

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

FREEDOM PLACE COLLECTION

Presented by Zenith Community Arts Foundation (ZCAF)

Never Before Seen in Washington

ROMARE BEARDEN -BENNY ANDREWS

Robert Freeman - Alma Thomas - Richard Yarde

Show dates: September 6 – 30, 2007

at Zenith Gallery

Opening Reception: Friday, September 4, 6 –9pm

This exhibition gives you a rare opportunity to enjoy oils, watercolors and collages, never before shown in Washington, by five of our country's most distinguished artists whose styles and motifs vary, but whose ties are steeped in the African-American experience that has inspired, nurtured and enriched their art.

One of America's pre-eminent artists, Romare Bearden (1912-1988) was a draftsman, painter, water-colorist and, most notably, a collagist. Born in North Carolina, and raised in Pittsburgh and New York's Harlem, Bearden worked in various styles, including cartoon and drawing, social genre, modernism, abstract expressionism and photo-collage. The Freedom Place Collection includes some of Bearden's most innovative and expressionistic works. Created between 1970 and 1985, they embody characteristic subjects and motifs that occupied his imagination over a 40-year period. The

recipient of many honors, Bearden received the National Medal of Arts in 1987. His works are in notable public and private collections throughout the United States.

Benny Andrews (1930-2006), raised in Georgia as one of 10 children in a sharecropper's family, told stories about people, places and things in a style ranging from caricature to fully realized paintings. His work is exhibited and collected by major museums here and abroad, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Museum of Modern Art and the Art Institute of Chicago.

Robert Freeman (b.1946) is much admired for his figurative work depicting well-heeled African-Americans at sophisticated gatherings, and for his restful landscapes. The Boston-based artist has exhibited extensively and is widely collected. His works have been shown at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, the Newport Art Museum, Zenith Gallery and at galleries in New York, Georgia, Florida, Illinois, Michigan and beyond.

Alma Thomas (1891-1978) had her first one-woman show at age 68, and went on to have retrospectives at the Corcoran Gallery of Art, the National Museum of American Art and the Whitney Museum, where she was the first African-American woman to have a solo exhibition. Raised in Columbus, Georgia, she moved to Washington DC at a young age, where she lived for 71 years. She is best-known for her large, mosaic-like canvases, filled with dense, irregular patterns and bright colors.

The images of the brilliant watercolorist **Richard Yarde (b.1939)** range from evocative to lyrical portrait studies and complex, figurative compositions. Boston-bred, his works reflect African-American dwellers, as well as famous black personalities. His paintings are in many prestigious institutions, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art and Boston's Museum of Fine Arts.

The Freedom Place Collection was assembled, and is owned, by Washington residents Stuart Marshall Bloch, chairman of Congressional Bank, and Ambassador Julia Chang Bloch, who began collecting the works of African-American artists 35 years ago. The Bloch's and Congressional Bank are sponsoring the ZCAF exhibition.

The Zenith Community Arts Foundation (ZCAF), established by Margery E. Goldberg in 2000, is the non-profit division of Zenith Gallery. Created to further Goldberg's vision of artistic and community activism, ZCAF is committed to arts advocacy, collaboration and using art to benefit community. Among ZCAF's most successful projects is its annual Food Glorious Food calendar with associated Giglée prints.

Gallery Hours: Tuesday – Friday: 11am to 6 pm, Saturday: 11 am to 7 pm, Sunday: noon to 5 pm

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