2018 Duncanson Artist-in-Residence Vanessa German

Click here to download high-res images of Vanessa German’s work and headshot.

VANESSA GERMAN NAMED 2018 DUNCANSON ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE
AT TAFT MUSEUM OF ART

CINCINNATI, OH — The Taft Museum of Art and the Robert S. Duncanson Society have selected visual and performance artist Vanessa German as the 2018 Duncanson Artist-in-Residence.

German’s mixed-media sculptures and assemblages will be featured in a special exhibition entitled vanessa german: running with freedom. This show will be on view July 13–October 21 in the Sinton Gallery. One work will be placed in the Longworth Foyer, where it can be appreciated in the context of Robert S. Duncanson’s landscape murals.

Constructed from found objects, including doll parts, antique tins, beads, household items, and other cast-off relics, German’s “power figures” evoke folk art traditions, religious icons, and African nkisi nkondi—ritual figures carved from wood to embody mystical forces.

German's sculptures bridge the past and the present: antiques mingle with provocative imagery, challenging stereotypes and confronting current issues facing African American communities.

German spent her young adult years in Loveland, Ohio, when she began collecting, assembling, and painting found objects to create works of art—a precursor to the power figures she is known for today.
"I am thrilled to be selected as the 2018 Duncanson Artist-in-Residence," said German.

"I'm looking forward to do a residency in a place where I had formative art experiences. It was a place where, as a young adult, my art intersected with activism and I began engaging with issues that matter."

"We are delighted that Vanessa German has been named the 2018 Duncanson Artist-in-Residence," said Deborah Emont Scott, Louise Taft Semple President/CEO. "Through her work as both an artist and an educator, German seeks to transform lives through the power of art and love."

Now based in Pittsburgh, German is a true multidisciplinary artist, and her sculptural work, spoken word, and community art initiatives have garnered national attention. Her work has been featured on CBS Sunday Morning, NPR’s All Things Considered, and in the Huffington Post, O Magazine, and Essence Magazine.

German’s art has been exhibited in museums nationwide, including the Spelman College Museum of Fine Art, the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, the Studio Museum in Harlem, and the Ringling Museum of Art. The Taft also featured German’s work as part of the 2013 exhibition African American Art Since 1950: Perspectives from the David C. Driskell Center.

Vanessa German is a recipient of the 2015 Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation Grant, the 2017 Jacob Lawrence Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and a 2018 United States Artists Grant.

From October 7-21, German will lead public programs, teach workshops, and visit schools across Greater Cincinnati.

Residence Sponsor: Ohio National Financial Services

The Taft Museum of Art is supported in part by the generosity of individuals and businesses that give annually to ArtsWave. The Ohio Arts Council helps fund the Museum with state tax dollars to encourage economic growth, educational excellence, and cultural enrichment for all Ohioans. The Taft Museum of Art is accredited by the American Alliance of Museums and is affiliated with the Association of Midwest Museums and the Ohio Museums Association.