



A U C T I O N G A L L E R I E S

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**SWANN GALLERIES' APRIL 2 AUCTION OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN FINE ART FEATURES
19TH-CENTURY PAINTINGS BY TANNER, MID-CENTURY WORKS BY LEWIS AND
CONTEMPORARY ART BY HENDRICKS AND GILLIAM**

Sale Is Titled Ascension: A Century of African-American Art

NEW YORK—Swann Galleries' **April 2** auction, **Ascension: A Century of African-American Art**, focuses on the 100-plus years of contributions made by African-American artists across many genres. All of the artists featured in this 178-lot sale contributed not only to the canon of African-American Art but also to American Art as a whole.

The sale features important paintings from the early careers of three great American artists: Henry Ossawa Tanner, Norman Lewis and Barkley L. Hendricks. The first lot in the sale is a beautiful pastoral painting, *Boy and Sheep under a Tree*, oil on canvas, 1881, one of the finest and earliest Tanner paintings to come to auction in the last 25 years. The painting has been in the collection of a Philadelphia family since 1883 and has been featured in every significant Tanner retrospective thereafter. It has a pre-auction estimate of \$200,000 to \$300,000.

A portion of the auction devoted to works by Norman Lewis includes two canvases and seven works on paper. One of the featured works, *Cathedral*, oil on canvas, 1950 was exhibited in the landmark exhibition, *American Artists Paint the City*, at the 1956 Venice Biennale. This extraordinary example of Lewis's work displays the artist's evolution into abstraction (\$120,000 to \$180,000).

Also estimated at \$120,000 to \$180,000 is Barkley L. Hendricks's *Steve*, oil, acrylic and Magna on canvas, 1976. This bold, life-sized portrait exemplifies Hendricks's "white on white" paintings and his trailblazing work in portraiture. It was featured in the recent retrospective: *Barkley L. Hendricks: Birth of the Cool* and appeared on the April 2009 cover of *Artforum* magazine.

Other major works from the latter half of the 20th century include Hughie Lee-Smith's *Figure by the Seashore II*, oil on board, 1957, an excellent example of Lee-Smith's mid-career painting that epitomizes his exploration of a modern, existential landscape inhabited by isolated figures; Sam Gilliam's

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Untitled, acrylic on canvas, 1969, an early example of Gilliam's experimental floor paintings made with his "soak-stain" technique (each \$40,000 to \$60,000); David C. Driskell's *Two Pines (Two Trees)*, oil on canvas, 1961, the largest and most significant work by Driskell ever to come to auction, from a series of modernist compositions abstracting the tall pine trees of Maine; and Alvin D. Loving, Jr.'s *Untitled*, mixed media on collage of cardboard, paper and wood, mounted on board, circa 1976-79 (\$35,000 to \$50,000 each).

There are many significant works by female artists, among them Lois Mailou Jones's *Lobsterville Beach*, oil on canvas, 1945, one of the largest Martha's Vineyard landscapes by Jones to appear at auction (\$30,000 to \$40,000); Elizabeth Catlett's *Glory*, cast bronze with a copper-colored patina, 1981, which depicts performer, dancer and educator Glory Van Scott (\$25,000 to \$35,000); Mavis Pusey's *Untitled*, oil on canvas, circa 1968, a striking modernist abstraction typical of Pusey's late-1960s canvases (\$15,000 to \$25,000); and Beulah Woodard's *Maudelle*, painted terra cotta, mounted on a wood base, circa 1937, a very scarce example of this early Californian sculptor's work (\$10,000 to \$15,000).

Rounding out the sale is very strong selection of fine contemporary prints by important artists such as Faith Ringgold, Hank Willis Thomas and Kara Walker. A highlight of this section is *You Became Playmate to the Patriarch and Their Daughter*, a diptych of chromogenic prints by Carrie Mae Weems from her iconic series *From Here I Saw What Happened and I Cried* (\$15,000 to \$25,000).

The **auction** will begin at 2:30 p.m. on Thursday, April 2.

The works will be on **public exhibition** at Swann Galleries Saturday, March 28, from 12 p.m. to 5 p.m.; Monday, March 30 through Wednesday, April 1, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Thursday, April 2, from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.

An illustrated auction catalogue, with information on bidding by mail or fax, is available for \$35 from Swann Galleries, Inc., 104 East 25th Street, New York, NY 10010, or online at www.swanngalleries.com.

For further information, and to make advance arrangements to bid by telephone during the auction, please contact Nigel Freeman at 212-254-4710, extension 33, or via email at nfreeman@swanngalleries.com.

Live online bidding is also available via invaluable.com.

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