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National Gallery of Art Celebrates African American History, Art, Music, and Culture Throughout 2013



Augustus Saint-Gaudens, American, 1848–1907
Shaw Memorial (detail), 1900

U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site, Cornish, New Hampshire

On loan to the National Gallery of Art

Photo by Lee Ewing

Washington, DC—In February, the National Gallery of Art kicks off a year-long celebration of African American history, art, music, and culture with exhibitions, film events, podcasts, DJs in the Garden at the ice rink, gallery talks, and concerts.

The Gallery welcomes Jeffrey Mumford as its composer-in-residence in February and presents several concerts featuring premieres of his new music, as well as a lecture by the composer titled *Multiple Voices* on February 19.

On March 14, artist Glenn Ligon delivers the annual Elson Lecture, which may also be viewed via a live webcast. The Gallery recently acquired its first painting by Ligon,

Untitled (I Am a Man) (1988), on view in the East Building Concourse.

The celebration continues with ***In the Tower: Kerry James Marshall***—Marshall's first solo exhibition in Washington—which opens June 28 and is accompanied by several related programs, including a lecture and concerts. Opening in September, ***Tell It to the World: The 54th Massachusetts Regiment and Augustus Saint-Gaudens' Shaw Memorial*** commemorates the 150th anniversary of the Battle of Fort Wagner.

All programs are free of charge in the East Building Auditorium unless otherwise noted. Seating is available on a first-come, first-served basis.

Composer-in-Residence: Jeffrey Mumford

The Gallery celebrates African American History Month by welcoming Jeffrey Mumford as composer-in-residence in February. This appointment continues a relationship between the music community and the Gallery that began in 1943, when composer Richard Bales became the Gallery's first head of music programs. During his 42-year tenure, Bales composed more than 100 works, some of which were inspired by the Index of American Design and other aspects of the Gallery's permanent collection.

Mumford, a DC native who teaches at Lorain County Community College in Ohio, brings his personal connection with the Gallery to the project. The Gallery was a frequent destination for him during his formative years. His residency includes free Sunday concerts on February 10 and 17, as well as a Works in Progress lecture on February 19 at 12:10 p.m. and 1:10 p.m. Featured are world premiere performances of works Mumford has composed especially for this residency and the introduction of music by New Orleans native Courtney Bryan, an emerging African American woman composer, to Washington audiences.

Concerts

National Gallery of Art Chamber Players

With Miranda Cuckson, violinist, and Julia Bruskin, cellist

Peter Wilson, guest conductor

Music by Jeffrey Mumford, composer-in-residence

Includes world premiere of *eight aspects of appreciation II* for violin and cello

Sunday, February 10, 6:30 p.m.

West Building, West Garden Court

Avalon String Quartet

With Winston Choi, pianist

Music by Jeffrey Mumford, composer-in-residence

Sunday, February 17, 6:30 p.m.

West Building, West Garden Court

In the Tower: Kerry James Marshall

June 28–December 7, 2013

Kerry James Marshall is one of the most exciting and celebrated painters currently working in the United States. His art is a reflection on African American history and the reverberations of the past in contemporary life. In Marshall's first solo exhibition in Washington, a selection of nine major paintings and some 30 works on paper allows visitors to understand the Gallery's work *Great America* (1994) and its powerful imagery within the broader context of the artist's career. ***In the Tower: Kerry James Marshall*** marks the sixth in a series of Tower installations focusing on developments in art since midcentury.

The exhibition is organized by the National Gallery of Art, Washington. It is sponsored by Dr. Anita Blanchard and Martin Nesbitt and Cari and Michael Sacks. Additional support is provided by The Tower Project.

