

**Catherine Armbrust:** Everybody, here we go. Welcome friends I am Catherine Armbrust. I am coming to you from my own personal gallery at my home, but I am the director of the George Caleb Bingham gallery on the University of Missouri campus. Luckily, we were able to reopen in late August when school started, we closed down in March kind of like everything else in the world did, but we are back open now and we are hosting now our third exhibition of the fall semester called collective voices. I do want to point out that somebody asked me this this morning about like, "how have you been," like, "how's the gallery been doing during the pandemic". Part of the reason that this show actually came about is that a bunch of other stuff fell through I had a bunch of different exhibitions scheduled and because of COVID-19 quite a few artists ended up canceling so I decided to message my friends' John and Nicole who work in these collections on campus and ask them if they would be interested in putting together just a real quick, just a real quick, easy show with me. We'll just do it real quick we've got like a month to put it together and suckers that they are, said yes, but what has come out of it is, I think, something bigger than the three of us really realized it would be and I feel very grateful that they were in on it with me. So what the people you have here besides me you might see Nicole Johnston [Nicole waves] she is from the Missouri historic costume and textile collection I got that one right didn't I that one's a little hard for me sometimes she's like the textile queen with the fancy closet of things she can't wear and John Fifield-Perez from the Ellis library Special Collections [John nods] he's like an amazing curator and has brought so much so many wonderful objects into their collection over the past couple of years so we started putting our heads together to decide how we wanted to drive this exhibition there were a few really specific objects that kind of were the springboards for us and you'll get to see some of those tonight we'll talk a little bit more about those but what we ended up coming together with is this piece called collective voices and it does include art objects as well as archival and textile objects from three really specific campus collections first is the Missouri Historic Costume and Textile Collection that I mentioned, Special Collections, and then as we were working we started realizing that there are kind of some holes that we needed to fill and we ended up reaching out to Anselm Huelsbergen and Gary Cox at the University Archives and they really stepped up and helped us find some amazing documents that are in the University Archive that really enriched what we were trying to do. So as I mentioned earlier this is a big show there's a lot of ground we're trying to cover and there's specific ways that you're going to see that we're starting to tie things together but essentially we've chosen objects for you that reveal these historically

repeating narratives that we think are very, very relevant today such as what you see on the screen marginalized voices, Mizzou student activism, civil rights, a lot of political tensions, colonialism and anti-colonialism, LGBTQ+ issues, and then climate and environmental concerns and tonight as I mentioned we're going to be really focused on the colonialism or anti-colonialist issues and the civil rights along with Mizzou student activism so when you walk into the gallery space like literally what we're doing is kind of going on this tour of the space since I'm not in the space we're doing still images right here's just a reminder also of the curators but this is what you see right when you walk into the space and are kind of like staring, staring off holistically into the exhibition and so this is where you're gonna start to sort of pick up on these persistent narratives that are reminders that so we're working really hard to try and amplify very, very diverse voices in this exhibition but part of what has been happening as we're doing this is the realization that of course there are many, many voices that still need representation and amplification within our own campus collections and across cultural institutions so we are highlighting a lot of new acquisitions and previously underutilized materials and a lot of those are going to reflect the changes that we're seeing in the acquisition processes and guidelines and we'll have the collectors talk about that a little bit too so the show ends up being kind of evidence of both progress that has been made and a reminder of the monumental work that's been- that still needs to be done. So, I do want to just once again thank my co-curators y'all are really the best thank you for taking this on with me, John and Nicole and thank you again to Anselm and Gary at the University Archives. So, as you're walking into the gallery if you look to the right, you're gonna see some of the queer voices and feminist voices and that's what we'll be covering in part two is this area along with some of the climate stuff so I just wanted to get you a little bit of an overview of that. Hold on I gotta admit people to the room. There we go- and then we're going to start with this first piece, so this is as you're walking in, you're going to look to the left and this piece called the true and exact history is just like smacking you right in the face pretty much when you walk in. John brought this to the table and so I'm going to ask him to talk about this one a little bit please.

John Fifield-Perez: [06:50] Yeah, thanks Catherine. So, with the "True and Exact History" this is sort of our first example of an artist book in the exhibition. It's an unbound book in this case, so it's- you'll see a series of cards that are displayed on the wall and they are two-sided so they're in this case we're just leaving them be but in theory you can move through this text sort of linearly or it can be a very non-linear process but the whole text is coming from an erasure of this work "A True and Exact History of the

Island of Barbados" by Richard Ligon who was an English colonist in Barbados, and he was doing sort of a very in his- in his approach a very broad scope history and sort of report on, on the island and what he was finding there. So, Sonia Farmer, the artist who did this work, she is from the Bahamas and is looking a lot at sort of more broadly Caribbean identity and so in taking Ligon's work she's erasing much of his perspective and trying to tease out these other narratives of immigrants to the island, of indigenous populations on the island, enslaved individuals, and enslavers so it's, it's sort of going through all these different perspectives. and within the this fine press edition of the artist's book none of those players are identified it's all just sort of a long running narrative that again can be sort of mixed and matched as it goes whereas then there's a trade edition that we also have up in Special Collections that actually identifies the speakers as you're reading it and so it's written as a play so it's, it's giving specific identities and ... sort of agencies to these various figures in the history of the island and then the imagery in this book is it's all rooted from the work it's or from this from the original work so you'll see like here you have the botanical illustration of a pineapple you have all sorts of palms and so you're getting Ligon's illustrations of the plants and sort of the botany from the island as well as woodcut maps and other illustrations and then a sort of schematics of a sugar refinery that they were intending to build on the island so it, it really sort of is pulling all of these different components out of the original work which is also one we don't unfortunately have a true and exact history of the island of Barbados in our collections but that's one where you can find online copies of it and sort of compare the source material to, to this treatment of it but it's I just think it's really a fantastic look at sort of subverting the colonial gaze on the Caribbean islands, in this case Barbados.

