



THE OGDEN MUSEUM OF SOUTHERN ART



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Solidary & Solitary: The Joyner/Giuffrida Collection

The Ogden Museum of Southern Art, September 30, 2017 – January 21, 2018

A major nationwide touring exhibition commencing in New Orleans this fall, *Solidary & Solitary: The Joyner/Giuffrida Collection*, will offer a new perspective on the critical contribution African American and African diaspora artists have made to the evolution of visual art from 1940s through to the present moment. Co-organized by The Baltimore Museum of Art and The Ogden in New Orleans, *Solidary & Solitary* will trace a movement beginning in the mid-twentieth century with Abstract Expressionist **Norman Lewis** through to some of the most celebrated artists working today such as **Glenn Ligon** and **Lynette Yiadom-Boayke**, as well as **Mark Bradford**, who is representing the USA at the Venice Biennale 2017. Curated by noted art historians **Christopher Bedford** and **Katy Siegel**, *Solidary & Solitary* will be the first large-scale public exhibition to bring together this vital lineage of visionary artists.

Ranging across 70 years, *Solidary & Solitary* will reveal a rich and complex history woven from the threads of artistic debates about how to embody blackness; social struggle and change; migrations and the international African diaspora. Drawing on the Joyner/Giuffrida collection's unparalleled holdings, a central theme will be the power of abstract art as a profound political choice, rather than a stylistic preference for generations of African American artists. The exhibition will demonstrate how postwar abstraction has declared individual freedom; a resistance to the imagery of racist mainstream culture on the one hand, and pressures to create positive representations of black Americans on the other.

Highlights will include large-scale works by an array of artists that fuse the social and the abstract in visceral ways, including **Jack Whitten**, **Kevin Beasley**, **Shinique Smith**, and **Serge Alain Nitegeka**, among others. Placing a spotlight on individuals' pursuit of creative freedom in different eras and geographical contexts, the exhibition will feature several artists' careers in depth including solo sections focused on **Norman Lewis**, **Sam Gilliam**, **Charles Gaines**, and **Lynette Yiadom-Boayke**.

As well as celebrating the 'solitary' brave individual artistic figures in this history, this exhibition also sets up a range of duets between artists of different generations to explore the significance of intergenerational solidarity. These pairings will include **Melvin Edwards**'s *Lynch Fragment* sculptures made in the early 1960s in response to racial violence in dialogue with **Leonardo Drew**'s recent monumental wall sculptures, as well as **Jack Whitten** paintings displayed with the work of **Mark Bradford**.

Katy Siegel, BMA Senior Programming & Research Curator and Thaw Chair in Modern American Art at Stony Brook University added: "As the exhibition title (drawn from Édouard Glissant's *The Poetics of Relation*) suggests, these artists confront with bravery and creativity a tension we all feel, most especially African Americans, between the 'solitary'—being specifically, uniquely and only oneself—and the 'solidary' of a group's collective social identity. It is essential that these histories be told, that the possibilities of individual achievement, collective identity and genuine, institutional social change be made vivid, concrete and beautiful. Only by remembering and understanding these histories can we move forward towards a different future collectively imagined."

"There is no museum collection in the world that can tell this story," commented **Christopher Bedford**, Dorothy Wagner Wallis Director of The Baltimore Museum of Art (BMA), which will host an expanded version of the exhibition in 2019. "That is why Katy and I have made it our mission to make this singular activist private collection accessible to the public for the first time in this national tour across city museums and some of the country's leading educational institutions. This exhibition is part of a wider, growing movement to address the blind spots in our shared cultural heritage. A distinct form of 'Social Abstraction'



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is about to be made visible for everyone to appreciate—from schoolchildren to undergraduates, academics to artists.”

Solidary & Solitary will commence at the Ogden Museum of Southern Art in New Orleans in September 2017, before touring to venues across the country to venues including the Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University; the Snite Museum of Art at the University of Notre Dame; University of California, Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive (BAMPFA), the Pérez Art Museum Miami and The Baltimore Museum of Art, which will present an expanded version with additional new commissions.

