



**For Immediate Release**

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**LAUMEIER SCULPTURE PARK ANNOUNCES FALL 2023 EXHIBITION,  
VAUGHN DAVIS JR.: THE FABRIC OF OUR TIME**

**At a Glance**

- WHAT:** A solo exhibition of new work by St. Louis-based artist Vaughn Davis Jr. that includes large-scale paintings, ceramic works, and outdoor flags.
- WHO:** Artist Vaughn Davis Jr., Laumeier’s 2023 Kranzberg Exhibition Artist
- WHEN:** On view August 26-December 17, 2023.
- WHERE:** Laumeier Sculpture Park, 12580 Rott Road, St. Louis, 63127. Inside the Aronson Fine Arts Center’s Whitaker Foundation Gallery and outside in the Northern Grove.
- WHY:** Local artist Vaughn Davis Jr. produces vibrant and expressive canvases that create organic, formless, shape-shifting objects, teetering between painting, performance, and sculpture. Davis’s work is timely and powerful as his distress of materials refers to daily struggles and social protest, especially for Black and Brown communities. His work challenges traditional definitions of sculpture and meditates on the passage of time and change.



Vaughn Davis Jr., *Tattered Portal*, 2023. Acrylic, pigment, aerosol, dye on canvas. 85 x 85 inches. Courtesy of the artist, St. Louis and Romer Young Gallery, San Francisco. Photo: Wil Driscoll Photography.

***Detailed release follows***



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**Laumeier Sculpture Park presents first solo museum exhibition  
for local artist Vaughn Davis Jr.**

**St. Louis, MO** – Laumeier Sculpture Park will present the first solo museum exhibition for St. Louis-based artist Vaughn Davis Jr., titled *The Fabric of Our Time*. The exhibition will be on view August 26 - December 17, 2023 and will feature recent and newly commissioned paintings, ceramics, and flags. The indoor and outdoor works will be presented in the Aronson Fine Arts Center’s Whitaker Foundation Gallery and in the Park’s Northern Grove.

Vaughn Davis Jr. rips, tears, and drapes pigmented canvases to transcend traditional notions of painting and push them into the realm of shape-shifting objects. His distress of materials refers to daily struggles and social protest, especially for Black and Brown communities. The pieces featured in the exhibition explore Davis’ visual vocabulary of dismantling the picture plane, illustrating the performative nature of painting, and testing its boundaries as moments cross into sculpture.

In each of his sizable paintings the canvas has multiple expressions of manipulations—from spilled paint to soaked dye and fraying—creating a spectacle of actions Davis has enacted on the materials.

He explains: “The act of tearing my paintings has become an experience that is a protest to the formalisms of painting and a metaphor of change. When undoing threads of painted canvas, I think of borrowing tools of labor and undoing a labored object, a kind of homage to hard working people. The departure of the works on view at Laumeier is a personal one, but also to speak about the human experience. I think about the struggles of humanity and the beauty that still exists.”

Davis applies a similar tactile approach in his ceramic works, folding and splitting clay and using expressive glaze techniques. Davis’ clay works will be experienced as a sculptural wall installation, each perched on a series of towers, reflecting his interest in support structures such as shelves and pedestals as display mechanisms. Many of these ceramic pieces were made by Davis at the Park using Laumeier’s clay studio and kilns.

In addition to the artwork presented inside the Aronson Fine Arts Center, Davis will create a series of flags for the Northern Grove Flag Project. Like his paintings, Davis’ handmade, expressive flags will be made with painted fabric that is deconstructed and then reconstructed. With these site-responsive flags, Davis will enter into a collaboration with nature, as his initial manipulation of the materials will be further subjected to the unpredictability of the weather and the forces of the wind. The resulting works will reflect and complicate some of the traditional functions of flags, such as protest, group identity affirmation, nationalism, and morale building during conflict.



Laumeier's Curator Dana Turkovic states: "Laumeier's Kranzberg Exhibition series is a great platform and opportunity for local and regional artists to create and present a new body of work. Vaughn's exhibition introduces a new perspective on traditional media as he pushes the boundaries of painting into sculpture. His ceramic work brings yet another craft into the conversation about sculpture, materials, and the artistic process."

