

HELP US BUILD A MOVEMENT

Ra Joy, Executive Director Bronzeville Center for the Arts

This year America will celebrate its semi quincentennial and the signing of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776. As the nation reflects on its founding, it also finds itself wrestling with fundamental questions around what we choose to remember, who we choose to honor, what we collectively celebrate, and why it all matters.

With America's 250th birthday rapidly approaching, the stakes are high. Politicians across the country are actively trying to disparage and erase Black culture – by banning books, whitewashing history, censoring school curricula, and attacking the civic infrastructure that allows the public to understand our cultural stories.

This is a pivotal moment in American history and a period of enormous consequence for our country. In an era of Artificial Intelligence, with the accelerating pace of fake news, shrinking democratic spaces, an attack on scholarship and facts, and continued economic uncertainty, there is an urgent need for authenticity, truth, meaning, and purpose.

The exhibition, *Glory! Glory!* presented by Pigment International declares that the arts are essential to not only surviving this moment but to imagining and building what comes next. The exhibition centered Black artists and provided people with space to gather, ask questions, share ideas, and practice the habits of democracy.

The Bronzeville Center for the Arts in Milwaukee, Wisconsin is committed to amplifying this impulse. Amidst the backdrop of uncertainty and the attempted erasure of Black culture, the BCA is not only building an art museum—we're building a movement.

We're building a movement to champion Black artists and celebrate their contributions to our world's cultural tapestry. Fueled by the bold vision of our founders, we're building a movement to make art of the African Diaspora a central part of the cultural consciousness of present and future generations. It is a movement that is artist- and community-centered. And it is a movement that will capture the imagination of our country and help transform the cultural and civic infrastructure of the Great Lakes region.

MOVEMENT is also a consistent throughline for the BCA in the year ahead. In 2026, we have organized a full slate of exhibitions, installations, and immersive arts experiences that spotlight the creativity of artists of African descent. This spring, the BCA is pleased to present a new solo exhibition at Gallery 507, "Above, Below, Within," featuring the performance-based work of interdisciplinary artist Ciarra K. Walters. The exhibition, on view through August 14, 2026, promises to move and motivate people. This fall, the BCA will present a groundbreaking exhibition showcasing the history of the Black Arts Movement in Milwaukee. The exhibition will feature the artists, arts collectives, and cultural organizations that helped define an influential era of cultural reimagination and artistic excellence. The BCA is proud to stand on the

shoulders of these pioneering efforts and serve as a bridge between Bronzeville's remarkable history, its time-honored traditions, and a bold, creative vision for its future.

As a premier multimedia platform, Pigment International is vitally important to the movement we're building at the BCA. At this moment, when many institutions are retreating from frameworks of fairness, Pigment International is stepping up to steward the culture, increase visibility for Black fine art, and strengthen the fabric of our creative ecosystems here in the Midwest and around the world.

We're building a movement, and we want you to be a part of it! Please join us and stay up to date with the Bronzeville Center for the Arts by signing up for our newsletter, following us on Facebook and Instagram and checking our website for regular updates.

Thank you for being on this incredible journey with us! While the road ahead won't be smooth, together, we're building a movement that can't be stopped.