CEPA Gallery Billboard Exhibit Celebrates Black Matters
Twelve billboards feature work by artist Stacey Robinson

Buffalo, NY – CEPA Gallery is pleased to announce the opening of a new public art exhibit on August 4th, taking place in another unexpected place. Twelve off-highway billboards will feature original artwork by Stacey Robinson alongside messages like #BlackHealthMatters, #BlackJoyMatters, #BlackFuturesMatter, #BlackPowerMatters, #BlackFamilyMatters, etc. To see the full list of Black Matters statements, view artwork and find billboard locations, please visit www.cepagallery.org.

Stacey Robinson, Arthur Schomburg fellow and MFA graduate from the University at Buffalo was already preparing for a show at CEPA Gallery this summer. However, the scheduled exhibit involved many interactive and immersive elements, intended to mimic the Black barber shop experience. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, CEPA Gallery and Robinson re-imagined their collaboration swiftly and creatively. “I always wanted to be on billboards,” says Robinson, “so there is a bit of serendipity here.”

Robinson is currently an Assistant Professor of Graphic Design at the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign. Robinson’s art imagines futures where black people are free from colonial influences. “My goal with much of my art is to dismantle ideas of derogatory Black relations, pacificity, and docility.” Along with John Jennings, Robinson is part of the collaborative duo ‘Black Kirby,’ which explores Afro Speculative existence via the aesthetic of Jack Kirby. Robinson’s collected works reside at Modern Graphics in Berlin, Bucknell University, and the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture.

CEPA Gallery’s Black Matters billboard exhibit highlights the realities of systemic and institutionalized racism, focusing the public’s attention not only on the present moment and the issue of police violence, but on the many challenges, contributions and assets of Black people in our communities. The text and image cohesion intends to speak directly to local governments and communities to create dialogue around the “isms” in our society with the hope of inspiring calls to action for lessening communal inequities. “This is just the beginning,” says Lawrence Brose, Executive Director of CEPA Gallery. “We will continue to work with incredible artists like Stacey to provide low barrier access to art that connects and engages people in their communities.”

This is CEPA Gallery’s second public art exhibit this summer. Earlier this month, the Photography Works show opened on 20 bus shelters across the region, featuring original artwork by students of the year-long program. Both exhibits are scheduled to run until Sept 1st, 2020. CEPA Gallery’s Black Matters Billboard exhibit is made possible through funding from the Andy Warhol Foundation for Visual Art, the Joy of Giving Something and the Golden and Goldman Foundation Philanthropic Fund. Additional support provided by the National Endowment for the Arts, Erie County, Simple Gifts Fund, and Arts Services Initiative of Western New York. For more information, please contact elizabeth@cepagallery.org.
#BLACKHEALTHMATTERS