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# iROZEALb

A RILEY CONTEMPORARY ARTISTS PROJECT GALLERY EXHIBITION

Opens February 8 at Joslyn Art Museum

(Omaha, NE) – The inaugural exhibition in Joslyn's Karen and Doug Riley Contemporary Artists Project (CAP) Gallery features work by New York-based artist iROZEALb (iona rozeal brown, b. Washington, D.C.). Fusing imagery and techniques from widely-varied sources – including American hip hop culture, traditional Japanese *ukiyo-e* woodblock prints, Kabuki, comic books, and Byzantine icons – iROZEALb's paintings, drawings, and mixed media collages examine the ways personal identity is shaped when cultural forces collide.

The exhibition highlights iROZEALb's most recent work, which reflects a developing interest in human relationships and coupledness. The show will include several existing paintings, including three just recently completed, and a mural created on-site in the Riley CAP Gallery specifically for the exhibition. Students from Joslyn's Kent Bellows Mentoring Program will assist with the mural. *iROZEALb* opens at Joslyn on February 8 and continues through May 11. The exhibition is included in free general Museum admission.

### About the Exhibition

The visual conventions of Japanese *ukiyo-e* and *shunga*, the Japanese tradition of erotic art, play a strong role in iROZEALb's new body of work, which is laden with intimacy. She also mines the rich cross-cultural territory of *ganguro* and *burapan*, a subculture of Japanese adolescents that sports tanned skin, bright makeup, blonde wigs, and gold chains, in order to model themselves after the stereotypical African-American hip-hop look—the word *ganguro* translates literally to “blackface.”

The paintings in the exhibition feature embracing couples, each assigned to their own cozy atmosphere (sometimes referred to as a pod). Luxury accessories like strands of pearls and oversized gold jewelry are collaged throughout the compositions, as are walls of speakers. From a series, loosely called “All I Ever Wanted . . . (My God . . . my man!)” after the Lenny Kravitz/Taro Ono Lennon tune of the same name, most of the works are titled with an accompanying haiku as well as a quote from Song of Solomon. The artist's revisiting of [Japanese artist Kitagawa] Utamaro's imagery and *shunga*, the erotic prints of late-Edo Japan, sparked the series' focus on representations of sensuality and sexuality. Even today, the artist posits, these themes are often presented as merely a barrage of images, leaving nothing to the imagination.

### About iROZEALb

iROZEALb (iona rozeal brown) is a native of Washington, D.C., and a graduate of the San Francisco Art Institute and Yale University. In addition to her critically acclaimed commission for Performa 11 (the fourth edition of the international biennial of new visual art performance presented by Performa), the artist has been featured in solo exhibitions at the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington DC, MoCA Detroit, MoCA Cleveland, and the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford. She currently lives and works in New York.

### About Joslyn's Riley CAP Gallery

A 500-square-foot space in the Scott Pavilion suite of galleries, the Riley CAP Gallery showcases nationally- and internationally-recognized artists, as well as emerging talent, selected by Joslyn curators. A rotating schedule of carefully focused exhibitions will examine how artists engage with the world and respond to the issues that challenge them creatively, bringing new perspectives on contemporary art to Nebraska.

Riley CAP Gallery artists will be invited to Joslyn for lectures and other public programs, giving audiences the opportunity to gain insight into creative processes and contribute to an expanded dialogue about new art.

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*iROZEALb at Joslyn Art Museum*

The first Joslyn gallery dedicated exclusively to living artists, the Riley CAP Gallery represents an important step in making contemporary art an even more integral component of the Museum's exhibition programming.

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PICTURED (PAGE 1): *iROZEALb, Pod 222: The Reunion (Song of Solomon 5:10-11)*, 2013, acrylic, marker, ink, krink, and graphite on wood panel, 48 x 96 in., Courtesy the artist and Edward Tyler Nahem Fine Art, New York



Our Mission – Joslyn Art Museum collects, preserves, and interprets the visual arts of the highest quality, fostering appreciation and enjoyment of art for the benefit of a diverse audience.  
Our Vision – To be cherished and respected as a premier art museum.

The Museum was a gift to the people of Omaha from Sarah Joslyn in memory of her husband, George, who made his fortune as president of the Western Newspaper Union. The Museum's original 1931 building is one of the finest examples of Art Deco architecture in the nation, with 38 types of marble from seven countries. The Walter and Suzanne Scott Pavilion, a 58,000-square-foot addition built in 1994, was designed by renowned British architect Norman Foster as his first U.S. commission. The Museum features galleries, a 1,000-seat concert hall, fountain court, education technology gallery, lecture hall, classrooms, sculpture garden, café, and shop.

General Museum Admission: Free (the *iROZEALb* exhibition is included in free general Museum admission).

Regular Museum Hours (includes exhibition): Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, 10 am–4 pm; Thursday, 10 am–8 pm; closed Monday and major holidays.

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