

**May 25, 2021**

**Kevin Beasley's installation *Chair of the Ministers of Defense* welcomes the public back into the Snite Museum of Art June 1.**

**Notre Dame, IN:** The Snite Museum of Art at the University of Notre Dame is thrilled to reopen to the public on June 1, with the special focus on the exhibition of Kevin Beasley's *Chair of the Ministers of Defense* (2016) on loan from The Joyner/Giuffrida Collection and The Rennie Collection.

This immersive installation explores ideas of power and race in America through theatrics reminiscent of the Roman Baroque. Renowned conceptual artist Kevin Beasley calls into focus Black Liberation movements and ongoing imbalances of power experienced by Black Americans and marginalized men and women of color. The work maintains a formality often employed in religious imagery in artworks intended to convey the divine right of leaders.

An empty, rattan "peacock" chair is at the center; above it hangs a house window clad in protective iron bars, evoking a stained-glass window. Flanking the chair are archetypal Maasai and Zulu warrior shields, icons of African might. Surrounding these objects are vaguely figurative, resin-infused sculptures made from t-shirts, housedresses, and du-rags—all items associated with contemporary urban culture. Bathed in the dramatic light of the theater, *The Chair of the Ministers of Defense* is an open stage in which to consider the circumstances and conventions used by those in control and those who challenge their authority.

Based in New York City, Kevin Beasley has emerged as among the most insightful and distinguished American artists of his generation. Through sculpture, installations, and performance art, he has captivated audiences by exploring challenging topics that address history, social injustice, power dynamics, and, ultimately, the dignity of Black men and women in America. Born in Lynchburg, Virginia, in 1985, Beasley attended the College for Creative Studies in Detroit (BFA, 2007) and Yale University School of Art (MFA, 2012). He captured critical attention at the 2014 Whitney Biennial and presented a solo exhibition in 2018. He has exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art, the Studio Museum, Harlem, and the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum. Beasley's work is included in many of the most important public and

private collections across the United States and England, including The Joyner/Giuffrida Collection and The Rennie Collection.

This exhibition was made possible through the generosity of Pamela J. Joyner and Fred J. Giuffrida (ND '73) and the Humana Foundation Endowment for American Art.



Kevin Beasley, *Chair of the Ministers of Defense* (2016), as installed at the Hammer Museum, UCLA in 2017. Polyurethane resin, wood, acoustic foam, jeans, trousers, du-rags, altered t-shirts, altered hoodies, guinea fowl feathers, wrought iron window gate, vintage Beni Ourain Moroccan rug, kaftans, housedresses, Maasai war shields, Zulu war shields, and vintage peacock rattan chair. On loan from The Joyner/Giuffrida Collection and The Rennie Collection.



Kevin Beasley (American, b. 1985)

MEDIA CONTACT: If you would like high-resolution images or in-depth information, please contact Gina Costa, Marketing and Public Relations Program Manager, (574) 631-4720, [gcosta@nd.edu](mailto:gcosta@nd.edu)

### **About The Snite Museum of Art, University of Notre Dame**

Considered one of the leading university art museums in America, the Snite Museum's permanent collection contains nearly 30,000 works that represent many cultures and periods of world art history. Exceptional holdings include the Jack and Alfrieda Feddersen Collection of Rembrandt Etchings, the Noah L. and Muriel S. Butkin Collection of 19th-Century French Art, the John D. Reilly Collection of Old Master and 19th-Century Drawings, the Janos Scholz Collection of 19th-Century European Photographs, the Mr. and Mrs. Russell G. Ashbaugh Jr. Collection of Meštrović Sculpture and Drawings, the George Rickey Sculpture Archive, and the Virginia A. Marten Collection of 18th-Century Decorative Arts. Other collection strengths include Olmec and Mesoamerican art, 20th-century art, and Native American art.

Sculpture is displayed in the Mary Loretto and Terrence J. Dillon Courtyard and in The Charles B. Hayes Family Sculpture Park.

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Directions: [nd.edu/visitors/directions](http://nd.edu/visitors/directions)

Closed Sunday, Monday and major holidays.

In compliance with University of Notre Dame regulations, all visitors must wear masks indoors and remain 6-feet from other visitors not in their group. Please check our website for the most current requirements for Covid-19 protocols when planning your visit.

Admission is free

Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday 10 a.m.-5 p.m.  
Thursdays 10 a.m. -7:30 p.m.  
Saturdays Noon-5:00 p.m.

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