

For immediate release



Zenith Gallery Presents:
In Celebration of Black History Month
“From History to the Dream”

Show Dates: February 5- March 5, 2016
At 1429 Iris St., NW, Washington, DC 20012

Featuring Artists: Doba Afolabi, Mason Archie, Francesca Britton, Margaret DeLorme, Richard Fitzhugh, Robert Freeman, Cassandra Gillens, Hubert Jackson, Gloria Kirk, Christopher Malone, Joyce J. Scott, Karen Starika, Curtis Woody and more

Meet the Artists Receptions: Friday, February 5, 4-8pm, & Saturday, February 6, 2-5pm



Reincarnation, Doba Afolabi



Down By the Creek, Mason Archie



Girl in Yellow Dress, Francesca Britton



Margaret DeLorme

Doba Afolabi was born in the mountains of southwest Nigeria and credits his mother, who was a versatile dancer, as the fundamental force behind his flair for expression. Monet, Van Gogh, Degas and Yoruba stylized carvings were later influences on Afolabi. Doba studied at the famous Zaria Art School. While still in school he became known as one of the “Zaria Rebels,” an artists’ school known for their experimental style and bold color palette. Briefly, he worked for the United Nations as a graphic designer. He also spent some time teaching art at Yaba Technical College, in Lagos, Nigeria, before eventually immigrating to New York City. He is currently based in Brooklyn. His first solo exhibit, “*Buffalo Soldier*” was in 1999, in North East Miami, Florida, at Asmar B Art Gallery. Since that time, he has been an annual presence at the Black History Month art shows featured on the campus of Florida International University. In addition to showing with Zenith Gallery, he is also represented by Dorsey Gallery in New York.

Mason Archie was born and raised in Dayton, Ohio. He currently resides in Indianapolis, Indiana. Archie began his artistic career as the Art Director and pictorial artist for Lamar Outdoor Advertising. In 2005, he began to work full-time as a fine artist, swiftly achieving notoriety. In addition to a natural gift, he also attributes his success to a single-mindedly intensive study of the materials and techniques utilized in traditional landscape and Realism paintings executed by the 19th century Naturalist artists, whose art and techniques have clearly influenced Archie. Archie's works have been exhibited at the Schuster Art Center in Dayton, OH; the Indiana State Museum; The Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History in Detroit, MI; The National African American Museum and Cultural Center in Wilberforce, OH; and the Chicago Museum of Science and Industry. He has been featured in *The International Review of African American Art*, *American Art Collector*, and *The American Art Review*.

Francesca Britton learned to paint on an easel set-up next to her mother, Marchita. Having grown up in such a loving and supportive, not to mention creative, atmosphere - it is not surprising that Francesca followed in the family's footsteps, and grew up to become a fine artist. Naturally, she did this while developing her own unique style and artistic sensibilities. In addition to being a prolific painter and a jewelry designer, she has also been the long-time visual arts teacher and counselor for D.C. Banneker High School. Francesca's paintings and other two-dimensional works range from the representational to the abstract. She works in a range of medium, including charcoal, watercolor, pastels, and acrylic paint.

Margaret DeLorme was a teacher for many years at Eaton Elementary School, in Washington, DC, as well as being a prolific painter and a renowned jewelry designer. Her beaded jewelry designs masterfully incorporate color, pattern, rhythm, and texture. Her pieces utilize semiprecious stone and natural materials such as: jade green serpentine, semi-translucent retaliated quartz, vibrant amethyst, mystical aventurine, and smoky Cat's Eye. Her signature look is a streamlined piece of jewelry that showcases polished surfaces interspersed with just a touch of texture, in the form of filigree antique metal cast fastenings and the uneven surface of freshwater pearls. (Numerous necklaces are shown combined here.) Custom pieces, including bracelets and earrings, as well as complete sets, are available upon request.