Programming to coincide with *Solidary & Solitary: The Joyner/Giuffrida Collection*:

- Black Artists/New Histories: A Conversation with Christopher Bedford, Courtney Martin & Katy Siegel – September 30th 2-3pm
- Cocktail Reception – September 30th 4-6pm (by invitation only)
- Opening Reception – October 19th 6-8pm during Ogden After Hours with a VIP Preview 5-7pm (by invitation only)
- Artists and Curators Panel with Leonardo Drew, Christopher Bedford & Katy Siegel – November 18 3:30-5pm

The *Solidary & Solitary* tour is made possible with the support of The Joyner/Giuffrida Collection and is also supported by presentation sponsor The Helis Foundation, a private Louisiana foundation committed to advancing access to the arts. Contributing Sponsor for this exhibition is the Lambent Foundation. A companion publication, *Four Generations: The Joyner/Giuffrida Collection of Abstract Art*, is published by Gregory R. Miller & Co., and edited by Courtney J. Martin (Brown University) featuring new research and writing from curators at some of the world’s leading institutions.

For media enquiries and images please contact Selina Jones at Scott & Co selina@scott-andco.com +44 20 3478 0077

The Joyner/Giuffrida Collection was started in 1999 by Pamela J. Joyner and Alfred J. Giuffrida and originally focused on abstract work by post-war and contemporary African American artists. Comprised of hundreds of works spanning four generations of artists, the collection ranges from pieces dated 1945 to the present day. In recent years, the collection’s focus has expanded to incorporate a more global perspective including artists from Africa and the global African diaspora including South African artists such as Zander Blom, Mikhael Subotzky, and Nicholas Hlobo; as well as artists based in Europe and the UK such as Lynette Yiadom-Boakye, Isaac Julien, Robin Rhode, and Oscar Murillo.

Joyner and Giuffrida inaugurated an artist residency program in 2014 in Sonoma, California. Leonardo Drew held the initial residency and has been followed by artists and curators including: Lorna Simpson, Shinique Smith, Matthew Witkovsky, Andrianna Campbell, Josh Ginsberg, Mikhael Subotzky, Samuel Levi Jones, and Kevin Beasley.

Christopher Bedford is the Dorothy Wagner Wallis Director of The Baltimore Museum of Art (BMA) and the 10th director to lead the museum, which is renowned for its outstanding collections of 19th-century, modern, and contemporary art. Recognized as an innovative and dynamic leader for building greater community engagement and creating programs of national and international impact, Bedford served as director of the Rose Art Museum at Brandeis University for four years prior to joining the BMA and was appointed as Commissioner for the U.S. Pavilion for the 2017 Venice Biennale, the world’s most prestigious contemporary art exhibition, which debuted an exhibition of new work by American artist Mark Bradford. Previously, Bedford held the positions of chief curator and curator of exhibitions at the Wexner Center for the Arts at The Ohio State University (2008-2012), where he organized a nationally travelling exhibition of the work of Mark Bradford. He also served as assistant curator and curatorial assistant in the Department of Contemporary Art at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (2006-2008) and consulting curator in the Department of Sculpture and Decorative Arts for the J. Paul Getty Museum (2006-2008). Born in Scotland and raised in the United States and the UK, Bedford has a Bachelor of



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Arts from Oberlin College, received a master's degree in art history through the joint program at Case Western Reserve University and the Cleveland Museum of Art, and has studied in the doctoral programs in art history at the University of Southern California and the Courtauld Institute of Art at the University of London. Bedford is also a noted author and contributor to publications including *Art in America*, *ArtForum*, and *Frieze*, among others.

