

T.J. DEDEAUX-NORRIS

Second Line - Part II

Educator Handout Grades 7-12

ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

Second Line features the work of artist, performer, and educator [T.J. Dedeaux-Norris](#) (pronouns she/her and they/ them). Split into two parts, this exhibition features over 45 works from multiple series spanning 16 years. Dedeaux-Norris's work critiques systems of race, sex, gender, religion, education, healthcare, and class, as well as the complexities of family dynamics and histories. Through their multidisciplinary practice, including painting, fiber, performance, video, and music, Dedeaux-Norris questions how these systems—and the visible and invisible trauma they induce—exploit people of color, women, Queer folx, and the elderly.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

T.J. Dedeaux-Norris's work has been exhibited at *Prospect.3*, New Orleans, Louisiana; Figge Art Museum, Davenport, Iowa; 1708 Gallery, Richmond, Virginia; Contemporary Arts Center, New Orleans, Louisiana; David Shelton Gallery, Houston, Texas; Emerson Dorsch Gallery, Miami, Florida; Franklin Street Works, Stamford, Connecticut; Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C.; Jane Lombard Gallery, New York, New York; Ronchini Gallery, London, UK; SVA, New York, among others. Dedeaux-Norris has completed residencies at the Fountainhead Artist Residency, Miami, Florida; Grant Wood Fellowship, Iowa City, Iowa; Hermitage Artist Retreat, Sarasota, Florida; Long Road Projects, Jacksonville, Florida; MacDowell Colony, Peterborough, New Hampshire; and Ox-Bow School of Art, Saugatuck, Michigan. They earned their MFA from Yale University and are currently an assistant professor in Painting and Drawing at the University of Iowa.

Exhibition checklist and label information

subjective frame

- What do you associate with the materials, imagery, and objects in the [exhibition](#)?
- Which artwork stands out most to you and why? Based on what you see, what do you think the work is about?
- How do the artworks and their titles make you feel? What about them makes you feel this way?

cultural frame

- Search for ways Dedeaux-Norris critiques systems of race, class, sex, and gender through their work in this [exhibition](#).
- The second line in a jazz funeral is largely about the coming together of family, friends, and strangers to celebrate the life of one who has passed, while supporting those who are mourning to carry the weight of their grief. In what ways does Dedeaux-Norris reference the importance of community throughout the exhibition?
- In [Jazz Religion, the Second Line, and Black New Orleans, New Edition: After Hurricane Katrina](#), Richard Brent Turner states, "participants in second-line culture...created their own social space and became proficient in the arts of [political disguise](#), [resistance](#), and [performance](#)."¹ Analyze the exhibition and describe ways Dedeaux-Norris demonstrates these skills through her practice.

structural frame

- How has Dedeaux-Norris used similar mediums in different ways throughout the exhibition?
- Choose an artwork in the exhibition to focus on, then analyze and describe how the artist has used formal elements to communicate meaning. How do the mediums and composition contribute to the messages conveyed?
- What connections can you draw between works based on the arrangement of the [exhibition](#)? Why do you think the artist and curator chose to place works where and how they did?



T.J. Dedeaux-Norris: Second Line. Installation view at University Galleries of Illinois State University, 2021.

VOCABULARY

ESTATE

collection of property owned by an individual

CONTEMPORARY

something that belongs to the present or current time

CONTEXT

the situation in which something happens

FORMAL QUALITIES

refers to elements and principles of design such as line, shape, color, balance, movement, contrast, and unity

INSTALLATION

often large-scale mixed-media works created to fit a specific space

POLITICAL DISGUISE

strategic concealment of identity, character, or quality² to resist oppressive dominant power structures

POWER OF ATTORNEY

the authority to act for another person in specified or all legal or financial matters³

SECOND LINE

extended family, friends, and strangers that join in the celebration of life during New Orleans jazz funeral processions

SUBJECT MATTER

what is being depicted in an image or artwork

SUBJECTIVE

something that is open to interpretation; up to the viewer to decide

THEME

recurring ideas, materials, or subject matter

¹ Turner, R. (2017). *Jazz Religion, the Second Line, and Black New Orleans, New Edition: After Hurricane Katrina*. (p. 6). Indiana University Press. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt2005rqb>.

² Dictionary.com. (n.d.). Disguise. In *Dictionary.com*. Retrieved November 2, 2021, from <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/disguise>

³ Google Dictionary. (n.d.). Power of attorney. In *Google.com dictionary*. Retrieved July, 13, 2021 from <https://www.google.com/search?client=safari&rls=en&q=google+dictionary&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8#dobs=power%20of%20attorney>

RESOURCES

- Educator resources are available on the exhibition [web-page](#).
- An exhibition video tour will be available via University Galleries' Vimeo.
- December 1: On-site screening and presentation in conjunction with World AIDS Day and Day With(out) Art. Time will be announced via University Galleries' Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter accounts.

You can find [University Galleries](#) on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#), and sign up to receive email updates through the [newsletter](#). Please contact galleries@illinoisstate.edu or call (309) 438-5487 if you need to arrange an accommodation to participate in any events related to this exhibition.

ART-MAKING ACTIVITIES

- [Jerusha, Zeresh, and Hamutal](#) reference three female biblical characters and serve as commentaries on the often neglected or misrepresented narratives of women in historical texts. Guide students to research an historically underrepresented figure of their choice. Ask them to consider:
 - Who wrote the story?
 - From whose perspective is the story told?
 - How is the person portrayed?
 - What might have been omitted or falsified in the story and why?Based on their responses to these questions, prompt students to create an artwork that provides an alternative narrative for the person they researched.
- [The Fabric of Our Lives](#) is comprised of found and gifted clothing, bedding, and other utilitarian fabrics. Sewn together by various people, this ongoing collaborative artwork weaves together the efforts of students, friends, family, and strangers. As a class, discuss associations with the title—not only the literal use of these fabrics, but also the embedded reference to relationships between [cotton](#) production, the expansion of [slave labor](#), and resulting [generational trauma](#)—relative to the materials and processes used to create the artwork. Then, engage students in a community building, skill-sharing project using found and gifted materials. Encourage students to work together to figure out ways to integrate the materials and “stitch” them together. During the activity, invite participants to share the significance of the materials they brought—where they came from, who they belonged to, their function, and/or stories connected with them. Consider including students’ statements of the personal significance of this activity through labels or video documentation which can be displayed next to the unified work.
- Search for elements that are present in both [Part 1](#) and [Part 2](#) of *Second Line*. As a class, discuss the differences in arrangement and function of these elements and the ideas communicated through both installations. Prompt students to create an artwork that can serve a variety of functions—from utilitarian to aesthetic, supportive to obstructive, and/or decorative to reductive. For example, the ceramic knobs inserted into the wall acted as punctuations, interruptions, or extensions to works in Part 1 of the exhibition, while in Part 2, they serve as supports for hanging fabric paintings. Invite students to explore various possibilities for display, considering how each iteration impacts what is communicated to the viewer.
- The portraits in this exhibition are of Dedeaux-Norris’s family members, both close and estranged. These portraits are sourced from family photographs, social media profile pictures, and mug shots found online. Dedeaux-Norris used memorable quotes to title the [portraits](#) of women in her family, while she used only the name and individual’s relation to the artist for the [portraits](#) of men. Analyze how this information and the formal qualities of each work impact your understanding of Dedeaux-Norris’s relationship with these family members. Consider how it might feel to create a portrait of a person you are not close to. Prompt students to create two portraits—one of a close friend or family member and one of someone they do not know well. Encourage students to reflect on the creative choices they made to represent their relationship with each person.