



PHOTO BY SARAH SHADBURNE

MacKenzie became interested in photography through his mother and began taking photos eight years ago after a friend gave him a camera as a gift.

## Asheville-based photographer brings exhibition to campus

**SARAH SHADBURNE**

Arts & Features  
sshadbur@unca.edu

Micah MacKenzie peers into the center of his subject's soul with a single glass eye and evaluates its contents, taking a valuable life lesson as he goes. With a simple click, he captures it on his Nikon. Asheville-based photographer MacKenzie showcases some of these souls with the photography exhibition *An Expose of Fashion*, as part of Black History Month at UNC Asheville.

When recalling the shooting process of *An Expose of Fashion*, MacKenzie summoned the glittering gold image of Beyoncé in her recent performance at the 2017 Grammy's.

"That's what showed up for my shoot," MacKenzie said. "Black goddesses."

*An Expose of Fashion* features black models from Asheville — eight women and two men — highlighting the various contributions made by black people to the history and culture of Asheville, while wearing boldly colored

outfits to depict the modern African in urban Asheville, according to his artist statement.

"When I put out a call for all black models, I got a lot of hits from males and females. But as you can see, only the females showed up," MacKenzie said, gesturing to all but two photographs. "The males didn't show up, and I'm noticing with everything going on right now, women are standing up and trying to show us men how to constantly be there and be present."

MacKenzie emphasizes vibrant colors and the juxtapositions of such colors meshing well together in this project. He cites the aesthetic of a *Vogue* Africa look coming out spearheaded by the up-and-coming rapper Young Paris as an inspiring force.

"He dresses in this very beautiful, vibrant African and at the same time American, New York street-style fashion that I think is just absolutely beautiful," MacKenzie said. "He walks around every day with his face painted."

MacKenzie expresses his exaspera-



PHOTO BY NICK HASELOFF

One of MacKenzie's photographs hangs in the Intercultural Center in Highsmith Student Union.

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