

**USF Contemporary Art Museum  
NEWS RELEASE  
May 1, 2023**

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**USF Contemporary Art Museum presents  
BREAKING BARRIERS 2023  
Free Online Cellphone Photography Workshops for Military Veterans  
July 7 – August 11, 2023 (Registration due by July 1)**

This summer, the USF Contemporary Art Museum, part of the Institute for Research in Art in the College of the Arts, will offer **Breaking Barriers 2023**, an intensive six-week cellphone photography workshop series for military veterans and their families (18 years or older).

**Breaking Barriers 2023** offers two online workshops:

**THE FORMATION OF A SMILE, BREAKING DOWN THE PORTRAIT (beginning)** focuses on photography enthusiasts who want to learn the basics of portraiture by exploring different ways of recording someone's likeness; No prior photography experience is required.

**AN INDULGENCE IN PORTRAITURE (advanced)** focuses on advanced techniques and will explore tools used by artists to push portraiture to its limits; Previous Breaking Barriers or photography experience is requested. Both workshops will be led by artist and photographer Christian Cortes.



Agustin Collazo Jr. *Hidden Within*, 2022. From 2022 Breaking Barriers Workshop.

**Breaking Barriers 2023** is an initiative to expand access to the arts for military personnel, veterans, and their families. **Breaking Barriers 2023** will give veterans the opportunity to have a voice through art making, and interface and integrate with both the local civilian and larger veteran communities. **Breaking Barriers 2023** is free to veterans and their families.

**WORKSHOP DATES:** Fridays, July 7 – August 11, 2023

**WORKSHOP TIMES:** (select one)

Section A, *The Formation of a Smile, Breaking Down the Portrait* (beginning), 8am–12pm

Section B, *An Indulgence in Portraiture* (advanced), 1–5pm

**REGISTRATION DUE: July 1.** Email Amy Allison at [amyallison@usf.edu](mailto:amyallison@usf.edu) to register or for more info. Visit us on the web at [http://cam.usf.edu/CAM/cam\\_breakingbarriers.html](http://cam.usf.edu/CAM/cam_breakingbarriers.html)

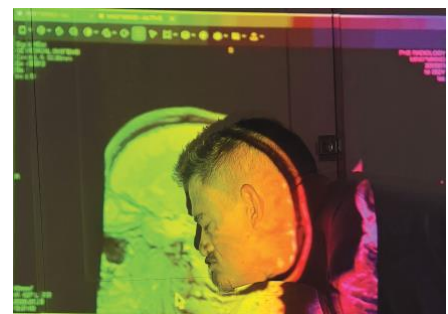
**WORKSHOP DETAILS:**

**SECTION A: THE FORMATION OF A SMILE, BREAKING DOWN THE PORTRAIT** - Join artist and photographer Christian Cortes for a series of online cellphone photography workshops designed for beginners. Participants will learn how to define portraiture by exploring different ways of recording someone's likeness. Our participants will use their resourcefulness and their imaginations to create portraiture that goes beyond the familiar candid and selfie imagery. In this workshop we will learn to recognize the elements of good portraiture and use them as leverage when making photographs. The workshop will discuss the history of portraiture photography from a broader point of view by including historical figures like Francis Benjamin Johnson, Dorothea Lange, and Diane Arbus, as well as more contemporary figures like John Edmonds, Shizuoka Yokomizo, and Elle Perez. Participants will learn photography basics such as fundamentals of lighting, composition, and color, as well as how to use their camera and its special tools to create their own photographs.

**NO PREVIOUS PHOTOGRAPHY EXPERIENCE REQUIRED.**

**Equipment:** Cellphone with camera and iOS or Android operating systems.

**Other Optional equipment:** cellphone tripod or grip



Mikko Maki, *A Look Inside*, 2022. From 2022 Breaking Barriers Workshop.

**SECTION B: AN INDULGENCE IN PORTRAITURE** - Join artist and photographer Christian Cortes for this advanced online series of photography workshops. Going beyond the definition of portraiture, this workshop will explore tools used by artists to push portraiture to its limits. Should a portrait always include a person's face? Can objects stand in place for our subjects? Artists like John Edmonds challenge portraiture ideas and expose the way we relate clothing items —such as hoodies— to race and culture. Series like Edmonds’ “Hoods” will inspire participants to explore different artistic tools to create meaningful portraiture that expresses more than the preservation of a person's likeness. The workshop will deep dive into meaningful and compelling themes to create powerful imagery. Participants will learn advanced photo editing techniques to create conceptually and technically sound photographs.

**PREVIOUS BREAKING BARRIERS OR PHOTOGRAPHY EXPERIENCE IS REQUESTED.**

**Equipment:** Cellphone with camera and iOS or Android operating systems.

**Other Optional equipment:** cellphone tripod or grip. Other lighting and photographic equipment are welcome but not required.



Evan Fountain, *Throne Room*, 2022. From 2022 Breaking Barriers Workshop.

The *Breaking Barriers* workshop series concludes with a personal project, portfolio review, and an exclusive Visual Thinking Strategies museum session. A curated selection of each participant’s works will be exhibited at CAM according to best practices and on the USFCAM *Breaking Barriers* website. A digital catalog will be published and available for print-on-demand.

**Instructor’s Bio:** Christian Cortes was born in a small town in the middle of the Puerto Rican island. After serving in the military, Christian pursued an artistic practice. In 2016 Christian earned a Bachelor of Arts in Photography followed by a Master of Fine Arts degree from the University of South Florida in 2019. Christian’s body of artwork is comprised of photographs, sculptures, and small paintings. Artist Statement: “As a queer and brown artist I often question how my presence disturbs my surrounding environments. In the past two years, I’ve been travelling across the country, working on the go and living in an RV. My current artistic practice deals with interactions and encounters while on the road, and with the people and places that are disrupted by me [who I am and what I represent]. In this Americana of blue jeans, tailgates, and a camping-style environment, my presence is more often than not questioned. It invites interactions that spark conversations about race, culture, and the need to belong.”

**Accessibility:** The University of South Florida Contemporary Art Museum (USFCAM) strives to make all programming accessible to visitors with disabilities. Please email Amy Allison at [amyallison@usf.edu](mailto:amyallison@usf.edu) for accessibility questions or to request accommodations.

**About USF Contemporary Art Museum:** USF Contemporary Art Museum (USFCAM) organizes and presents significant and investigative exhibitions of contemporary art from Florida, the United States and around the world. Serving as a teaching laboratory, USFCAM’s curatorial and socially engaged initiatives and educational programs are designed to present the students, faculty, and community with current issues of contemporary art practice, and to explore the role of the arts in society. USFCAM publishes relevant catalogues, presents critically recognized traveling exhibitions and commissions new projects by national and international artists. USFCAM maintains the university’s art collection, comprising more than 5000 contemporary art works. [CAM.USF.EDU](http://CAM.USF.EDU).



RaeAnne Swanson, *Life in Ten Photographs: Number Eight*, 2022. From 2022 Breaking Barriers Workshop.

**Breaking Barriers 2023** is a program by the USF Contemporary Art Museum, and is supported by the James A. Haley Veterans’ Hospital, Love IV Lawrence, Hillsborough Arts Council, USF Office of Veterans Success, USF School of Art & Art History, and the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Arts and Culture and the Florida Council on Arts and Culture. The USF Contemporary Art Museum is accredited by the American Alliance of Museums.

