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From Instagram Post to Online New York Art Gallery: St. Croix Artist Danica David's Work Gets Proper Feature

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Danica David

St. Croix artist Danica M. David's "Mask Mission" project is being featured at "Awareness through Conceptual Art and Photography," an online exhibition at X Gallery in New York City. The exhibition features pandemic art and is part of a permanent online collection reflecting one of the world's most difficult times.

According to a release issued Friday, Ms. David's art became part of the exhibition after she shared her artwork and "Mask Mission" project on her Instagram page. Adrienne DeLoe of Pandemic Self Portraits saw Ms. David's post on Instagram. Ms. DeLoe then shared it with Lisa

DuBois, a curator at X Gallery in New York City.

"I feel so honored to be a part of this exhibition, I just wanted to serve others in my community, this was an unexpected surprise," said Ms. David.

She added, "I was inspired to donate masks because my late grandmother, Esther E. Davis, was a kitchen employee at the Virgin Islands Department of Education for thirty years. Additionally, my late great-grandmother, Asselita Fleming Wyatt, taught me how to sew clothing at age seven. In my book, *Creative Callaloo: Art, Poems, and Recipes Inspired by the Virgin Islands*, I share my fondest memories of my late grandmothers through Virgin Islands art, culture, food, and history."

Ms. David said she started her Mask Mission project during the initial stages of the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown in April. She prayed for an idea to assist others. Her prayer, she said, was answered when she remembered that she had a sewing machine at home. After that, Ms. David began sewing cloth face masks and donating them to various nonprofit organizations.

Ms. David wanted to donate specifically to the Virgin Islands Department of Education kitchen and custodial staff. Kitchen and custodial personnel are essential workers who Ms. David calls the "unsung heroes" of the D.O.E. Thus far, she has donated to these essential workers at St. Croix Educational Complex High School, St. Croix Career & Technical Education Center (CTEC), Pearl B. Larsen Elementary School, Ricardo Richards Elementary, John H. Woodson Junior High School, and Women's Coalition of St. Croix.

Ms. David's masks are sewn with the Virgin Islands' cultural madras fabrics and Ankara or African wax fabrics. Over the months, her friends, Sayeeda Carter, Winifred "Oyoko" Loving, Makeda Kamara, and Verdina Smith, have donated Ankara fabrics to this project, according to the release. Additionally, Khnuma Simmonds of My Girlfriend's Closet boutique highlighted Ms. David's "Mask Mission" project in August during The National Girlfriend Day Girlfriendism Campaign.

There are two styles: the pleated and Three-D designs. To assist with this project, she also sells masks. The majority of sales assist with mask production. "By assisting others in this way, I hope to share love, joy, and peace amid COVID-19, David said."

For more information, contact Danica M. David www.creativecallaloo.com/mask-mission.