



The Studio Museum in Harlem is Sharing its Collection with America, Launching a Touring Exhibition of 100 Artworks in January 2019

Victoria L. Valentine | November 20, 2018

culturetype.com/2018/11/20/studio-museum-in-harlem-is-launching-a-national-tour-of-100-artworks-in-january-2019/



"Conspicuous Fraud Series #1 (Eminence)" (2001) by Kehinde Wiley

A MAJOR EXHIBITION of more than 100 artworks by a broad selection of Black artists is headed to Seattle, Kalamazoo and Salt Lake City. In January, the American Federation of Arts (AFA) is launching "Black Refractions: Highlights from The Studio Museum in Harlem," a national touring exhibition scheduled for six venues.

Developed in collaboration with the Studio Museum in Harlem, the show will feature art by nearly 80 artists—figures active in the 20th and 21st centuries, including many alumni of the museum's highly regarded artist-in-residence program. Dating from the 1920s to

the present, the selection of works reflects the breadth and depth of museum's permanent collection.

The Studio Museum is currently closed as construction plans for its new David Adjaye-designed building on 125th Street move forward. The new building is scheduled to open in 2021 with additional square footage to store and display its collection. In the meantime, the museum is presenting off-site public projects, exhibitions and programs in partnership with other institutions. Organized by associate curator Connie H. Choi, whose portfolio includes responsibility for the collection, "Black Refractions" is the latest interim project, an ambitious effort to reach audiences far beyond Harlem.

"Over the past fifty years, The Studio Museum in Harlem has played a catalytic role across the United States and the world in advancing the work of visual artists of African descent," Thelma Golden, director and chief curator of the Studio Museum, said in a statement. "Now, we are thrilled to collaborate with AFA in sharing works from our collection during an historic moment in the life of the Museum. Though the doors of our former building may be closed, through Black Refractions we are able to carry our mission to new audiences, maintaining ourselves as a point of contact between artists of African descent and people across the country."

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BARKLEY L. HENDRICKS, "Lawdy Mama," 1969 (oil and gold leaf on canvas, 53 3/4 × 36 1/4 inches / 136.5 × 92.1 cm). | The Studio Museum in Harlem; gift of Stuart Liebman, in memory of Joseph B. Liebman 1983.25, © Estate of Barkley L. Hendricks. Courtesy of the artist's estate, Jack Shainman Gallery, New York and American Federation of Arts

THE FIRST STOP ON THE TOUR is the Museum of the African Diaspora (MoAD) in San Francisco, where the exhibition opens on Jan.15. MoAD is organizing a daylong public symposium on Feb. 23, 2019, in conjunction with "Black Refractions." The gathering of artists, curators, and collectors will center around "identity, politics, and the role of institutions on the works and careers of artists of African descent."

Naima Keith, deputy director and chief curator of the California African American Museum and Aruna D'Souza, author of the recently published book "Whitewalling: Art, Race & Protest in 3 Acts," are the keynote speakers. A pair of panel discussions will

feature artists Henry Taylor and Kori Newkirk (whose works are featured in the exhibition); Seattle gallery owner Mariane Ibrahim; Hammer Museum assistant curator Erin Christovale; and art historian Bridget R. Cooks (UC Irvine), among others.

“Black Refractions” will also be presented at the Smith College Museum of Art, on the campus of Golden’s alma mater. The exhibition is traveling throughout 2019 and 2020. The full itinerary includes the following venues:

- Museum of the African Diaspora, San Francisco, Calif. | Jan. 15-April 14, 2019
- Gibbes Museum of Art, Charleston, S.C. | May 24–Aug. 18, 2019
- Kalamazoo Institute of Arts, Kalamazoo, Mich. | Sept. 13-Dec. 8, 2019
- Smith College Museum of Art, Northampton, Mass. | Jan. 17–April 12, 2020
- Frye Art Museum, Seattle, Wash. | May 9–Aug. 2, 2020
- Utah Museum of Fine Arts, Salt Lake City, Utah | Aug. 28–Dec. 13, 2020



FAITH RINGGOLD, “Echoes of Harlem,” 1980 (acrylic on canvas, 79 ½ x 80 ½ inches.) | The Studio Museum in Harlem; Gift of Altria Group, Inc. 2008.13.10, © 2018 Faith Ringgold, Courtesy American Federation of Arts

SINCE ITS FOUNDING IN 1968, the Studio Museum has assembled a singular collection representing more than 400 artists of African descent. The expansive holdings include more than 2,600 works of art across a wide-range of mediums, spanning 200 years, with the earliest examples by Joshua Johnson and Edward Bannister dating to the 1800s.

