



G R O U N D S F O R S C U L P T U R E

Grounds For Sculpture to Present *Clifford Ward: I'll Make Me a World*

*Exhibition Represents Over a Decade of Creative
Work That Resonates with the Collective Human Experience*

Hamilton, NJ — January 28, 2025 — This spring, **Grounds For Sculpture** (GFS) will present ***Clifford Ward: I'll Make Me a World***, an exhibition guest curated by Noah Smalls, which will be on view in the Museum Building from May 18, 2025 through January 11, 2026. Spanning over a decade of creative work, much of which was created at Clifford Ward's studio on the GFS campus, this exhibition presents a rich tapestry of themes and concepts in his expansive practice. Ward is inspired by a diverse array of cultural influences, including contributions from the African diaspora, Australian Aboriginal people, and Native American and Māori cultures. His work often explores geometry, Cubism, mythology, and anthropomorphism. Together, these myriad influences, themes and concepts transcend temporal and geographical confines, resonating with the collective human experience.

"We're delighted to showcase an extensive body of work from an artist with whom we have a long-standing relationship," said **Kathleen Greene, Chief Audience Officer at Grounds For Sculpture**. "The diverse cultural narratives woven into Ward's wide-ranging artistic practice will be relatable to both existing and new audiences, including those of our nearby collaborator, Artworks Trenton."

This exhibition offers an opportunity for a unique collaboration between Grounds For Sculpture and Artworks in Trenton, NJ, which will show ***Clifford Ward: I'LL MAKE ME A WORLD, prologue***, from February 1 – April 12, 2025. Curated by **Addison Vincent, Artistic Director of Artworks Trenton**, the preceding exhibition at Artworks will introduce a sampling of Ward's works, highlighting the individual impact of specific works from multiple series. The exhibition at GFS will build on the Artworks exhibition by presenting Ward's work in a larger context, revealing the complete narrative and the interconnectedness of his greater oeuvre.

"We are excited to present Clifford Ward's exhibition at Artworks Trenton. His talent for engaging and inspiring audiences perfectly complements our mission to nurture creativity and artistic expression within the community. Furthermore, his work embodies the ideals of Black History Month, extending its significance beyond the month of February," stated **Addison Vincent, Artistic Director of Artworks Trenton**.

Ward's artistic journey envisions a Black future that reclaims and reinterprets the symbolism and history of the past. Conceptually, it aligns with Afrofuturism, a cultural aesthetic with roots in the mid-twentieth century. The aesthetic weaves together science fiction, history and fantasy to explore Black experiences and imagine liberatory futures. This is embodied by Ward's "Animism" series, a body of work featuring totemic figures displaying intricate geometries, mythologies, textures, and symbols. Despite their ethereal origins, these sculptures firmly root themselves in the present moment. These works also demonstrate a sculptural process that Ward has developed and refined over many years: wrapping plaster bandages around a supporting armature, which is reinforced and shaped with a variety of materials, such as steel, wood, Styrofoam, cardboard, and newspaper, and subsequently finished with shellac, brown wax, and acrylic paint.

"Having always felt the inclination to create, I made a significant piece one night using a long balloon wrapped around a cranberry juice jar, applied paper mâché, and painted it. This simple piece was the impetus that changed my life—leading to my becoming a professional artist," remarked **Clifford Ward**. "Since then, I've expanded this technique to create wall reliefs and figures ranging from six feet to nine feet, and I look forward to sharing approximately 60 works that use this technique at my upcoming exhibition at Ground For Sculpture."

"I am deeply honored to curate this exhibition alongside Clifford Ward, whose unwavering vision and dedication to his masterful artistic practice has been a constant source of inspiration throughout this project," added the exhibition's curator, **Noah Smalls**. "Much of the work Clifford has created over the past decade has never been exhibited before, and it is with great excitement that I look forward to sharing these extraordinary pieces with the GFS community and audiences beyond."

This solo exhibition of Ward's work not only celebrates Afrofuturism as a dynamic artistic genre, but also underscores its evolution and potential future directions within visual culture. It encourages audiences to engage deeply with diverse cultural narratives, transcending temporal and spatial boundaries to address themes that are simultaneously timeless and forward-thinking. It invites viewers to embark on a journey of exploration and introspection, hopefully challenging them to reconsider their perspectives on identity, history, and the future.

