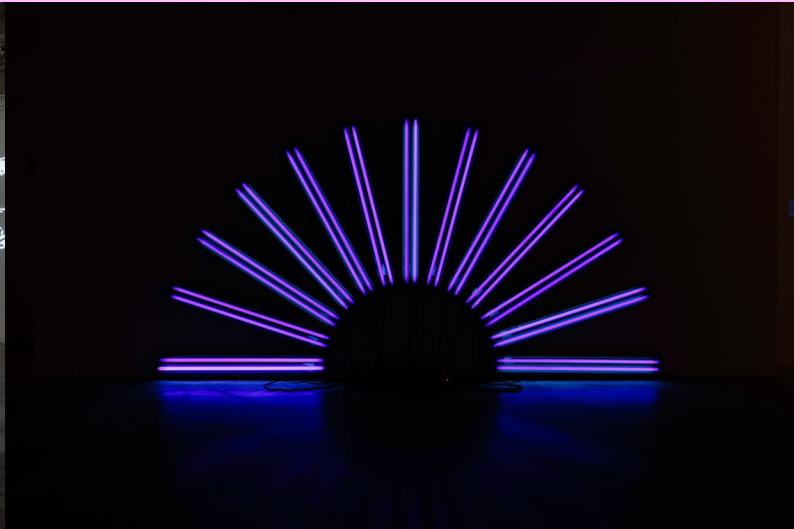


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Paul Stephen Benjamin: Black of Night

May 18–September 15, 2024

Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts
724 S. 12th Street, Omaha, NE 68102

bemiscenter.org/exhibitions/paul-stephen-benjamin

Curated by Rachel Adams, Chief Curator and Director of Programs, Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts

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IMAGE CREDITS

1. Installation of *Paul Stephen Benjamin: Black of Night*, 2024. On view at Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts. Courtesy of Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts. Photography by Colin Conces.
2. Paul Stephen Benjamin, *Black Suns*, 2024. Black light, black fixture, black extension cord, black power strip. Courtesy of the artist. Photography by Colin Conces.
3. Paul Stephen Benjamin, *Sonata in Absolute Black (All the Black Keys) (detail)*, 2020. Video, 36 channel, color, sound, loop. Courtesy of the artist. Photography by Colin Conces.
4. *Black Flag (In Memory of Malcolm and Betty)*, 2024. Black cotton, black lace, black metal, black rope, black threads. Courtesy of the artist. Photography by Colin Conces.

Paul Stephen Benjamin's practice is an ongoing investigation of blackness through concept, thought, and perception. From wordplay with the actual letters that comprise "BLACK," to utilizing the expanse of shades of black house paint—including as *Nightfall*, *Soot*, *Ebony Field*, and *Black Beauty*—to posing the question, "If the color black had a sound, what would it be?" Benjamin calls attention to the color's deep historical and social resonance. Across his practice, the artist's work references integral moments in Black history as well as art history.

Black of Night—the artist's first solo exhibition in the region—features video installations, paintings, text-based work, and sculpture as conceptual entry points for dialogue around identity, race, and patriotism. By continually "documenting" the color black through his multifaceted practice, he is also deconstructing its meaning—breaking it down to its simplest form and allowing for it to operate as a medium for interpretation and introspection. Focusing on the connotations of the color black in society, culture, and language, Benjamin incorporates history, text, imagery, and sound from popular culture, in turn discussing the absence and presence of color.

Support for *Paul Stephen Benjamin: Black of Night* was provided by the Terra Foundation for American Art. Additional support by Douglas County Visitor Improvement Fund, Mutual of Omaha, Nebraska Arts Council/Nebraska Cultural Endowment, Omaha Steaks, and the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts.