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**UCR ARTS TO PRESENT THREE PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITIONS PLUS BLACK KIRBY'S
REIMAGINING OF THE FIRST AFRICAN AMERICAN COMIC BOOK SUPERHERO**

(Riverside, CA) — UCR ARTS announced today the presentation of four new exhibitions that will debut February through April, including selections from three important collections of photographs and an Afrofuturistic project by the duo known as Black Kirby. These new exhibitions will be on view at UCR's California Museum of Photography and the adjacent Barbara & Art Culver Center of the Arts in downtown Riverside, California.

"UCR ARTS is widely known for celebrating photographs, and this Spring we are thrilled to offer a broad range of photography exhibitions that highlight various aspects of the dynamic medium: idiosyncratic visions of California, portraits of jazz musicians, and pictures of ordinary people captured by vendors from San Francisco's memorable Fox Movie Flash," says Executive Director Sheila Bergman. "In addition, we're delighted to present a project by UCR faculty member John Jennings and artist/educator Stacey Robinson, collectively known as Black Kirby, which explores Larry Fuller's pioneering Black comic book hero, Ebon."

An opening reception for the first two spring exhibitions will take place on Saturday, February 26, 2022 from 7 – 9 p.m.

UCR ARTS's upcoming spring exhibitions are:

California Stories: Photographs from the Stephen White Collection II

California Museum of Photography

February 26 – July 21, 2022

Drawn from renowned collector and gallerist Stephen White's collection, *California Stories* presents select moments from California's sweeping saga from a dusty land populated by indigenous peoples to a crowded U.S. state with industrialized farming, bedroom communities, and overflowing cities. Featuring nearly two hundred images, the exhibition includes numerous portraits—which were some of the earliest photographs taken in California—as well as landscapes of iconic and lesser known built environments and natural spaces. The works on view encompass more than a century



of photography in the state, ranging from 1872–1980. Luminaries abound—both in front of and behind the camera—including in images of Teddy Roosevelt, John Muir, Shirley

Temple, and Amelia Earhart as well as photographs by Berenice Abbott, Ansel Adams, Kali Archibald, Ruth Bernhard, Robert Heinecken, Taizo Kato, Dorothea Lange, Patrick Nagatani, Julius Shulman, Carleton Watkins, and many others.

This exhibition is curated by Dennis Reed. Support comes from UCR College of Humanities, Arts, and

Social Sciences, and the City of Riverside.

Ebon: Fear of a Black Planet

A project by Black Kirby

Culver Center of the Arts



March 19–June 19, 2022

In 1970, Spearhead Comics published the first and only issue of *Ebon*, Larry Fuller's pioneering yet short-lived comic about a Black superhero. While other Black comic book characters preceded Ebon—such as Lobo (Dell Publishing, 1965), the human gunslinger in the Old West, and Black Panther (Marvel), a supporting character to the Fantastic Four in 1966—Ebon was the first African American superhero to have his *own* comic book. It was a landmark in Black creative thought and political commentary, and a formative work in what is now known as Afrofuturism.

Written, penciled, inked, and lettered by Fuller, Ebon was imagined as an alien who came from a planet where everyone is Black. Enthralled with this narrative potential, Black Kirby—the collaborative moniker of artists and professors John Jennings and Stacey Robinson—has

worked with Fuller to build, expand, and re-imagine that world. *Ebon: Fear of a Black Planet* featured their splashy digital illustrations and colorful collages of characters, costumes, and locations of Ebon's universe, a powerful Black safe space that references Hip-Hop, African diasporic traditions, Afrofuturism, and more.

John Jennings is a best-selling author, graphic novelist, curator, and professor of Media and Cultural Studies at UC Riverside. Stacey Robinson is an artist and professor of graphic design at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. This exhibition is curated by Nikolay Maslov, UCR ARTS Curator of Film & Media Projects.

Black Kirby X: Ten Years of Remix and Revolution

Culver Center of the Arts

March 19–June 19, 2022



Through comics, the interdisciplinary duo known as Black Kirby examines identity as a socialized concept and destabilizes ideas of “Blackness” in order to promote a broader spectrum of Black subjectivity. In conjunction with *Ebon: Fear of a Black Planet* and in celebration of the tenth anniversary of their collaboration, *Black Kirby X: Ten Years of Remix and Revolution* presents a selection of their early works, artist projects previously presented at the Culver Center, and other experimental and iconic pieces.

Black Kirby is the shared pseudonym of artists and educators Stacey Robinson and John Jennings. Sampling and remixing comic legend Jack Kirby’s bold forms and energetic ideas combined with themes around Afrofuturism, social justice, representation, and magical realism, it uses the culture of Hip-Hop as a methodology to create visual communication and the notion of the alter-ego to reference W.E.B. DuBois’ “double-consciousness” theory.

Black Kirby’s work has been exhibited at museums, universities, and other venues worldwide. The duo has collaborated on award-winning graphic novels, designed and art directed numerous publications, and was nominated for a Bessie Award for their art direction on Cynthia Oliver’s performance piece, *Virago Man Dem*.

Black Kirby X is organized by Black Kirby and UCR ARTS. UCR’s College of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences and the City of Riverside provide support for UCR ARTS programs. Additional support for this exhibition was provided by Jack Fitsimmons, Palm Springs.

Fox Movie Flash: The Street Vendor Camera in San Francisco, 1950–1963

California Museum of Photography
March 26–November 27, 2022



Long before everyone carried digital cameras, street vendors playfully snapped photographs of people in popular public places, then offered them a candid portrait to buy as a keepsake. Many said yes!