Catherine Armbrust: [09:55] Wonderful. I do want to- John knows that I'm like obsessed with this. This artist has wonderful containers that her work fits into and so we did make a special choice to include a lot of especially her containers that her books come in because we have a second book by her as well and it's just such a beautiful letterpress edition so thank you for that.

John Fifield-Perez: Yeah.

Catherine Armbrust: Next we have this amazing piece that John also brought to the table so I'm gonna let him chat about this one as well.

John Fifield-Perez: [10:32] So, this item this is an artist book by Islam Aly. He's an Egyptian American artist and currently teaches art education up at the University of northern Iowa and so this particular item is a response to his experience of being in Cairo during the Egyptian spring back in 2011 and so he's, he's using- taking the sort of constant chant of the people want to bring down the regime and he's put this into Kufic Arabic script you can- I

think the next... Well actually we'll leave it on this slide first but the next slide you'll get a better, better view of that and so this text is sort of gradually introduced as you progress through the book and through laser cuts and so it's cut directly through the pages and then you'll notice in these images the laser engraved street map of Cairo and of specifically around Tahrir Square where the, the sort of the hub of this uprising is occurring and then the orange thread you see on the corners of the book and sort of the top of the boards and the in the image on the right those are from a binding structure he's using which is a Coptic stitch. So, this is sort of one of the, essentially, the earliest known and documented style of binding of what we would call a multi-section codec so that is basically a book that you think of as a book with covers and then the text on the inside that is in sort of an extended format a long format. That's not just a group of papers that are folded together and so also contextualizing this work in the historic Coptic tradition in Egypt and Ethiopia in in sort of the history of the book and so really grounding it in the history of this area and then tying that into his, his current work.

Catherine Armbrust: Nice, so there's a little close-up of it.

John Fifield-Perez: [12:32] Yeah, so here you can see this sort of stylized Kufic script and you can see a little bit about how that changes as it goes through and then the very final section of the book is a final laser cut that says "the people have brought down the regime" with the time and date stamp in February of 2011 and, and so it sort of has that completion of the movement of that time.

Catherine Armbrust: [12:58] Nice. I want to give Nicole a shout out because she got some really beautiful, detailed photos of the work in the exhibition thank you so much Nicole. I love the shot so much because you got that the burnt edges of the paper as well from that laser engraver. So, as you- so after you've moved past those two pieces this is the, the title wall essentially where you're gonna see the signage, right, and there's a shelf with three books and these start to speak to Native voices that we have in the collection and this is also where you're going to see the first example of Mizzou's yearbook called the Savitar and that is actually our grounding element and sort of connective tissue throughout the whole exhibition. So, let's get a little bit closer look at that these books are from Special Collections and John can tell us a little bit more about these.

John Fifield-Perez: [14:01] So, the three books on this shelf- the first and the third are actually from relatives of each other, it's half siblings so the first is Francis LaFlesche the third that we'll see is Suzette LaFlesche or Inshta Theamba and these actually came from what was sort of the original germ of

our... sort of as we were kicking around ideas for what we were going to do for this exhibit... so two of my colleagues Courtney Gillie and John Henry Adams put together a digital exhibition earlier in quarantine called "Leaders and Heroes" and it's sort of rooted in this idea of who are the- what are some of the perspectives that are unsung or underrepresented within Special Collections and sort of pulling those, teasing those back out and taking a closer look at them within sort of a range of marginalized identities and so these are two individuals- they have multiple works represented in there. We just have one of each in this case, but it is sort of a, a tie back to, to our original thoughts of this was sort of pulling some of the writing that they had done for that and the research that they had done, to try and give that a physical manifestation and so Francis LaFlesche was an, an ethnographer. He comes from- he was sort of born into the Omaha tribe and in this case "The Middle Five" is his memoir and looking at his experience in a mission school in the 1860s and, and sort of that experience of being indoctrinated into more of a colonial mindset. but he was- he's sort of, on a scholarship side, he's very- he's one of the few sort of Native ethnographers who was working at the time to also document various tribal music. So, he worked a lot with the Osage tribe and again this is sort of one of our main works that we have by him in the collection.

Catherine Armbrust: Great here we go.