Tell It to the World: The 54th Massachusetts Regiment and Augustus Saint-Gaudens' Shaw Memorial

September 15, 2013–January 19, 2014

To commemorate the 150th anniversary of the Battle of Fort Wagner, the Gallery is mounting an exhibition celebrating its magisterial *Shaw Memorial* by Augustus Saint-Gaudens. This monument, on long-term loan to the Gallery from the U.S. Department of the Interior, the National Park Service, and the Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site, honors Colonel Robert Gould Shaw and the 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry, one

of the first regiments of African American soldiers during the Civil War. The exhibition will feature daguerreotypes, tintypes, and cartes-de-visite portraits of the soldiers, the people who recruited them, including Frederick Douglass, Charles Lenox Remond, and Sojourner Truth, and the women who nursed, taught, and guided them, such as Clara Barton, Charlotte Forten, and Harriet Tubman. Letters, a recruiting poster, and the Medal of Honor awarded to the first African American soldier who earned this distinction, Sergeant William H. Carney, will also be displayed. Work by such diverse 20th-century artists as Lewis Hine, Richard Benson, Carrie Mae Weems, and William Williams, who have reflected on the continuing importance of the 54th, the Battle of Fort Wagner, and the *Shaw Memorial*, will be also presented. Accompanying the exhibition are a fully illustrated catalogue with essays by the organizing curators and other scholars, as well as a printed brochure. An online feature about the memorial is available at www.nga.gov/feature/shaw/home.shtm.

Glenn Ligon, *Untitled (I Am a Man)*

The Gallery recently acquired a major painting by African American artist Glenn Ligon (b.1960), who powerfully articulates issues of race and gender while he leads viewers to reconsider the complexities of representation. On view in the modern and contemporary galleries of the East Building Concourse, *Untitled (I Am a Man)* (1988) is the Gallery's first painting by Ligon, complementing a suite of etchings and a print portfolio. A reinterpretation of the signs carried by 1,300 striking African American sanitation workers in Memphis in 1968 and made famous in Ernest Withers' photographs of the march, this small, roughly made painting combines layers of history, meaning, and physical material in a dense, resonant object. As the first painting in which the artist appropriated text, it is Ligon's breakthrough. His work was recently featured in the 2011 midcareer retrospective *Glenn Ligon: America*, organized by the Whitney Museum of American Art. The Gallery's acquisition was made possible by the Patrons' Permanent Fund and the artist.

Additional Concerts

Lectures

Multiple Voices

Tuesday, February 19, 12:10 and 1:10 p.m.

Jeffrey Mumford, composer-in-residence, National Gallery of Art, and distinguished professor of music, Lorain County Community College
East Building Small Auditorium

Elson Lecture: A Conversation with Glenn Ligon

Thursday, March 14, 3:30 p.m.

Glenn Ligon, artist, in conversation with Molly Donovan and James Meyer, associate curators of modern art, National Gallery of Art

This program may also be viewed via a live webcast.

*In honor of ***In the Tower: Kerry James Marshall:****

Conversations with Artists: Kerry James Marshall

Wednesday, June 26, 3:30 p.m.

Kerry James Marshall, artist, in conversation with James Meyer, associate curator of modern art, National Gallery of Art

In honor of ***Tell It to the World: The 54th Massachusetts Regiment and Augustus Saint-Gaudens' Shaw Memorial:***

Opening Day Lecture

Curators Nancy Anderson, Sarah Greenough, and Lindsay Harris

Sunday, September 15

Film Events

The Nicholas Brothers: Born to Dance

Illustrated talk by Bruce Goldstein

Saturday, February 9, 2:30 p.m.

The fabulous Nicholas Brothers, Fayard (1914–2006) and Harold (1921–2000), are among the greatest dancers of the 20th century. Despite racial hurdles, these self-taught African American entertainers became one of the biggest musical acts of their time, headlining on Broadway, radio, and television, and in vaudeville and nightclubs. Their show-stopping numbers in such films as *Sun Valley Serenade* and *Stormy*

Weather made them international icons. Known for effortless balletic moves and jaw-dropping leaps, flips, and splits, along with a consummate grace and humor, they remain impossible to categorize. Bruce Goldstein, a friend of the brothers, is director of repertory programming at New York's Film Forum. (Various formats, total running time approximately 90 minutes)

Nothing But a Man

Saturday, February 16, 4:30 p.m.

Railroad worker Duff (Ivan Dixon) walks into a small-town church in Alabama and falls for Josie (Abbey Lincoln), the preacher's daughter. Though both are African American, Josie's father is not supportive and, in the middle of a palpably racist town, the couple's difficulties only intensify. In the early 1960s, a naturalistic portrayal of the Black American experience spelled risky box office. Nonetheless, *Nothing But a Man*, with its Motown soundtrack, proved a huge success at international festivals. (Michael Roemer and Robert M. Young, 1964, 35 mm, 95 minutes) *A Library of Congress restoration*

David Driskell: In Search of the Creative Truth

Saturday, April 20, 4:00 p.m.

