embrace advocacy and movement-building, through telling stories that mourn and celebrate their lives.

We Shall Remember: Mourning Our Losses Traveling Memorial (MOLTM) brings to life the experience of our digital website memorial that honors the lives

of people who died in correctional and detention facilities in the United States during the COVID-19 pandemic. The MOLTM is an immersive exhibit that is educational, displaying critical information and statistics on the pandemic in America’s prisons. We will also engage the community to add to the exhibit’s public altar for reflection and remembrance. The MOLTM showcases the artistry of those incarcerated and formerly incarcerated across the United States with a focus on Illinois artists through works that speak to the horrors of the pandemic and their strategies for survival. We remember the lives of people who died from abominable public health conditions. We believe a loss of any human life warrants mourning and our traveling memorial — through art, education, and lived experience — shares that message across the United States.

MOLTM Featured Artists

Adamu Chan, CA	Erika, IL	Lloyd R. Caldwell, CA	Rick, TX
Alberto Nunez, OR	Ernesto Valle, IL	Lonnie Smith, IL	Robert Curry, IL
Anonymous, CO	George, CA	Luci Harrell, GA	Ruth L. Poor, IL
Anthony “Sonny” Ramirez, CA	JA-HEE, IL	Marshall Stewart, IL	Sketch Vektor, IL
Brian Hindson, TX	Jami Renee, IL	Mary Elizabeth Baxter, PA	Stan-Bey, CA
Carlos J. Ayala, IL	Jane Field, TX	Mesro Dhu-Rafa’a, CA	Tara Betts, IL
Cedar Annenkovna, CO	JD, IL	Michael Poor, IL	William Jones, IL
Chanthon Bun, CA	Jeff-Free G. Raff, CA	Michael Sullivan, IL	Willie Spates, IL
Cuong “Mike” Tran, CA	Joanne DeCaro, CA	Michelle Daniel Jones, IN	
D. Nichols, CO	John W. Zenc, CA	Miguel Disarufino, CA	
Darrell Fair, IL	Jonathan Marvin, CA	Page Dukes, GA	
Devon Daniels, IL	Joseph Dole, IL	Randy Colōn, NY	
E L. Burnside, IL	Juan Luna, IL	Reginald BoClair, IL	
Efrain Alcaraz, IL	Keith Thomas, CA	Renaldo Hudson, IL	

PROGRAMMING

Opening Reception

Friday, July 7 | 6-8:00PM

Holla Back: Art & Conversations

Saturday, July 8 | 10AM-3:30PM
Logan Center Screening Room + Great Hall

What These Walls Won't Hold

10-11:15AM | Screening Room

Documentary screening and talkback with filmmaker Adamu Chan.

We Shall Remember: COVID-19 in Prisons

11:15AM-12:30PM | Screening Room + Great Hall

Panel with members of Mourning Our Losses on the impact of COVID-19 in prisons, and a participatory memory project that will be added to the gallery exhibition.

Lunch + Tabling by Community Organizations

12:30-1:30PM | Gidwitz Lobby

Survivors of Police Torture Speak

1:30-3:30PM | Screening Room

Context + Framing with Alice Kim and Dorothy Burge. Panel discussion with Carl Williams, Anthony Holmes and LaTanya Sublett, moderated by Damon Williams.

Virtual Tour with Incarcerated Scholars

Thursday, July 27 | Private Event

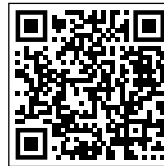
Black August: Solidarity Quilting Workshop

Saturday, August 19 | 12-3:00PM
Logan Center Rooms 801 + 802

Send messages to incarcerated police torture survivors by making quilt patches with Dorothy Burge. Featuring guest speakers Mary L. Johnson (mother of incarcerated torture survivor Michael Johnson) and Gregory Banks (torture survivor).

Artists Live with Dorothy Burge & Michelle Daniel Jones

Wednesday, September 6 | 6-7:30PM
Logan Center Performance Penthouse



More info and
RSVP links at
loganexhibitions
.uchicago.edu

Logan Center Programming and Production Staff: Jan Brugger, Ben Chandler, Caleb Clemente, Emily Hooper Lansana, Rooke Hyde, Anika Steppe, Marcus Warren, David Wolf

CSRPC Programming and Production Staff: Beth Awano, Anaga Dalal, Tierra Kilpatrick, Alice Kim, Tracye A. Matthews, Marilyn Willis

MOL Traveling Memorial Team: Susie Bannon, Michelle Daniel Jones, Joanne DeCaro, Page Dukes, Jane Field, Luci Harrell, Kelsey Kauffman, Chanthon Bun. Additional assistance from Project PAINT: The Prison Arts Initiative and North Park Writing Center.

