



**Mississippi
Arts+
Entertainment
Experience** SM

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***Through the Looking Glass* Exhibit opens August 31**

MERIDIAN, Miss. (August 17, 2019) – A new exhibit opens August 31st at Mississippi’s Arts + Entertainment Experience (The MAX) that offers a unique photographic journey through the state of Mississippi. *Through the Looking Glass: Life in Mississippi* is a collection of photographs by Alysia Burton Steele and Betty Press.

As relative newcomers to Mississippi, neither artist thought they would land in Mississippi nor did they know what to expect. Both photographers began photographing life in Mississippi with a desire to foster better understanding of our state through images.

The exhibit runs through January 5, 2020 and is free with regular museum admission.

“This exhibit is important because it asks the question—what is Mississippi?” said Stacey Wilson, Curator of Exhibitions at The MAX. Wilson chose both artists because of the stories their photographs tell. “Through their lens, this exhibit explores whether Mississippi is only her negative stereotypes or is she something more?”

Steele has worked as a photojournalist at several newspapers, including *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution* where she worked as a picture editor and deputy director of photography. In 2006, she was part of the photo team for *The Dallas Morning News* that won the Pulitzer Prize in Breaking News for their Hurricane Katrina coverage. She is a professor at the University of Mississippi in Oxford, Mississippi, where she teaches journalism writing, podcasting, multimedia production, photojournalism and the capstone technology class. Steele is also the author of *Delta Jewels: In Search of My Grandmother’s Wisdom*.

Betty Press is a veteran freelance photographer who has worked with a number of major magazines and newspapers, along with organizations such as UNICEF and UNHCR. Her photographs have been widely exhibited around the world, and she also published her book *I Am Because We Are: African Wisdom in Image and Proverb*. She has lived and worked in Africa, and also was a photography professor at Stetson University. Her work has been selected for many juried competitions, and in the last few years *Shots Magazine*, *Southern Glossary*, *Lens Culture*, *Silvershotz Magazine*, *South x Southeast Magazine*, *Lenscratch Magazine*, *Rfotofolio*, *Art Photo Index*, *ACurator*, *Oxford American*, *Aint Bad Magazine*, and John Wall’s *Southern Photographer* have all featured her work.

About The MAX

The MAX showcases Mississippi's arts and entertainment experience in one immersive destination. Here, visitors of all ages explore the global impact of Mississippians on music, books, art, entertainment, and cuisine. The MAX honors our state's creative legacy and inspires the next generation of creators through a unique experience of interactive exhibits. Come discover the Mississippi roots of some of the world's greatest arts and entertainment icons — like Elvis Presley, Oprah Winfrey, B.B. King, Faith Hill, Sela Ward, and Kermit the Frog, just to name a few.

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