

### Introduction

In response to COVID-19 restrictions, The Miami-Dade Public Library System identified the need for a digital platform where library patrons can feel safe and informed through a virtual exhibition program that continues to make the library's permanent art collection available beyond the gallery space.

### Goals

- Expose and connect County residents to the library's permanent art collection, digital collections, and other library resources.
- Provide County residents with a safe place to view curated art exhibitions.
- Encourage an appreciation for the arts and inspire local pride through engaging and relevant content.
- Increase the library online presence in an increasingly digital world.

### Method

To create Virtual Exhibitions, Art Services team members primarily drew on past exhibitions and worked closely with the following library divisions:

- Digital Collections
- Communications and Community Engagement
- Information Technology Department

### Results

There are currently thirteen virtual exhibitions active on <https://mdpls.org/virtualexhibitions> that showcase a variety of local and world renowned artists. With more exhibitions slated for the future, each exhibition features a selection of works by the artists alongside informational text. Patrons are encouraged to follow the link to the library's Digital Collections where they can see more artwork, photographs, and ephemera by the artists, as well as introducing patrons to other library resources.

#### Elizabeth Catlett: *The Future of Equality*

From the Permanent Art Collection of the Miami-Dade Public Library System

Elizabeth Catlett (1915 - 2012), an internationally renowned American and Mexican sculptor and artist, infused her work with her strong sense of heritage and social activism. Growing up in Washington, D.C., she was influenced as a child by her own life experiences and her grandmother's stories of the horrors of slavery and heroism of oppressed people. As a graduate of Howard University and the first person to obtain a Master of Fine Arts degree in sculpture from the University of Iowa, Catlett studied under artists who encouraged her to have her art reflect her unique view of life.

[Read More](#)



View the Digital Collection

Screenshot from the virtual exhibition webpage

### Future Possibilities

Art Services has deepened its commitment to community engagement and has already garnered interest from community stakeholders including future collaborations with ProjectArt. There are currently plans to implement hands-on workshops over Zoom led by hired professional artists to facilitate these programs.

