



PRESS RELEASE

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21c MUSEUM HOTELS TO UNVEIL NEW LOCATION IN KANSAS CITY ON JULY 17, 2018

REVITALIZING THE HISTORIC SAVOY HOTEL AND GRILL AS A MUSEUM, BOUTIQUE HOTEL, AND CHEF-DRIVEN RESTAURANT

INAUGURAL EXHIBITION *REFUGE* EXPLORES EXPERIENCES OF MIGRATION THROUGH CONTEMPORARY ART

SITE-SPECIFIC COLLECTION *LIMITLESS* FEATURES WORKS BY ARTISTS BRAD KAHLHAMER, KEN+JULIA YONETANI, AND LUFTWERK

For press information contact:
Jennifer Petrisko/Kelsey Whited
21c Museum Hotels
(732) 874-2166 / (502) 882-6237
jpetrisko@21chotels.com / kwhited@21chotels.com

Sarah Palay/Juliet Vincente/Maria May
Resnicow + Associates
(212) 671-5163 / (212) 671-5158 / (614) 827-5810
spalay@resnicow.com / jvincente@resnicow.com /
mmay@resnicow.com



Mohau Modisakeng (South African)
Passage 7 (detail), 2017
Inkjet Print on Epson Hot Press Natural

Kansas City, MO (June 27, 2018)

21c Museum Hotels announced today that it will open its newest location on July 17, 2018 in Kansas City, Missouri — a revitalization of the historic Savoy Hotel and Grill. *Refuge*, an interdisciplinary exhibition exploring contemporary migration, and *LIMITLESS*, a collection of site-specific commissions in direct dialogue with the location's history and architecture, will premiere at 21c Museum Hotel Kansas City. Marking the eighth location for North America's only multi-venue museum dedicated to collecting and exhibiting art of the 21st century, 21c Museum Hotel Kansas City will bring a new cultural resource to the City's vibrant art scene.

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The inaugural exhibition is an exploration of human migration, a historically resonant topic that is particularly compelling in light of the current refugee crisis. Works include painting, sculpture, photography, film, and video installations, offering a global perspective on past and current events by artists from all over the world.

—Alice Gray Stites
Chief Curator

Designed by New York-based architects Deborah Berke Partners with Kansas City-based architect Hufft Projects, 21c Kansas City will inhabit the revitalized, historic Savoy Hotel and Grill, honoring its illustrious past as the longest continuously running hotel west of the Mississippi with modernized facilities. Upon opening, 21c Kansas City will provide a dynamic platform of contemporary art exhibitions, installations and cultural programming — a destination for travelers and locals alike. Located in the heart of the city's historic downtown Library District, the space features 6,200 square feet of exhibition space, which will be open to the public, free of charge, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Examining the current status of global migration, 21c Kansas City will present the inaugural exhibition *Refuge*, showcasing works by over 54 artists, including; **Hew Locke**, **Yoan Capote, JR**, **Stephanie Syjuco**, and **Mohau Modisakeng**, amongst others. *Refuge* will be on view in 21c Kansas City's gallery space until spring 2019. Simultaneously on view, site-specific collection *LIMITLESS* features new commissions by artists **Brad Kahlhamer**, **Ken+Julia Yonetani**, and **Luftwerk**, illuminating the realm of the imagination brought to life in Kansas City through the intersection of visionary art and architecture.

INAUGURAL EXHIBITION: *Refuge*

Refuge, is a multi-media and interdisciplinary exhibition about seeking, needing, and creating shelter. The harsh and haunting realities of contemporary migrant life are vividly rendered in **Richard Mosse's** images of refugee camps in Greece and Turkey, captured using heat-mapping technology; in **Serge Alain Nitegeka's** charcoal figures painted on shipping crates; and in **Mohau Modisakeng's** *Passage*, a multi-media series tracking the perilous journey of a would-be refugee, alone in dark waters. Throughout the exhibition, the sea serves as a potent symbol for both desire and danger: in photographs by **Dinh Q. Lê**, **Ellen Kooi**, and others, the sea offers escape, while **Jorge Méndez Blake**, **Alex Hernández**, and **Sandra Ramos** depict shipwrecks, evoking the threat of disaster that so often attends the ocean traveler's crossing to safety. The simultaneous allure and risk of a water-borne passage is a recurrent theme in contemporary Cuban art, additionally represented here by **Kcho's** sculpture of a simple rowboat, **Glenda Leon's** metaphoric photograph of birds in flight, and by **Yoan Capote's** portrayal of the sea surrounding the island nation as a raw canvas covered in hundreds of sharp metal fish hooks. Global, historical narratives of travel and migration—both sought and forced—are invoked by

Hew Locke's flotilla of hanging boats. Ornamented like reliquaries, the model boats that comprise *The Wine Dark Sea* pay homage to the fantasies and realities of centuries of human flow. "It's not just about something dark," says the artist. "It's about people searching for a better life, which is a human right. It's what we do."

