



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

***CENTER FOCUS TO SPOTLIGHT BLACK WOMEN PHOTOGRAPHERS***  
Inaugural Black Women Photographers exhibition runs April 11 to 29 at Hi-ARTS

**NEW YORK (April 1, 2022)** — [Hi-ARTS](#) has joined forces with [Black Women Photographers \(BWP\)](#) for *Center Focus*. BWP's inaugural group exhibition, which showcases the work of seven of its acclaimed and emerging members, will run from April 11 to April 29 at Hi-ARTS.

Founded by Polly Irungu and birthed out of the racial reckoning of 2020 to disrupt the notion that it is difficult to discover and commission Black creatives, Black Women Photographers is a global community and directory of more than 1,000 Black women and non-binary identifying photographers, spanning more than 46 countries and 32 U.S. states. Through conversation, workshops, educational resources, virtual and in-person events, as well as an active directory of photographers available for hire, BWP is committed to providing a home for Black women identifying photographers with the aim of increasing access to professional and paid opportunities for Black creatives.

Co-curated by Irungu and Hi-ARTS, New York City's premier incubator for urban art, *Center Focus* will highlight the individual journey of acclaimed and emerging photographers Eliana Carter, Andrea K. Castillo, Poochie Collins, Maria J. Hackett, Myesha Evon Gardner, Ashli Owens and Edolia Stroud through multimedia content and visual storytelling. Work includes both portraits of Black women and pieces that capture the world as seen through a Black woman's gaze.

Hi-ARTS is an urban arts incubator that has helped develop acclaimed works of art from creators including [Dominique Morisseau](#), [Radha Blank](#), Alex Alphaaroh, Ebony Noelle Golden and others.

"These phenomenal artists will share the joy, beauty and struggle of Black women in a way that welcomes all while celebrating the uniqueness singular to our community," said Hi-ARTS Executive Director Aaron L. McKinney. "We applaud the work and are honored to partner with and be the home of BWP's inaugural exhibition and we are committed to providing an experience that sets the bar for future BWP exhibitions and partnerships."

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“It’s an honor to give members of Black Women Photographers an opportunity to take up space in the world of art exhibitions,” Irungu stated. “It is not too often that we are invited to these spaces, so I am forever grateful for the incredible team at Hi-ARTS for believing in my work and the work of BWP.”

*Center Focus* opens on April 11 with an in-person opening reception from 7 to 9 p.m. ET and concludes with a closing mixer, on April 29 from 7 to 9 p.m. ET. An intimate in-person, peer-to-peer artist talk with the exhibiting artists will take place on April 13 from 7 to 9 p.m. ET. This will also be recorded and streamed online at a later date. Gallery hours for the exhibition will be Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 1 to 6 p.m. ET and Thursdays and Fridays from 1 to 8 p.m. ET. All events will take place at Hi-ARTS in El Barrio’s Artspace PS109 at 215 East 99th Street in Manhattan.

The exhibition is free and open to the public with a timed-entry registration. Attendees will have the opportunity to make a donation at the time of registration to support both presenting nonprofits.

To learn more about Hi-ARTS and secure exhibition, reception or mixer tickets visit [hi-artsnyc.org](https://hi-artsnyc.org). Follow Hi-ARTS at @hiartsnyc on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn. For more information on Black Women Photographers, visit [blackwomenphotographers.com](https://blackwomenphotographers.com) or follow it at @blackwomenphotographers on Facebook, Instagram and YouTube, @blkwomenphoto on Twitter and @black-women-photographers on LinkedIn.

### **About Hi-ARTS**

Hi-ARTS is a leading cultural hub within the urban art movement and is the only institution in New York City, and one of the few in the country, exclusively dedicated to supporting and developing Hip-Hop and the urban aesthetic. Through artistic development residencies, vibrant multi-disciplinary creative programming and civic engagement opportunities, we empower artists to develop bold new work while creating a positive, lasting impact on our community. Learn more at [hi-artsnyc.org](https://hi-artsnyc.org) and follow us at @hiartsnyc.

### **About Black Women Photographers**

Launched in July of 2020, Black Women Photographers (BWP) is a global community of more than 1,000 active members from around the world. Black Women Photographers is a home for Black women to receive proper recognition, and most importantly, get hired. Dedicated to providing a resource for the industry’s gatekeepers, it supports its members through promoting their work in an active database distributed to photo editors, directors, curators and art buyers. The collective also offers free educational resources such as regular programming of webinars, workshops, training and portfolio reviews.

### **Health & Safety**

Hi-ARTS continues our ongoing requirement for individuals to wear masks at all times while in our space. We also ask that audiences provide Proof of Vaccination OR a Negative PCR test taken within 72 hours of visit. Audiences will also be asked to complete a contact tracing form upon arrival.

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**Accommodations**

El Barrio Artspace PS109, home of Hi-ARTS, is ADA accessible. Should you require any additional accommodations for our events, please contact Programming Manager Joyous Pierce at [joyous@hi-artsnyc.org](mailto:joyous@hi-artsnyc.org) no later than 72 hours prior to the event.

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