John Fifield-Perez: [16:08] So, this is from again the other sibling. This is Suzette LaFlesche or Inshta Theamba and she was very interesting. She was an activist and worked as an interpreter, was a writer, lecturer, artist, and so in this case this particular work there again two that we have in the collection that you'll find in the digital exhibit and so in one she's writing the introduction for a Ponca chief and who it's his memoir and who she had worked as an interpreter for during basically during a national trial that was giving Native Americans the rights as individuals instead of as wards of the of the federal government. So, it's a really important legal case and then the other work that we have from her is one that she was an illustrator for and so it's, it's sort of one of very few works that we have in the collection of with Native illustration work that's gone into it as well as in particular a Native woman which is which is much less common. And then, this. So, the book that sits right in the middle as Catherine said it's the first of quite a few Savitar's that you'll find so the Savitar being the yearbook the University of Missouri yearbook that would come out every year up until the early 2000s but it's no longer printed and so this one is this is from 1996 and when you get in there you'll all sort of give you a little bit of some reason so you can't really read it clearly right now but once you get in you'll have a chance to read it for yourself and take a closer look at the illustrations this is from a

Powwow that was hosted at the University. It was- and I don't know if it was the first ever, but it was definitely the first sort of at- in memory at that time the- this one of the students talking in the article discusses that that there you know there are many universities that host Powwows annually and Mizzou is not one of them so this is them trying to amend that and you had tribal members from many, many different tribes. you had from all sorts of different states coming from across the Midwest and the South to Mizzou to participate in this and then there's a really interesting final paragraph that just sort of again attests to some of the challenges experienced in a number of marginalized communities at Mizzou of just sort of a lack of support. That there wasn't much of a turnout for this event that had taken so much planning and in particular that no administrators attended this sort of monumental event for the University and commenting on that which I which I found very interesting.

Catherine Armbrust: [19:10] So, as you move past that wall and into another part of the gallery- sort of the middle of the gallery. This is where we're flowing away from the anti-colonialist/ colonialist issues, and we're moving into civil rights, and a lot of this is really focused on campus actions including Black faculty hires and a lot of Black student activism. So, we're going to kind of zoom into this middle wall that you see here and focus on Arvarh Strickland who was the first Black faculty member at the University of Missouri. He was recruited by the department of history because they were finally looking for a Black historian to teach Black history, so he taught from at Mizzou from 1969 until 1996. He- this book he did an introduction to, it's called "The African-American Experience at the University of Missouri from 1950 to 1994." When this got into the gallery and I was finally able to look through it, I was so excited because a lot of the things that of course we were talking about are included in this book and so I was just really touched. Also it's got gold on it, it's a little bit glittery on the cover so I was a little bit excited about that too but I really want to get my hands on this book and dig into it a little bit more he also has essays in this book called "Commitment; Fatherhood in Black America" so while he was at the University of Missouri he was- Strickland was really instrumental in developing the Black studies minor which is now available as a major because he really felt it was important, of course, to promote a broader perspective on America in both the past and present. He was extremely active in the Columbia community as well. He and his family integrated the first united Methodist church. He helped found the Guardians to help support African Americans in the city, and he did a lot of serving on city committees, helped organize black voters and contributed to a lot of other organizations too. This was a really interesting find that I can't remember if Nicole showed

it to us or if Anselm showed it to us. Nicole, did you find this, or did Anselm? Do you remember?

Nicole Johnstone: I think it was Anselm.

Catherine Armbrust: [21:49] Okay, thank you Anselm, because this was awesome. So, what popped up was this amazing article with this fantastic photo of Dr. Strickland in front of the Jefferson tombstone that's on the Mizzou quad. So, this article is all about him applying to jeff- applying Jeffersonian principles to his educational philosophy into the classroom but what was so interesting to us I think, and this from 1985, and what was interesting to us as the curio- curators I think, was the fact that he's posing in front of what is now an extremely controversial monument on campus and as many of you know it has been recently covered by a \$20,000 Plexiglas box in order to protect it and so this like tie between past philosophies and past monuments of the past on campus and what's happening on the present day which just really struck us and then we also have a couple of other photos on that wall this is at his at the year of his retirement and this was at a celebration as they were dedicating a room to him in Memorial Union. So, if you're in Memorial Union on campus you'll see the Strickland room, and these were other important educators that were working and administrators that were working with him around the same time so it's interesting. I found something I think in the Columbia tribune that said "when Arvarh Strickland died 44 years after coming to Mizzou as the first Black faculty member, meetings were conducted in the Strickland Room, and Memorial Union classes were taught in the Strickland building. The distinguished scholar Wilma King held the Strickland professorship and Black studies program regularly offered a broad array of courses." So, his influence at the University of Missouri is just undeniable. So, as we move past his wall, we're taking a look into the back left part of the gallery and that's where we're gonna start to focus in on a lot of student activism on campus and we have another Savitar that acts as a grounding again, that like connective tissue, and that grounding agent that John's going to talk a lot about a little bit for us.

John Fifiield-Perez: [24:22] Yeah, so this one this one sort of came a little bit later in the process of, of gathering all the materials it was sort of after we'd already put some things into the gallery and we were talking about just like the different things that really resonating especially comparing movements civil rights movements from the 60s, 70s, up to today. How many things are repeating and so this actually sort of came out of an idea around in in searching through the sabotage sort of really intentionally looking around Rodney King in this case sort of as an echo or I guess the reverse of that that we're seeing echoes of that with the response to all of the Black deaths

at police hands, in particular with protests in response to George Floyd's death over the summer and spring and looking back at Rodney King with the first example of a sort of footage of police brutality... well- yeah in- in sort of the modern sense and so I was curious that was just sort of an instance where I was curious to look and see if that was represented, if there was a big response after that on the University campus and lo and behold sort of you- if you look you'll find it it's- so there's there are these images of the protest in 1992 after the court ruling letting off the officer in in the beating but yeah so that was something that again it as we kept looking we kept finding all of these sort of repeating histories that are just going, going, going, and cycling and we're, we're definitely in the midst of that still currently with the student movements on campus

