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**Florida CraftArt**501 Central Ave., St. Petersburg, FL 33701

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**Florida CraftArt presents: *Ya La’ford: GLYPHS***

January 12-20, 2018; Opening reception, January 13.

Florida CraftArt presents “Ya La’ford: GLYPHS” featuring the artist’s world-renown linear and cyclical geometric labyrinths as a journey to explore metaphysical relationships between light, words and space. The artist has invited the community to contribute personalized, contemporary hieroglyphs via written words, quotes, drawings or programs making St. Petersburg at the core of the show. People are invited to add their written or visual contribution to the installation at the gallery.

Government and community leaders, local students of all ages, community organizers, parents and teachers have contributed messages that display a renewed message of hope, love and progress for the city’s future.

Mayor Rick Kriseman commented, “Today’s St. Pete believes in a common humanity. While darkness may be around us, we lead the way with compassion and opportunity. Sunshine is our flashlight.”

Vice Mayor Dr. Kanika Tomalin said, “St. Pete is its people. A beautiful, tightly-woven tapestry of love and light; diversity and dynamism. We are a place motivated by our challenges and accelerated by opportunity. Purveyors of sunshine, figuratively and literally - we amplify equity, celebrate righteousness and pursue that purpose with uncompromised passion. To all whose hearts beat the same, in every language, we shout welcome.”

“The exhibition is about exploring past, present and our future,” says Ya La’ford, “and evaluating our renewed sense of self and interconnectivity to each other. This installation will represent a moment of cohesion and communal pride, reflecting our tenacity and strength to move forward in 2018 and beyond.”

Ya Levy La’ford, was born in New York and resides in historic Kenwood. She earned a bachelor’s degree from Florida State University, a Juris Doctor from University of Florida, and a Masters in Fine Arts from Art Institute of Boston. La’ford maintains her studio practice in St. Petersburg, Washington, DC, and New York. La’ford is a professor, visual painter, installation artist, and muralist. As a first generation American, she moves between her Jamaican heritage and vulnerable communities to try to find a universal language.

“My painstakingly intertwining lines, that I paint and build environments with, investigate various pertinent issues, such as interconnectivity, lifelines and placing roots,” says La’ford. “The visual line mimics the memories of our central being and how we are all interlocked. This fantastic lifeline, composed of the recollected subjective experiences of each living thing, parallels this literal one. But through the lines, the journey fills the space between, creating depth and exploration. Through this constant interaction, human life is cyclical. Regardless of how much our own path may differ from another’s, the core of the human condition remains the same. The lines show a retroactive nature of the ability to trace back to a beginning. The increasingly complex language I am building, forming an optical vortex of order, reflects this. The complexities we feel - the joys, the humiliations, the strife - are branches stemming from the root of this obsession.”

“Ya La’ford GLYPHS” will be on display through January 20 at Florida CraftArt located at 501 Central Avenue in St. Petersburg, Florida. The opening reception is on Saturday, January 13, 2018, from 5:30 to 7 p.m. A brief gallery talk by the Ya La’ford will be presented at 6 p.m.

For more information, visit [www.FloridaCraftArt.org](http://www.FloridaCraftArt.org) or call (727) 821-7391. Admission is free. Hours are Monday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. and Sunday from noon to 5 p.m. Florida CraftArt is a nonprofit organization founded in 1951 and headquartered in St. Petersburg. Its mission is to grow the statewide creative economy by engaging the community and advancing Florida’s fine craft artists and their work. Fine craft art is presented in its 2,000-square-foot retail gallery with a second gallery featuring curated exhibitions. Florida CraftArt is the *only* statewide organization offering Florida artists a platform to show and sell their work.