

# M+B



## Art Museum launches billboard photo project

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By Julie Engebrecht

The first four billboards go up early Sunday – two portraits from the '70s by Chicago photographer Dawoud Bey and two modern images from Hannah Whitaker, an emerging New York art photographer.

They are part of a year-long program – Big Pictures – created by Brian Sholis, associate curator of photography at Cincinnati Art Museum.

He wanted to take the art he curates to the streets.

Sholis selected the photographers, and the photographers selected the images for their 25-foot billboards. "I'm here to extend the invitations, then just ensure that the files get printed correctly," Sholis said.

At the end of the year, Big Pictures will have featured 36 photographs from 18 artists, ideally in 36 different neighborhoods, each for a six-week rotation.

Whitaker embraced the assignment enough that with the help of Google Maps, she's found a way to insert her "Arctic Landscape (Pink Sky)" into a field with a ring of trees behind it. They should merge imperceptibly – snow-covered trees in Finland stuck in the middle of Cincinnati.

Sholis hopes you'll be intrigued enough to visit the website featured on the billboards – [BigPicturesCincy.org](http://BigPicturesCincy.org) – to learn more about the project, the photographers and their images.

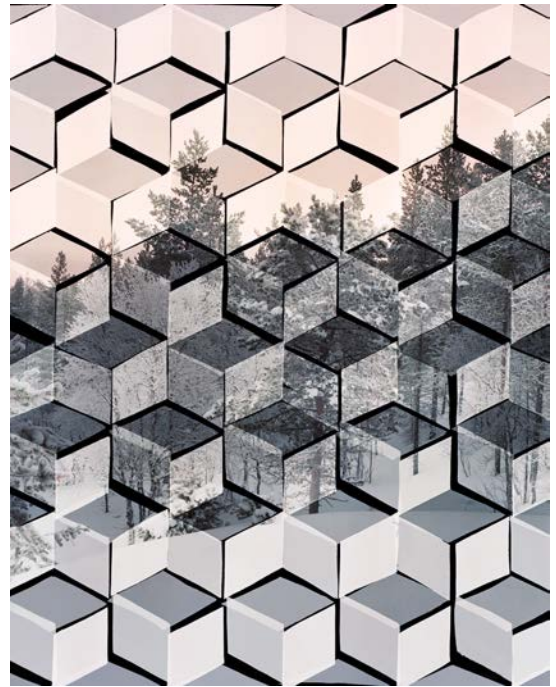
It might interest you to know, for instance, that the overlay on Whitaker's photograph hasn't been digitally created, but that she handcut the triangles out of cardstock with an Exacto knife and made the image with a large format camera.

Unlike what you might see on other billboards, "We're not trying to sell anything," Sholis said.

"I want creative interruption of everyday routine. I want people to be interested in what they're seeing – but I don't want fender benders."

### First four billboard locations

- Beechmont Circle, just north of Beechmont Avenue, in Linwood.
- Reading Road, about one-half mile north of the Norwood Lateral.
- Anderson Ferry Road, just south of Crookshank Road.
- Mitchell Avenue, just east of Spring Grove Avenue and west of I-75.



Hannah Whitaker, detail of "Arctic Landscape (Pink Sky)," 2014. That billboard will appear on Beechmont Circle, just north of Beechmont Avenue, in Linwood. (Photo: Provided/Hannah Whitaker and M+B, Los Angeles)