

**BMoCA**



Spring 2020 Present Box

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**Candice Davis:**  
***Lifting As We Climb***

March 5 – March 22, 2020

Guest curated by Rose van Mierlo

# Lifting As We Climb

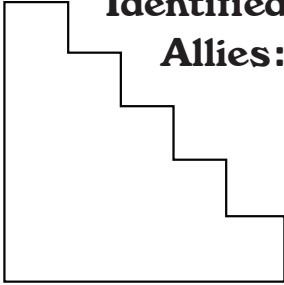
As a central feature of the exhibition, Davis presents the figure of the staircase as a metaphor for assumed socio-economic progress versus the real, racial, gendered and monetary disparity in contemporary America. Drawing on black feminist theory, Davis looks at sources from the suffrage movement, contemporary visual culture and gender politics to encourage a debate around minority women's representation and citizenship.

Two video screens have been positioned to represent a scene from *Gone with the Wind* (1936). In it, Scarlett O'Hara stands atop a staircase after learning about the destruction of her family's plantation, looking angrily down on her servant slaves. The scene exposes the contempt for formerly enslaved African Americans after the Civil War, and the racial stereotypes that persist in media, where female desirability and social status is made synonymous with Whiteness. By inviting visitors to ascend a seemingly unending staircase in the form of a modified stair machine, Davis encourages audiences to experience, however momentarily, the 'feeling of climbing without moving upward' that plays an enduring, frustrating part in the lives of women of color. As part of the development of the installation and performance, Davis worked with the local community to create a voting accessibility declaration that challenges self-identified allies to consider how and if they lift women of color up as they climb.



Above: Candice Davis, *Lifting As We Climb* (detail), 2019. Textile reproduction. Courtesy of the artist. Cover image: Candice Davis, *13850* (detail), 2017. Installation, Performance. Courtesy of the artist.

**For the  
Consideration  
of Self-  
Identified  
Allies:**



Is your allyship active  
or passive?

Do you check in with  
and listen to the needs  
and concerns of your  
neighbors?

Can you empathize  
with those who  
have lost faith in the  
political system?

Are you someone that  
your neighbors can  
count on or turn to?  
Do they know of or  
feel that support?

Do you consider  
how the language  
of policy and voting  
can be made more  
accessible to all in  
your community?

Above: Candice Davis, *For the Consideration of Self-Identified Allies*, 2020. Poster design as part of 2020 Present Box Exhibition, *Lifting As We Climb*. 8.5" x 11". Courtesy of the artist.

## **Artist and Curator Biographies**

**Candice Davis** is a conceptual artist originally from San Antonio, Texas and currently working in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Davis graduated from the Minneapolis College of Art and Design in 2018 with a BFA in Web + Multimedia Environments. Her practice focuses primarily on digital media, installation, and performance as a means of witnessing for the experiences of marginalized people. She is a recent recipient of a Next Step Fund Award and is currently an Artists on the Verge 11 Fellow.

**Rose van Mierlo** is an independent international critic, curator, and lecturer working between the United Kingdom, United States, India, and the Netherlands. She was a Critical Writing Fellow at Lokaal 01 (Belgium, 2011), and a post-academic fellow at DNA/GEMAK (the Netherlands, 2011). After completing a MA in Contemporary Art Theory at Goldsmiths (University of London, 2015), she was appointed as the Curator of Exhibitions and Public Programs at the Swiss Cottage Gallery (London, 2017). She is currently a director of the SquareWorks:Lab Fellowship in Mumbai and a part-time lecturer in critical art theory. Van Mierlo has curated emerging and established international artists, such as Ronny Sen, Rithika Merchant, and Soghra Khurasani (*This burning land belongs to you*, 2017); Katarina Hruskova (*The Waning Yolk*, 2018); Caitlin Griffiths (*While we belong to ourselves, a part of us belongs to everyone*, 2018); and Tash Kahn and John Ros (*Citizen*, 2018) and has commissioned public art projects by Claudette Johnson, Sutapa Biswas, Ely Clarke, Ingrid Pollard, and Liz Hingley.

**Present Box** is a series of temporary exhibitions that invite artists to transform BMOCA's lobby and front entrance into innovative installations, performances, and events that last less than a month. Presented two times per year, the site-specific projects are intended to encourage artists to create work outside their comfort zone and to foster interactive participation. The exhibitions encourage experimentation and urge artists to test ideas and explore different approaches. Present Box exhibitions are always free and open to the public.

### **BMOCA's 2020 Exploration on Themes Surrounding the Passage of the 19th Amendment**

In 2020 to commemorate the centennial of women being guaranteed the right to vote in the United States, BMOCA will be bringing three contemporary women artists to reflect on the complexities of being a woman in our democracy today. A hundred years since the vote was won, the relation between gender and equality is still being negotiated daily. What does it mean to have a vote? To be a body? To use your voice?

In addition to Candice Davis, the artists who will be exhibiting work exploring the themes of women's voice in our society today include Nyeema Morgan and Christina Battle. Morgan's exhibition will open on June 4, and Battle's on October 8. Additional details on these exhibitions will be forthcoming and available at [bmoqa.org](http://bmoqa.org).

### **Present Box Events**

#### **Opening Reception and Performance for *Lifting as We Climb***

March 5, 6 - 8pm

Opening performance 6:30 - 7:30pm

Discussion after the performance 7:30-8pm

Free

#### **Second Performance for *Lifting as We Climb***

March 7, 2 - 3:30pm

Performance 2 - 3pm

Q&A 3 - 3:30pm

\*Please Do Not Take Photographs During the Performances

#### ***Thank you to our generous sponsors:***

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#### ***Special thanks to our community partners:***

*YWCA Boulder County*

Please Do Not Touch Works of Art

Flash Photography Not Permitted

Boulder Museum of  
Contemporary Art

# **BMOCA**

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