### **Public Programs**

Multiple exhibition-related public programs—many free of charge—will be presented. These include:

#### **EXHIBITION OPENING / Saturday, August 26 from 11 a.m. – 1 p.m. / Free**

The public is invited to celebrate the opening of the exhibition, which includes a conversation between Vaughn Davis Jr. and Curator Dana Turkovic at noon in the Aronson Fine Arts Center.

#### **DISCOVER LAUMEIER / Sunday, August 27 / 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. / Free**

*Discover Laumeier* invites people of all ages to explore Laumeier's 105 acres, uncover the inspiring effects of artmaking, and soak in the calming and restorative benefits of the natural landscape. Among the day's free offerings will be a project led by Vaughn Davis Jr. inviting visitors to contribute to the making of a large-scale, collaborative painting.

#### **LECTURE / Friday, September 8 / 12 p.m. / Webster University, 8300 Big Bend Blvd., Sverdrup Hall, Room 123 / Free**

Join Vaughn Davis Jr. for an artist talk to learn about his artistic practice and his current exhibition, *The Fabric of Our Time*, at Laumeier.

#### **FAMILY WORKSHOP: Painting as Sculpture / Saturday, September 16 / 1–3 p.m. / \$45**

Bring your painting into another dimension with inspiration from Vaughn Davis Jr.'s exhibition. Transform a flat surface into sculpture and use color to distinguish the different shapes and layers that you create. Designed for ages 4 to 12, accompanied by an adult. The \$45 registration fee covers one child and one adult.

Visit [laumeier.org](http://laumeier.org) for the most up-to-date information on exhibition-related programming.

### **About the Artist**

Vaughn Davis Jr. received his BFA in 2017 from Webster University, St. Louis. His work has been exhibited at Craft Alliance, St. Louis; Philip Slein Gallery, St. Louis; Malin Gallery, New York; The Luminary, St. Louis; Gazebo Gallery, Kent, OH; among others. He has had solo exhibitions at Romer Young Gallery, San Francisco; Dragon Crab & Turtle, St. Louis and Monaco Gallery, St. Louis. Davis lives and works in St. Louis.

### **About Laumeier Sculpture Park**

Founded in 1976, Laumeier Sculpture Park is one of the first and largest sculpture parks in the country. Laumeier presents more than 70 works of large-scale outdoor sculpture throughout its 105-acre campus. It serves 350,000 visitors of all ages each year, with a world-class art collection, indoor and outdoor temporary exhibitions, education programs and public events. Laumeier is an internationally recognized museum, accredited by the American Alliance of

# LAUMEIER

Museums. The 501(c)3 nonprofit organization operates in partnership with St. Louis County Parks.

Laumeier Sculpture Park's ongoing operations and programs are generously supported by St. Louis County Parks; Regional Arts Commission; Missouri Arts Council; among other corporations, foundations, individual donors and members.

2023 Exhibitions are supported by Alison and John Ferring, Ken and Nancy Kranzberg, Joan and Mitchell Markow and Two Sisters Foundation, Emily Rauh Pulitzer, and Mary Ann and Andy Srenco.

*Vaughn Davis Jr.: The Fabric of Our Time* is supported by Whitaker Foundation. Davis is the 2023 Kranzberg Artist. This fund, generously provided by Ken and Nancy Kranzberg, supports the presentation of new work by one or more St. Louis area artists per year.

For more about Laumeier Sculpture Park, please visit [www.laumeier.org](http://www.laumeier.org).

## **Images**

High-resolution images available upon request.



### **Vaughn Davis Jr.**

*Runaway, 2023*

Unprimed canvas, acrylic, dye, pigment, aerosol  
Dimensions variable

Courtesy of the artist, St. Louis and Romer Young  
Gallery, San Francisco

Photo: Wil Driscoll Photography



**Vaughn Davis Jr.**

*Skyscraper*, 2023

acrylic, dye, aerosol paint, pigment on canvas

120 x 78 inches

Courtesy of the artist, St. Louis and Romer Young  
Gallery, San Francisco

Photo: Wil Driscoll Photography

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