Washington premiere

David Driskell will be present to introduce his film, which explores the influence of his mentor, Romare Bearden and the creative collaboration between the artist and his master printmaker, Curlee Holton. Driskell's work shows the influence of abstract expressionism, African masks, Coptic art, and cubism.

Film Series

L.A. Rebellion: Creating a New Black Cinema

March 10–April 28

"At a particular time and place in American cinema history, a critical mass of filmmakers of African origin or descent together produced a rich, innovative, sustained, and intellectually rigorous body of work, independent of any entertainment industry influence"—Shannon Kelley. The Gallery joins the American Film Institute Silver Theatre in presenting a selection of films closely associated with the creative renaissance realized by a group of African and African American students who entered the UCLA

School of Theater, Film, and Television during the 1970s and 1980s. Extraordinary windows on the legacies of Black communities, the films in the series are remarkable not only for their evocations of everyday life, but even more for their revelation of a diverse talent pool and political resolve. Presented in association with UCLA Film & Television Archive and supported in part by grants from the Getty Foundation and the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, the series is curated by Allyson Nadia Field, Jan-Christopher Horak, Shannon Kelley, and Jacqueline Stewart. Texts following are based on material provided by UCLA.)

My Brother's Wedding

preceded by ***A Little Off Mark***

Sunday, March 3, 4:30 p.m.

Charles Burnett's (*Killer of Sheep*) second film, *My Brother's Wedding*, has not been widely seen in this new director's cut, a full half hour shorter than its theatrical release. A portrayal of Black, lower-middle-class life in south central Los Angeles in the 1980s, it reveals the power of Burnett's unadorned style, though more driven by narrative than its predecessor. The protagonist Pierce (Everett Silas) is a naive, annoyed but idealistic dropout who works for his parents' business. Shot on location, the film reveals the network of relationships that constantly tug at the lives onscreen. (Charles Burnett, 1983, DigiBeta from 16 mm, 82 minutes)

The hero of *A Little Off Mark* is the eternally nice, shy guy who tries all the wrong moves to meet the right girl. (Robert Wheaton, 1986, DigiBeta from 16 mm, 9 minutes)

Bush Mama

preceded by ***Daydream Therapy***

Sunday, March 10, 4:30 p.m.

Inspired by seeing a Black woman in Chicago evicted in winter, Haile Gerima blends narrative fiction, documentary, surrealism, and political modernism in his unflinching story about a pregnant welfare recipient in Watts, Los Angeles. Featuring the magnetic Barbara O. Jones as Dorothy, *Bush Mama* is an unrelenting and powerfully moving look at the realities of inner-city poverty and systemic disenfranchisement of African Americans. (Haile Gerima, 1975, 16 mm, 97 minutes)

Daydream Therapy, imagining the fantasy life of a hotel worker trying to flee his workplace humiliations, is set to Nina Simone's haunting rendition of "Pirate Jenny."
(Bernard Nicolas, 1977, DigiBeta from 16 mm, 8 minutes)

Daughters of the Dust

followed by ***The Diary of an African Nun***

Saturday, March 23, 4:30 p.m.

In the early 20th century off the South Carolina coast, three generations of Gullah women, descendants of African captives living on the Sea Islands, are planning a migration to the mainland for what they see as a better way of life. Not surprisingly, the family clash over their reasons for this big move, and in the process expose the deeply rooted concerns of displaced people. The first American feature by an African American woman to receive general theatrical release, Julie Dash's tour de force was named to the National Film Registry in 2004. (Julie Dash, 1991, 35 mm, 112 minutes)

Preservation funded by the Packard Humanities Institute

From a story by Alice Walker, Julie Dash filmed *The Diary of an African Nun*, a stunning pantomime performance by Barbara O. Jones as a nun in Uganda who questions the spiritual void in her life. (Julie Dash, 1977, DigiBeta, 15 minutes)

Preservation funded in part by the National Film Preservation Foundation

Passing Through

preceded by ***When It Rains***

Saturday, March 30, 2:30 p.m.

