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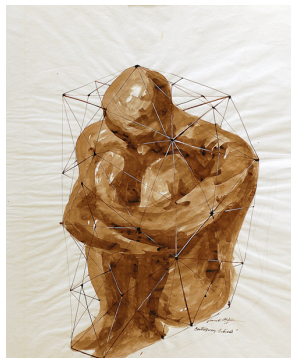
Press Opening: Thursday, March 24, 6:30 pm
Bennett College for Women, Steele Hall Art Gallery
900 E. Washington Street
Greensboro, NC
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**THE ART OF JAMES C. MCMILLAN: DISCOVERING AN AFRICAN AMERICAN
MASTER**

A Retrospective of 100 Works

Loss and Redemption, March 20-May 6 2011, African American Atelier, Inc.

Elegance and Line, March 20-May 6, 2011, Steele Hall Art Gallery, Bennett College for Women



Contemporary Cubicle, 1968, sepia ink/wash drawing, 25"x18"

(New York, NY—March, 2011) The burgeoning career of renowned North Carolina artist and educator James C. McMillan takes center stage with two major exhibitions in Greensboro, NC, Sunday, March 20-Friday, May 6, 2011. Covering a prolific 60 years in art, both exhibitions are free to the public and open simultaneously at the **African American Atelier Inc.**, 200 N. Davie Street, and at **Bennett College for Women**, Steele Hall Art Gallery, 900 E. Washington Street.

Gallery hours for the African American Atelier are Tues-Sat, 10am-5pm, Wed 10am-7pm, and Sun 2-5pm; and gallery hours for Bennett College are Tues-Fri, 10am-4pm, Sat 11am-2pm. The exhibitions are co-organized by Dr. Alma S. Adams, co-founder and curator of The African American Atelier, Inc., and Professor of Art and Gallery Director, Bennett College for Women, Greensboro, NC, and Charlotte Sherman, director, Heritage Art Gallery, Pacific Palisades, CA. These exhibitions follow the artist's acclaimed west coast debut at the Bakersfield Museum of Art in California, 2009-2010.

An art prodigy, McMillan attended Howard University at 15 years of age and studied under Lois Mailou Jones, James Lesesne Wells, James A. Porter and James V. Herring. After graduating from Howard University with a Bachelor of Fine Arts, he was accepted as the first African American student at the noted Skowhegan School of Art in Maine, and later studied at the prestigious Académie Julian in Paris, France. He achieved eminence as an art professor and chair of both art departments at Bennett College and Guilford College in Greensboro, NC where he taught a collective 40 years at both institutions. McMillan is like many African American artists born in the early 20th century whose work has been largely undiscovered. Now at age 85, he is being recognized and brought to national attention by virtue of this retrospective.

McMillan's works explore a variety of media, artistic movements, and styles that defy simple categorization and serve as an emotional archaeology of the universal human condition: dehumanization, loss and renewal. Painting, drawing, traditional and abstract sculpture and printmaking will be featured, representing an oeuvre ranging from the 1940s to the present. A recently completed large-scale surrealist-style oil painting, Contemporary Precipice/60s Symbols (2011) will be on view for the first time. Numerous early architectural studies and nudes in ink, charcoal, and conte crayon drawings on paper complete the retrospective and are featured mainly at the Bennett College Art Gallery, including a Paris series from the 1950s.

Noted economist and Bennett College President, Dr. Julianne Malveaux, states, "That universal theme of individual tragedy, loss, and revitalized hope is manifested in the brilliant art of a man with a special vision. By taking time to discover this overlooked master artist, we offer hope that other exceptional black artists, now lost to history, may someday be found."

On view at the African American Atelier, Inc., *Loss and Redemption* is an expanded version of the 2009-2010 west coast premiere. This exhibition captures his meticulous attention to the human figure as a collective, intellectual humanity. A signature oil painting, Four Dream Builders (2001), projects a redeeming future with civil rights in the visionary guises of four North Carolina college students who challenged segregation at a Woolworth's lunch counter. Humanity is isolated, entrapped by a webbed force field in the ink drawing Contemporary Cubicle (1968), inspired by the use of technologically advanced systems for restraining laboratory animals and a work the artist describes as "a study of racial suppression."

McMillan's experiments with metaphorical abstraction are evident in Holocaust/Apartheid (1957). A postmodern driftwood sculpture, IO Bird (1991), representative of McMillan's most recent direction using weathered, found materials, suggests a natural world under assault. The works on paper, *Elegance and Line*, at Bennett College, demonstrate McMillan's deft use of materials like felt marker, crayon, and newspaper.

McMillan has incorporated the techniques of classical masters Da Vinci and Michelangelo; the strategies and philosophies of Cezanne, Brancusi, and Picasso; the lengthy nudes of Modigliani; and the astute dexterity of Pollock and some of today's contemporary artists to create imagery that maps the emotional geography of human cruelty, indifference, and perseverance over adversity. He calls his works "emotional reactions" to experiences he felt compelled to address as a life-long artist and humanist, such as the Vietnam War and other international conditions.

