

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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For media inquiries only,
contact: Barbara Hauck
443-263-4315



**EXHIBITION OPENS AT TOP OF THE WORLD SHOWCASING THE WORK OF
BALTIMORE ARTIST ERNEST SHAW JR.**

The **Baltimore Office of Promotion & The Arts (BOPA)** joyfully announces a bold new exhibition opening at the Top of the World Observation Gallery on the 27th Floor of the Baltimore World Trade Center. One of the most prolific, yet unsung, Baltimore artists, **Ernest Shaw Jr.** will open his brazen solo exhibition “Continuous Line” on Thursday, February 3, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. Visitors to Top of the World can view Shaw’s exhibition through Sunday, April 17, 2022.

Media Preview Dates: January 24–27, 2022

Opening Date: Thursday, February 3, 2022, 6:00–8:00 p.m.

Event/Artist Talk: Thursday, March 17, 2022, 6:00–8:00 p.m.

Closing Date: Sunday, April 17, 2022

Ernest Shaw Jr. is an image maker whose work highlights the humanity of the Black/Africanist experience in the context of a society that confines Blackness to being the antithesis to whiteness. His art is a response to racialized subjugation. It delivers authentic portrayals of the Black body because there is no other subject Shaw finds to be as complex, misrepresented, and misunderstood as his own.



One of the City’s brightest sons, Shaw is a native of West Baltimore. He attended Baltimore City Public Schools, Morgan State University, and Howard University. You can see Shaw’s uplifting mural art throughout Baltimore City. For this solo exhibition, **Curator Kirk Shannon-Butts** wanted to showcase Shaw’s depth. Working in acrylic, oil stick, graphite, charcoal, colored pencil, and oil pastel, “Continuous Line” examines the uninterrupted, unrelenting connection between continental African traditional culture and Africans dispersed throughout the diaspora, with a particular lens focused on the United States of America. Through his layered images, Shaw dispels the myth that the Black American has been totally separated and stripped of their name, culture, language, and history.

Contemplating his pieces, Shaw says, “My artworks are more reflective of my observations than my words, hopefully.” It is this balance and optimism Shaw embodies that makes him the epitome of what curator Shannon-Butts calls “The Baltimore Movement.” The

Baltimore Movement is a group of Baltimore-based artists whose work reflects the creative morals and social expressions deeply rooted in the Baltimore City landscape — family, community, body, spirit, and reckoning. At this movement’s forefront, Shaw’s broad vision encapsulates and manifests the global story taking place up and down blocks all over the City. Regarding Shaw’s selection for this exhibition, Shannon-Butts says, “It was a no brainer for me. Shaw is the cornerstone of The Baltimore Movement, which the entire art world is only just beginning to recognize.”

As **Baltimore City’s Arts Council**, BOPA strives to provide ample opportunities for artists to showcase their work, connect with new audiences, and raise their profile in Baltimore and beyond. By activating prodigious gallery spaces throughout the City such as the Top of the World Observation Level, we hope to reinforce Baltimore as a supportive home for artists and a notable destination for art lovers and collectors.

Top of the World Observation Level is managed by BOPA and is located on the 27th floor of the World Trade Center at 401 E. Pratt St., Baltimore, MD 21202. Top of the World is the perfect starting point for any visit to the city and provides a breathtaking view of Baltimore's skyline, harbor and beyond. This city attraction featuring a spectacular 360-degree panoramic view of Baltimore with stationed binoculars and photo-map guides to help guests learn about local attractions, hotels, sites, and neighborhoods.

For more information on this exhibition or to schedule an interview with artist Ernest Shaw Jr., or curator Kirk Shannon-Butts, please contact BOPA’s Communications Manager Barbara Hauck at bhauck@promotionandarts.org.

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