



UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

DAVID C. DRISKELL CENTER
FOR THE STUDY OF THE VISUAL ARTS AND CULTURE OF
AFRICAN AMERICANS AND THE AFRICAN DIASPORA

1214 Cole Student Activities Building
College Park, Maryland 20742
301.314.2615 TEL 301.314.0679 FAX
driskellcenter@umd.edu
www.driskellcenter.umd.edu

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEWS RELEASE

Date: January 1, 2012
Contact: Ms. Dorit Yaron
Title: Deputy Director
Phone: 301.405.6835
Email: dyaron@umd.edu

**ROMARE BEARDEN, JACOB LAWRENCE, ELIZABETH CATLETT,
DAVID C. DRISKELL, MARGO HUMPHREY, EMMA AMOS, JAMES L. WELLS**

Featured in

***Successions: Prints by African American Artists
from the Jean and Robert Steele Collection***

COLLEGE PARK, MD. ***Successions: Prints by African American Artists from the Jean and Robert Steele Collection***, an exhibition of works by some of the most highly regarded African American artists, organized by the David C. Driskell Center for the Study of the Visual Arts and Culture of African Americans and the African Diaspora at the University of Maryland, opens on Thursday, February 2, 2012 with a public reception from 5-7PM. The exhibition will stay open until June 22, 2012.

Forty-five artists, using traditional printmaking techniques such as etching, monoprint, lithography, linocut and silkscreen, created the sixty-two works on display. The exhibition highlights the remarkable focus of the Jean and Robert Steele collection. For the last four decades, the Steeles have developed a collection of hundreds of prints and works on paper by African American artists.

Instrumental in the Steele's collecting has been their patronage of printmaking workshops that have been established by, and focus on, African American artists, such as Bob Blackburn's Printmaking Workshop, Inc. in New York City; Allan Edmunds's Brandywine Workshop, Philadelphia, PA; Lou Stovall's Workshop, Inc. and Percy Martin's WD Graphics Studio, both in Washington, DC. In addition to workshops established by African Americans, works in the collection also represent various institutions with which African American artists have collaborated, such as Tamarind Institute, Albuquerque, NM and the Rutgers Center for Innovative Print and Paper, New Brunswick, NJ.

"The Steeles are endeavoring to create a systematic structure to support African American art," says exhibition curator Adrienne Childs in her catalogue essay. "Although there are few public or

<<<OVER>>>

private collections of this nature, the Steeles recognize the need to support black printmakers and the systems that sustain them in order to ensure the longevity and vitality of this important medium.”

The extraordinary depth of this collection provides an opportunity to appreciate a variety of styles and thematic expressions embodied in the works by some of the most celebrated African American artists of the 20th century. Important to the exhibition are prints by Romare Bearden, Jacob Lawrence, Elizabeth Catlett, David C. Driskell, Margo Humphrey, Emma Amos and James L. Wells.

Many other seminal African American artists such as Benny Andrews, Bob Blackburn, Robert Colescott, Stephanie Pogue, Allan R. Crite, Lois Mailou Jones, Betye Saar, Sam Gilliam, Samella Lewis, Lou Stovall and William T. Williams are featured in the exhibition. The works of these influential figures, as well as those of emerging and mid-career artists, inform the viewer of the significant role the print medium has had in African American visual culture.

Accompanying the exhibition is a forty-eight page catalogue; it includes twenty-eight color reproductions, an exhibition checklist, a glossary of printmaking terms, and texts by David C. Driskell, Jean and Robert Steele, and curator Adrienne Childs. The catalogue is among the few which document the medium of printmaking by African American artists. It is available for purchase for \$20. “Jean and Robert Steele have amassed a significant body of work and have become an integral part of the culture of printmaking and the interconnected community of African American art,” curator Adrienne Childs concludes in her essay.

The exhibition was first presented at The Art Gallery at the University of Maryland, College Park, from April 1 through April 29, 2002. Since then, the exhibition has traveled to fourteen additional venues across the country.

The David C. Driskell Center for the Study of the Visual Arts and Culture of African Americans and the African Diaspora at the University of Maryland, College Park, celebrates the legacy of David C. Driskell—Distinguished University Professor Emeritus of Art, Artist, Art Historian, Collector, and Curator—by preserving the rich heritage of African American visual art and culture. Established in 2001, the Center provides an intellectual home for artists, museum professionals, art administrators, and scholars of color, broadening the field of African diasporic studies. The Driskell Center is committed to collecting, documenting, and presenting African American art as well as replenishing and expanding the field. For further information about the David C. Driskell Center, please visit www.driskellcenter.umd.edu.

###