Catherine Armbrust: [26:20] And this this one to me, the left- the photo on the left page was really poignant because of the actions that have been taking place in Columbia since the end of May around the downtown area there have been so many moments of protest and march and rallying in front of our own police department in 2020 so it was really interesting for me to see this photo from 1992 as well. I want to- you know, I'm so pleased and Nicole is a big Savitar website rabbit hole fan and so it's been really amazing to find all of these connections through that material object. So, this slide and then what you're going to see on the next slide were some of the real springboards for getting this exhibition started. Part of it was this stuff and then the other part was what John mentioned about the "Heroes and Leaders" online exhibit they had, but these two textiles that you see here the "Black Lives Matter face mask" and the "Enough is Enough t-shirt" were collected by Nicole Johnston over the summer and I'm gonna have her talk about some of their new collections in just a moment but I want to talk about how the idea of the face mask has changed our lives so much, right, in the last six months, and so it tells a really unique story of 2020 not only of the Black Lives Matter resurgence in 2020 but also like, how people need to operate in order to dissent in a safe and healthy manner. So, yeah, this mask really merges these two pivotal moments in world history in terms of the COVID-19 pandemic and the Black Lives Matter movement and then the "Enough is Enough shirt" you see at the bottom is- was designed by MU senior Kayla Hahn who has been very active in protests downtown and on campus and as part of people's defense and Nicole got in touch with her and chatted with her a little bit and Kayla just started essentially bringing these shirts to protest, she noted noticed people that didn't have signs and so she just started making these shirts and bringing them and giving them away for free, which was really lovely of her. So, she essentially said that she wanted to make these shirts so that she could be a part of history and, like, an



active part of history rather than just learning about it. so, she did these hand-cut stencil designs, and then did this bleach spattering and spray, so you might see a lot of people actually wearing, wearing these around.

Nicole Johnston: [agrees, words indistinct]

Catherine Armbrust: [Catherine chuckles] I, I know I do all the time this other flyer that you see was a really exciting find that we're gonna have John- I'm gonna have John talk about a little bit here but it's part of this sort of descent wall right the beginning of the descent section. John, can you tell us a little bit about your pamphlet collection.

John Fifield-Perez: [29:52] Yeah absolutely. So, this is the- this sort of similar to the "Leaders and Heroes" exhibit. This item calls back to some of our earlier ideas as we were sort of conceptualizing this whole exhibit and one of those the Special Collections has a large collection of it's called the 20th century political pamphlet collection, and it's mostly 60s and 70s but it ranges as early as the 40s and up until the 90s political pamphlets from various activist groups and so this is this is the only one that actually ended up in the exhibition but I feel like they really sort of again informed a lot of how we thought about- especially get those movements in the 60s and 70s and sort of reading through those and looking at them and just kind of plugging ourselves into what, what some of the thought and messaging was that was going on at this time. So, this particular one is from the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, and one of the things that we are interested in was that language around dissent and especially just sort of some of the language that's been coming up on campus from the administration around dissent within faculty staff and students and, and looking at this this sort of presentation of that idea as a civic duty to dissent and to resist and push back.

Catherine Armbrust: [31:26] I also really liked that it was published by the Women's International League because that I felt like tied back into what we'll see in part two, but the kind of Feminist voices of the exhibit as well so yeah, I love- I love- I love this wall. Okay, so this section that we're coming to now is kind of the main focal point of the that back sidewall of the gallery and these two textile objects when I saw that Nicole had collected them this summer they immediately resonated with me in in a similar way like I saw that she had collected these things and then I chatted with her about maybe getting one of Kaija's shirts too so really Kaija's shirt that you see here and Kaija is here with us tonight and Chris's flag. I'm not sure if Chris is here with us yet. Were another like really important impetus for the show I really wanted to have them in here and so let's kind of zoom in on how we want to talk about these objects here Nicole would you just talk to us a little bit

about the timely response acquisitions that you all have going on in the Textile Collection right now.

Nicole Johnston: [32:53] Sure. It's a newer method of collecting for us and many of you may be familiar with it, other museums across the world are doing it right now as well another term for it is "rapid response collecting" but it's really a- it can be more challenging because you're trying to collect things that are very recent trying to document and preserve important current events to speak to what's happening today for the future and we were very excited I came across the photograph that you'll see here soon in the Columbia tribune and it listed the names of the students in the photograph and that's how I came across Kaija and Christian to begin with, and reached out to them to see if we could collect something some things from them to document part of the student protest- organized protest that happened on MU campus in May.

Catherine Armbrust: Kaija, I don't I don't want to put you on the spot but if there's anything that you would like to say in relation to this amazing donation because, like, I'm actually really impressed that you gave up this awesome shirt but like we have some notes here of course from our exhibition text but like since you're here if there's anything that you'd like to share about this object itself I'd love for you to, to unmute and come on in and if you don't that's okay too.

Kaija Caldwell: [34:36] Hi, yeah, I'm sorry I'm- I was getting food I didn't- wasn't sure what time I was gonna be able to speak to somebody.

Catherine Armbrust: sorry

Kaija Caldwell: No, no problem at all. So, a little bit about the shirt itself. So, I got this shirt as a gift from my mom, and she's also on this call too. Hey mom. I know I'm talking to you earlier.

Kaija's mom: Hi!

