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Namibian Craft Culture Exhibited at UA Gallery

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Photographs exploring Namibian craft culture are on display Nov. 6-23 at The University of Alabama Gallery in downtown Tuscaloosa.

TUSCALOOSA, Ala. — An exhibit exploring Namibian craft culture through photographs, a documentary

and physical objects collected during a University of Alabama student's visit to the African country are on display Nov. 6-23 at the University Gallery in the Dinah Washington Cultural Arts Center in downtown Tuscaloosa.

An opening reception will be held Friday, Nov. 6 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

The exhibit, "Namibian Craft: The Unknown and the Outsiders," is free and open to the public.

Becky Beamer, a Master of Fine Arts candidate in book arts at UA, explores indigenous craft and humanitarian policy through her work.

Works on display at the UA Gallery are informed by first-hand accounts and personal stories of Namibian master craftspersons, humanitarian experts and Beamer's own experiences in Namibia. Examples of weaving, leather making, steel bead production, traditional garb/ornamentation, pottery and paper making are included in the exhibit.

"Namibian art is underrepresented around the world," Beamer said. "This exhibit digitally preserves Namibian craft culture and magnifies the artisan African voice for a new audience. It is a snapshot of the current craft culture narrative in Namibia."

Beamer, inspired by the book form, uses hand-made paper, found objects, ink and video. She has shot and produced documentaries for National Geographic, Smithsonian, Discovery and PBS. She now applies storytelling and photographic techniques to small press publications, installations and sculptural projects.

The University of Alabama Gallery offers a year-round schedule of exhibitions of artistic works, artifacts, textiles and more from permanent collections held by UA, as well as works by faculty, students, and guest artists and designers.

The UA Gallery is located at 620 Greensboro Ave. in downtown Tuscaloosa. It is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and the first Fridays of the month until 8 p.m. For more information, phone the gallery at 205/345-3038 or phone 205/342-2060.

The gallery is part of UA's College of Arts and Sciences, the University's largest division and the largest liberal arts college in the state. Students from the College have won numerous national awards including Rhodes Scholarships and Goldwater Scholarships.

The University of Alabama, a student-centered research university, is experiencing significant growth in both enrollment and academic quality. This growth, which is positively impacting the campus and the state's economy, is in keeping with UA's vision to be the university of choice for the best and brightest students. UA, the state's flagship university, is an academic community united in its commitment to enhancing the quality of life for all Alabamians.

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