Eddie Warmack, an African American jazz musician, convicted in killing of a white gangster, is released from prison. Not willing to play for the mobsters who control the music industry, he searches for his mentor and grandfather, musician Poppa Harris. Larry Clark's film theorizes that jazz is one of the purest expressions of African American culture, embodying the struggles of generations of Black people and now hijacked by a white culture that exploits jazz musicians for profit. (Larry Clark, 1977, 16 mm, 111 minutes) *Preservation funded in part by the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts and the Packard Humanities Institute*

In *When It Rains* a man tries to help a woman pay her rent and learns a tough lesson

about linking up with others. (Charles Burnett, 1995, 16 mm, 13 minutes)

Jean Rouch in West Africa

May–June

The famed French ethnographer Jean Rouch (1917–2004) began his prolific career in the 1950s in the West African countries of Ghana, Mali, Niger, and Ivory Coast. With his co-director Edgar Morin, Jean Rouch is often credited with inventing cinema vérité many years before it became a popular style in the 1960s.

Gallery Talk

Robert Seldon Duncanson's "Still Life with Fruit"

Wilford W. Scott

February 7–10, noon

West Building Main Floor, Rotunda

12 minutes

DJs in the Garden: Spin, Cut, & Groove

A DJ spins popular music from the 1960s through today every Thursday evening from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m.

National Gallery of Art Sculpture Garden Ice Rink

7th Street and Constitution Avenue NW

February 14: DJ Stylus

(80s R&B, boogie, Valentine's Day slow jams)

February 21: DJ Neville C.

('50s/'60s R&B, blues, soul, rock 'n' roll)

February 28: DJ Stereo Faith

('90s/'00s pop, hip-hop, dance)

Podcasts to be Released in February 2013

Historical Perspectives: African American Art

David C. Driskell, artist, curator, and professor of art, University of Maryland, College

On January 11, 1990, the National Gallery of Art announced an initiative to address the underrepresentation of minorities—particularly African Americans, Hispanic Americans, and Native Americans—in the museum profession. In response, David Driskell presented a lecture at the Gallery on February 11, 1990, on multicultural representation in art museum collections and exhibitions, and among staff and visitors. Unresolved issues in our cultural history raise questions about why the arts have been divided along racial lines—if, as Driskell observes, all art emanates from the salient desire to express the inner urges of the human spirit. This quality we all possess is colorless, classless, and uncluttered by feelings of racial superiority. The insistence on dividing art in the United States along racial lines demonstrates a response different in both thought and action than that seen in older cultures and ancient societies. Driskell hopes that these initiatives allow us to take a more holistic view of our history and the cultural pluralism that is the privilege of this nation.

(original program date: 2/11/90; podcast release date 2/5/13)

Artists in Residence: Henry O. Tanner in the Holy Land

Gwendolyn H. Everett, lecturer, National Gallery of Art

As part of the Artist in Residence lecture series, Gwendolyn H. Everett focused on Henry Ossawa Tanner's (1859-1937) visits to the Holy Land, and how this travel affected the later religious paintings for which he achieved international recognition. In this podcast recorded on August 9, 1987, Everett explains the formative influence of Tanner's upbringing in an educated, religious family in post-Civil War Philadelphia. Tanner's father was a minister and, later, a bishop in the African Methodist Episcopal Church, and his mother administered a Methodist school. Tanner enrolled in the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts as the only African American student in 1879, graduating in 1885. His professor, the artist Thomas Eakins, encouraged a progressive method of study from live models instead of plaster casts, which profoundly affected Tanner. After 1891 Tanner resided primarily in France; by 1895 his paintings were mostly of biblical themes, and in 1897 he made his first trip to the Holy Land, where his firsthand experience led to mastery of religious subject matter. He visited the region several times to explore mosques and biblical sites, and to complete character studies of the local population, as he had learned from Eakins. Tanner invigorated religious painting with modernism and with his deeply rooted faith, achieving renown in the

international art world.

