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Coviello, Will. "Dawoud Bey highlights the PhotoNOLA photograph festival in December." *Gambit*, December 7, 2021.

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*Dawoud Bey's three channel video is installed at the Historic New Orleans Collection. Images by Dawoud Bey/Provided by Sean Kelly, New York.*

Photographs of plantations have often focused on large columned mansions, framed as symbols of wealth, beauty and the South. Usually left out is any reference to the underlying mechanism of the plantation economy: slavery.

In his black-and-white photographs of five Louisiana plantations, Dawoud Bey is taking a fresh look at the legacy of plantations. The full project of 24 large-scale photos is called "*In This Here Place*," and eight of them as well as a video made at Evergreen plantation are on display at the Historic New Orleans Collection as part of Prospect.5, the international art triennial that runs through Jan. 23, 2022.

Bey's work also is on the roster of PhotoNOLA shows. The annual photography festival's events are scheduled on Wednesday, Dec. 8, through Sunday, Dec. 12, but shows' run dates vary, and many continue into 2022. Bey also is featured in the PhotoNOLA artist talk at 2 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 11, at Toulouse Theatre.

The plantation photos are the third major project Bey has produced on Black history. Bey became known in New York in the 1970s for his black-and-white portraits. A decade ago, he did a project based on the bombing of a Birmingham church and murder of six Black children — including four girls killed in the bombing and two boys shot in the hours after — in September 1963. It featured diptychs of people the same age as the victims, one person being the age of the deceased victim,

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and another person the age the victim would have been, as a way of conceptualizing the gap in time and lost potential of the young victims.

Bey then did a project on the Underground Railroad. It featured landscape photos, including some at historic sites, and though they were taken in daylight, they appeared as if night photos, evoking what the sites might have looked like to people escaping to freedom.

Then he turned his attention to Louisiana and New Orleans' history as a major slave market.

"My interests in photographing plantations extends from my interest in continuing this ongoing history project, since the institution of slavery and the experience of African American enslavement is absolutely formative to the history of this country," Bey told Gambit. "I wanted to make work about these places that are the first places in which enslaved Africans became African American. So much of the tension and problematics around race in this country can be traced directly back to the experience and relationships that were forged on the plantation. The abuse of Black bodies, the viewing of Black people as expendable and less than human begins on the plantation."

In many of the photos, trees old enough to have been on the grounds of the operating plantations evoke the passage of time.

"I'm using the medium of photography as a vehicle to activate the imagination so that the viewer is inexplicably pulled into the past," Bey says. "All of these projects have to do with bearing witness and bringing the past into a contemporary conversation."

The three-channel video installation in Prospect.5 includes a soundscape by composer and vocalist Imani Uzuri. It evokes the voices of the past, as well as Black vocal traditions rooted in plantations, Bey says.

At the artist talk, curator Brian Piper will talk with Bey about the Prospect.5 photos and the way history and place have figured in his career's work.

For his next project, Bey will go to Virginia and the landscapes where some of the first boats carrying enslaved people arrived in the colony, and where many of those people were bought and sold.

At the Historic New Orleans Collection, Bey's photos are on display along with a selection of portraits by George Dureau, whose work was included in Prospect.1 as well.

PhotoNOLA includes a large and diverse array of photo shows at museums, art and photography galleries and other spaces. The New Orleans Museum of Art has a show exploring the history of photo images and their transmission, as well as a show of photos by Ishimoto Yasuhiro. There are two shows of portraits of musicians at the New Orleans Jazz Museum. There's an outdoor show on the Lafitte Greenway featuring images of women and gender-nonconforming individuals presented by

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Photoville, Women Photograph and PhotoNOLA. The gallery of the New Orleans Photo Alliance, which organizes PhotoNOLA, presents Vikesh Kapoor's photos of his parents and their lives in Pennsylvania since emigrating from India in 1971.

The festival's opening reception on Wednesday at The Broadside features a show of projected images of the devastation of Hurricane Ida by photographers from The Times-Picayune. There also will be images from a project about Dillard University's women's basketball team by Ashley Teamer and Annie Flanagan. The reception also includes work by other artists and music by Naked on the Floor.

Regular PhotoNOLA events include portfolio reviews, a photo walk with artists sharing their portfolios and work by Photo Alliance members at the Ogden Museum of Southern Art. There are workshops on Polaroid transfers, tintypes and other topics.

Last year's event was entirely virtual, but there are only a few virtual events this year, including the virtual bookfair and a seminar featuring Afghan-born photographer Zalmai.