



CAAM California
African American
Museum

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**THE CALIFORNIA AFRICAN AMERICAN MUSEUM RECEIVES SIGNIFICANT GIFT OF ART
FROM GORDON W. BAILEY COLLECTION**

(Los Angeles, CA) — The California African American Museum (CAAM) announced today a significant gift of thirty-two artworks from collector, scholar, and advocate Gordon W. Bailey. The paintings, sculpture, and mixed media works that comprise Bailey's gift to CAAM are by African American artists and include an important, circa-1980s work by the renowned, St. Helena, South Carolina artist Sam Doyle (1906–1985), whose expressive paintings chronicle America's unique Gullah culture, and more generally African American achievement. The documentary work, which includes the Gullah-speaking artist's hand-painted, phonetically spelled title, *St. Helena's Black Merry Go Rond*, declaratively elevates the ordinary to the extraordinary when viewed in a historical context. Other noted artists represented in the gift are Leroy Almon, Hawkins Bolden, Roy Ferdinand, Robert Howell, "Missionary" Mary Proctor, Herbert Singleton, Georgia Speller, Jimmy Lee Sudduth, and Purvis Young.

George O. Davis, Executive Director of CAAM, said, "CAAM is honored to acquire this important collection of artworks, which furthers our mission of preserving and interpreting the art, history, and culture of African Americans. Mr. Bailey is a staunch supporter of artists working outside the

mainstream and he has generously gifted artworks from his collection to a number of American museums, including the High Museum of Art in Atlanta, Smithsonian American Art Museum, and Los Angeles County Museum of Art. It is a great compliment to be in the company of these esteemed institutions whose commitment to diversity is laudable.”

As a young man, Bailey witnessed firsthand the suffering in the Jim Crow South and was profoundly impacted. He explains that this gift to CAAM underscores his commitment to advocate for disenfranchised artists: “Each visit to CAAM strengthens my resolve and validates my conviction that the brilliant works created by many marginalized artists merit a fair review. CAAM's exhibitions are broad ranging and relevant, and the museum's dynamic programming, often featuring prominent speakers, is a huge plus for Los Angeles. It is an honor to be able to contribute.” In 2013, Bailey organized and curated CAAM's highly regarded exhibition, *Soul Stirring: African American Self-taught Artists from the South*.

“We are most grateful to Mr. Bailey for donating these inspiring artworks to CAAM,” says Naima J. Keith, deputy director and chief curator. “This gift is central to our goal of growing our collection, allowing us to broaden and deepen our understanding of what it means to be an African American artist.”

About the California African American Museum

CAAM explores the art, history, and culture of African Americans, with an emphasis on California and the West. Chartered by the State of California in 1977, the Museum began formal operations in 1981 and is a state-supported agency and a Smithsonian Affiliate. In addition to presenting exhibitions and public programs, CAAM houses a permanent collection of more than four thousand works of art, artifacts, and historical documents, and a publicly accessible research library containing more than twenty thousand volumes.

Visitor Information

Admission to the California African American Museum is free. Visit caammuseum.org for current exhibition and program information or call 213-744-7432 for tours or additional assistance.

Hours: Tuesday–Saturday 10 a.m.–5 p.m., Sunday 11 a.m.–5 p.m. Closed Mondays and national holidays. The California African American Museum is located in Exposition Park at the corner of Figueroa Street and Exposition Boulevard, west of the 110 (Harbor) Freeway. Easy parking is available for \$12 (cash only) at 39th and Figueroa Streets. The Metro Expo line stop Expo Park/USC is a five-minute walk through the Exposition Park Rose Garden to the Museum.

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Image: Sam Doyle, (United States, 1906–1985), *St. Helena's Black Merry Go Rond*, house paint on metal, 26 x 48”, circa 1980–83

Additional images available upon request.