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“Exercise Your Mynd—BK Adams I Am Art” Opens at the Smithsonian’s Anacostia Community Museum Aug. 22

The Anacostia Community Museum presents the one-man show “Exercise Your Mynd—BK Adams I Am Art” on view Aug. 22 through Nov. 27—the largest compilation of his work to date. The exhibition features more than 50 works of art, including towering sculptures, large-scale paintings, photographs and a video incorporating materials such as found objects, acrylic paint, toys, furniture, wood and visuals in an exuberant mix of color and form. Most were created in BK Adams’ former studio in historic Anacostia.

Between 17 and 19 years of age, Adams was the brains behind a blueprint courier service and the Soap & Water Inc. janitorial company; later in life, he was the proprietor of The Eye Opener Coffee Shop and Working Man Truckin’ movers. To these endeavors he brought a clear sense of self as a creator and innovator, one who saw a way that others did not see. It is that “other way” of seeing that Adams brings to his work as an artist.

“BK Adams challenges his viewer to see the world not as it is, but as it might be,” said Portia James, curator of the exhibition. “Adams calls the viewer to get involved with art.”

The “Art Man,” as he is known, has a faithful Washington following built from his practice of pop-up public art where he places sculpture in unexpected places throughout the city. His mantra “100% mynd use” encapsulates his philosophy on art and life as he demands both himself and everyone else to think and be creative.

The exhibition is the first of three multipart presentations comprising the museum’s “Call & Response: Community and Creativity Initiative” that examines and highlights the expression of creative acts—from traditional arts to the artistry of roller skating—that can be found in everyday community life. The second and third parts will run Dec. 12–March 18, 2012, and April 2, 2012–Aug. 5, 2012, respectively.

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The Anacostia Community Museum opened in southeast Washington in 1967 as the nation's first federally funded neighborhood museum. Located at 1901 Fort Place S.E. in Washington, D.C., the museum focuses on the impact of contemporary social issues on urban communities. The weekend summer Shuttle Anacostia, offering free travel from the National Mall to the museum, is available through Sept. 5, as well as year-round Metro access and free onsite parking. For more information, the public may call (202) 633-4820, (202) 633-1000 or (202) 633-5285 (TTY); for tours, (202) 633-4844. Website: anacostia.si.edu.

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