Visual Resources Center Technical Consultants: Bridget Madden, Allie Scholten

Curatorial, Research, and Design Contributors: Amber Ginsburg, Sarah Ross & the *Interpretations* class at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Joaquin F. Verges

Prison + Neighborhood Arts/Education Project: Tim Barnett, Gabrielle Christiansen, Alice Kim, Jason LaFountain

Production Volunteers: Taji Chesimet, Susan Mart, Ruth L. Poor, Michael Poor, Indigo Wright

Makes Me Wanna Holla: Art, Death & Imprisonment is presented by Logan Center Exhibitions, the Center for the Study of Race, Politics, and Culture, and the Pozen Center Human Rights Lab at the University of Chicago. Practitioner Fellows are supported in part by a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to the Centering Race Consortium, a partnership between race studies centers at Brown University, Stanford University, UChicago, and Yale University to center the study of race in the arts and humanities. MOL's Traveling Memorial is also supported by Illinois Humanities.

DOROTHY BURGE

**INCARCERATED CHICAGO POLICE TORTURE
SURVIVORS FEATURED IN THE EXHIBITION:
ROBERT ALLEN/GEORGE ANDERSON/MICHELLE
CLOPTON/ERWIN DANIEL/JAVAN A. DELONEY/
AUBREE DUNGEY/DARRELL FAIR/STANLEY
HOWARD/MICHAEL JOHNSON/DERRICK KING/
ABDUL MUHAMMAD/ANTONIO NICHOLAS* /
ROBERT ORNELAS/JOHNNY PLUMMER/GERALD
REED/DANIEL VAUGHN**

*Antonio Nicholas was released in 2022.

I am a fabric and multimedia artist and community activist who was born and raised in Chicago. I hailed from a long line of quilters from Mississippi and Louisiana, including my mother, grandmother, and great grandmother. Although they were all quilters, it was not until my art quilts moved from the personal to political that I learned to value the power of quilts.

Those close to me call me Mama Dorothy, and I follow in the footsteps of generations of Black people who have used quilting to document history and resist oppression. In 2008, I was commissioned to make a quilt about the issue of lynching.

Inspired by the stories of Ida B. Wells and James

Cameron, my early work told these unsung stories through art as a means of quilting to freedom.

My mission is to inspire generations to action.

In response to Trayvon Martin's murder in 2012, I converted a photo of my nine-month-old great nephew in a hoodie holding Skittles and iced tea into a provocative quilt, which now lives in the

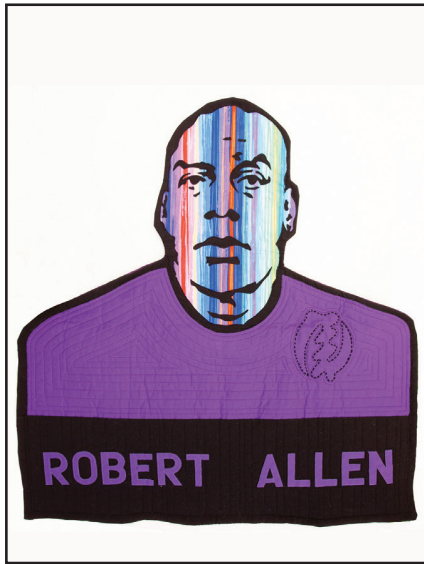
Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. Since

then, I have continued to make quilts that connect the history of this fiber art with social issues that

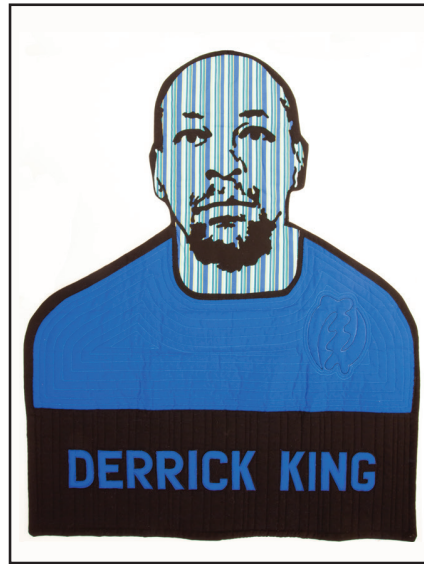
impact me and my communities. Ranging from

domestic violence, to incarcerated individuals living

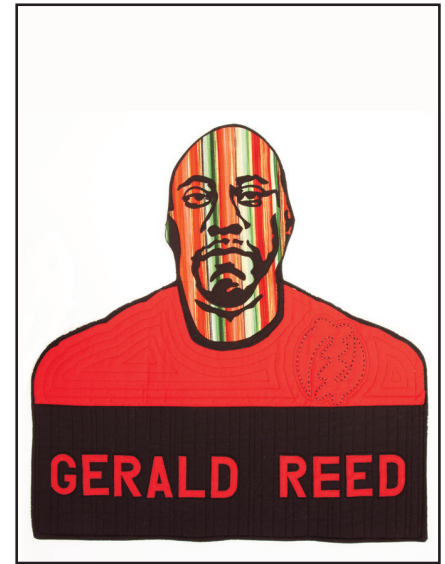
with life without parole, to survivors of Chicago police



Dorothy Burge, **Free Robert Allen** from *Won't You Help to Sing These Songs of Freedom?*
2021, quilted materials, 36"x48"
Image courtesy of DePaul Art Museum.