Katy Siegel is the inaugural Eugene V. and Clare E. Thaw Endowed Chair in Modern American Art at Stony Brook University, and Senior Curator for Research and Programming at The Baltimore Museum of Art. She is the co-curator with Christopher Bedford of Mark Bradford's exhibition at the U.S. Pavilion for the 2017 Venice Biennale, and co-curator with Okwui Enwezor and Ulrich Wilmes of *Postwar: Art Between the Atlantic and the Pacific, 1945-1965*, at the Haus der Kunst, Munich. Past exhibitions have included *Rosalyn Drexler: Who Does She Think She Is?*, *Pretty Raw: After and Around Helen Frankenthaler*, *Light Years: Jack Whitten, 1971-1974*, and *High Times Hard Times: New York Painting, 1967-75*, which toured internationally and received an award from AICA. Her edited volumes include *"The heroine Paint": After Frankenthaler* (2015) and *Abstract Expressionism* (2011); she is the author of *Since '45: America and the Making of Contemporary Art*, which details the collision of American social history and European modernism (2011). She has written criticism and historical essays on contemporary and modern art for numerous institutions internationally, and is a Contributing Editor at *Artforum*, and Consulting Editor at *The Brooklyn Rail*. From 2010-2013 she was the Editor in Chief of *Art Journal*.

The Ogden Museum of Southern Art

Located in the vibrant Warehouse Arts District of downtown New Orleans, Louisiana, the Ogden Museum of Southern Art holds the largest and most comprehensive collection of Southern art and is recognized for its original exhibitions, public events, and educational programs that examine the development of visual art alongside Southern traditions of music, literature, and culinary heritage to provide a comprehensive story of the South. Established in 1999, and in Stephen Goldring Hall at 925 Camp Street since 2003, the Museum welcomes almost 85,000 visitors annually, and attracts diverse audiences through its broad range of programming including exhibitions, lectures, film screenings, and concerts, which are all part of its mission to broaden the knowledge, understanding, interpretation, and appreciation of the visual arts and culture of the American South. It is the first museum in Louisiana to be designated an Affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution.

The Baltimore Museum of Art

Founded in 1914, The Baltimore Museum of Art is a major cultural destination recognized for engaging diverse audiences through dynamic exhibitions and innovative educational and community outreach programs. The BMA's internationally renowned collection of 95,000 objects encompasses more than 1,000 works by Henri Matisse anchored by the famed Cone Collection of modern art, as well as one of the nation's finest holdings of prints, drawings, and photographs. The galleries showcase an exceptional collection of art from Africa; important works by established and emerging contemporary artists; outstanding European and American paintings, sculpture and decorative arts; significant artworks from China; ancient Antioch mosaics; and exquisite textiles from around the world. The 210,000-square-foot museum is also distinguished by a grand historic building designed in the 1920s by renowned American architect John Russell Pope and two beautifully landscaped gardens featuring an array of 20th-century sculpture. The BMA is located in Charles Village, three miles north of the Inner Harbor, and is adjacent to the main campus of Johns Hopkins University. General admission to the BMA is free so that everyone can enjoy the power of art.

The Helis Foundation

The Helis Foundation is a Louisiana private foundation established and funded by the William Helis Family. The Helis Foundation's resources and objectives are divided into two areas: the general fund, and the Diana Helis Henry and Adrienne Helis Malvin Art Funds. The general fund focuses on community needs primarily within the Metropolitan New Orleans area by granting funds to numerous local non-profit organizations. The Art Funds were established by bequests from Diana Helis Henry and Adrienne Helis Malvin. The Art Funds make grants to sustain operations, to provide free admission to, and to acquire significant art works on behalf of major institutions within the Metropolitan New Orleans area. The Art Funds also underwrite major initiatives and special projects, such as Prospect.3's *Basquiat and the Bayou presented by The Helis Foundation*, the *Poydras Corridor Sculpture Exhibition presented by The Helis Foundation*, *New Orleans Airlift's Roving Music Village in City Park*, the installation of Lynda Benglis' *The Wave of the World in City Park*, and *The Helis Foundation Enrique Alf rez Sculpture Garden*.