

# Weatherspoon Art Museum in Greensboro, NC, Offers Exhibition of African American Artworks

The Weatherspoon Art Museum at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro is pleased to present the exhibition, *Race and Representation: The African American Presence in American Art*, on view in the Gregory D. Ivy Gallery, from Aug. 20 through Nov. 20, 2011.



Kara Walker, *No World* (from *An Unpeopled Land in Uncharted Waters*), 2010, etching with aquatint, sugarlift, spit-bite and drypoint on Hahnemuhle paper, ed. 5/30, 30 3/8 x 39 3/4 in. Museum purchase with funds from the Weatherspoon Art Museum Acquisition Endowment and the Lynn Richardson Prickett Acquisition Endowment, 2010.

Featuring approximately 25 works by 15 multi-generational artists, the exhibition is presented as part of the Weatherspoon Art Museum's 70th Anniversary year showcasing its permanent collection. American visual culture is permeated with the history and memory of slavery and racism. This exhibition suggests that however much we may seek to affirm a cultural diversity that transcends historically instigated racial boundaries, the African American presence remains American democracy's greatest sticking point and testing ground.

The exhibition is organized around the recent acquisition of two works by pre-eminent, contemporary artists Kara Walker and Leonardo Drew. In the contrasting

languages of narrative figuration and allegorical abstraction, both artists speak to an understanding of the world forged by an African American identity and heritage. Complementing Walker's *An Unpeopled Land in Uncharted Waters* (2010) and Drew's *Number 119D* is a range of works from the museum's permanent collection that demonstrates the centrality of the African American experience to American visual culture.

Primarily but not exclusively created by black artists, these paintings, prints, and sculptures highlight the extraordinary creative visual expression that is but one aspect of that experience. They also dramatize the impossibility of circumscribing African American experience within particular conceptual or stylistic boundaries. The extended range of subject matter (from runaway slaves to the reclining female nude) and competing strategies of representation (from Renaissance perspective to minimalist abstraction and from performance and conceptual art to postmodern appropriation) suggest the ongoing necessity of regarding the African American experience as a touchstone for and microcosm of American culture more generally.

The exhibition was organized by Elaine D. Gustafson, Curator of Collections, and George Dimock, Associate Professor of Art History, UNCG. Support for this exhibition was provided through the generosity of Bob and Lissa Shelley McDowell and Fairway Outdoor Advertising.

For further information check our NC Institutional Gallery listings, call the Museum at 336/334-5770 or visit (<http://weatherspoon.uncg.edu/>).

tamer. Imagine a giant jar of hot molasses drip, drip, dripping onto a perfectly baked hot biscuit. Now imagine potters firing a wood-burning kiln to 2400 Fahrenheit, while knowing that the kiln itself was melting onto the pots inside.

Talk about crazy, talk about pyromania! These "Wild Fire" Alamance County pots were given a true trial-by-fire as kiln drips and wood ash oozed and melted over the surfaces of the pots. They possess a devilish beauty and are a cold-eyed portrait of an inferno. Some say that pots often resemble people, with their bellies, shoulders, feet, and lips, some are tall and elegant, and some are short and stout. These Alamance pots with their fiery surfaces are "messed up" in the most beautiful way. We all know people like that, don't we?

Complementing these historical shows, are beautiful pots made by four exceptional contemporary Alamance County potters: Pamela Groben, Peggy McCormick, Susan Kern, and Coy Quakenbush. We are delighted to invite statewide potters to the Center to show the variety and quality being made across the state.

Exhibition sponsors include: Jason Dowdle, Blue Sky Digital Photography, Saxapahaw General Store, The Eddy Pub and Restaurant and wine from Benjamin Vineyards.

The North Carolina Pottery Center continues to be at the epicenter of pottery scholarship and advocacy, with rotating exhibitions highlighting work from across the state (both ancient and modern), fine educational programs, and strong community support. The Center is a resilient and robust resource for legions of pottery-loving North Carolinians.

Exhibitions are made possible through the generosity of our membership, the Mary and Elliott Wood Foundation, The John Wesley and Anna Hodgin Hanes Foundation, and the Goodnight Educational Foundation. This project was supported by the NC Arts Council, a division of the Department of Cultural Resources, with funding from the National Endowment for the Arts.

For further information check our NC Institutional Gallery listings, call the Center at 336/873-8430 or visit

([www.ncpotterycenter.org](http://www.ncpotterycenter.org)).

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# North Carolina Pottery Center in Seagrove, NC, Offers Two New Exhibits

The North Carolina Pottery Center in Seagrove, NC, will present two new exhibits including: *Wild Fire: Alamance County Stoneware – Past and Present* and *Remember Me as You Pass By... North Carolina Ceramic Grave Markers*, both on view from Aug. 19 through Oct. 29, 2011. A reception will be held on Aug. 19, from 5:30-7:30pm.

There's something wild, and just a little scary, going on in Seagrove again. It's too early, and way too hot for Halloween, so what are those crazy Carolina potters up to now? Well, down at the North Carolina Pottery Center in Seagrove there are two intriguing exhibitions opening in August ... be afraid; be very afraid, for one involves death, the other wildfire.

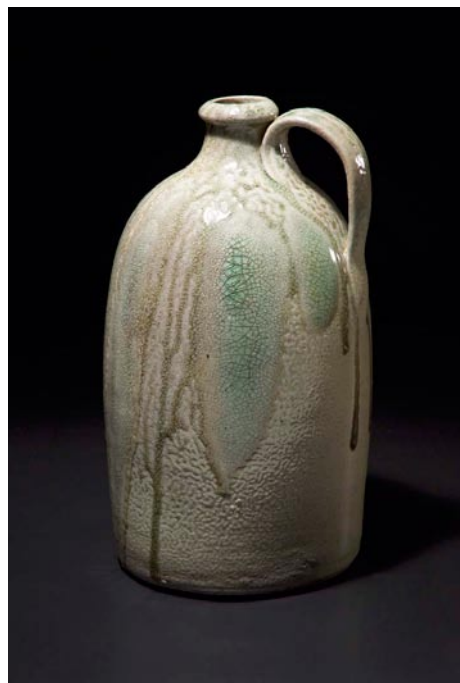


Gravemarker, Unsigned, c. 1890

The cemetery may seem an unusual place for the work of the North Carolina potter, but for Alamance, Moore, Randolph, and Union Counties, there remains solid evidence that they produced a variety of grave markers as well as flowerpots and urns. The predominant form was the "jug marker," which was turned like the common jug but closed off

at the top and surmounted with a decorative finial or knob.

Since they were not functional, like a whiskey jug, grave markers offered a sense of play, an opportunity for potters to exercise their imaginations. But on most, decoration was very restrained; incised or impressed designs, names, and dates were simple and quickly stamped into the wet clay. Some of the forms are soaring and graceful, but most reflect the old utilitarian shapes and techniques. All these tendencies seem in keeping with the pragmatic nature of the old potters, whose purpose was to produce an inexpensive, relatively durable memorial for family and friends.



Work by Solomon Loy, c. 1860

This exhibition will feature historical markers from the 19th and early 20th centuries, as well as contemporary memorials made for friends by Burlon Craig, Vernon Owens, and Mark Hewitt.

The pots in the second show are no  
*continued above on next column to the right*

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