

Up 86 Guest
Curator
Series

MOSS
ARTS
CENTER

Friday, April 14, 2023, 8 PM

Sonny Miles

Moss Arts Center
Cube



UP 86

Guest Curator Series

North Carolina artist Shirlette Ammons is serving as the Moss Arts Center's first independent guest performing arts curator. Ammons brings a new perspective to the center's lineup, creating a focus on Black Southern artists who effortlessly cross genres and revitalize time-honored music traditions.

Ammons reflects on her curation process and travels along Highway 86.

This trio of performances connects neighbors separated by winding roads.

The artists conjured over that three and a half hour drive extend vastly beyond this performance trilogy. But, in various ways, they are represented in the works of Sonny Miles, Rissi Palmer, and yours truly. Sonny, Rissi, and I are part of a regional music community with limbs that reach back and forth, across genre- and borderlines; down into the murk of Black Southernness; across time to invite new interpretations of old sounds and experiences; and out into a world where next door neighbors are divided by fields, and fences, and party lines.

In the planning stages of this series, I traveled to Virginia Tech twice, navigating remote stretches between Durham and Blacksburg, each trip made identical by shallow morning dew and provoking terrain. The landscape reminded me of the small eastern North Carolina plot that raised me, the rural swaths connecting beatdown bungalows, open pastures, and single-wides. I thought about the music that might waft through each kitchen, past walls of family portraits, and out flimsy screen doors. I began making a mental playlist of the songs that came to mind.

Curating this series has been an expansive experience for me. As participants, I hope you are inspired to spend more time getting to know your neighbors, their journeys, and the paths they pave.

Sonny Miles

Biography



SONNY MILES

Sonny Miles is a singer and multi-instrumentalist from Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Citing gospel, funk, and neo-soul as his biggest influences, Miles fuses catchy, relatable lyrics with soulful compositions to create a unique sound. His talents have led him to performances at festivals such as Hopscotch Music Festival and Shakori Hills GrassRoots Festival and to beloved regional venues such as The Pour House, Cat's Cradle, and The Ramkat. Opening for acts like T.I., Flying Lotus, Tori Kelly, and Kehlani, he has proven to be a star on the rise with a captivating live performance.

Miles has amassed over 500,000 streams on Spotify alone, with his entire catalog attracting 12,000 monthly listeners on the platform. His feature on *Raleighwood Hills* by Lesthegenius was selected by President Obama on his Favorite Songs of 2019 list. Miles' releases of the EPs *Gamma*, *Catallabs*, and *Catallabs Live* are available on Spotify, Apple Music, and all other streaming services.

This is the first performance by Miles at the Moss Arts Center.

This performance was programmed by Guest Curator Shirlette Ammons.

Tell Us What You Think!

We'd love your feedback on this performance. If you complete the short survey, you can enter for a chance to win two tickets to Cécile McLorin Salvant on Saturday, April 29, 2023.



bit.ly/sonny-miles-feedback

Engagement Events

THURSDAY, APRIL 13, 2023

RADIO INTERVIEW ON DUSTY AND DIGITAL ON WUVT-FM

Hosts of this VTDITC: Hip-Hop Studies at Virginia Tech radio show welcomed Miles for a conversation about his music, influences, and aspirations.

FRIDAY, APRIL 14, 2023

WORKSHOP WITH DIGGING IN THE CRATES

Sonny Miles led a workshop in songwriting, recording, and producing for students in VTDITC: Hip-Hop Studies at Virginia Tech.

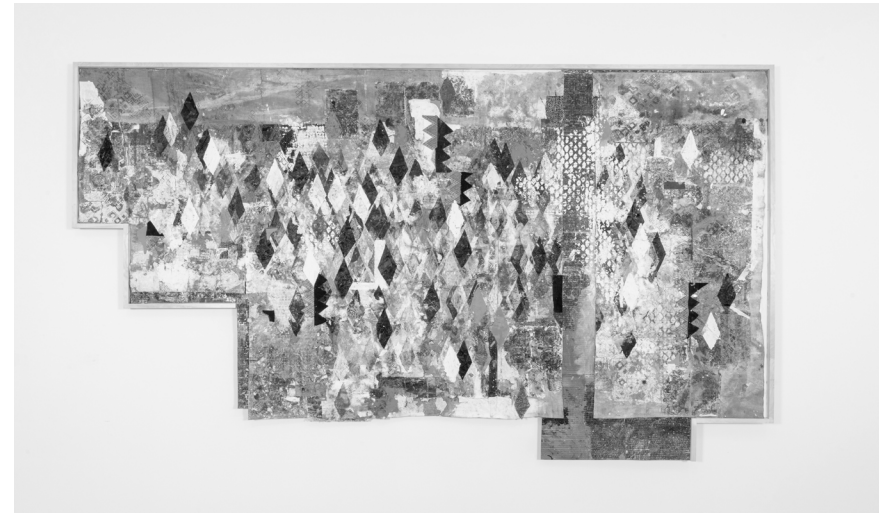
Special thanks to VTDITC: Hip-Hop Studies at Virginia Tech, Craig Arthur, Kevin Ayoub, Ashleigh "Bing" Bingham, Kimberly Clark-Shaw, Nina Ha, Grant Hamming, Kwame Harrison, DeRay Manning, Freddy Paige, Matthew Vollmer, and Janean Williams

Go Deeper

Yes! Weekly lists some of Sonny Miles' influences as "Prince, Sly and the Family Stone, [...] Stevie Wonder, [and] rock acts like Avenged Sevenfold, Slipknot, and System of A Down." What do you imagine to be some of the challenges and surprises of making music that draws from such diverse sources?

