

CONTACT:
stellajonesgallery@gmail.com | 504-568-9050

GUS BENNETT,
ANTONIO CARRENO, DELITA MARTIN,
DAVID GAITHER, PATRICK WALDEMAR

FIVE ARTISTS in FIVE GALLERIES
ALL artists in attendance at Opening Reception

Opening: Saturday, November 18, 6pm – 9pm
to coincide with *Prospect 4* Public Opening
On Exhibition: November 10 through December, 30, 2017

STELLA JONES GALLERY presents a diverse group of emerging contemporary artists in an exhibition spread throughout our five galleries and slated to coincide with *Prospect 4*, New Orleans citywide tricentennial of contemporary artists. Each of these artists of the African Diaspora offer differing viewpoints on how to be seen, heard and traverse a racially charged and tumultuous America.

Born in New Orleans, Gus BENNETT is a self-taught photographer who has created a series of portraits of African American's covered in a deep black powder over their differing shades of black skin. The implication being that we as black people are typically seen as one shade and one voice. He further pushes the visual boundaries of what being black in America actually means vs. the narrative in the media in a variety of ways. In some works, BENNET places flowers in their hands to show that we are gentle souls; cotton is used as a prop to hint at how blacks helped to build America from the sweat off our backs; a woman is shown placing a crown on her head to remind us that our ancestors in Africa were often Royalty and people of great social stature before slavery and a couple is featured as they interact with strength and grace not lust or violence.

BENNETT's process of digitally layering organic matter such as leaves, bark, moss or mold provides a rich texture and depth to his photographs. BENNET has a M.A. in *Museum Studies* from *Southern University at New Orleans* and is the official photographer of the annual *Essence Musical Festival*, New Orleans. His ongoing series *The New Orleans People Project*, which chronicles New Orleans culture and the creative's who are often behind the scenes, was recognized by the Lieutenant Governor's Office.

Antonio CARRENO's new series of paintings provide a fresh perspective with spontaneous, organic abstractions and an emphasis on large, bold sweeping strokes. Although **Carreno** continues to draw inspiration from landscapes and nature found in his native land of the Dominican Republic, his intent here is to focus on the beauty that surrounds us all. This new series is an experiment of light, color and movement. **Carreno** has works in several public collections including the *Latin American Museum of Modern Art* in Washington, D.C., the *Dominican American Institute of Culture* and *The Reserved Bank of the Dominican Republic*,

Dillard University, New Orleans, LA, as well as many important private collections, along with exhibitions at several prestigious galleries and museums.

Delita MARTIN is primarily a printmaker and this new series features large portraits which are centered around women of color as they are in their everyday lives. **MARTIN**'s unique process consists of layering, drawing, sewing, collaging, and painting—a combination she describes as fusing the “real and the fantastic.” Signs and symbols are used to create a visual language and by fusing this visual language with oral storytelling, she offers other identities and other narratives for women of color than has traditionally been presented. **Martin**'s work has been exhibited both nationally and internationally in numerous portfolios and collections, including recently, the *State Of The Art: Discovering American Now* at the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art in northwest Arkansas. This exhibit included 101 artists from around the United States. She was also included in the *International Review of African American Art* as one of sixteen African American artists to watch who were gaining national and international attention in 2015.

David GAITHER is a self-taught, artist from Mableton, Georgia whose paintings are a layered tapestry of bold color, abstract shapes and symbols that create depth and context and which the artist defines as a “land of maximalism.” **GAITHER**'s canvases are filled with energetic interactions between his sometimes original shapes, forms and symbols and saturated with color that gives a nod to the Pop Art movement. This imaginary world is a place of escape from reality as the viewer must suspend what is real and jump into this frenzied, yet happy place. **Gaither**'s work has been exhibited around the world and recently in the Tubman Museum of African American Art.

Patrick WALDEMAR is a recent transplant who splits his time between his native, Kingston, Jamaica and New Orleans. His love of our rich culture comes through in a series of portraits of Marie Laveau, an historical figure who has attained mythical status as NOLA's Voodoo Queen. He showcases Ms. Laveau's beauty, strength and vulnerability. In a second series focusing on the rights of African American's to protest, **WALDEMAR** offers a more energy infused grouping that focuses his anger at a President who shows little regard for people of color and their role in making America great.

WALDEMAR is considered one of the Caribbean's leading watercolorists and his paintings in acrylic and watercolor are rooted in the Impressionism Movement. **WALDEMAR** is a graduate of the *American Academy of Art*, Chicago and his work has been exhibited in New York, Los Angeles and New Orleans. His work can be found in private collections in the U.S.A., the United Kingdom, Canada and Jamaica. **WALDEMAR** has been commissioned for murals for the Bank of Jamaica and works for Jamaica's 35th Independence Anniversary for the Jamaican High Commission, New York. His designs for Jamaica's entry at the Chelsea Flower Show in London were awarded Silver Gilt and Silver medals for five years.

Stella Jones Gallery - 201 St. Charles Avenue, New Orleans, Louisiana 70170. For more information, please contact 504-568-9050/stellajonesgallery@gmail.com or visit www.stellajonesgallery.com