15th St. & Constitution Ave NW, Richard Fitzhugh



Evening Gala, Robert Freeman



Wine & Crabs, Cassandra Gillens



Man in White Hat, Hubert Jackson

Richard Fitzhugh is a Washington D.C. native, and graduate of the Howard University School of Architecture. He has worked in the field at home and abroad. Imposing his vision of urban landscapes on paper, Fitzhugh's deep sense of community is reflected in his vivid palette, and in his 25 years working with disadvantaged youth. This current show includes some of his finest work, depicting familiar Washington D.C. streets and landmarks. The artist speaks about his chosen medium: *"I've stayed with watercolor because this paint medium is transparent. Because it's transparent, everything you do for a painting, even when you have covered something already painted previously, you can see totally everything that has been done for the painting. But for the watercolor painting, being able to see everything that was done....(makes me feel that) my art....(begins to resemble my) life."*

Robert Freeman has been showing with Zenith Gallery and nationally for over 35 years, and has been included in the collections of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; The National Center for African American Artists; Boston Public Library; Brown University and The DeCordova Museum. His paintings have been featured in exhibitions at Rose Art Museum at Brandeis University, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston and Williams College Museum of Art, Williamstown, MA. Known for his vivid and powerful figurative paintings, Robert Freeman has traditionally focused on the interactions between people in his work. Skillful, bold use of color and gesture are the trademark of Freeman's work and make his figures nearly abstract. In winter of 2016, Freeman will be featured in a retrospective show at the Danforth Art Museum, in Framingham, Massachusetts.

Cassandra M. Gillens is a self-taught artist, currently residing in North Carolina. Born in Boston, some of her earliest memories are of drawing with colored chalk on the sidewalks of her childhood neighborhood of Roxbury. Cassandra also has fond memories of visits to South Carolina to visit family. These memories have moved her to paint visions of The Low Country's southern culture. Growing up in Roxbury, Gillens dreamt of one day returning to The Low Country – a place that had won her heart and spirit. Upon her return as an adult, she swiftly reconnected with her people, and the culture she so loved. Cassandra's paintings clearly show that love and those connections, with their depiction of the vivid colors of the southern seasons and their images of good ol' Southern living. Cassandra is a member of Beaufort Arts Association. Her art can be found on display throughout the Low Country, and in collections held in various states throughout America.

Gillens was a Featured Artist on HGTV's 2013 *Dream Home*; a featured U.S. artist for A. R. T. Revolution, held in Taipei, Taiwan 2012; and featured in the October '08 issue of *Southern Living Magazine*. Her art is also in "Nights in Rodanthe."

Hubert Jackson was born in 1943 in Culpeper, Virginia. He began his artistic career with a correspondence course in commercial art, which he took while still in high school. From there, he went on to formally study painting, ceramics, printmaking, sculpture and photography. Jackson earned his Bachelors in Fine Arts Education at Virginia State University in 1965. After graduation he moved to Washington D.C. In 1971, he earned his Master's Degree in painting from Howard University. In the early 1970s, he participated in the historical national movement of community-based mural projects under the advisement and mentorship of master artist Hughie Lee-Smith. Jackson's work is in a number of private collections throughout the U.S., and has been shown in foreign countries such as Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Lesotho, New Guinea and Rwanda through the Artist-in-Embassies Program, run by the U.S. Department of State. This past summer he had a show at the U.S. Embassy in Rome. He also taught visual arts for many years at Wilson High School, located in Washington, DC.



Engungun Masquerade, Gloria Kirk



Reach, Christopher Malone



Heavy D, Joyce J. Scott



Gables, Karen Starika



Freedom isn't Free, Curtis Woody

Gloria Kirk is a photographer who considers herself as "one who thinks outside of the box." Kirk has been the recipient of numerous awards for artworks in media and genres as diverse as: portraits, still life, photojournalism, landscape, architecture and conceptual photography. In October 2007, four of her fine art pieces were chosen by the Artist-in-Embassies Program for exhibition in the U.S. Embassy in Freetown, Sierra Leone, for a period of three years. Kirk is a member of the Professional Photographers Society of Greater Washington, DC Black Artists, The DC National Conference of Artists, The Exposure Group and FotoCraft. She has been in numerous publications including *the Washington Post*, *In the Arts*, and *Spice*. Kirk has exhibited throughout the US, Cuba, Ghana, Brazil, & Sierra Leone.