Dorothy Burge, **Free Derrick King** from *Won't You Help to Sing These Songs of Freedom?*
2021, quilted materials, 36"x48"
Image courtesy of DePaul Art Museum.



Dorothy Burge, **Free Gerald Reed** from *Won't You Help to Sing These Songs of Freedom?*
2021, quilted materials, 36"x48"
Image courtesy of DePaul Art Museum.

torture at the hands of Commander Jon Burge, my quilts are resistance in the face of oppression.

I call myself a “quiltivist” because I fuse the storytelling power of quilts with activism. I conduct quilt-making workshops and display my work across the country. I often work with the youth, hoping to inspire young people into social justice activism and inevitably, they inspire me right back. The quilts I make are challenging but also powerful. Through quilting, I ask audiences to reckon with America’s white-washed history and anti-Black racism. One quilt titled *16 Shots and a Cover-Up* used the autopsy report of Laquan McDonald’s 2014 murder to align

the quilt’s silhouette with the precise locations of bullets where Laquan was shot sixteen times by Chicago police. Central to my quilting is storytelling: the stories of who Black people are, how our social and physical oppression has affected us, and why we must keep fighting against such injustices.

My works sustain and document social movements. The work highlights the strength and resilience Black folks display in the face of oppression and discrimination.

– **Dorothy Burge**

MICHELLE DANIEL JONES

Freedom In Death

- Michelle Daniel Jones

TIME

COUNT TIME

LUNCH TIME

WORK TIME

SLEEP TIME

TIME OF EXPOSURE

EQUAL JEOPARDY

BOTH THE INCARCERATED
AND FREE

TIME OF INCUBATION

PLAGUED WITH SYMPTOMS
AND WORRY

BOTH UNFREE
NO SECURITIES

TIME OF INFECTION

EMBODIED MISERY

HEIGHTENED AND STRAINED FOR THEE
BEHIND WALLS UNSEEN

TIME OF ISOLATION

WATCHING FRIENDS SEETHE

SELF IN PAIN AND DISCOMFORT

IGNORED AND UNMET ARE THE NEEDS

TIME OF TREPIDATION

THE POWER OF COVID-19

CAGED INSIDE A CAGE

ONLY DEATH ITSELF DID FREE

TIME ETERNAL

COUNT TIME

LUNCH TIME

SLEEP TIME

SICK TIME

DEATH TIME

FREE TIME



Michelle Daniel Jones

Freedom in Death

2023, mixed media, 16"x20"

Image courtesy of the artist..

At the beginning of the pandemic, I was most concerned for the elderly and sick behind bars, many of whom were my friends I'd left behind only three years before. There was so much that we didn't know about the pandemic, but what I did know is it would be impossible to achieve isolation in quarantine, little to no PPE was available, and social distancing would be a running joke. With colleagues and friends, we asked the Indiana governor to consider releasing the sick, elderly, and those serving less than 365 days as a health measure to reduce the overcrowded prison populations to permit the reasonable executions of the CDC's quarantine and infection measures. The governor failed to act and out of concern for those who would likely die, *Mourning Our Losses* was born. From the beginning, our goal was to memorialize those men and women who died behind bars while elevating the devastating effects of COVID-19 behind bars. We actively shared information with other groups around the country, collected memorials, highlighted artists who drew the faces of the dead, held vigils, engaged in advocacy, conducted research, published articles and launched a website to hold our collective memorial work. As an artist, it was important for me to funnel this collective and creative energy into artistic expressions and the *Mourning Our Losses Traveling Memorial, We Shall Remember* was born. What you experience in this exhibit is an effort to make those of you on the outside SEE it, KNOW it, HOLLA and be CHANGED. Only when there is a change in consciousness does the potential for right action arise.

In my curation of this exhibit, I sought out artists who were either incarcerated or formerly incarcerated that created work about the pandemic or during the pandemic, as a way to process their experiences of living with a debilitating disease in captivity. I am proud to announce that there are 61 works from 50 artists from 8 states. The education alcove challenges what you know about COVID-19 in prisons and the heart alcove is a visceral response to the loss of loved ones. My other work for this show reaches outward from inside, expressing how, for some of my friends, their freedom came not from a sentence modification, post-conviction relief petition, or exoneration. For so many, their release from prison came because they died of COVID-19, alone in an inhospitable environment, and that shit Makes Me Wanna Holla!!!! The injustice of it all is catastrophic, putrid, and vile, yet artistic expression is one of the ways that I and others in this exhibit dealt with the inhumane and unjustified.

– **Michelle Daniel Jones**