



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 7, 2025

**DS Kinsel to Present New Work at the August Wilson African American Cultural Center
Inspired by the August Wilson Archive**

PITTSBURGH, PA — Renowned visual artist and cultural agitator DS Kinsel will unveil new work created as part of the August Wilson Archive Community Artist-Scholar Award program sponsored by the University of Pittsburgh Library System. The exhibition will be on view **March 6 until April 6, 2025, inside the 2nd floor Claude Worthington Benedum Gallery within the August Wilson African American Cultural Center (AWAACC).**

The exhibition titled, *August Taught Us...*, presents powerful artifacts created by Kinsel inspired by the life and legacy of August Wilson. Across the paintings and collages, Kinsel merges icons from his own archive with copies of rare documents, photographs, and production materials from the August Wilson Archive, held by the Pitt Library System's Archives & Special Collections. The exhibition provides an abstract visual report on the vast universe created by Wilson's American Century Cycle.

"This body of work is a reflection of what I learned—not just about August Wilson, the historical figure, but August Wilson the practicing artist, negotiator, and everyday person.," said DS Kinsel. **"Wilson's archive is more than a collection of scripts and notes; it's a portal into the ways of being of a monumental Black American artist, and I aim to honor that legacy through my work."**

As a Community Artist-Scholar, Kinsel has been engaging with Wilson's materials in Hillman Library since 2023. These investigations into Wilson's work have also encouraged Kinsel to uncover lost icons within his own artistic archive, leading to time spent reviewing artifacts from Kinsel's creative journey to fuse alongside Wilson's notes. The resulting work uses all of this source material as a foundation to build bridges between past and present narratives of Black resilience, genius, and artistic expression.

The Claude Worthington Benedum Gallery at the August Wilson African American Cultural Center boasts a wide range of dynamic exhibition and educational spaces that have hosted thousands of talented artists and creative students of all ages and backgrounds. Kinsel's exhibition reinforces the AWAACC's mission to support local artists, elevate Black voices, and present dynamic visual storytelling and artistic experiences.

The exhibition is free and open to the public. Attendees will have the opportunity to engage with Kinsel's work, learn about his research process, and reflect on August Wilson's enduring influence.

About DS Kinsel:

DS Kinsel is an award-winning creative entrepreneur and cultural agitator who expresses his creativity through various mediums, including painting, printmaking, collage, installation, curating, performance, and public art. His work focuses on themes such as space keeping, urban tradition, hip-hop, informalism, and cultural re-appropriation. DS is former **AmeriCorps Public Ally member** and an Awardee of the **Pittsburgh Courier Fab 40, Pittsburgh Magazine PUMP 40 Under 40, Pgh Tech Council Creative of The Year, the Pittsburgh Post Gazette's "Top Ten People To Meet in 2016," and the Incline's "Who's Next" for 2018.**

DS is also the co-founder of BOOM Concepts, a creative hub dedicated to advancing black and brown artists representing marginalized communities. **Since its establishment in 2014, BOOM Concepts, based in Pittsburgh, has curated 50 on-site exhibitions, paid over \$500,000 in artist fees, and produced 200+ events across the country.** BOOM serves as a space **for field building, knowledge sharing, mentorship, and storytelling,** continually challenging and uplifting the creative community. In 2021, BOOM Concepts was selected as one of the partners to represent the Greater Pittsburgh Region on the Google Arts & Culture platform and recognized as one of Pittsburgh's Cultural Treasures through The Heinz Endowments and The Ford Foundation.

ABOUT THE AUGUST WILSON ARCHIVE

Held by the University of Pittsburgh Library System, the August Wilson Archive is a comprehensive collection of materials that document Wilson's life and career. The archive includes handwritten notes, scripts, playbills, production materials, personal correspondence, and rare photographs that shed light on Wilson's creative process and contributions to American theater.

ABOUT AUGUST WILSON AFRICAN AMERICAN CULTURAL CENTER

The August Wilson African American Cultural Center is a nonprofit cultural organization located in Pittsburgh's cultural district that generates artistic, educational, and community initiatives that advance the legacy of Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright August Wilson. One of the largest cultural centers in the country focused exclusively on the African American experience and the celebration of Black culture and the African diaspora, the non-profit organization welcomes more than 100,000 visitors locally and nationally. Through year-round programming across multiple genres, such as the annual Pittsburgh International Jazz Festival, Black Bottom Film Festival, AWCommunity Days, TRUTHSayers speaker series, and rotating art exhibits in its galleries, the Center provides a platform for established and emerging artists of color whose work reflects the universal issues of identity that Wilson tackled, and which still resonate today.

Major support for AWAACC's operations is provided by Richard King Mellon Foundation, Henry L. Hillman Foundation, Heinz Endowments, and the Allegheny Regional Asset District (RAD). AWAACC's programming is made possible by generous support from its donors. For a complete list, visit our website. www.awaacc.org

###

Media Contact:

Carolyn McClair | CMPR

(212) 721-3341 | CMcClair@awaacc.org

EVENT DETAILS:

What: The August Wilson Archive presents: *August Taught Us... by DS Kinsel*

When: March 6 – April 6, 2025

Where: The Claude Worthington Benedum Gallery, 2nd floor, August Wilson African American Cultural Center, Pittsburgh, PA

Admission: Free and open to the public

AWAACC Gallery Hours of Operation:

Thursday: 3pm-6pm

Friday: 3pm-6pm

Saturday: 1pm-5pm

Sunday: 1pm-5pm

Experience More:**Sunday, March 16, 3-5 PM**

Black Power Storytime, presented by artist DS Kinsel as part of his exhibition *August Taught Us*, is a dynamic storytelling event that celebrates Black voices through captivating performances of prose, poetry, essays, and more, highlighting the richness of the Black experience. Presented in collaboration with partners like BOOM Concepts, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, and Pittsburgh Festival of Books, the program creates an inclusive, intergenerational space for cultural exploration and appreciation. Through the power of storytelling, this event fosters dialogue, preserves traditions, and showcases the creative brilliance of Black authors.

Friday, March 28, 6-9 PM

Kinselland Radio, created by Anqwenique and DS Kinsel, is a vinyl-driven sonic experience that takes listeners on a journey through deep cuts of classical, jazz, hip hop, R&B, rock, and retro pop. Having performed at venues like Carnegie Museum of Art and The Westmoreland Museum of American Art, Kinselland blends ancestral inheritance with personal crate-digging discoveries. For the March 28th Gallery Crawl at AWAACC, they will curate a musical selection inspired by August Wilson's personal collection, seamlessly intertwined with their own.

Saturday, April 5, 3-6 PM, Closing Reception

The exhibition closing reception will feature a gallery talk with DS Kinsel and AWAACC Literary Curator, Jessica Lanay: "AW Archive as Ancestral Work".