



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 19, 2018

Contact: Alexandra Nelson
Communications Director
212-254-4710 ext. 19
alexandra@swanngalleries.com

In Isolation & Among Friends:

Modern African-American Artists Shine in October 4 Swann Sale



New York—**African-American Fine Art** sales at **Swann Galleries** offer the opportunity to see marketplace history happen, and the **October 4** auction is no exception, with a significant selection of works by Elizabeth Catlett, Eldzier Cortor and Hughie Lee-Smith, among others.

A timely run of works by **Charles White** features the significant and powerful *Nobody Knows My Name #1*, 1965, a mid-career drawing that was exhibited extensively in the late 1960s (Estimate: \$100,000 to \$150,000). The title was likely inspired by James Baldwin's *Nobody Knows My Name: More*

Notes of a Native Son, 1961—White's composition shows a young African-American man's head in a swirling, atmospheric space, a deeply symbolic response to the height of the Civil Rights movement. Prints by White include the linoleum cuts *Young Farmer (Young Worker)*, 1953, and *Solid as a Rock (My God is Rock)*, 1958 (\$12,000-18,000 and \$20,000-30,000, respectively).



Sculptures by **Elizabeth Catlett** represent the beginning and end of the artist's prolific career. Catlett's carved *Untitled (Head of a Man)*, circa 1943, is one of only two stone works on record from her significant 1940s period, and the earliest sculpture by the artist known to come to auction (\$200,000-300,000). *El Abrazo*, carving in Guatemalan red mahogany of two figures embracing, is Catlett's last sculpture: it was started by the artist in 2010 and posthumously completed by her son, David Mora Catlett, in 2017 (\$150,000-250,000).

MORE

A beautiful mid-career painting by Eldzier Cortor—the most significant work by the artist to come to auction—will be offered. *Sea of Time*, 1945, is a haunting depiction of a female nude with rich symbolism and surreal elements, inspired by Gullah and African traditions. The oil on canvas is estimated at \$200,000 to \$300,000.

Other midcentury compositions include the earliest painting by Beauford Delaney to come to auction. The 1940 oil on canvas is a self-portrait of the artist in a studio-like setting with a young woman thought to be “Jessie,” a model and mutual friend of Delaney and James Baldwin (\$200,000-300,000). **Hughie Lee-Smith’s** best-known and most widely published work, *Man With Balloons*, oil on canvas, 1960, will also be in the sale. A meditation on the isolation of modernity, Lee-Smith considered it an important painting: it carries an estimate of \$150,000 to \$250,000.



A riotous, recently rediscovered 1965 oil and charcoal on canvas by Al Loving, *Variations on a Square*, gives insight into the artist’s earliest work. The artist notes, in a letter included, that it was completed for his thesis show and was one his last oil paintings, remarking on it as a “forerunner to the geometric abstractions that started my career in NY” (\$80,000-120,000).

A 1983 self-portrait by Robert Colescott: *Down in the Dumps: So Long Sweetheart* shows the heartbroken artist seated among an overwhelming, teeming pile of debris, his head in his hands, paintbrushes at his side (\$35,000-50,000). Other works from that decade include a 1980 welded steel sculpture by Melvin Edwards, *Lusaka* (\$30,000-40,000); Sam Gilliam’s *Blood Legacy*, acrylic, gel medium and canvas collage, 1983 (\$80,000-120,000) and Spiral artist Emma Amos’s *Arched Swimmer*, acrylic with glitter and fabric on canvas, circa 1987 (\$10,000-15,000).

Contemporary art from the Dr. Robert H. Derden Collection brings pieces by significant, current artists to the sale, with an emphasis on photographic works. Featured lots include Rashid Johnson’s *Jonathan with Hands*, a Van Dyke Brown photo-emulsion print, 1997 (\$7,000-10,000); Alison Saar’s *Dreamer*, mixed media, 1988 (\$3,000-5,000); Carrie Mae Weems’s *Untitled (Woman and daughter with makeup)*, from the *Kitchen Table Series* (\$3,000-5,000); and a monumental photogravure with screenprint by Lorna Simpson, *Counting*, 1991 (\$4,000-6,000).

The complete catalogue with bidding information is available at www.swanngalleries.com.

Additional highlights can be found [here](#).

Captions:

[Lot 20](#): Elizabeth Catlett, *Head (Head of a Man)*, carved stone, circa 1943. Estimate \$200,000 to \$300,000.

[Lot 63](#): Hughie Lee-Smith, *Man With Balloons*, oil on canvas, 1960. Estimate \$150,000 to \$250,000.

[Lot 78](#): Charles White, *Nobody Knows My Name #1*, charcoal and crayon on illustration board, 1965. Estimate \$100,000 to \$150,000.

Auction date: Thursday, October 4 at 2:30pm

Exhibition dates: September 29, 12-5; October 1 to 3, 10-6; October 4, 10-1

Specialist: Nigel Freeman • nfreeman@swanngalleries.com • 212-254-4710 x 3

Press: Alexandra Nelson • alexandra@swanngalleries.com • 212-254-4710 x 19

Please credit all images *Courtesy of Swann Auction Galleries* or @swanngalleries on social media.

#

PRINTED CATALOGUE & ADDL. DIGITAL IMAGES AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

Swann Auction Galleries is a third-generation family business as well as the world's largest auction house for works on paper. In the last 75 years, Swann has repeatedly revolutionized the trade with such innovations as the first U.S. auction dedicated to photographs and the world's only department of African-American Fine Art. More than 30 auctions and previews are held annually in Swann Galleries' two-floor exhibition space in Midtown Manhattan, and online worldwide. Visit swanngalleries.com for more information.