The Grounds For Sculpture exhibition *Clifford Ward: I'll Make Me A World* is made possible by generous exhibition support from Julie and Michael Nachamkin. Additional support is provided by NRG Energy and Marjorie Ogilvie. Support is provided in part by the Atlantic Foundation, The New Jersey State Council on the Arts, a division of the NJ Department of State, and a partner agency of the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation.

About the Guest Curator for *Clifford Ward: I'll Make Me a World*: Noah Smalls (he/him) is a museum consultant, exhibition designer, gallery director, and interpretive program developer. With a diverse portfolio of clients, including the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts (PAFA), Mural Arts Philadelphia, the African American Museum in Philadelphia (AAMP), the Kentucky Center for African American Heritage, and the American Friends Service Committee, Smalls has left an indelible mark on numerous cultural institutions across the nation. He currently serves as the Director of Exhibitions and Collections Management at the esteemed Williams College Museum of Art in Massachusetts, as well as the Director of the vibrant Rush Arts Philadelphia Gallery in Pennsylvania. Smalls brings a depth of knowledge and artistic insight to his work, continually pushing boundaries and challenging the status quo. Driven by his mission to contribute to the ongoing transition of the museum field, he is dedicated to creating spaces that showcase art and serve as platforms for dialogue, education, and social change. His vision for the future of museums embraces diversity and accessibility, ensuring that art remains a powerful tool for transformation and enlightenment.

Thanks to a generous grant from organizations like the New Jersey Arts Council, **Artworks Trenton** can present programming like ***Clifford Ward: I'LL MAKE ME A WORLD, prologue***. Programming such as this exhibition enriches our community and fosters creativity, a cornerstone of Artworks Trenton's mission.

About the Curator for *Clifford Ward: I'LL MAKE ME A WORLD, prologue*: Addison Vincent is a freelance artist and curator from Lower Bucks County, Pennsylvania. He studied art history and business administration at the University of Hartford and began his art career shortly after graduating with honors in Visual Communications from Gibbs College in 1999. Addison has completed many works on a commission basis for both private parties and businesses, stage productions, and short stories, while presenting his original works in galleries across PA, NJ, and NY. In his role as Gallery/Artistic Director, he selects and coordinates the exhibitions in the Artworks Trenton galleries, including gallery programming at the annual Art All Night and Art All Day events.

Press Preview

A special viewing of the exhibition for accredited journalists will take place on Tuesday, May 13, 2025 at 11AM. Reservations are required. Contact: press@groundsforsculpture.org.

Member Preview Day

Grounds For Sculpture will hold a special Preview Day for its Members on Saturday, May 17, 2025. Reservations are required.

Hours and Ticketing

Grounds For Sculpture is open Wednesday – Monday, 10AM – 5PM. For extended hours May – September, visit the Grounds For Sculpture website: groundsforsculpture.org.

Advance timed ticket reservations are highly recommended to ensure entry. Capacity is limited and tickets often sell out on weekends and holidays. Member reservations are required on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays. Tickets are available up to two weeks in advance and are released on a weekly basis.

Follow Grounds For Sculpture on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#), using the hashtag #groundsforsculpture.

About Grounds For Sculpture

Grounds For Sculpture (GFS) is a 42-acre not-for-profit sculpture park, arboretum, and museum, founded by the late Seward Johnson. Featuring over 300 contemporary sculptures by renowned and emerging artists in a beckoning, ever-changing landscape, Grounds For Sculpture combines art and nature to surprise, inspire, and engage visitors from all backgrounds in the artist's act of invention. In addition to its permanent collection, Grounds For Sculpture offers exhibitions in six indoor galleries, alongside experiential art, horticulture, and wellness programs for all ages. Located in Hamilton, New Jersey, Grounds For Sculpture is easily accessible from the New York City and Philadelphia metropolitan areas by public transit and is open year-round. For more information, visit groundsforsculpture.org.

About Artworks Trenton

Artworks Trenton's downtown visual arts center is a 501(c)(3) Charitable Corporation, that promotes artistic diversity by fostering creativity, learning, and appreciation of the arts. Our exhibitions, workshops and events make art an accessible experience for all, building community among and between art students of all ages, professional and amateur artists, inner city and suburban residents, die-hard art fans and first time art appreciators. For more information, visit artworkstrenton.org.

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