



Carrie Meek – James N. Eaton, Sr.
Southeastern Regional Black Archives Research Center and Museum
Carnegie Library at Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University

“African American history is the history of America” - James N. Eaton, Sr., Founder

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BLACK ARCHIVES**

Beyond Black Beauty:

AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMEN, IMAGE-MAKING & RESISTANCE:
A MULTI-PART INSTALLATION

Miss FAMU and the Aesthetics of Excellence

Crowns: My Hair, My Soul, My Freedom by Sandro Miller

Can I See Me? The Black Archives African American Doll Collection

February 2025 thru February 2026

SPONSOR DECK

Florida A&M University
Meek-Eaton Southeastern Regional Black Archives Research Center and Museum
445 Robert and Trudie Perkins Way
Tallahassee, FL 32307

www.famu.edu/meba

Curated by Kimberly Brown Pllum, Ph. D., Aja Roache, Ph.D., and Timothy A. Barber, this installation offers an insightful journey through historical and contemporary narratives that African American women have woven in their quest to define beauty for themselves.



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Photo excerpt of Sandro Miller's Crowns: My Hair, My Soul, My Freedom

About Sandro Miller

Crowns: My Hair, My Soul, My Freedom

Artist Statement

My Hair, My Soul, My Freedom is a celebration of the diversity, artistry, and power of black women's hair. This project is about highlighting the many ways in which black and black lives. Women embrace their freedom of choice and express their creativity through their hair, no matter the style or texture, whether they wear braids, locs, weaves, or whether they wear it natural or straightened. With each portrait in this ongoing project, I seek to recognize and honor black women's power and beauty while celebrating blackness.



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Kimberly Brown Pellum, Ph. D. (Curator), Aja Roache, Ph.D. (Curator)
Timothy Barber, Director of the Black Archives (Curator)

Miss FAMU and the Aesthetics of Excellence: In the long arc of the African American experience, two key pursuits have shaped ideas about racial progress: formal education and the freedom to define worthiness on self-determined terms. The Black College Queen tradition exists precisely at the intersection of African American educational aspirations and collective image-making.

In spite of the early 20th century’s violent racism, African American institutions across the United States independently produced beauty contests as fundraisers and leisurely social gatherings, apart from the white gaze. Black beauty contests also became a type of race work allowing African Americans opportunities to convey their own ideal representations of the race and counter damaging stereotypes promoted throughout the larger society. With the decades-long support of major Black media outlets, such as EBONY Magazine, the Black College Queen tradition continues to allow for the exploration of both attainability and aspiration, while heralding young African American within the context of community.

Crowns: My Hair, My Soul, My Freedom by Sandro Miller: Historically, national media has invested in a racialized standard for ugliness built upon phenotypical distance from whiteness. Hair has been central for gaging the distance between “good and “bad.” Yet, Black women have resisted the notion of dominant society’s complete control of how they see themselves internally and how they project themselves in the public sphere. According to the artist, Black women’s hair is a “declaration of freedom, choice and sensibility.” This declaration is evident in her remarkable portraits of Black women with inspiring coils, braids, and structured strands atop their heads.

Can I See Me? The Black Archive’s African American Doll Collection: Recognizing the political meaning of beauty as a marker of human value, African American leaders, from Marcus Garvey to Martin Luther King, have made strong affirmations about “Black beauty.” The Universal Negro Improvement Association, founded by Garvey, bought a small toy manufacturing company in Harlem, declaring Black children needed “dolls that look like them.” This collection captures the history African American image-making as a political apparatus. Visitors who immerse themselves within this multi-pronged installation will find themselves appreciative of African Americans’ transformative and complex perspectives on beauty, identity and image-making.



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Greetings!

The Florida Agricultural and Mechanical Meek-Eaton Southeastern Regional Black Archives Research Center and Museum is excited to announce the opening of the Beyond Black Beauty: African American Women, Image-Making & Resistance exhibit. This exhibit opens in February 2025 and runs through February 2026.

Beyond Black Beauty is a multi-part installation that encapsulates a profound appreciation and understanding of cultural richness. This concept extends beyond mere aesthetic appreciation, embracing the comprehensive development of individuals through the celebration of African American heritage through the lens and context of existence. This existence is on display through the history of Queendom of Miss FAMU at Florida A&M University, the lens of profound photographer, Sandro Miller, and the display of the Meek-Eaton extensive African-American doll collection, beckoning the question, “Can I See Me?”

Beyond Black Beauty will be curated at the Meek-Eaton Southeastern Regional Black Archives, 445 Robert and Trudie Perkins Way, Tallahassee, FL 32308. Workshops, special tours, children’s programming, and talkbacks will occur throughout the exhibit.

With your support, you can help make this exhibit possible. We will host a private pre-opening sneak peek with exhibit sponsors and special guests and an official VIP Chic opening reception to the public later.

We hope that you will consider becoming a significant contributor to the sustainability of the Meek-Eaton Black Archives by sponsoring this exhibit. Please take a moment to review the enclosed materials to identify the levels of sponsorship.

I am available to speak with you at any time to address any questions or concerns that you may have at (850)599-3020 or by email timothy.barber@famuedu. Thank you in advance for your contribution.

Best Regards,

Timothy A. Barber
Director of Museum Operations
Florida A&M University



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ORGANIZATION DESCRIPTION

The **Meek-Eaton Southeastern Regional Black Archives Research Center and Museum** is an esteemed institution dedicated to preserving and showcasing the rich history and cultural heritage of African Americans in the Southeastern United States. Located on the campus of Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU) in Tallahassee, Florida, the museum has become a cornerstone for historical research and education within the African American community.

