



For Immediate Release: December 11, 2018

Contact:

Emma Jacobson-Sive, 323-842-2064,
emma@ejs-media.com
Stacey Ravel Abarbanel, 310-736-5300,
srabarbanel@gmail.com

**THE CALIFORNIA AFRICAN AMERICAN MUSEUM ANNOUNCES WINTER SEASON,
FEATURING A NEW SLATE OF EXHIBITIONS THAT EXAMINE
AFRICAN AMERICAN ART, HISTORY, AND IDENTITY
Season Launch Party (Can't Stop, Won't Stop!): March 20, 2019 7–9 pm**

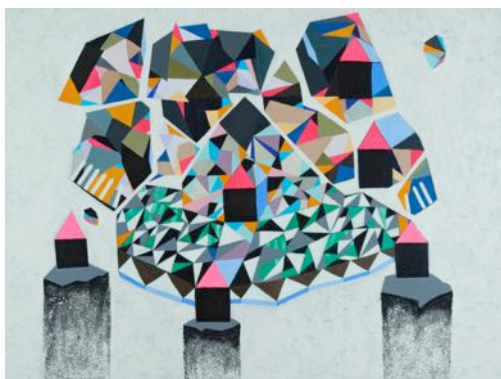
(Los Angeles, CA) — The California African American Museum (CAAM) announced today that it will open four new exhibitions in early 2019, including a solo exhibition of new and recent work by Oakland-based artist Adia Millett; a survey of the historic 20th-century newspaper *The Liberator*, which documented Los Angeles' emerging African American population; and a selection of works by contemporary artists who find conversation with the oeuvre of noted painter, printmaker, muralist, draftsman, and photographer Charles White.

George O. Davis, Executive Director of CAAM said, “We are grateful that our longtime supporters, fellow cultural organizations, and the public at large have welcomed CAAM's new direction. This winter we continue our journey by presenting a unique combination of exhibitions, offering various takes on the art, history, and culture of African Americans in California and beyond. There is truly something for everyone.”

CAAM's winter exhibitions are:

Adia Millett: Breaking Patterns

February 5 – August 25, 2019



In *Breaking Patterns*, Oakland-based artist Adia Millett delves into issues of identity, personal memory, and collective history. She cycles her evocative imagery through a variety of media, including collage, assemblage, photography, textiles, and painting, creating multilayered representations of deconstructed structures and imaginary interiors that stand in for the human experience and provide a dwelling place for a black aesthetic. A central concern of Millett's is the history of African Americans, and the history of African American women in particular. Her quilts—made from discarded clothing, sheets, other quilts, and curtains—allude to domesticity and craftwork. *Flying Coffee*

Table (2015), for example, is an elaborate, process-oriented quilt that reveals Millett's use of improvisation and intuition; the artist disassembled an existing quilt and rearranged it into an irregular, unexpected form.

Breaking Patterns also features Millett's miniature houses, including *Capital Gain* (2011), whose intriguing, mirrored interiors are charged with psychological unrest, offering a deep exploration of memory and loss. She photographs these tiny interiors, transforming the spaces into surreal, self-contained vignettes that resemble dreamscapes. Her collages in turn utilize fragments of her photographic prints, and her mixed-media constructions reuse model-making supplies from the

miniature houses. As Millett repurposes these subjects and materials, she adds layers of meaning to her work's distorted spaces and skewed perspectives. Metaphorically, they capture the complexity of the body and, by extension, its potential identities; they also stand as structures for human subjectivity—vessels for multiple psychological states of being.

Millett's work has been a standout in numerous group exhibitions including *Greater New York* at PS1 in Long Island City, New York and *Freestyle* at the Studio Museum in Harlem, New York.

This exhibition is curated by Mar Hollingsworth, Visual Arts Curator and Program Manager.

Plumb Line: Charles White and the Contemporary

March 6 – August 25, 2019



A prolific painter, printmaker, muralist, draftsman, and photographer whose career spanned more than half a century, Charles White's artistic portrayals of black subjects, life, and history were extensive and far-reaching. *Plumb Line* features contemporary artists—including Sadie Barnett, Greg Breda, Arielle Danielle, Toyin Ojih Odutola, Lava Thomas, and others—whose work in the realm of black individual and collective life resonates with White's profound and continuing influence.

From abstraction to figuration, the artists of *Plumb Line* find conversation with White through the largesse of their canvases, expansive renderings of black skin and black community, and in the treatment of black past and presence in ways that are both epic and intimate.

