


Spring 1-22-2016

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Recommended Citation

Zimny, Brooke and News Bureau, Ouachita, "Ouachita to host “Boys to Black Men” exhibit by Chrystal Seawood Jan. 25-Feb. 26” (2016). *Press Releases*. Paper 203.
http://scholarlycommons.obu.edu/press_releases/203

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NEWS

For immediate release

Ouachita to host “Boys to *Black Men*” exhibit by Chrystal Seawood Jan. 25-Feb. 26

By Brooke Zimny

January 22, 2016

For more information, contact OBU's news bureau at newsbureau@obu.edu or (870) 245-5208

ARKADELPHIA, Ark.—Ouachita Baptist University's Department of Visual Arts will host Chrystal Seawood in a guest exhibit, “Boys to *Black Men*,” Jan. 25-Feb. 26. The exhibit will be held in the university's Rosemary Gossett Adams Gallery in Moses-Provine Hall and is free and open to the public. A closing reception and artist lecture will be held Feb. 26.

“Boys to *Black Men*” responds to the highly publicized shooting deaths among unarmed, black males at the hands of police. Seawood surveyed a group of black teen boys from her hometown of Forrest City, Ark., to understand how these national incidents influence the boys' relationships with law enforcement in their community and how the incidents affect their self-image as emerging black men in America. The exhibit is a visual reference of the survey, seeking to offer a sense of candor and intimacy not available through the mainstream media.

“In the title ‘Boys to *Black Men*,’ the emphasis is placed on ‘Black’ to acknowledge to some and affirm to others that there are distinct life experiences native only to black boys maturing to black men versus non-black boys maturing to non-black men,” Seawood noted, “and that one of those distinct life experiences is the disproportionately high black male mortality rate due to fatal interactions with law enforcement.”

Without drawing any conclusion of who or what is right or wrong, Seawood said, “It's simply an invitation for any viewer – regardless of race and personal opinion about the details surrounding the killings – to hear directly from young black boys who share their honest thoughts openly.”

“I've been excitedly anticipating Chrystal's show for over a year,” said Summer Bruch, assistant professor of visual arts at Ouachita. “Her work is beautifully rendered and allows the viewer to connect to her subjects in a profound way. This is a show that no one should miss.”

Seawood will deliver an artist lecture at 6:30 p.m. in the second floor Adams Gallery on Feb. 26. A drop-in reception also will be held Feb. 26 from 6-7:30 p.m. in the first floor Adams Gallery. The exhibit is open 8 a.m.-5 p.m. weekdays and admission is free.

Seawood currently serves as an English teacher at Forrest City High School. She is a graduate of Henderson State University in Arkadelphia.

“Arkadelphia is a very special place to me, as it was vital to my growth and development as an adult and artist,” Seawood said. “I enjoyed the intimacy Arkadelphia provided; the community was homey and close-knit. Each time I visit Arkadelphia, it's like I never left.”

For more information, contact OBU's School of Fine Arts at (870) 245-5129.