Kaija Caldwell: [34:57] So my mom bought that shirt for me, man, maybe like two years ago. It was one of those things where I was saving it for the right moment you know like I didn't wear it you know it's a white t-shirt you know white, it gets you know messed up pretty easily, so I kept it in my drawer. I'm like there's gonna be a right moment for me to wear this shirt and I think I wore it one time before like I wore it on the day of the protest and that was it. but the day of the protest, like I told Nicole, it was like a spur of the moment thing, you know? It was one of those things where I was just talking with some friends you know, just having a normal conversation and all of this happened before 12 o'clock and we were just you know talking about everything that was going on. A lot happened that week, you know, the whole country was protesting, and it was a lot going on, you know, we

just wanted to figure out a way that we can contribute. You know Columbia is such a small town, but we're all from some you know large, you know, urban cities where you know the stuff that was going on at our homes felt, you know, close to heart and we wanted to see you know what are some things that we could do, you know, and Columbia was pretty, like, I would say ghost town. Like you know, because most people didn't come back after the pandemic, you know, started so it was like we were trying to figure out what can we do what we have you know, what, can we get together and you know consolidate with our peers and you know what can we do to get our voices heard. They're like, no we're paying attention to what's going on too, even though this might not be a small town where people you know might not feel as affected by I know we feel what's going on too and we need to you know let the community know that this is an issue that you know expands beyond just you know major cities and beyond just you know it's more of a political thing now where human rights is getting tied into it is beyond just politics like this is you know sad to say it's life or death now you know and it's like we need to make people aware it's all about awareness you know it's never from a place of you know belligerence returning attacking because it's character is simply you know just making people aware what's going on with other human beings you know. So, for me I've been able to you know learn how to do that, you know with being in college you know I've been exposed to a vast majority of different people you know from major cities, rural towns, you know, different countries, you know, different continents, you know, all over you know. So, I feel like that has been something else to contribute to my knowledge, not just the books, you know not just the classes, you now but the experience of the people you know, so I felt like at that point I was armed with everything I needed to be able to be a voice for people at that point. So, I feel like at that point, I'm a danger, you better watch out, you know, cause I'm coming through you know and I'm, I'm sticking up for you know, the little man I'm sticking up for the person that doesn't have, you know, the courage to speak up for themselves. I'm saying the things you know that needs to be said you know but I'm coming with the team it's not just me you know, so I have the knowledge to know that it takes a village you know. So, we got our village together that day you know, and got our voices heard and that's how Nicole found us, you know, so that's really that, but yeah, that's really the synopsis on why I wore that shirt that day.

Catherine Armbrust: I love- I love that and then you gave it up which was just like such a-

Kaija Caldwell: Yeah.

Catherine Armbrust: Like you- it was already so precious to you and then you, you gave it up and now it's in a gallery which is sort of an exciting thing for me of course is the gallery director but like I feel really grateful that you that you just donated that to posterity, essentially, because it is such an important message and connected to such an important moment in time so thank you and I do I have in my notes that you're also a student in the college of agriculture food and natural resources.

Kaija Caldwell: [38:47] Yes, ma'am that's correct.

Catherine Armbrust: love that and then Nicole looks like she made some notes about you growing up in Chicago and how you were thinking about kind of the food desert of the south side of Chicago and how that and some of your family members activism have helped to motivate your current activism yourself right.

Kaija Caldwell: Absolutely.

Catherine Armbrust: Great. Well, cheers to that and cheers to your mom for getting you this amazing shirt thank you so much. Kaija, do you know if Chris is here too or no?

Kaija Caldwell: He was here, I saw his name pop up. I just texted him again.

Nicole Johnston: Get him back on here.

Kaija Caldwell: To, yeah, get him back on here.

Catherine Armbrust: well, we're gonna we're gonna we're gonna move on and if anybody has questions for Kaija now or later you know please feel free to throw questions in the chat too but otherwise we're gonna move to the other really important piece that connects to Kaija's shirt and this is the stop shooting flag that it sounds like Christian is the one who spray painted on there right.

Kaija Caldwell: yeah, yeah, he was the one who spray painted it.

Catherine Armbrust: [39:58] Okay awesome. So, and he- it looks like he was another one of the coordinators for this protest and solidarity march that took place on May 31st, 2020. Chris, if you're here come on come on in if, if not you can't hear me say it's okay, but you know this this action that they were taking was in direct response to stuff happening on the Mizzou campus and the murder of George Floyd and this continuing police brutality against Black people across the nation. Which again if we like look back to that Savitar and the Rodney King campus activism and I also want to let's see let's go to the next photo. So, this is the photo that Nicole saw, right, that was in the Missourian. Leanne Tippet Mosby took it, she is was amazing and allowed us to use this photo but what like every time every time I see the photo I get a little bit like reclaimed a little bit because this is where those objects that t-shirt and the flag coalesce where it's in real life and we're

