

Moini, Nina. "Minnesota artwork part of New York exhibit exploring 'data consciousness,' *MPR News*, 17 December 2025.



Nina Moini and Ngoc Bui · December 17, 2025 2:22 PM

Minnesota artwork part of New York exhibit exploring 'data consciousness'



Five prints from Highpoint Center for Printmaking in Minneapolis are a part of the "Data Consciousness: Reframing Blackness in Contemporary Print" exhibit in New York. 🟡 Courtesy of Argenis Apolinario

Prints from a Minnesota studio are among those on display as a part of novel exhibit at the Print Center New York. The project, called "[Data Consciousness: Reframing Blackness in Contemporary Print](#)," is inspired by the ground-breaking data visualization work of W.E.B. Du Bois presented at the 1900 Paris Exposition, which sought to present various aspects of Black life after Reconstruction.

This contemporary exhibit draws on updated data from official records, archives and oral testimonies to provide a contemporary look into the same themes explored by Du Bois.

MPR News host Nina Moini talked with one of the artists behind the show, William Villalongo, along with Alex Blaisdell, gallery director at Highpoint Center for Printmaking in Minneapolis.

Audio transcript:

NINA MOINI: Prints from a Minnesota studio are among those on display as a part of a novel exhibit at the Print Center New York. The project, called Data Consciousness-- Reframing blackness in Contemporary Print, is inspired by the groundbreaking data visualization work of W.E.B Du Bois presented at the 1900 Paris Exposition, which sought to present various aspects of Black life after Reconstruction. This contemporary exhibit draws on updated data from official records, archives, and oral testimonies to provide a look into the same themes explored by Du Bois.

Joining me now for more about the project is one of the artists behind the show, William Villalongo. Hi William, thanks for being here.

WILLIAM VILLALONGO: Good to be here.

NINA MOINI: Thank you. And also here with me is Alex Blaisdell, who's the gallery director at Highpoint Center for Printmaking in Minneapolis. Thanks for being here as well, Alex.

ALEX BLAISDELL: Thanks, Nina.

NINA MOINI: I'd love to start with you, if I could William, would you tell us a little bit more about the concept behind this exhibit?

WILLIAM VILLALONGO: So Data Consciousness is an exhibition, a group exhibition, curated by Tiffany E. Barber, and it builds on the portfolio of prints that my partner, Shraddha Ramani, and I have produced. The print project is called Printing Black America-- Du Bois's Data Portraits in the 21st Century. Our project is inspired directly by Du Bois's visualizations, and we update and reimagine Du Bois's project for the 21st century over a series of 30 prints, five of which were produced at Highpoint Center here in Minneapolis.

So Tiffany, the curator, she expands on this project by including our work in relationship to other artists-- Silas Munro, Kameelah Janan Rasheed, Julia Mallory, and Tahir Hemphill-- in order to look at how data and technology are involved in Black life today. All of our projects are located across the United States and we intersect with scholars in those spaces to basis to understand a little bit about where we are and then do a visualization that is anchored in that location, and do some visualizations that have a sort of national focus largely.

NINA MOINI: So cool. Alex, can you describe-- would you be comfortable just describing the five prints that Highpoint produced and just the themes that brought them together?

ALEX BLAISDELL: So our focus was specifically on ownership. And so our structure essentially was that we'd have five different prints that we produce with William and Shraddha, and we would have three of those focus on national data and two of those focus on local data, to Minneapolis or to Minnesota specifically.

Our first print was the median monetary worth of Black families from 2001 to 2022. We had the debt to asset ratio of US families by race and ethnicity. Mortgage interest rates of Black and white households, or homeowners I should say. And then the two local studies were Black-owned businesses in the Twin Cities and characteristics of Black and African farmers in Minnesota.

NINA MOINI: And how did you all go about narrowing down to these themes?

ALEX BLAISDELL: So these are inspired by these original data sets. So each of these projects kind of called on original pieces that Du Bois had created and pulled inspiration from them visually,

but also from how they were approaching gathering the data, how they took that data from either a national scale or a local scale to Georgia in some of the instances of Du Bois's works, and interpreted those in a visual sense.

And so William and Shraddha took that inspiration and interpreted local data or national data from today in order to create these new reimagined visualizations.

NINA MOINI: William, would you share a little bit more about what the collaborative process was like in each of these different cities with the different print shops? You spend about a week there or so.

WILLIAM VILLALONGO: Yeah. So we spent about a week. In all of these spaces, we tried really hard to connect with local scholars or activists in thinking about getting a kind of picture of Black life in that space. So we actually had to do the Black farmers across the Twin Cities.

We reached out to Whitney Terrell. And Whitney really gave us a overview of the challenges of Black farmers in Minnesota, although they present as a very small portion of the larger farming community, the economic challenges and the unequal relationship between access to resources, among many of the concerns.

NINA MOINI: So the show I understand is on exhibit in New York only until December 20. Alex, when will these prints be coming to Minnesota?

ALEX BLAISDELL: Yeah. We're really excited. We will have our five of the series of 30 on display in our print study room at Highpoint Center for Printmaking pretty quickly here. We are just finishing everything up for William and Shraddha to come sign the works. They'll be released to the public in March of 2026, March 7 to be exact. And we will have an entire exhibition of all 30 of these prints on display in September of 2026.

NINA MOINI: All right. Thank you both so much for coming by Minnesota Now and sharing about the exhibit and this important work. I really appreciate your time.

ALEX BLAISDELL: Thank you.

WILLIAM VILLALONGO: Thank you.

NINA MOINI: That's Alex Blaisdell, who is the gallery director at Highpoint Center for Printmaking in Minneapolis, and William Villalongo, one of the artists in the exhibit.