Founding and Mission

Founding: The Black Archives was established in 1971 by Dr. James N. Eaton, who served as its first director. Dr. Eaton's vision was to create a center that would not only preserve African American history but also serve as a hub for scholarly research and public education.

Mission: The mission of the Meek-Eaton Black Archives is to collect, preserve, and make accessible records, artifacts, and other materials that document the experiences and contributions of African Americans in the Southeastern United States. The Archives aims to educate the public, support academic research, and foster an appreciation for African American history and culture.

Growth and Development

Early Years: In its early years, the Black Archives operated out of Jones Hall on the FAMU campus. The collection began with donations from local residents, alumni, and other supporters who recognized the importance of preserving African American history.

Expansion: As the collection grew, the need for a larger, more modern facility became apparent. In 1996, the Black Archives moved to its current location at the historic Carnegie Library, one of the few remaining Carnegie Libraries built specifically for African Americans. This move was made possible through the support of FAMU, private donors, and government grants.

Renaming: In recognition of the significant contributions of Dr. James N. Eaton and the continued support from the Meek family, the center was renamed the Meek-Eaton Southeastern Regional Black Archives Research Center and Museum. This renaming honored the legacies of both the Eaton and Meek families in their dedication to the preservation of African American history.



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Collections and Exhibits

Collections: The Archives boasts an extensive collection of artifacts, photographs, documents, and memorabilia that chronicle the African American experience. The collections include items related to slavery, the Civil Rights Movement, African American education, and local history.

Exhibits: The museum features both permanent and rotating exhibits. Permanent exhibits include displays on the history of FAMU, notable African American leaders, and the contributions of African Americans to various fields. Rotating exhibits, like the upcoming "Beyond Black Beauty," ensure that the museum remains a dynamic and engaging resource for visitors.

Community Engagement and Education

Educational Programs: The Meek-Eaton Black Archives offers a range of educational programs, including workshops, lectures, and special tours designed for students, educators, and the general public. These programs aim to foster a deeper understanding of African American history and culture.

Community Involvement: The Archives works closely with the local community, collaborating with schools, churches, and civic organizations to promote historical awareness and cultural pride. Special events, such as Black History Month celebrations and cultural festivals, draw diverse audiences to the museum.

Future Vision

The Meek-Eaton Southeastern Regional Black Archives Research Center and Museum continues to expand its reach and impact. Future plans include further digitization of the collection to enhance accessibility, new partnerships with academic institutions, and the development of innovative exhibits that explore contemporary issues in African American history and culture.

Through its dedication to preserving the past and educating future generations, the Meek-Eaton Black Archives remains a vital institution in the cultural landscape of the Southeastern United States.



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BECOME A SPONSOR!

Beyond Black Beauty:

AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMEN, IMAGE-MAKING & RESISTANCE

Why Sponsor? As a sponsor, you will play a crucial role in supporting an event that fosters cultural appreciation and promotes critical thinking and research. Your sponsorship will help us in achieving the following goals:

- **Enhancing Community Engagement:** Providing a platform for dialogue and education on the significance of black beauty and cultural heritage.
- **Supporting Artists:** Offering opportunities and visibility to African American artists and creators.
- **Inspiring Future Generations:** Encouraging young people to explore and embrace their cultural identities.

Additionally, sponsors may take advantage of the 501 (c) 3 non-profit opportunities as permitted by law when donating to Florida A&M University Foundation.



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Sponsorship Levels and Benefits:

1. PLATINUM Title Exhibit Sponsor (\$50,000)

- Prominent logo placement on all promotional materials
- Prominent logo placement on exhibit panels
- Prominent listing on exhibit sponsor levels list
- Mention in press releases and media coverage
- Invitation to pre-opening “Sneak Peek”
- VIP Badges at the exhibit opening reception
- Opportunity to bring greetings at the opening reception
- Dedicated social media placement
- Opportunity to host event during exhibition run

2. DIAMOND Opening Reception Sponsor (\$25,000)

- Logo placement on promotional materials
- Branding opportunities at opening reception
- Prominent listing on exhibit sponsor levels list
- Mention in press releases
- Invitation to pre-opening “Sneak Peek”
- VIP Badges at the exhibit opening reception
- Opportunity to bring greetings at the opening reception
- Social media mentions

3. GOLD Exhibit Sponsor (\$10,000)

- Logo placement on promotional materials
- Prominent listing on exhibit sponsor levels list
- Invitation to pre-opening “Sneak Peek”
- 8 VIP Badges at the exhibit opening reception
- Social media mentions



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4. SILVER Exhibit Sponsor (\$5,000)

- Listing on exhibit sponsor levels list
- Invitation to pre-opening “Sneak Peek”
- 4 VIP Badges at the exhibit opening reception
- Social media mentions

5. BRONZE Exhibit Sponsor (\$2,500)

- Listing on exhibit sponsor levels list
- Invitation to pre-opening “Sneak Peek”
- 2 VIP Badges at the exhibit opening reception

6. PATRON Exhibit Sponsor (\$1,000)

- Listing on exhibit sponsor levels list
- Invitation to pre-opening “Sneak Peek”
- Invitation to the exhibit and opening reception

Customized Sponsorship Packages

We understand that each potential sponsor has unique needs and objectives. We are happy to work with you to create a customized sponsorship package that aligns with your goals and maximizes the impact of your contribution.

Next Steps

We would love to discuss this exciting opportunity with you further. Please contact **Timothy A. Barber**, Director of Museum Operations, at timothy.barber@famuedu.edu or **(850) 599-3020** to set up a meeting or for more information.

Thank you for considering this opportunity to support a meaningful and impactful event. We look forward to the possibility of partnering with you to celebrate and promote the beauty and cultural heritage of the African American community.