



Franklin Sirmans Pays Tribute To Legendary Art Gallery Just Above Midtown

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Perez Art Museum Miami (PAMM) is pleased to announce its Director Franklin Sirmans will curate a special section of Frieze New York, highlighting artists from Just Above Midtown (JAM), the 1970s-80s Black Power Art Gallery founded by the visionary Linda

Goode Bryant, the Director of Education at the Studio Museum in Harlem at the time.

Bryant founded JAM in 1974 at just 23 years old in response to the lack of exhibition platforms for African American artists. The nonprofit space pioneered the early work of now world-renowned artists, including David Hammons and Adrian Piper. In collaboration with invited galleries, Sirmans will bring JAM back to New York with works by artists including Dawoud Bey, Norman Lewis, Senga Nengudi, Lorraine O'Grady, Howardena Pindell, Lorna Simpson, and Ming Smith.

Linda Goode Bryant's gallery and its experiments with art and artists is the stuff of legend. She gave a home to artists now considered to be part of the canon when they had nowhere else to present their work. If she had only showed David Hammons, Adrian Piper, and Lorraine O'Grady that alone would be enough to celebrate, but when considering JAM's impact in totality, we discover evidence of the great history she created, said Franklin Sirmans, PAMM Director. I am excited to work with Linda around shared goals and ideals that recognize the power of art in public discourse in creating opportunity for diverse people to pursue their mutual well-being.

Loring Randolph, Artistic Director of Frieze Americas, invited Sirmans to curate this year's themed tribute section at Frieze New York. Sirmans' decision to spotlight African American artists at Frieze reflects PAMM's commitment to showcasing artwork from underrepresented communities. This section takes inspiration from PAMM's curatorial mission to celebrate one of the most important cultural institutions of African American art.

Sirmans' reprisal of JAM will include seven solo artist presentations from ten galleries and will be on view this May 2-5, 2019 at the eighth edition of Frieze New York on Randall's Island Park. A portion of the fees from the galleries in this section will be donated to Bryant's current non-profit initiative, Project Eats, a neighborhood-based urban agricultural partnership and social enterprise that creates sustainable food production and equitable distribution of those resources within and between communities. More information available on frieze.com.

PARTICIPATING GALLERIES ARTIST LIST

Dawoud Bey (Rena Bransten Gallery, Stephen Daiter Gallery)

For over four decades Dawoud Bey has made photo and video-based work that examines marginalized

populations, communities, and histories. His recent photo-based works bring African-American history into conversation with the contemporary moment, creating a liminal and resonant experience that collapses the past and the present.

Norman Lewis (Michael Rosenfeld Gallery)

Known for his dynamic abstract compositions, Norman Lewis was a vital member of the first generation of abstract expressionists. Lewis's art derived energy from his vast interests in music both classical and jazz as well as nature, ancient ceremonial rituals, and social justice issues central to the civil rights movement.

Senga Nengudi (Thomas Erben Gallery, Lvy Gorvy, Sprth Magers)

Senga Nengudi's work sits at the forefront of contemporary sculptural, photographic and performance-based practices. A member of the African-American avant-garde of the 1970s and 1980s, she has continued to create evocative works that explore the physical and psychological limits of the human body in relation to the outside world.

Lorraine O'Grady (Alexander Gray Associates)

For more than four decades, Lorraine O'Grady has challenged cultural conventions. Her multidisciplinary practice seeks to confront the limitations of a culture built on exclusivity and resistance to difference. Advocating for concepts like hybridity, gender fluidity, and process rather than resolution, O'Grady uses a variety of mediums that include performance, photo installation, moving media, and photomontage.

Howardena Pindell (Garth Greenan)

Pindell's work often employs lengthy, metaphorical processes of destruction/reconstruction. Among her first forays into abstraction, on unprimed canvas, she sprayed acrylic paint through hand-made stencils, dotted with hole punches. Later, she would cut canvases in various shapes and sew them back together, building up surfaces in elaborate stages with the use of hole punches, paint, and other non-traditional materials. In recent, more political work, Pindell uses similar techniques in order to address social issues, such as homelessness, HIV/AIDS, war, racism, sexism, and xenophobia. The artist's fascination with gridded, serialized imagery, along with texture, appears throughout her oeuvre.

Lorna Simpson (Hauser & Wirth)

Over the past 30 years, Simpson has expanded her practice to encompass various media including film and video, painting, drawing and sculpture. Layered and multivalent, Simpson's practice deploys metaphor, metonymy, and formal prowess to offer a potent response to American life today.

Ming Smith (Jenkins Johnson Gallery)

Smith documents everyday moments through her ethereal and transcendent works. Her work challenges any limiting notion of what African-American photography should look like. Combining a deliberate blurriness with experimental post-production techniques Smith's work includes double exposed prints, collage, and painting, which amplify her photographs dream-like qualities.