Gallery Guide

MARCH 20 – APRIL 26, 2026



In Pursuit of Home

Mario Moore

JANUARY 16 – APRIL 26, 2026

What does it mean to claim a place, to cross the threshold and call it yours? For many Americans now in their twenties and thirties, homeownership hovers at the edge of fiction, eroded by wage stagnation, student debt, and soaring housing prices. For Black Americans, that dream has never been simply economic; it is shadowed by state-sanctioned exclusion, from the 1930s redlining maps to the 2000s subprime lending traps that deliberately severed Black families from this engine of generational wealth.

Mario Moore situates this fraught terrain at the center of *In Pursuit of Home*. Through meticulously rendered paintings, graphite drawings, and a bronze sculpture, Moore probes the architecture, literal and symbolic, that dictates who is granted stability and who must improvise it. Domestic interiors flicker between sanctuary and surveillance; verdant backyards become contested ground; figures at rest appear both protected and precarious, their sense of ease is hard-won. The artist's Detroit roots surface in layered references to labor and land, grounding abstract questions of belonging in concrete histories of displacement and resilience.

Mario Moore, *Mortgage Burning*, 2025, Oil on linen, Courtesy of the artist.





Jeremy Okai Davis, *Metering*, 2019, Acrylic on canvas, Courtesy of Heather C. Ohaneson.

Presence of Color

JEREMY OKAI DAVIS

MARCH 20 – APRIL 26, 2026

Presence of Color explores racial biases ingrained in photographic technology and broadens the conversation by questioning the politics of seeing. Through a critical reimagining of Kodak's mid-20th century "Shirley" cards, reinterpretations of Black portraiture, and the inclusion of archival images from *Jet* and *Hue* magazines, Davis challenges the historical dominance of whiteness in visual culture.

Kodak's original "Shirley" card was used to balance color in film, centering white subjects as the "normal" in lighting and shadow exposure, and embedding whiteness into the technical framework of photograph printing. The result was not merely aesthetic imbalance; it institutionalized racial hierarchy within visual systems, often rendering darker skin tones underexposed or flattened. By creating "Black Shirley cards," Davis performs both critique and reclamation. He positions Black skin tones as the standard of calibration, symbolically and materially re-centering Blackness within the framework of visual and cultural worth.

Through technological critique, cultural reclamation, and the elevation of Black portraiture, Jeremy Okai Davis transforms the camera from an instrument of exclusion into a tool of affirmation.

Jazz Greats:
Classic Photographs from the Bank of America Collection

NOVEMBER 7, 2025 – APRIL 26, 2026

Of all visual art media, photography is most often referred to as democratic in its accessibility — to photograph takers, makers and viewers. There is some truth to that designation, especially today, when capturing a high-quality image is easy for most of us. However, the processes used to create the photographs on view in *Jazz Greats: Classic Photographs from the Bank of America Collection* were not nearly as simple. Almost all are gelatin silver prints made from negative film, a near-obsolete photography method displaced by digital technology. Beyond their material properties, the images in this exhibition reveal a variety of relationships between photographers and performers.

Jazz is historically in the forefront of African American music for its honesty, sensuality, and improvisational vigor. This selection of black-and-white prints spans three generations and speaks to the histories of individuals and occurrences, in front of and behind the camera.

Essay by Margaret Rose Vendryes, PhD – Distinguished Lecturer, York College, CUNY



William Gottlieb (American, 1917–2006), *Ella Fitzgerald, Dizzy Gillespie, Ray Brown, Milt (Milton) Jackson, and Timmie Rosenkrantz, Downbeat, New York, N.Y.*, 1947, Gelatin silver print, Bank of America Collection

This exhibition has been loaned through the Bank of America Art in our Communities® program.

BANK OF AMERICA



PAST PRESENT AND FUTURE

INTERACTIVE MURAL EXPERIENCE

- **Use your phone to scan the mural and bring Charlotte's iconic figures to life!**
- **Located in the D. Oscar & Heide Groomes Creative Annex on the 2nd Floor.**

How to Interact

1. **Scan the QR code** to access instructions.
2. **Hover over highlighted images** to watch historical figures come alive with animation, narration, and insight.

About the Mural

Past, Present, and Future honors the achievements of Black Charlotteans who have helped shape the vibrant city we know today. The featured people and landmarks have had a significant influence on local government, foodways, business, culture, and even the U.S. Supreme Court. Building on foundations set during the era of segregation, they changed law, politics, and community both locally and nationally.

Although they worked in various fields, they shared a commitment to progress, equality, and strong connections within Charlotte's Black communities. The mural is dedicated to the young people in the forefront — future leaders of the work still to come.

About the Artist

Visual artist Abel R. Jackson III channels a lifetime of creative exploration into work that uplifts, inspires, and serves his community with purpose.



About the Gantt

Harvey B. Gantt Center for African-American Arts + Culture is a multidisciplinary arts institution located in the heart of Charlotte, North Carolina. Founded in 1974, the Gantt's mission is to present, preserve, and celebrate excellence in the art, history, and culture of African-Americans and those of African descent through visual and literary arts, dance, music, film, educational programs, theatre productions, and community outreach. The Gantt features fine art exhibitions from around the world and is home to the nationally celebrated John and Vivian Hewitt Collection of African-American Art, which was generously donated by Bank of America, and is accessible online.

Named for Charlotte civic leader and former mayor Harvey Bernard Gantt, the Gantt is housed in an iconic, award-winning structure designed by architect Philip Freelon, co-designer of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture (NMAAHC).

Harvey B. Gantt Center
for African-American Arts+Culture

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COVER ARTWORK CREDIT Jeremy Okai Davis, *Thelma Study (Thelma Johnson Streat)*, 2020, Acrylic on canvas, Collection of Tanmaya Bingham.