seeing them in action, right, not just a static objects on the gallery wall but we're seeing them being used for a really specific and important purpose so you see Chris, you see Kaija, and then another friend Ashton Brown on the MU campus again on May 31st they marched through downtown and then returned to rally near the statue of Thomas Jefferson on the MU quadrangle. The organizers, they are holding this flag in front of Jefferson's statue while Kaija, that's what the newspaper says tell me if I'm wrong, while Kaija urges the crowd to contact University officials to have the statue removed, noting Jefferson's history as a slave owner. So they're bringing that all back around right, this national issue but how it's all connected to these local issues and especially campus issues and so as we move from the present we're now kind of flowing- and I use the word flow a lot in this exhibit because these sections are all flowing into each other, right, like all of these things are connected through time and space and the continuation of history, right history is repeating itself here so what you see on this back wall is this beautiful Nigerian Dashiki that we're going to talk about and also moments documented from campus activism from the 1960s and 70s so this is part of the textile collection this Nigerian dashiki it's this gorgeous cotton with embroidery and the dashiki became this this very important symbol worn by African Americans to express solidarity using this traditional form of African dress. Especially during the- like, you know, the late 1960s and it's kind of one oops wonderful that we have this piece and then we're zooming in and seeing this protester from 1974 wearing a Dashiki. He's standing on the steps of Jesse Hall at this 1974 rally against racism on the MU campus. So this back wall some of the photos that you see are from the University Archives but we're also included in some of the sabotage that we found but we've got black students marching and rallying carrying signs that look very similar to signs that you see today Nicole found this wonderful patch that we kind of got obsessed with and did this cropping because it's this beautiful patch of the fist right the power fist and I love this relationship to 1974 we see the guy standing next to it holding his fist in the air and then we're also relating it back to Kayla Hahn's bleach stenciled shirt with the power fist on it saying "Enough is Enough" and then also Kaija and Chris and Ashton on the quad rallying on May 31st 2020 with their fists up in the air too. So again, we're seeing this history repeating itself. So, this is on the wall and then right below there we found three Savitars from 1968 1970 and 71. and I'm gonna have John share a little bit of info about these wonderful, wonderful yearbooks.

John Fifield-Perez: [45:07] Yeah, so, in this case, the three we- they're in chronological order. It goes 1968 which is the image you have on the upper left, 1970 which is going to be the one in the upper right, and then 1971

down below and so in each of these at the beginning of the Savitar during this time each year there are sort of photos of different political movements that are going on and so we would often just sort of like flip through those and see like what's going on in this year and again like just sort of this eerie connection to the present and so in the first one the one in the upper left from 1968 it's depicting student demonstrators who are being taken by administrative officials and the caption notes that these students are put on probation for demonstrating which again just echoes the administration the current administration's response to student protesters this fall during the semester and looking at like the academic sanctions for, for demonstrating inside Jesse Hall, the 1970 image. So, the one right, of Delta Sigma Theta, they are in this case, this is, we'll actually talk about a little bit more in a couple slides, but this is a Black sorority that is posing in front of a monument that was on campus at that time that's no longer here called confederate rock and it was this big granite rock that sat basically right where- right by where the library is. Sort of where speaker circle is currently, and they have, you can see they've covered the plaque with a black cloth and so just sort of that, that taking control over this space with their own bodies and then we'll get a little bit more into the history of confederate rock and sort of how the way that it came to be removed and again the history of the removal of confederate monuments which feels very recent but has been going on for, for decades and decades and then the third image is- this is actually from a protest on the anniversary of the shooting of students on Kent State's campus and so this is also sort of to connect back into all of the other movements that are going on at this time many of the themes which are represented in in the exhibition of feminism, of anti-imperialism, around the Vietnam war, of civil rights and, and gay rights and so this is I think this is just sort of again one that is meant to tie in a few other themes and if you were to flip the page one past this you'd see that image of the patch that Catherine pointed out of the fist so again just sort of being aware of sort of how some of these images are connecting to each other and so here we have this is again what we were talking about with the confederate rock there's a... if you, if after this presentation if you're curious University Archives has a site called "MU in Brick and Mortar" that if you look into that there's a page about confederate rock that gives you additional images from its original installation to sort of later removal and a little bit of history on it but these are just three images we have of them removing the rock again the sorority sisters posing in front of it and then the rock sort of as it currently exists so the rock was originally donated I guess you would say by the daughters of the confederacy as the case with many, many of the confederate memorials especially those that are being debated

now, and frequently removed which is excellent. Then in this particular case- so this one was donated in the 1930s 70 years after the Civil War and it was not until student protests led by the Legion of Black Collegians after their formation in the late 1960s. They really led the charge in getting it removed and it took multiple years, so again that- I noted the image of the sorority sisters is from 1970 and it was a few years later that they actually were able to get it removed and it sort of through some maneuvering between the University and the city where each were sort of claiming the other one was responsible. It was a lot of sort of pushing the buck back and forth, but this persistent student movement was really sort of at the heart of its removal from campus and I haven't- I haven't been able to find much information about other confederate monuments that removed. I don't know how common that was at the time but I just find it really remarkable at given the debate currently about sort of the what sort of the persistence of monuments in various cities and that there is actually a precedent for it that that began decades and decades ago and sort of to cap off what happened to it so it was originally removed and taken to what is now Cosmo Park and then it was relocated to the courthouse lawn and I think it was in 2005 that there was a another protest to remove it from the courthouse lawn so now it exists over on the centralia battlefield sort of for a more appropriate context but whether debating whether there's any appropriate context for it but yeah so that's, that's sort of the history of this one.

Catherine Armbrust: [51:03] Well, and it's bizarre, I mean look at how big it is it's bizarre that they continue to move it around.

John Fifield-Perez: It's just yeah, it's like it's like a three-ton granite rock.