SITE-SPECIFIC COLLECTION: *Limitless*

From the glowing **Ken+Julia Yonetani** uranium glass chandelier; to the reflective, intricate forms of **Brad Kahlhamer's** *Supercatcher*, *Vast Array*; to the immersive, color saturated entry ramp transformed into **Luftwerk's** *Linear Sky* — the collection of site-specific art at 21c Kansas City connects visitors with past and present, nature and technology. The collection of site-specific exhibition *LIMITLESS* features new commissions by artists that respond directly to the building's history and architecture. Details on installations in *LIMITLESS* follow below:

Ken+Julia Yonetani, Crystal Palace: *The Great Exhibition of the Works of All Nuclear Nations (U.S.A.)*, 2015, Dome Gallery

This is the largest work in the artists' series of chandelier sculptures, introduced at the 2013 Singapore Biennial. Entitled *Crystal Palace: The Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nuclear Nations*, the installation was comprised of 31 uranium glass-made chandeliers. Utilizing the rarely employed material of uranium glass, the size of the chandelier corresponds to the scale of each country's nuclear power capacity. Now glowing beneath the historic dome in the lobby of 21c Kansas City, the chandelier representing the United States references nature, artifice, technology, and various manifestations of power, expressing the artists' interrogation, "In the future, what should we wish for?"

Luftwerk, *Linear Sky*, 2018, Main entry ramp hallway

In response to the form and function of the entrance hallway at 21c Kansas City, **Luftwerk's** *Linear Sky* features light fixtures that vary in length, producing an anamorphic optical illusion of an expanding, outward pattern of line and color upon entry, and a receding effect while exiting the ramp. The LEDs are programmed with a lighting sequence inspired by the changing hues of the outdoor skies above the urban landscape of Kansas City — the palette of bright morning saturates the walls that greet visitors, while the glow of waning daylight colors envelop those en route to the outdoors. The geometric interplay of the vertical and the horizontal within this narrow, ramp leading to and from the lobby both highlights and transforms the architecture, offering visitors views of a new horizon from either direction.



Brad Kahlhamer, *Super Catcher, Vast Array*, 2017,
The Savoy at 21c Lounge

Super Catcher, Vast Array is a hanging sculptural installation that takes the form of multiple Native American dream catchers, made of wire and bells. Associated with both Ojibwe and Lakota traditions, dreamcatchers were used as talismans to protect sleeping people, usually children, from bad dreams and nightmares. Native Americans believe that the night air is filled with dreams. Working at a large-scale to his create intricate, wire and bell sculptures that shimmer and cast shadows as the light passes over and through the space, Kahlhamer's work affirms the magical, mythical spirit of the dreamcatcher, expanding its power. *Super Catcher, Vast Array* is a superhero—delicate yet strong, heavy with history yet light with new hopes and dreams.

BUILDING HISTORY

21c Museum Hotel Kansas City is housed in the historic Savoy Hotel and Grill building, nestled between the Power and Light District and River market in downtown Kansas City. The Savoy Hotel was originally designed by S.E. Chamberlain, Van Brunt and Howe, and built in 1888 by Arbuckle Coffee Company. In the early twentieth century, the seven-story wing that housed the Savoy Grill, Kansas City's oldest restaurant, was added. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the Savoy Hotel and Grill building features an eclectic mix of Victorian and Arts and Crafts architectural details, finishes, murals, as well as twentieth century historical markers and other elements. The National Register Nomination states that, collectively, the "nominated property is an important element in Kansas City's social and economic history," which still holds true today.

21c MUSEUM HOTEL KANSAS CITY DESIGN

The design team of 21c Kansas City, led by New York-based architects Deborah Berke Partners with Kansas City-based architect Hufft Projects, has embraced the building's original features to create a space where contemporary art and historic architecture meet. Rather than conceal or strip away elements, the approach was to highlight and dramatize to create a one-of-a-kind immersive environment.

Visitors and guests are welcomed to 21c Kansas City via 9th Street through the original entrance guiding visitors towards the lobby gallery where the original mosaic tile floor, historic plaster, and a stain-glass dome have been restored. Contemporary art is integrated throughout the entire property, creating a unique experience at every turn.

The property's restaurant is located in the former Savoy Grill and the space adjacent. Retaining its historic architectural elements, including murals of pioneers departing from Westport Landing and their journey along the Santa Fe Trail, stained glass windows, and dark wood paneling, the space is reconceived as a lounge. The restaurant dining room, by contrast, is bright and airy, with new windows.

The second level contains additional gallery and meeting spaces and a conference room. The property's 120 guestrooms are found on levels two through seven. The corridors and historic wooden doors with transoms have been preserved to compliment the guestroom's contemporary feel with modern furnishings.

ABOUT 21c MUSEUM HOTELS

21c Museum, a multi-venue museum with locations in eight cities, is one of the largest contemporary art museums in the U.S., and North America's only collecting museum dedicated solely to art of the 21st century. It was founded in 2006 by Laura Lee Brown and Steve Wilson, philanthropists, preservationists, and contemporary art collectors, who were inspired by the idea that art can spur urban revitalization and catalyze civic connection. Envisioning a new way to expand access to contemporary art in urban centers, they created 21c Museum Hotels, which seamlessly combine a fully functioning contemporary art museum with boutique hotels and chef-driven restaurants.

From rotating, curated exhibitions, to site-specific installations and cultural programming, 21c creates innovative cultural centers for experiencing thought provoking contemporary art from all over the world. Open and accessible 24/7, 21c's exhibitions and programs are free to public. 21c Kansas City brings over 6,200 square feet of exhibition, meeting, and event space to downtown Kansas City. As a multi-venue museum, 21c presents a range of arts programming curated by Museum Director, Chief Curator Alice Gray Stites. 21c collaborates on arts initiatives with artists and organizations worldwide. 21c Museum Hotels are located in Louisville, KY; Cincinnati, OH; Bentonville, AR; Durham, NC; Lexington, KY; Oklahoma City, OK, and Nashville, TN. Projects are under development in Des Moines and Miami.