Christopher Malone is a self-taught artist who asks us to move past seeing dolls as just playthings for children, but rather as spiritual objects, capable of inspiring deep thoughts and heady visions in balance with our imaginations and our dreaming state. He believes that how far you take this interpretation of the capability of his dolls is up to you. In his words: "I have always been fascinated with dolls. Their form and construction, complex and simple forms...made of stone, clay, bone, ivory, grasses and wax... have for as long as I can remember have beckoned to me to hold them in my hand and study them. I have no idea why...? From the beginning of recorded time, all over the world, people have been making dolls. Dolls have been children's play things and have also been used to bridge the gap between our physical world and the spiritual realm.... Like most traditions... there's so much more to the story (once you dig a little deeper)."

Joyce J. Scott, one of the most significant artists living and working in Baltimore today, still lives in the neighborhood where she was raised. Sculptor, jeweler, printmaker, installation artist, performance artist, and educator, Joyce J. Scott draws from influences as wide-ranging as her media: from African and Native American experiences, to comic books, television, popular American culture sources and the contemporary culture as it exists on the streets of her urban Baltimore neighborhood. For more than three decades, this multi-talented artist and provocateur has created objects of exceptional skill and beauty, while offering her own distinctive commentary on social issues such as stereotyping, violence, and other forms of social injustice.

Karen Starika has over 25 years experience as a preservation architect, receiving awards from the National Historic Trust and the Louisiana Preservation Alliance. She was also published in the *Architectural Record* for a preservation project in New Orleans, and has additionally taught classical piano for over a decade. Having a lifelong passion for history in terms of music, literature, architecture and art, she has followed an impulse to reinvent herself in the guise of artist, and craft through creative energy a personal artistic interpretation and rendering of historic structures, with an imaginative, colorful, fanciful whimsy. Her digitally enhanced photographs present her view of architecture as a work of art and a moment in time, through her own voice. Each of her pieces are informed by her deep familiarity with the subject, yet each also offers a freedom from the doctrines of the often pragmatic practice of architecture.

Curtis Woody refers to his artworks as "mixed media quilt paintings." In his words: "The beauty of mixed media art is the flexibility it offers to start with things around you and expand from there. As a mixed media painter, I juxtapose these

visual elements into a language of moods and reactions that allow for the viewer's own interpretations." Woody's mixed media quilt paintings start with hand cut museum board blocks that are painted, embellished, scratched and merged together to form extremely well-composed, thought provoking collages that are not terribly pre-planned, but rather, let the feelings and emotions of the overall design dictate how each block fits together. Woody allows the colors, patterns and textures to direct these compositions. Mediums may include acrylics, pastel, graphite, texture crackle, watercolor or clay paint. Sometimes, Woody also incorporates beads, rope, paper, grommets, fabric, hot glue or various other objects. Many of his pieces include replicas of vintage newspaper advertisement, newspaper articles, or photographs – all included because they accentuate the composition, while adding a symbolic richness to the work. The result is a work that strikes the balance between spontaneity and a carefully planned composition of historical relevance.

Where: 1429 Iris St. NW, WDC 20012

Exhibit on Display: February 5 – March 5, 2016

Opening Reception: Friday, February 5, 4-8 pm, & Saturday, February 6, 2-6 pm

Information: Margery Goldberg, 202-783-2963,
margery@zenithgallery.com, or art@zenithgallery.com

Gallery Hours: Wednesday- Saturday 12- 6pm

Now celebrating 37 years in the nation's capital, Zenith is recognized for its unique mix of contemporary art in a wide variety of media, style and subject. The gallery provides high-quality acquisition, art consulting, commissioning, appraisal and framing services, through its gallery/salon/ sculpture garden off 16th Street at 1429 Iris St NW, WDC 20012. Zenith also curates rotating exhibits at the Eleven Sculpture Space at 1111 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, WDC 20004