



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**Swann African-American Fine Art:
Artist Records for Amos, Leigh, Lovelace O'Neal, Pindell & More**



AFRICAN-AMERICAN FINE ART

Sale 2504; April 4, 2019

All prices include Buyer's Premium.

New York—**Swann Galleries** saw strong results for **African-American Fine Art** on **Thursday, April 4**. Nigel Freeman, the house's director of African-American Fine Art, noted, "I was happy to see our department's success from last year continue into 2019. It surpassed our last auction's results, becoming our department's second highest-grossing auction, and our third sale in a row to hammer at more than \$3 million." The sale set twelve auction records and delivered successful auction debuts.

Contemporary artists stood out, claiming six of the top prices in the sale, including **Emma Amos**, Simone Leigh and Howardena Pindell, who established new auction records. Amos's painting on fabric *Let Me Off Uptown*, 1999-2000, exceeded her previous auction record of \$40,000, selling for \$125,000; Hugo Boss Prize recipient Leigh garnered a record with a 2006 salt-fired stoneware vessel at \$93,750; and Pindell's 1980-81 mixed-media on paper collage, utilizing her signature hole-punched circles, reached \$47,500. Also of note was Faith Ringgold's *Sleeping: Lover's Quilt #2*, 1986, an example of the artist's story quilts, which brought \$221,000.

Artists experimenting in color brought top prices, including Frank Bowling with *In M. of M.W. III*, 1980, an example of his poured painting series (\$118,750), and Sam Gilliam, with the 1975 work on paper *Onion Skin III* (\$50,000), *Longing*, 1993, an acrylic and polypropylene example of his raking technique (\$81,250) as well as *Snow Lane #22*, 1996, acrylic and mixed-media paper collage, (\$52,500).

Norman Lewis led the sale with the 1973-75 oil on canvas *Block Island*, an impressive example of the artist's 1970's period inspired by his summers on the island, which brought \$389,000. Also of note by Lewis, an early oil on masonite board from 1947, *Shapes*, sold for \$70,000, and *Blue Moon*, a 1960 oil on paper based on the phases of the moon, at \$62,500. Every work by Lewis found a buyer, almost universally surpassing their high estimate.



Other works on paper included Charles White's *Caliban*, a circa 1950 charcoal drawing of Shakespeare's character in *The Tempest*, (\$221,000); Elizabeth Catlett's 1974 experimental multimedia work *Untitled (Civil Rights Protest)* (\$118,750); the collage *Early Morning*, 1968-69, by Romare Bearden (\$185,000); and *Psychic Fragments #3*, 1988, mixed media with watercolor and ink, by Jack Whitten (\$55,000).

The Harlem Renaissance was well represented in all mediums: William H. Johnson's circa 1941-42 color screenprint *Jitterbugs V* made its auction debut at \$118,750, tying the previous record for the artist; Augusta Savage's sculpture in plaster *Gamin*, circa 1929, matched the artist's standing record at \$68,750. A portfolio of 18 silver and sepia-toned prints by James VanDerZee sold for \$52,500.

Kermit Oliver's *Dusk*, acrylic on board, 1972, brought a record for the artist at \$112,500. Additional artist records included Walter Sanford, Charles McFee, Freddie Styles, Peter Bradley, Robert James Reed, Jr. and Victor Seach.

Mary Lovelace O'Neal's *Running Freed More Slaves Than Lincoln Ever Did*, oil and mixed media, 1995, sold for \$40,000, the first significant work by the artist to come to auction. Other debuts included Sonya Clark's 2013 sculptural work in cotton thread and combs, *Albers #1* (\$9,100).

The next auction from Swann Galleries' **African-American Fine Art** Department will be held in October 2019. The house is currently accepting quality consignments. Visit swanngalleries.com for more about selling at Swann.

Additional Artist Records: Mary Lovelace O'Neal (Lot 164, \$40,000); Walter Sanford (Lot 32, \$28,750); Charles McGee (Lot 54, \$25,000); Freddie Styles (Lot 146, \$20,000); Peter Bradley (Lot 95, \$11,250); Robert James Reed, Jr. (Lot 94, \$9,375); Sonya Clark (Lot 172, \$9,100); Victor Seach (Lot 31, \$5,750).

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

Captions:

[Lot 163](#): Emma Amos, *Let Me Off Uptown*, oil & photo transfer on canvas with metallic paint, glitter, collage & African fabric borders, 1999-2000. Sold for \$125,000, a record for the artist.

[Lot 105](#): Norman Lewis, *Block Island*, oil on canvas, 1973-75. Sold for \$389,000.

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