Works by the following artists are represented in the collection and will be included, along with many others, in “Black Refractions”: Mark Bradford, Frank Bowling, Njideka Akunyili Crosby, Glenn Ligon, Derrick Adams, Terry Adkins, Dawoud Bey, Jordan Casteel, Elizabeth Catlett, Noah Davis, David Hammons, Clementine Hunter, Jacob Lawrence, Hughie Lee-Smith, Norman Lewis, Chris Ofili, Lorraine O’Grady, Betye Saar, Malick Sidibé, Mickalene Thomas, Bob Thompson, Bill Traylor, Jennifer Packer, Howardena Pindell, Robert Pruitt, Romare Bearden, Betty Blayton-Taylor, Juliana Huxtable, Sam Gilliam, Alma Thomas, Carrie Mae Weems, Jack Whitten, Fred Wilson, Kehinde Wiley, Hale Woodruff, and Lynette Yiadom-Boakye.

AFA has a history of touring exhibitions featuring African American artists. Since the nonprofit was established more than 100 years ago, AFA has circulated “Creative Art of the American Negro” (1942); “Ten Negro Artists from the United States” (1966); “Hidden Heritage: Afro-American Art, 1800–1950” (1985); “I Dream a World: Portraits of Black Women Who Changed America” (1989); “Alone in a Crowd: Prints of the 1930s 40s by African-American Artists” (1993); and Lorna Simpson’s mid-career survey (2006). “Romare Bearden: Abstraction” and “Invisible Man: Gordon Parks and Ralph Ellison in Harlem” are currently available to interested venues.

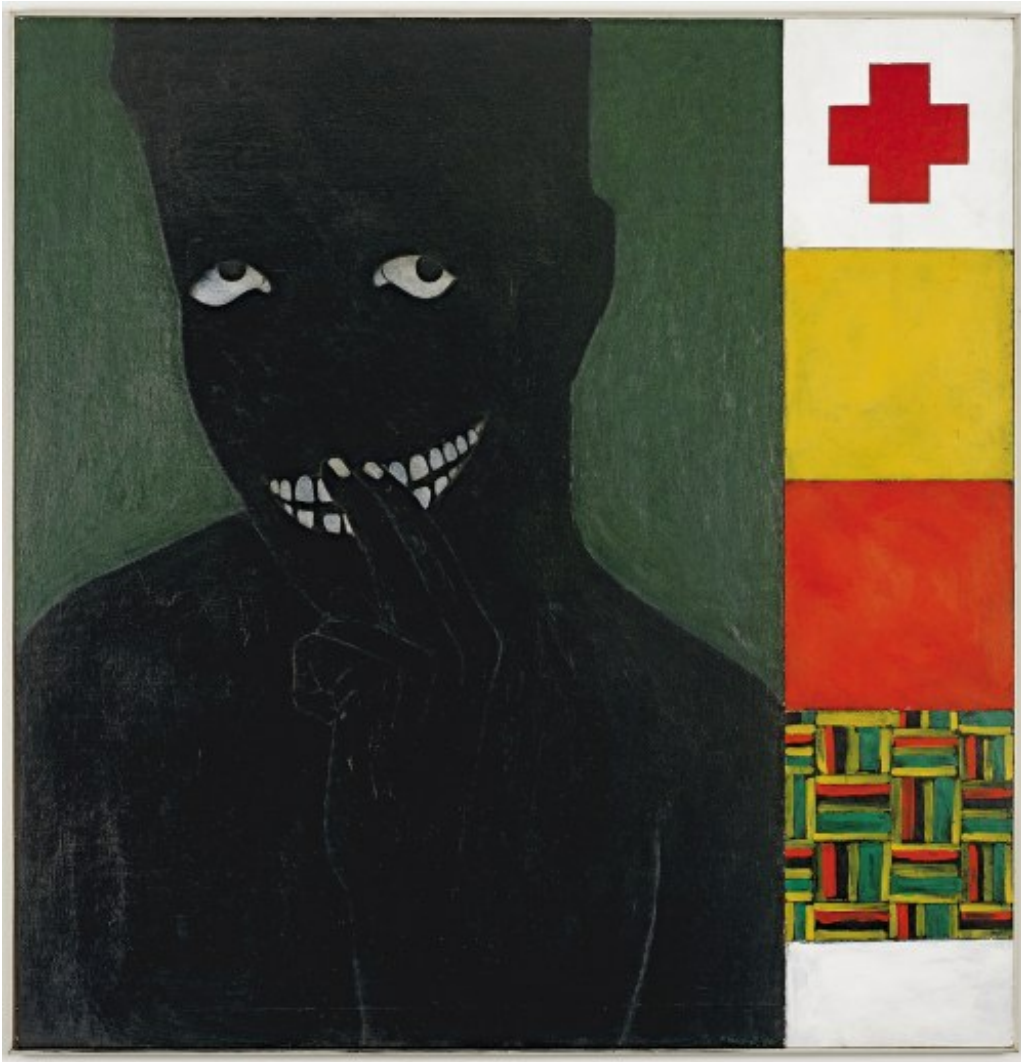
In 1988, AFA toured “Harlem Renaissance: Art of the Black America,” which was organized by the Studio Museum. Twenty years later, “Black Refractions” is the latest collaboration.

