

PRESS RELEASE

ORGANIZATION: Parachute Gallery
CONTACT: Jessica Todd
PHONE: 813-825-3804
EMAIL: parachute.tampa@gmail.com
WEB: www.parachute-gallery.com



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Celebrating Censored People, Books, and Art in Ybor City

[TAMPA, FLORIDA, June 7, 2023] — Parachute Gallery, located in the Historic Ybor City Kress building, joyfully invites you to [Summer School](#), an interactive installation that is a celebratory response to the recent censorship of inclusive cultural content in K-12 schools, colleges, and public and private spaces across the state of Florida. *Summer School* takes place July 6 through August 3, 2023.

The installation will include:

1. **A library of banned books, available to browse or purchase-by-donation.** 100% of book sales benefit [Heard 'Em Say Youth Arts Collective](#), a Tampa-based non-profit that identifies, cultivates, and empowers young people in activism and advocacy through artistic education and expression. All of the books in the library are donated: [Bess the Book Bus](#)—a mobile literacy outreach dedicated to narrowing the academic achievement gap—as well as [Book + Bottle](#) in St. Pete and [Mojo Books & Records](#) in Tampa are donating banned books and books celebrating diversity for this program!
2. **A video screening of storybook readings by local Drag performers [Jay Miah](#), [TeMonet](#), and [Apollo Infiniti](#).** Performers were paid a stipend for their time, as Drag bookings have been negatively impacted by recent hostilities. These stipends and other production expenses have been fully funded by a successful [GoFundMe](#) campaign for the program! [Dave Decker Photography](#) is generously donating the videography.
3. **An exhibition of artwork that has faced censorship and backlash due to inclusive content.** On view will be a selection of artwork that was created for [Embracing Our Differences](#), a Sarasota-based non-profit that uses the power of art and education to expand consciousness and open the heart to celebrate the diversity of the human family.

The artwork—created both by children and professional artists—[made the news](#) for being censored from display on State College of Florida’s campus in Bradenton, as well as a piece that was [vandalized earlier this year](#) at Sarasota’s Bayfront Park. The included artwork is positive, inclusive, and reflects an earnest hopefulness for a better, more loving world.

Parachute Gallery Director Jessica Todd encourages her fellow Floridians to—now, more than ever—loudly support and celebrate the people and cultural assets that are being unjustly targeted by Florida politicians and lawmakers. “Do not lay down. Do not participate in self-censorship out of fear. Now is the time to stand up for our neighbors.”

Parachute Gallery is seeking [banned book donations](#) to share in the gallery and sell-by-donation to benefit Heard ‘Em Say Youth Arts Collective. Contact parachute.tampa@gmail.com to donate used or new books from Florida’s public school banned lists!

Parachute Gallery is an exhibition and micro-retail space with a focus on Crafts media in the Historic Ybor City Kress building in Tampa, Florida. Parachute Gallery aims to amplify the voices of artists from a diversity of backgrounds, elevate Crafts media, highlight underrepresented regional and national artists, and obliterate historical art hierarchies. Learn more: www.parachute-gallery.com.