Catherine Armbrust: Some of the documents we have in this binder that you're going to see in the next slide are, like, letters back and forth about its removal and like how to essentially make it not fall on somebody. Too, the few documents too, up at the top right are the MSA senate agenda from 1971 where they're introducing a bill and a resolution to have it removed from campus right, so they started I guess you know probably talking about it before then but like 1971 and it took what four, four years to get the administration to finally get it get it moving.

John Fifield-Perez: Yep. I will say also real quick the- it's interesting the tie-in of again of course with the current debate around the Jefferson statue on campus but also looking at sort of student activities and behaviors around the rock and how that is also changed with it. I mean not immediately with its removal but there used to be an event every year called the Old South Ball which was led by the fraternity on campus, Kappa Alphas I think, and they would every year this was for decades until the 80s they would on one day they would dress in confederate uniforms and one the president of the

fraternity would stand on top of confederate rock and declare secession from the Union. So, as this sort of imitation of the confederacy secession and but so looking at again how that was used as a tool for oppression at the time and sort of as part of these rituals and practices and so in removing it still took another 10 years for that event to finally get killed off, but it was just sort of the role that some of these monuments have in campus culture and I think that is really important to note.

Catherine Armbrust: [53:15] Yeah, thank you John. So, this terrible picture is of the only thing you can actually touch in the exhibition because I have like don't touch this all over all over the gallery, but this is a binder full of various archival documents that Anselm and Gary put together for us. A lot of them having to do with different student actions around campus the establishment of the Legion of Black Collegians and a lot of these are like memos- hard copy memos and letters of either demands by the students or to from different administrators to other administrators sort of talking about these ideas but what I have it open to here is the flyer and then all of the really wonderful text that goes along with that rally against racism from 1974 that these photographs on that other wall are from and then I also included the list of demands from Concerned Students 1950 because they're so related to the demands from 1969 the demands from 1974. You know it's ongoing right and then even the student demands now that are that are happening currently this fall are all connected to and sort of echoing this continuation of requests from students to the University for what they'd like to see here so I love this binder and yeah you can finally catch something in the space that is starting to bring us around towards the end one of the things that the textile collection also recently acquired is this suit ensemble from Mike Middleton so you see his suit here in relationship to some of the actions on campus in the background and you also see a picture of him from the black culture center dedication that I totally forgot to write down the date of right. Now do y'all remember- John, Nicole, do you remember that date?

Nicole Johnston: was it 93?

Catherine Armbrust: [55:40] That sounds about right, thank you. So, Michael Middleton who is also featured in one of the first pages of that Arvarh Strickland book the African American experience at the University because he was one of he was attended school here in 1970 the early 1970s so he was the third black student to graduate from MU school of law in 1971. During his time as a student here at Mizzou he was a founding member of the Legion of Black Collegians. After he graduated in 71, he maintained this very illustrious career with the federal government, and then he came back to Mizzou in 1985 as the school of law's first Black faculty member in 1997.



He served as the interim vice provost for minority affairs and faculty development, and as deputy chancellor from 1998 to August 2015. Now from December 2015 to March 2017 Middleton served as interim president of the University of Missouri system after Concerned Students 1950 successfully got Tim Wolfe, the president of the system, and Bowen, to who was the, I'm sorry, yes, Bowen was the chancellor for the president, thank you to resign because of all of the things that have been taking place over the last well many years at Mizzou of course. So, kind of the exciting part of this right is that Middleton was the founding member of the Legion of Black Collegians. He's one of the ones who presented the student demands to the administration in 1969, and then Concerned Students 1950 actually presented their demands to him in 2015 and then he took them to the administration so there's a sort of full circle going on here with, with him and I'm so glad we were able to include him- wore his suit at least in some photos in the exhibition and that brings us to the last object that we're going to talk about from this section which I am totally geeked out over but I'm gonna this is this is one of John's babies so I'm gonna have him talk about it or at least introduce it.

[John Fifield-Perez: \[58:17\]](#) Yeah absolutely. So, there are two copies of this work in the gallery actually on the same pedestal this is a, it's a fine press book so it's sort of... it's all handmade, it's letterpress printed and in this case illustrated with screen prints and the so it's- the text is the "Letter from Birmingham City Jail" Martin Luther King Jr's really famous letter from when he was in in jail and with some just remarkable statements that just are constantly resonating still to this day and in this case the limited editions club which is- it- it's a group in New York that that commissions these work and sort of matches a famous text with a very major artist and so in this case they commissioned Faith Ringgold to design eight screen prints to accompany the text and so you have one next to the title page which you see here of King in his jail cell- jail cell with the letter in his hand and then you have others that are depicting laborers and cotton fields, you have depictions of white churches with silhouettes of police brutality occurring out like through the stained glass, you have depictions of the bombing of the of the church in Montgomery when you had four young girls who were killed in the bombing from a white supremacist, and then you also have suppression of protesters who are protesting for the right to vote or against voter suppression also the Montgomery bus boycotts and so on so it's sort of capturing a number of these different scenes from that that contextualize the letter itself that are mentioned in the letter and they're really stunning so I was glad we had the two copies we could at least cover two of the eight

illustrations but to see all eight you'll have to come to the Special Collections after the exhibition comes down next month.