The Art of James C. McMillan: Discovering An African American Master is accompanied by a 48-page exhibition brochure that includes over 60 reproduced images of McMillan's art from the 1940s, and 50s to the present, many published for the first time from his personal collection. The brochure includes an essay by Professor Shawnya Harris, director of the University Galleries at North Carolina A&T University, which focuses on the artist's life and artistic development and a Portraits in Paris interview of McMillan by Charlotte Sherman of the Heritage Art Gallery in California.

MORE ABOUT JAMES C. MCMILLAN

James C. McMillan was born in Sanford, North Carolina on December 23, 1925. McMillan was one of three children of Sadie and Rev. Dr. James Ernest McMillan. Both parents were educators in the public school system, with his father also serving as the minister of the St. James Presbyterian Church.

In 1941, at the age of fifteen, young James McMillan graduated valedictorian from his high school and moved to Washington, D.C. to attend Howard University. He studied under such artists as painter Lois Mailou Jones, James Lesesne Wells, James A. Porter and James V. Herring. McMillan served in the United States Navy during World War II from 1943-46. He returned to Howard for a final year and earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1947. In the summer of 1947, he received a nine-week art fellowship to the prestigious Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in Skowhegan, Maine. He was also the first African American to be admitted to that program.

In the fall of 1947, McMillan became the Chair of the Art Department at Bennett College; he would complete the first of three tenures at Bennett. Despite a busy teaching and administrative schedule, McMillan continued to produce paintings and pursue artistic study on the side. In 1950, he took a sabbatical from Bennett College to study at the Académie Julian in Paris, France. As one of about twenty-five international, advanced level students, McMillan was most productive and completed several pieces including the prolific Weeping Christ (originally titled Weeping Christ as Modern Man, 1951.), a critique of racial violence and social injustice towards black Americans during this time.

He did a second tenure at Bennett for the period of one year and then moved to Washington, D.C. While in Washington, D.C., McMillan attended Catholic University, where he pursued his MFA in Sculpture (completed in 1952). In addition, he worked as a commercial artist and made an attempt at gallery ownership when he and another artist opened Ger-Mac Art Studio between 1954 and 1955. During this time he also taught at Howard University.

McMillan returned to Greensboro in 1956 to resume teaching at Bennett College. Soon after, he was awarded a Danforth Teacher Fellowship Grant enabling him to pursue doctoral study at Syracuse University. McMillan's return also coincided with some major strides in the Civil Rights Movement. He participated in Greensboro's groundbreaking Sit-In Movement, and was involved with several non-violent student demonstrations with students from Bennett College and North Carolina A&T and was jailed several times for his protests. In 1969, he accepted a post as a Professor and Chair of the Art Department at nearby Guilford College. McMillan was the first African-American chair of the Art Department there. He retired in 1988, but continues to produce powerful works of art.

James McMillan has continued to work and involve himself in the arts. He was one of the original co-founders and first president of the African American Atelier, which originally opened in 1991. His work can be found in private collections and at Bennett College, North Carolina Central University, Guilford College, The Weatherspoon Art Museum and Virginia State University.

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PARTIAL LIST OF EXHIBITED WORKS***The Art of James C. McMillan: Discovering an African American Master***

Joint Exhibition of 100 Works

March 20 - May 6, 2011

Greensboro, North Carolina, USA

The Art of James C. McMillan: Loss and Redemption - A Retrospective

The African American Atelier, Inc.

1946, Portrait of Mother, charcoal, 24 x 19.5

1947, Study for African Scene, pencil, 10.5 x 10

1947, African Scene, lithograph, 10.5 x 10

1948, Self Portrait as an Artist, oil on canvas, 16 x 12

1949, Hilda, Bennett Student, 21.5 x 16.75

1950, Weeping Christ, oil on board, 25 x 18

1950, Paris Suburb with Trees, ink/wash, 10.5 x 8

c. 1950s, Cold War, oil on canvass, 18 x 24

1950/51, Sharecroppers, charcoal, 25 x 18

1950/51, The Weepers, red conte, 18 x 20

1950/51, Pensive Nude, red conte, 25 x 18

1950/51, Seated Nude, From the Side, red conte, 25 x 18

1951, Study for Pensive Nude, ink, 12 x 9

1951, Racism Condemned, charcoal, 24 x 19

1951, Home Yard - Vista, oil on canvas board, 20 x 16

1951, Pensive, brush/ink, 9 x 7_1951, Shrouded Parisian, brush/ink, 9.5 x 3

1952, Looking Back: Looking Over My Shoulder, oil on paper, 20 x 12

1952, Mother and Child, oil on board, 27 x 21.5

1953/56, Afro-Thinker, wood sculpture, 26 x 6 x 6

1954, Broken Doll, pen ink/wash, 9.5 x 7.5

1957, Holocaust/Apartheid, oil on canvas, 24x50

1958, Self Portrait, sepia ink/wash, 18 x 12 (approx.)

