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L.A. Assemblage Artists Featured in Swann African-American Fine Art Auction

New York— On **Thursday, April 6**, Swann Galleries will hold an auction of **African-American Fine Art**, featuring originals and multiples from the last 200 years.

The highlight of the sale is an outstanding selection of paintings and collage by the assemblage artists working in Los Angeles in the 1960s and '70s. David Hammons leads the sale with a large 1976 untitled double body print collage, estimated at \$200,000 to \$300,000. Timothy Washington, represented here by his 1970 assemblage *Raw Truth* (\$15,000 to \$25,000), is joined by sculptural pieces by John Outterbridge and Noah Purifoy.

The sale will feature artworks from the estate of Miriam Matthews, the first professionally-trained African-American librarian in California and an avid proponent of Black history and art. Offerings from Matthews's California-focused collection include fine sculptures by Richmond Barthé, Priscilla "P'lla" Mills, John T. Riddle, Jr. and Beulah Woodard, as well as prints and drawings by female artists Marion Epting, Suzanne Jackson, Yvonne Cole Meo and Betye Saar.

A cornerstone of African-American Fine Art auctions at Swann is a strong section of Abstract Expressionist paintings with a special focus on works by Norman Lewis. An untitled 1947-48 oil painting, with a personal holiday inscription by Lewis, is valued at \$80,000 to \$120,000, while the ochre-toned *Untitled (Urban Composition)*, 1946, is expected to sell between \$75,000 and \$100,000. A rare early example of Lewis's first experimentations with abstraction, *Untitled (Figurative Abstraction)*, 1946, and the later oil on paper *Untitled (Circle Composition)*, 1964, each carry an estimate of \$25,000 to \$35,000.

A spectrum of works by Sam Gilliam begins with one of his earliest works ever to come to auction: *Think So*, 1967, is expected to sell between \$20,000 and \$30,000. A fine example of the artist's 1982 "D" paintings, *Muse #1*, marks a heightened physicality in his abstraction; it is valued at \$50,000 to \$75,000. Gilliam's ethereal 1968 canvas *Mess of Greens* is one of the earliest examples of his use of a beveled-edge stretcher; the canvas is stained and folded, creating a slight transparency that encourages the viewer to question the work's relationship with the wall (\$35,000 to \$50,000).

Fine examples of geometric abstraction by Alvin D. Loving, Jr. are led by a monumental untitled diptych, 1968, valued at \$80,000 to \$120,000. Loving is also represented by works on a more intimate scale, including *Untitled (Geometric Composition)*, 1968, and the 1970 colored pencil *Sketch for Wall* (\$8,000 to \$12,000 and \$3,000 to \$5,000, respectively). Abstraction continues with *Morning Light*, 1974, a bright canvas by Frank Bowling, expected to sell between \$60,000 and \$90,000.

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The earliest material in the sale is an 1863 oil on canvas riverscape by Robert S. Duncanson (\$50,000 to \$75,000). Early twentieth century highlights include James VanDerZee's *Eighteen Photographs* portfolio of silver prints, 1905-28 and Sargent Johnson's sublime painted copper mask *Untitled (Negro Mother)*, 1935-36, only the second of its kind to come to auction (\$40,000 to \$60,000 and \$80,000 to \$120,000, respectively).

A newly discovered oil painting by Walter Williams will be crossing the block for the first time: *Untitled (Boy on a Porch)*, circa 1965, is the largest work from the artist's *Southern Landscape* series to come to auction. It is expected to sell for \$35,000 to \$50,000.

A cast bronze sculpture by Elizabeth Catlett, *Rebozo IV*, 1965 (\$12,000 to \$18,000), makes a rare appearance, along with the 1975 color linoleum cut, *There is a woman in every color*, valued at \$3,000 to \$5,000. Five watercolors by Alma W. Thomas from a private collection are each valued at \$6,000 to \$9,000, while her homage to Pearl Bailey as the titular character in *Hello Dolly*, 1967, is expected to fetch \$12,000 to \$18,000.

An important early painting from Hughie Lee-Smith's Detroit period—*Untitled (Cityscape)*, 1954 (\$60,000 to \$90,000)—is joined by two of the artist's later works. *Counterpoise*, 1988, is expected to sell between \$15,000 and \$25,000, while the striking 1995 oil painting *Silhouette*, is valued at \$60,000 to \$90,000.

Contemporary works include *Boo Hoo*, a 2000 linoleum cut by Kara Walker (\$5,000 to \$7,000) and Faith Ringgold's 2007 portfolio of eight color screenprints, *Letter From Birmingham City Jail*, here valued at \$5,000 to \$7,000. Also available are recent works by Columbus Knox, James Little and Carrie Mae Weems.

The auction will be held Thursday, April 6, beginning at 2:30 p.m. The auction preview will be open to the public Saturday, April 1 from noon to 5 p.m.; Monday, April 3 through Wednesday, April 5 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; and Thursday, April 6 from 10 a.m. to noon.

An illustrated auction catalogue is available for \$35 at www.swannalleries.com.

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

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