The plumb line, an architectural tool used to determine verticality, is a featured element in White's *Birmingham Totem*, suggesting the work of black artists as architects of change. White himself

can also be considered an artistic plumb line: a builder of black artistic opportunities and a compass directing us toward new aesthetic, liberatory possibilities.

Plumb Line is curated by Essence Harden, independent curator, and Leigh Raiford, Associate Professor of African American Studies at the University of California at Berkeley, for the California African American Museum. The exhibition is presented as a companion to the LACMA exhibitions *Charles White: A Retrospective* and *Life Model: Charles White and his Students*.

The Liberator: Chronicling Black Los Angeles, 1900–1914

March 20 – September 9, 2019



The Liberator was an early 20th-century newspaper that documented the emerging African American population in Los Angeles. Founded in 1900 by Jefferson Lewis Edmonds, a former enslaved African who advocated for improved social and economic conditions for black men and women, the publication reported on local, national, and international news and provided a source of racial upliftment for over a decade. As *The Liberator's* editor, Edmonds portrayed Los Angeles as a city of hope for African Americans, particularly compared to the violence and hardship they experienced in the South, and the paper contributed significantly to the city's rapidly increasing black population. Yet Edmonds also used it as a vehicle to denounce injustices both locally and nationally.

The Liberator: Chronicling Black Los Angeles, 1900–1914 sheds light on the expansion of the city's African American community, its challenges in a post-

Reconstruction era, and its hopes and accomplishments, as captured in the newspaper's pages. More than a century since *The Liberator's* final issue, this exhibition includes rare ephemera, photographs, and artifacts that offer a unique study of the narrative of black Los Angeles.

This exhibition is curated by Tyree Boyd-Pates, History Curator and Program Manager, Taylor Bythewood-Porter, Assistant History Curator, and Arianne Edmonds, Founder of the J.L. Edmonds Project.

Aspects of Nude: Selections from the Permanent Collection

March 20 – September 8, 2019



Aspects of Nude showcases the ways in which artists have portrayed the human form in its purest state: bare. For centuries the study of nude models, in various poses, has been a fundamental source for artists to master drawing skills and learn to represent the subtleties of the human physique. The works in this exhibition capture the essence of the male and female body through both realistic and abstract compositions using a spectrum of materials. The bronze surfaces of John Wilson's *Standing Woman* (1980) and Charles Dickson's *Mae* (2000) emphasize the curvatures of women likely of color; while Artis Marie Lane's *Emerging First Man* (1997) illustrates the upward gaze of a man whose well-defined musculature surfaces from the earth. Frescoes by Alison Saar, photographs by Elisabeth Sunday and Tracy Brown, and paintings by Emmanuel Ekong Ekefey and

Elaine Towns, among other objects, reflect varied approaches to nude figures, using the body to convey emotions or tell particular stories. At times controversial, the subject of the nude remains an important one to artists. Their works, in turn, give viewers the permission to explore the distinctive ways in which the human figure can be rendered, celebrated, and transformed.

The majority of works in *Aspects of Nude: Selections from the Permanent Collection* are from the permanent collection of the California African American Museum, with additions from private collections. The exhibition is curated by Vida L. Brown, Visual Arts Curator and Program Manager.

California Bound: Slavery on the New Frontier, 1848–1865

Extended through April 28, 2019



California Bound: Slavery on the New Frontier, 1848–1865 examines California's under-recognized involvement with slavery in the 19th century. With powerful photographs, historical documents, and other ephemera, *California Bound* illuminates the state's struggles over enslavement in an era that encompassed two wars and the establishment of California first as a territory and then a state. The exhibition highlights major historical events and untold stories of those impacted, and it considers how the state's oscillation on

enslavement produced ripple effects in America's political structures that are still being felt today.

This exhibition is curated by Tyree Boyd-Pates, History Curator and Program Manager, and Taylor Bythewood-Porter, Assistant History Curator.

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.

###

Images:

Page 1: Adia Millett, *Snow*, 2018. Acrylic paint and glitter on panel, 36" x 48", Courtesy the artist

Page 2: Greg Breda, *Untitled (Salt, woman w/ big hat)*, 2013. Acrylic on mylar, 62" x 40", Courtesy the artist

Page 2: Jefferson Lewis Edmonds, *A Scene in Southern California, June 1905*. *The Liberator* vol. 7 no. 2, Reproduction. Courtesy Edmonds Family Collection | Los Angeles Public Library Special Collections

Page 3: Romare Bearden, *Mecklenburg Morning & Evening Sunrise*, 1986. Collage and watercolor on paper. Collection of the California African American Museum

Page 3: *California Bound: Slavery on the New Frontier, 1848–1865*. Installation photo by Brian Forrest.