“We are delighted to share the incomparable collection of The Studio Museum in Harlem with audiences across the nation,” said Pauline Willis, director and CEO of AFA. “Black Refractions highlights historically significant pieces alongside works by some of the most critically important artists in the field today. The AFA is honored to travel this exhibition and spark dialogue around the artistic contributions by artists of the African diaspora.” **CT**

TOP IMAGE: KEHINDE WILEY, “Conspicuous Fraud Series #1 (Eminence),” 2001 (oil on canvas, 72 1/2" x 72 1/2). | The Studio Museum in Harlem; Museum Purchase made possible by a gift from Anne Ehrenkranz 2002.10.14, © Kehinde Wiley, Courtesy of the artist Roberts Projects, Los Angeles, California, and American Federation of Arts

BOOKSHELF

A catalog is being produced to accompany the exhibition. "Black Refractions: Highlights from The Studio Museum in Harlem" features essays by Connie H. Choi and Kellie Jones; written contributions by Lauren Haynes, Ashley James, Oluremi C. Onabanjo, Larry Ossei-Mensah and Hallie Ringle; and a conversation among Choi, Jones, and Thelma Golden.



KERRY JAMES MARSHALL, "Silence is Golden," 1986 (acrylic on panel, 49 × 48 inches / 124.5 × 121.9 cm). | The Studio Museum in Harlem; gift of the Artist 1987.8, Photo Credit: Marc Bernier, © Kerry James Marshall, Courtesy of the artist Jack Shainman Gallery, New York, and American Federation of Arts



NJIDEKA AKUNYILI CROSBY, "Nwantinti," 2012 (acrylic, pastel, charcoal, colored pencil, and Xerox transfers on paper, 68 × 96 inches). | The Studio Museum in Harlem; Museum purchase with funds provided by the Acquisition Committee and gift of the artist 2012.41.1, © Njideka Akunyili Crosby, Courtesy the artist, Victoria Miro, London / Venice and American Federation of Arts



DAWOUD BEY, "Harlem U.S.A. (A Man in Bowler Hat, 1977)," 1976 (silver print, 7 x 10 inches – paper). | The Studio Museum in Harlem; Gift of the Artist. 1979.1.9, © The Artist; Courtesy of the artist, Rena Bransten Gallery and American Federation of Arts



JORDAN CASTEEL, "Kevin the Kiteman," 2016 (oil on canvas, 78 × 78 inches / 198.1 × 198.1 cm). | The Studio Museum in Harlem; Museum purchase with funds provided by the Acquisition Committee 2016.37, Photo Credit: Adam Reich, © Jordan Casteel, Courtesy American Federation of Arts



BEAUFORD DELANEY, "Portrait of a Young Musician," 1970 (acrylic on canvas, 51 × 38 inches / 129.5 × 96.5 cm). | The Studio Museum in Harlem; gift of the Estate of Beauford Delaney 2004.2.27 Photo Credit : Marc Bernier, © 2018 Estate of Beauford Delaney, by permission of Derek L. Spratley, Esquire, Court Appointed Administrator. Courtesy American Federation of Arts



CHAKAIA BOOKER, *"Repugnant Rapunzel (Let Down Your Hair),"* 1995 (Rubber tires and metal, 33 × 25 × 22 in. (83.8 × 63.5 × 55.9 cm). | The Studio Museum in Harlem; gift of Friends and Family of Chakaia Booker 1996.7 Photo Credit: Nelson Tejada © Chakaia Booker, Courtesy American Federation of Arts



HENRY TAYLOR, "how i got over," 2011 (acrylic on canvas, 56 1/8 x 75 1/2 inches). | The Studio Museum in Harlem; gift of Martin and Rebecca Eisenberg 2013.11.1, © Henry Taylor, Courtesy American Federation of Arts



JULIANA HUXTABLE, "Untitled (Psychosocial Stuntin')," 2015 (color inkjet print 40 x 30 inches). | The Studio Museum in Harlem; Museum Purchase with funds provided by the Acquisition Committee 2015.8.1, © Juliana Huxtable, Courtesy the artist and American Federation of Arts



NORMAN LEWIS, "Blue and Boogie," 1974 (oil on canvas, 44 1/4" x 56 inches – framed). | The Studio Museum in Harlem; gift of the Estate of Norman Lewis 1981.1.1, © Estate of Norma W. Lewis, Courtesy of Michael Rosenfeld Gallery LLC, New York, NY and American Federation of Arts

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