In the Galleries

Through Saturday, April 22



Anne Samat

Follow Your Heart Wholeheartedly 2

Ruth C. Horton Gallery

In her fiber-based reliefs, Malaysian artist Anne Samat meticulously juxtaposes beadwork and traditional South Asian weaving techniques with common items, a project that questions the boundaries of craft and art.

Yanira Collado

Zafa/ A Spellworking of Temporal Geometry

Miles C. Horton Jr. Gallery and Sherwood Payne Quillen

'71 Reception Gallery

In the face of inevitable change and displacement, memories find a home in the relic. Yanira Collado explores the ideas of migration, reliquary, and memory through construction and ritual.

▲ Yanira Collado, *Areíto #2*, 2020-2023, paper, carbon transfers, gel medium transfers, carbon paper, textile, paint, drywall compound, 65½ x 107 ½ inches, courtesy of the artist

K-12 Programs at the Moss



Experiences with the arts cultivate the next generation of creative thinkers, engage learners of diverse backgrounds, and foster community dialogue. The Moss Arts Center has been dedicated to providing K-12 students in the region with free, high-quality, and exciting arts programming since opening our doors in 2013. Through school-day matinee programs, gallery tours, in-school performances, and workshops with artists, we are passionate about serving our youngest community members and schools. Learn more at bit.ly/moss-k12.

Did You Know?

The Moss Arts Center's four-story experimental Cube is a highly adaptable space for immersive environments, intimate performance, audio and visual installations, research, and experimental investigations. The Cube is a space shared between the Moss Arts Center and the Institute for Creativity, Arts, and Technology.

Land Acknowledgement and Labor Recognition

Virginia Tech acknowledges that we live and work on the Tutelo/Monacan People's homeland and we recognize their continued relationships with their lands and waterways. We further acknowledge that legislation and practices like the Morrill Act (1862) enabled the commonwealth of Virginia to finance and found Virginia Tech through the forced removal of Native Nations from their lands, both locally and in western territories.

We understand that honoring Native Peoples without explicit material commitments falls short of our institutional responsibilities. Through sustained, transparent, and meaningful engagement with the Tutelo/Monacan Peoples and other Native Nations, we commit to changing the trajectory of Virginia Tech's history by increasing Indigenous student, staff, and faculty recruitment and retention, diversifying course offerings, and meeting the growing needs of all Virginia tribes and supporting their sovereignty.

We must also recognize that enslaved Black people generated revenue and resources used to establish Virginia Tech and were prohibited from attending until 1953. Through InclusiveVT, the institutional and individual commitment to *Ut Prosim* (That I May Serve) in the spirit of community, diversity, and excellence, we commit to advancing a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive community.

Health and Wellness

The Moss Arts Center adheres to the guidelines of the Virginia Department of Health and Virginia Tech in its operations, including protocols for distancing, face coverings, and cleaning and sanitation. Our status may change according to changes in university operating procedures. Find the most up to date information at artscenter.vt.edu/visit.

We ask patrons to do their part in keeping our community healthy. If you feel unwell, please stay home.

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Sunday, April 23, 2023, 4 PM

Opera Roanoke and Blacksburg Master Chorale

Benjamin Britten's *War Requiem*

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04.22.23

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1 - 5:30 P.M.

(VIP EARLY ACCESS AT NOON)



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YMCA at VIRGINIA TECH



the Y
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HEALTHY KIDS DAY
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Fun Run, The Y Fabulous 4Miler, field games, interactive performances, VT therapy Dogs, VT Police, MFRL Book Mobile, story time, healthy snacks, and so much more!

YMCA at VT Food Insecurity Initiatives

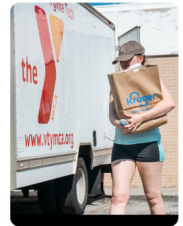


The oldest hiker Saul Simon was 84 yrs old!



THEN: The YMCA at VT coordinated hunger hikes in the 70's and 80's to help combat food insecurity.

NOW: The YMCA at VT provides meals to the local community 4 days of the week while providing enrichment activities with 5 days' meals at each distribution! We provide food to more than 250 kids in the NRV each week.



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We have multiple volunteer opportunities to help us bring positive change to our community.

To find out more and to sign up please visit vtymca.org/volunteer/



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