(original program date: 8/9/87; podcast release date: 2/12/13)

William H. Johnson

Gwendolyn H. Everett, assistant professor, department of art, Howard University
Gwendolyn H. Everett, scholar and author of the award-winning children's book *Li'L Sis and Uncle Willie: A Story Based on the Life and Paintings of William H. Johnson*, provides an overview of William Henry Johnson's (1901-1970) career as part of the Five African American Artists lecture series recorded on August 3, 2003. Everett traces Johnson's determination to become an artist, despite a humble upbringing in South Carolina, to his years at a segregated elementary school where art was not part of the formal curriculum. In 1918, during the first Great Migration, Johnson moved to New York to pursue artistic training unavailable in the South. While living in Harlem and working several jobs to support himself, he was accepted into the prestigious National Academy of Design. Noted watercolorist Charles Webster Hawthorne provided critical mentorship at the academy, hired Johnson to work at the Cape Cod School of Art, and sponsored his further training in Europe. Johnson supplemented this sponsorship with prizes awarded by the academy and funds earned working for Ashcan School painter George Luks. In 1920s Paris, Johnson lived in the former studio of James McNeill Whistler and became acquainted with Henry O. Tanner, an African American expatriate artist who had achieved international acclaim and who would become a pivotal figure in Johnson's rise to prominence. Follow along as Everett illustrates Johnson's journey—marked by determination, strengthened by hard work, and bolstered by the support of influential artists—that led him to become one of the greatest American artists of the 20th century.

(original program date: 8/3/03; podcast release date: 2/19/13)

Collection and Online Tour—African American Artists

The Gallery's collection of American art includes nearly 400 works by African American artists, including Kerry James Marshall's *Great America* (1994), acquired by the Gallery in April 2011, as well as Alma Thomas' *Red Rose Cantata* (1973) and Horace Pippin's *Interior* (1944). In the West Building, the American Galleries feature Joshua Johnson's *The Westwood Children* (c. 1807), Robert Seldon Duncanson's *Still Life with Fruit*

(1848), and Henry Ossawa Tanner's *The Seine* (c. 1902), among others.

An online tour offers commentary on a selection of 22 paintings, works on paper, and sculpture ranging from a colonial portrait by Joshua Johnson of Baltimore to modern and contemporary pieces by Henry Ossawa Tanner, Horace Pippin, Martin Puryear, Jacob Lawrence, Romare Bearden, Alma Thomas, Sam Gilliam, Barkley Hendricks, Willie Cole, Kara Walker, and Lorna Simpson. To begin the online tour, click on www.nga.gov/collection/gallery/ggafamer/ggafamer-main1.html.

Special Online Features

Romare Bearden

In conjunction with the 2003 exhibition *The Art of Romare Bearden* a number of Web features and resources are available:

Career: <http://www.nga.gov/feature/bearden/index.shtm>

Education resources: <http://www.nga.gov/education/classroom/bearden/>

Children's guide: <http://www.nga.gov/kids/zone/beardencg.pdf>

Martin Puryear

In conjunction with the 2008 exhibition *Martin Puryear*, a web feature is available:

<http://www.nga.gov/exhibitions/2008/puryear/index.shtm>

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General Information

The National Gallery of Art and its Sculpture Garden are at all times free to the public. They are located on the National Mall between 3rd and 9th Streets along Constitution Avenue NW and are open Monday through Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Sunday from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The Gallery is closed on December 25 and January 1. With the exception of the atrium and library, the galleries in the East Building will be closing gradually beginning in July 2013 and will remain closed for approximately three years for Master Facilities Plan and renovations. For specific updates on gallery closings, visit www.nga.gov/renovation (<http://www.nga.gov/renovation>) .

For information call (202) 737-4215 or the Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) at (202) 842-6176, or visit the Gallery's website at www.nga.gov. Follow the Gallery on Facebook at www.facebook.com/NationalGalleryofArt and on Twitter at twitter.com/ngadc.

Visitors will be asked to present all carried items for inspection upon entering. Checkrooms are free of charge and located at each entrance. Luggage and other oversized bags must be presented at the 4th Street entrances to the East or West Building to permit x-ray screening and must be deposited in the checkrooms at those entrances. For the safety of visitors and the works of art, nothing may be carried into the Gallery on a visitor's back. Any bag or other items that cannot be carried reasonably and safely in some other manner must be left in the checkrooms. Items larger than 17 by 26 inches cannot be accepted by the Gallery or its checkrooms.

For additional press information please call or send inquiries to:

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