Today these full-length pictures of ordinary people—photographed on the street like celebrities caught by paparazzi—survive in flea markets and family albums. Fox Movie Flash is the first exhibition devoted to these portraits, a form of photography practiced worldwide from the 1930s through the 1970s.

In San Francisco, Joe Selle called his business Fox Movie Flash and his vendors worked Union Square, Market Street, the Cliff House, and the Sacramento State Fair. Selle developed all the film, but only printed pictures that sold. When a new BART station replaced the Fox Movie Flash building at 642 Market Street, the Visual Studies Workshop in Rochester, New York agreed to house one thousand 35 mm film cans, each holding one hundred feet of film, roughly one million anonymous portraits by dozens of unknown photographers. Now it is the largest known street vendor photography archive.

“If someone you know visited San Francisco between 1945 and 1975, chances are they met one of these photographers!” says curator Mary Panzer. “These casual, spontaneous images reveal a fascinating picture of who we were in the middle of the 20th century.”

In the early 2000s, curator Andrew Eskind used then-new technology to look at 100,000 Fox Movie Flash negatives for the first time since they were made. In this exhibition six thousand of these striking images rotate on screens and projections, along with original prints and other ephemera that together reveal what Fox Movie Flash photographers found on the San Francisco streets: a diverse parade of families, couples, tourists and conventioners, sailors and soldiers, and many others.

This exhibition is curated by Andrew Eskind, curator and archivist, Rochester, New York; Mary Panzer, curator and historian, New York City; and Renny Pritikin, curator and art writer, Oakland, California.

Also on view:

Jazz Greats: Classic Photographs from the Bank of America Collection

Culver Center of the Arts, Jack and Marilyn Sweeney Art Gallery

January 29–April 3, 2022

Thirty-three iconic and lesser-known images dating from the 1920s–80s by fifteen photographers portray artists from varied genres in music and dance. Many of the photographs portray captivating moments in the lives of acclaimed jazz and modern dance legends such as Eartha Kitt, Louis Armstrong, Django Reinhardt, Martha Graham, and Merce Cunningham, while others depict members of local communities entertaining their neighbors. The photographers are Michael Abramson, Jonas Dovydenas, Arthur Felig (Weegee), William Gottlieb, Milt Hinton, Antony Armstrong Jones (Lord Snowdon), Gjon Mili, Lisette Model, Barbara Morgan, Gordon Parks, Marc Pokempner, Aaron Siskind, Edward Steichen, Chuck Stewart, and Eduard Van Der Elsen.

Related public program

Third Thursday Talk: Jazz Greats

Thursday, February 17, 2022 | 6–7 pm

Free Virtual Event

Join Joshua Welchez, UCR Jazz Ensembles director; Douglas McCulloh, senior curator at the California Museum of Photography; and Rita Souther, UCR ARTS exhibitions manager, for a virtual conversation about the intersection of photography and jazz.

Registration: <https://ucrarts.ucr.edu/Program/third-thursday-talks-jazz-greats>

This exhibition is loaned through the Bank of America Art in our Communities® program.

About UCR ARTS

UCR ARTS opened to the public in 2010, bringing together the California Museum of Photography (founded in 1973), the Jack and Marilyn Sweeney Art Gallery (1963), and the Barbara & Art Culver Center of the Arts (2010). Located three miles from UCR's main campus, UCR ARTS is housed on a single block in adjacent historical buildings in downtown Riverside.

UCR ARTS advances the understanding and appreciation of the arts through extraordinary experiences in contemporary visual and performing art and photography and photographic technologies, past and present. Presenting major exhibitions, artist projects, performances and community programs, and independent and foreign language films, UCR ARTS engages both global and regional audiences.

The extensive art, photography, and research collections of the California Museum of Photography and the Jack and Marilyn Sweeney Art Gallery make UCR ARTS an important destination for audiences as well as researchers working in a wide range of fields. ucrarts.ucr.edu

Visitor Information

Admission to UCR ARTS is now free, thanks to the generosity of our sponsors Altura Credit Union and Anheuser-Busch. Advanced reservations are encouraged and can be [made online](#). Email ucrarts@ucr.edu with questions or for additional assistance.

In response to COVID-19, numerous precautions are in place, including:

- Face masks are required regardless of vaccination status.
- All visitors are required to complete the UCR Wellness Survey on the day of their visit and show museum staff their clearance message to enter.
- If you feel unwell, please reschedule your visit.
- Hand sanitizing stations are available throughout the sites.
- As always, large bags, food, and drink are not permitted.
- Enhanced cleaning protocols are in place and ventilation filters are changed regularly.
- **Culver Cinema Guidelines:** Proof of full vaccination is required for visitors 5 years and up to enter the theater. Capacity is currently limited to 50% and social distancing is required in the theater. We have purchased new aerosolizing guns to further sanitize between each screening.

Hours: Thursday and Friday 12–5 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday 11 a.m.–5 p.m. Closed Monday-Wednesday.

UCR ARTS, including the California Museum of Photography and the Jack and Marilyn Sweeney Art Gallery in the Culver Center of the Arts, is located at 3824 + 3834 Main Street in downtown Riverside, California. Paid parking is available at several nearby lots.

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Images:

Page 1: Kali Archibald, *The Eye is a Photographer*, ca. 1960. Courtesy of Stephen White.

Page 2: Cover of Ebon, issue #1. Original by Larry Fuller, remastered by Black Kirby. Courtesy of the artists.

Page 3: “Shango,” original art by Black Kirby. Courtesy of the artists.

Page 4: Mike Selle/Fox Movie Flash. Courtesy of Andrew Eskind.