1958, The Prisoner, charcoal drawing, 27 x 20

1959, Escape, oil on masonite, 36 x 24 (approx)

1959, Dream Chaser, oil on masonite, 24 x 36

1959, Red Bird, oil on masonite, 36 x 24 (approx.)

1960, Voyagers, oil on masonite, 24 x 36

1960, Syracuse Cafe, pen ink/wash, 6 x 4

1960, Chair with Sketch Pad, ink/wash, 8 x 10.5

1960, Greensboro Before Redevelopment, pen/ink, 8 x 10.5

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1961, Study for Dark Corner, ink, 12 x 9
 1961, Dark Corner, oil on canvas, 36 x 28
 1961, Politicos, etching, 12 x 16.5
 1961, The Juggler, watercolor ink/wash, 24 x 14.25
 1963, Breaking Free-At Last, oil on canvas, 30 x 24
 1964, Abandoned Workshop, pen/ink, 12 x 16
 1967, Condemned Innocence, black conte, 25 x 19
 1968, Three Carolina Students, sepia pen/ink, 19 x 23.5
 1968, I Am My Brother's Keeper, oil, 24 x 30
 1968, Contemporary Cubicle, ink wash, 26 x 18
 1968, H. Rap Brown-New Minstrel, sepia pen/ink, 23.25 x 18.25
 1979, Time (Old Man), sepia pen/ink, 6 x 4
 1986, Am I My Brother's Keeper, oil on masonite, 31 x 23
 1991, IO Bird, found wood sculpture, 20 x 13 x 31
 2001, Four Dream Builders, oil on masonite, 48 x 32
 2011, Contemporary Precipice/60s Symbols, oil on masonite, 24 x 32

The Art of James C. McMillan: Elegance and Line - A Drawing Retrospective

Bennett College for Women
 Steele Hall Art Gallery
 Greensboro, NC

1948, Rescue, pastel wash, 12 x 22
 1950, Reclining Nude, black conte, 18 x 24
 1950, Hallelujah, ink/newsprint, 14 x 24
 1950, Suppression, ink/newsprint, 14 x 24
 1950, Blvd. St. Michel, Paris, felt marker, 14 x 18
 1950, Au Cafe, Paris ("Karen Heiberg"), pen/ink, 11 x 13
 1950, L'Hotel de Ville, Paris, felt marker, 14 x 16
 1951, Paris Suburb with Trees, ink wash, 20 x 12
 1951, Montmartre with Sacre Coeur, Paris, felt marker, 16 x 14
 1951, Luxemburg Gardens from Window, felt marker, 24 x 30.5
 1951, Le Concierge, felt marker, 14 x 16
 1951, Moulin de Galette, Paris, felt marker, 14 x 16
 1951, L'Hotel de Ville, Paris, felt marker, 14 x 16
 1951, St. Germain de Pres, Paris, felt marker, 15 x 18
 1951, Notre Dame Apse, Paris, pen/ink, 15 x 12
 1951, Notre Dame, Paris, felt marker, 15 x 18
 1951, Street Corner, Paris, felt marker, 15 x 18
 1951, Hands, ink/felt marker, 15.5 x 15.5
 1951, Racism Unleashed, pen/ink, 16 x 20
 1951, Luxemburg Palace, Paris, ink/felt marker, 14 x 18
 1951, Sidewalk Cafe, Paris, ink/felt marker, 14 x 16

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1951, Cafe Table with Wine, Paris, pen/ink, 13 x 16
 1960, House Crane, 9.5 x 6.5
 1960, Victorian Icon, woodcut, 16 x 20
 1960, Sentinel, lithograph, 13 x 16
 1961, Complex Interchange, lithograph, 13 x 18
 1961, Nature Embraced, wood cut, 16 x 20
 1963, Flight to Egypt, pastel, 17 x 24
 1977, Carolina Dunes, black conte, 28 x 32
 1977, Cedar Lane, black conte, 27 x 32
 1977, Our Days are Numbered, pen/ink 7 x 10
 1977, Windsor Composite, black conte, 19 x 23.5
 1979, Rubber Plant with Broken Vase, black conte, 27 x 32
 1979, Figure Composition: The Admired, black conte, 32 x 27

The Art of James C. McMillan: Discovering An African American Master is generously sponsored by The Community Trust Foundation of Greater Greensboro, The Cemola Foundation, the Tannenbaum-Sternberger Foundation, the African American Atelier, Inc., Bennett College for Women, and private art collectors; Patrick Bradford, Robert Holmes, and Arthur Primas.

To read more about James C. McMillan and his retrospective, please visit [artsee](http://artsee.com), a North Carolina-based art journal, www.artseemagazine.com. McMillan is the magazine's March-April 2011 cover story. To read selected statements from the artist, please visit www.jamescmcmillan.com. For additional information about *The Art of James C. McMillan: Discovering An African American Master* and/or to schedule an interview with Prof. McMillan, please contact Laura Rice at 917-941-5865 or laura.wicg@gmail.com.

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