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**NEW VISIT PHILADELPHIA® LOVE + GRIT STOREFRONTS PROJECT TRANSFORMS
EMPTY SPACES INTO ART INSTALLATIONS THROUGHOUT CITY**
Campaign Showcases Black- & Brown-owned Businesses & Elevates QBIPOC Artists

PHILADELPHIA, November 10, 2021 — Today VISIT PHILADELPHIA® announced the launch of the **Love + Grit Storefronts Project**, an extension of its popular **Love + Grit podcast**, aimed at reinvigorating and beautifying the city’s empty storefronts by transforming them into art installations. The citywide exhibition features original creations by 12 QBIPOC (queer, Black, Indigenous, people of color) artists that highlight 24 Black- and Brown-owned businesses adversely affected by COVID-19 and gives fans of the art a chance to win nearly \$2,000 in prizes from these vital businesses.

The integrated marketing initiative is part of VISIT PHILADELPHIA’s continuing efforts to support Black- and Brown-owned businesses and supplement the City of Philadelphia’s commitment to cultivating and growing small, diverse businesses. It is funded in part by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation.

On view through the holidays, the art appears in 14 storefronts in multiple neighborhoods — from Chinatown and Roxborough to Northern Liberties and Northwest Philly. Curated by photographer Conrad Benner (of photo blog Streets Dept.) and curator Ginger Rudolph, the installation features works by Fabiola Laura, Tash Billington and Nazeer Sabree, to name a few.

“We’re ecstatic that the Love + Grit Storefronts Project is beautifying the city, building civic pride, shining a light on local QBIPOC artists and supporting the Black- and Brown-owned businesses that are so vital to our neighborhoods,” said Rachel Ferguson, chief innovation & global diversity officer, VISIT PHILADELPHIA. “The love and grit, creativity and resilience of Philadelphia’s artists and entrepreneurs are the soul of this city, and the campaign demonstrates what Philly does best: Turn loss into inspiration and empty spaces into opportunity.”

Each artist collaborated with two businesses that served as the inspiration for their custom-made digital artwork. The full list of artists and businesses is available [here](#).

Shop Black Business Friday:

In addition to beautifying the city, the project encourages Philadelphians to shop Black- and Brown-owned businesses during the holiday season and beyond — an effort that will be reinforced by the City of Philadelphia through the second year of its **Shop Black Business Friday** initiative, taking place each Friday in December of 2021. Introduced by The Honorable Cherelle L. Parker, the resolution aims to support the jobs, revenue and economic impact generated by these vital businesses.

“It should come as no surprise that the holiday season is a make-or-break time for most retail businesses, and Uncle Bobbie’s is no different. We do everything we can to make the end of the year a huge success,” said Justin Moore, general manager. “That’s why we’re excited to be working with VISIT PHILADELPHIA on this initiative, and we’re hoping that having this platform will introduce us to future customers who will think of us when it’s time to buy gifts for their friends and family.”

Love + Grit Sweepstakes:

Fans of the art can enter the **Love + Grit Sweepstakes**, giving them a chance to win a \$2,000 prize package with more than 20 gifts curated from some of Philly’s best Black- and Brown-owned stores — many of which are featured in the exhibit. Among the prizes: beauty and wellness products from A Man’s Cave and Ursula’s About Phace Rittenhouse Makeup Studio, clothes from The Modern Republic and Harriett’s Bookshop, and homewares from YOWIE and Roberto Lugo Studio. Participants can enter the sweepstakes at visitphilly.com/storefronts or through the QR code featured on each of the 24 pieces of art. The contest is open through December 30, 2021.

VISIT PHILADELPHIA® is our name and our mission. As the region’s official tourism marketing agency, we build Greater Philadelphia’s image, drive visitation and boost the economy.

On Greater Philadelphia’s official visitor website and blog, visitphilly.com and uwishunu.com, visitors can explore things to do, upcoming events, themed itineraries and hotel packages. Compelling photography and videos, interactive maps and detailed visitor information make the sites effective trip-planning tools. Along with Visit Philly social media channels, the online platforms communicate directly with consumers. Travelers can also call and stop into the Independence Visitor Center for additional information and tickets. 6th & Market Streets, (800) 537-7676

Note to Editors: For high-resolution photos and high-definition B-roll of Greater Philadelphia, visit the Photos & Video section of visitphilly.com/mediacenter.