Catherine Armbrust: [60:27] I love- I'm- like I said I'm geeked out over this right and it's placed centrally in the gallery and I love the fact we're gonna see some different shots here but the one we see here of the protesters interacting with the police resonates so much with all the stuff that's happening on the other walls right with the student activism and what they're protesting against and that led to- we were actually the three of us Nicole and John and I were in the gallery kind of finalizing some of the curation and we were sort of sitting resting and we started noticing that like this page specifically of MLK junior behind the behind the bars of the jail started looking at like how it's in conversation with some of the other objects in the gallery because that's one of my favorite things to do is not just look at objects individually but start to look at how they're having conversations and interacting together and changing one another and Nicole seemed- she sort of noticed like, oh look at the way you know what, what Martin Luther King, Jr. is wearing and how that's sort of relating to Mike Middleton's suit in the background, and then what I was really fascinated by was the sort of like I was sitting down and I noticed that the bars of the jail cell started sort of leaking into the vision of Chris's stop shooting flag and how the bars of the jail cell started resonating or conversing with the stars and bars on the flag and how those can often be related or symbolic of each other in very, very many ways so this and I also y'all, if y'all don't know Faith Ringgold please look her up because she is an amazing artist and like an icon I think in in the art world in terms of like... this is these are stereographs, right, screen prints but she's also very well known for her mixed media art quilts that are just amazing so please look those up. So, this was sort of how I wanted to kind of wrap up this talk was with this last object and how it really connects past and present especially these views that we're getting right here but I also would like to kind of remind you of what's happening in the rest of the gallery that we're gonna this is one shot of some of the objects that we're gonna see next time to the far left you'll see this large pedestal that's where those that's where those books are that we were just talking about so they're really centered in the gallery but again when you're in the space and you're kind of taking everything in there are a lot of different stories that starts to happen as the objects interact with each other so we're gonna meet back here again here in the in the virtual world for part two at 6 30 on Wednesday November 11th in between now and then I we're gonna probably get together and do some Facebook live stream events for with to go maybe a little more in depth with John and Nicole on some of the objects in the exhibition too but I would love to I don't love to stop sharing my

screen but I'd love to bring them back on and I feel like Chris might have popped back in too Christian did you come did you come in I don't know if he's here hi.

Christian Bell: Yeah, I'm here.

Catherine Armbrust: Oh, hi I don't want to put you on the spot but if there's we I think that oops if there's anything you'd like to say I'm going to just roll back to your flag real quick is there I don't want to put you on the spot but if there's anything you'd like to say Kaija talked a little bit about her t-shirt is there anything you'd like to just mention about this object.

Christian Bell: [64:39] Yeah, sure. So, when I made the flag, I believe it was in the midst of the whole George Floyd and the Breanna Taylor situation, you feel me? I mean it just kind of spoke a lot to me because, you know, being a young Black man, I done had guns pulled out on me by police since I was like... 12, 13 years old... however old you are in 7th grade, you feel me. So that's like- with a lot of that and just seeing how, as I grow up you feel me here we are eight years down the line or whatever, and this is still happening you feel. I mean in some cases it's not like mine where the guns get put up, put away and things like that and people actually lose their lives. So that's kind of really what meant the most to me with this flag and things like that. Yeah, that's probably about all I got to say, I'm sorry I don't really talk much.

Catherine Armbrust: [65:29] That's okay I just I also want to thank you I think that this is a really important and meaningful object and I want to thank you for donating because it's um-

Christian Bell: [Agrees, word indistinct]

Catherine Armbrust: We're in this really important moment in time that does like you said it keeps repeating right but like

Christian Bell: Yeah.

Catherine Armbrust: I very much appreciate you giving this to the University so that we can educate and yes and show other people you know what's, what's going on what our students are doing also I think it's really important to note that like I love the, the homemade and the immediacy of the way that you just spray painted it on there right like-

Christian Bell: Mhm.

Catherine Armbrust: because this activity is so imperative and immediate, and it feels like a really strong, strong statement to me so thank you so much.

Christian Bell: No problem, thank you all for giving me the platform, you feel me, share my story, and share my artwork, as it is, right now. Yeah.

Catherine Armbrust: Thank you so much all right I'm gonna stop sharing my screen and see if anybody has anything that they want to throw into the

chat at all questions for anybody I know this is like a long talk and I appreciate you sticking with us. This was only half y'all even what it would have been if we did the other half too no one's throwing anything in the chat do y'all have Nicole and John do you have any last words of wisdom that you'd like to share before we before we stop recording and roll out for the night.

Nicole Johnston: You've said- you've said a lot and I am sorry you said a lot of what I think already.

Catherine Armbrust: [67:25] Okay well thank you, we- oh thank you so much Huelsbergen and family we really we really appreciate you and really we could not have made it so rich without Anselm's help so thank you for taking time away from your, your regular job but all three- all three of you taking time away from your regular job to make this exhibit happen so I'm gonna get this hopefully but on YouTube to share with other people but I hope that people will come back on November 11th for part two where we're covering environment and climate issues Queer voices and feminist voices because we've got a lot more rich material to talk about so thank you everybody for being a part of this we really appreciate you and John, Nicole.

Nicole Johnston: Yes, thank you.

John Fifield-Perez: Thank you, Catherine.

Catherine Armbrust: Thanks for letting me pull you into this, I really do appreciate it thank you students and public too I am going to stop recording now and if anybody wants to stay after and chat, they can I'll stay on for a little bit, but otherwise I will tell everyone bye-bye and thank you.