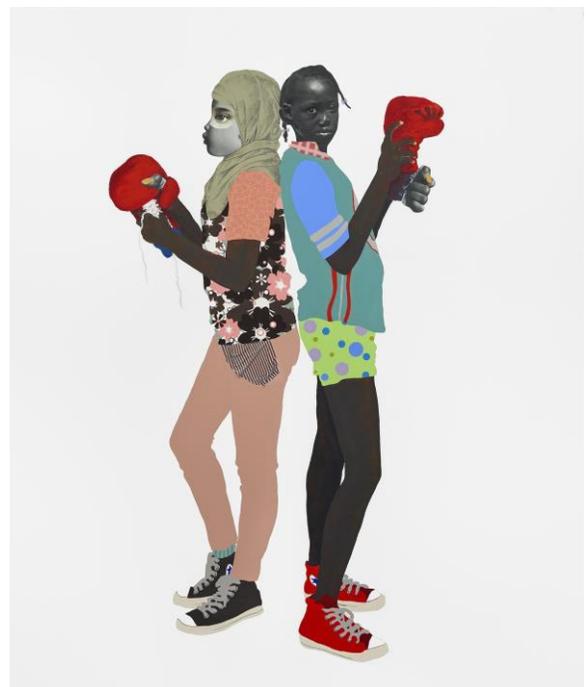


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**THE CONTEMPORARY AUSTIN'S UPCOMING EXHIBITION *DEBORAH ROBERTS: I'M* RECEIVES 2020 ART WORKS AWARD FROM THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE—AUSTIN, TEXAS** – The Contemporary Austin announces that it has received a grant of \$35,000 from the National Endowment for the Arts in support of the upcoming exhibition *Deborah Roberts: I'm*, opening at the museum's downtown Jones Center location on January 23, 2021. The Art Works award is among \$84 million in grants announced this morning by National Endowment for the Arts Chairman Mary Anne Carter, as part of the Arts Endowment's second major funding announcement for fiscal year 2020.

"We are honored to receive this Art Works award on behalf of The Contemporary and the very important exhibition of works by Deborah Roberts," said Margie Rine, Interim Executive Director. "Roberts's practice addresses issues that we hope will encourage important conversations in our community during the run of the exhibition.-Her compelling work weaves together history and culture, celebrates the Black body and Black identity, and draws attention to our nation's history of racism. We are grateful to the National Endowment for the Arts for supporting and recognizing an artist of Roberts's stature and relevance."



***DEBORAH ROBERTS: I'M*  
JANUARY 23 – AUGUST 15, 2021**

As the artist's first solo museum exhibition in Texas, *Deborah Roberts: I'm* features all new work by Roberts (American, born 1962 in Austin, Texas), including collages, paintings, sound and video installation, and text works. In addition to the exhibition opening January 23, 2021, The Contemporary Austin has also commissioned an outdoor public mural by the artist, which will be installed on the exterior of the museum's Jones Center building, premiering in fall 2020 in advance of the exhibition.

Based in Austin, Texas, Roberts critiques notions of beauty, the body, race, and identity in contemporary society. For her mixed media paintings and works on paper, the artist sources found material from

photographs, magazines, literature, and the Internet, collaging and reassembling these with hand-painted details into her reimagined figures. Black children, historically among the most vulnerable members of our population, are protagonists in Roberts’s work, often based on historical figures. Playful and serious, heroic and insecure, these youths are given complex portrayals that highlight the fraught assumptions and perceptions around them. With all new works being created this year, her forthcoming exhibition can be expected to extend Roberts’s ongoing dialogue with American history, art history, Black culture, and popular culture—resonating deeply with the challenging cultural conditions and social upheaval of our times. ***Deborah Roberts: I’m*** is organized by Heather Pesanti, Chief Curator & Director of Curatorial Affairs, and will be accompanied by a catalog to be published in Spring 2021.

“These awards demonstrate the resilience of the arts in America, showcasing not only the creativity of their arts projects but the organizations’ agility in the face of a national health crisis,” said Mary Anne Carter, chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts. “We celebrate organizations like The Contemporary Austin for providing opportunities for learning and engagement through the arts in these times.”

### THE CONTEMPORARY AUSTIN

As Austin's only museum solely focused on contemporary artists and their work, The Contemporary Austin offers exhibitions, educational opportunities, and events that start conversations and fuel the city's creative spirit. Known for artist-centric exhibitions and collaborations, The Contemporary invites exploration in both its urban and natural settings—downtown at the Jones Center (700 Congress Avenue), lakeside at the Laguna Gloria campus (3809 West 35th Street), and around Austin through the Museum Without Walls program. More information about The Contemporary Austin can be found at [thecontemporaryaustin.org](http://thecontemporaryaustin.org).

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**IMAGE CAPTION:** Deborah Roberts, *Red, White and Blue*, 2018. Mixed media and collage on canvas. 72 x 60 inches. Artwork © Deborah Roberts. Image courtesy the artist and Stephen Friedman Gallery, London.