

SPRING 2019

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News and Perspectives  
for Friends of the Arts



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**From the President**

Dear Art Patrons,

On behalf of University of Maryland University College (UMUC) and the 90,000 students we serve each year, let me say how grateful I am for your support of the arts and our Arts Program.

This year marks the 40th anniversary of the Arts Program, and we are excited to host two landmark exhibitions—our inaugural *Maryland High School Juried Art Exhibition*, which celebrates the talent, creativity, and hard work of students

across the state, and *Yumi Hogan: Cultural Traditions Unbounded*, which highlights the remarkable artistry of Maryland’s First Lady.

As I have often said, art sharpens our vision; broadens our experience and perception; and fires the creativity that drives us to innovate, learn, and grow. It is wholly consistent with the goals of higher education—and critical to our growth as individuals and society as a whole.

Our Arts Program remains deeply relevant to our mission, supporting the work of emerging and established Maryland artists, showcasing the work of international talent, reaching out to our local and regional community, and in all cases introducing the world of art and the diverse worldviews of artists to new audiences.

Thank you for your support of the arts and the UMUC Arts Program and for your belief in the importance of seeing the world in new and creative ways.

Sincerely,

Javier Miyares, President  
University of Maryland University College



**From the Chair**

Dear Art Lovers,

UMUC’s Arts Program ushers in 2019 with an expanded mission, an exciting exhibition schedule, and new initiatives set forth by President Javier Miyares to deepen relationships with students in grades K–12 and educational institutions across the state of Maryland.

This spring, the Arts Program is hosting its first *Maryland High School Juried Art Exhibition*. Nearly 200 students from across the state competed to be part of the exhibition, as well as for cash prizes for first-, second-, and third-place winners and their schools. The first-place winner, Kaya Abramson (George Washington Carver Center for Arts and Technology), also has the honor of having her artwork featured on a poster that was distributed to Maryland schools and highlighted on the UMUC Arts Program website.

A trip to Havana, Cuba, in April will mark the Arts Program’s first international art excursion. Art patrons and collectors will immerse themselves in the rich Cuban culture during the 13th Havana International Art Biennial. This tour is part of the Arts Program’s effort to provide its friends and supporters with culturally diverse experiences and to offer its constituents a global understanding of the arts.

In closing, I would like to acknowledge the recent passing of Floyd W. Coleman, PhD (1939–2018). He was a renowned art historian, professor emeritus and former chair of the art department at Howard University, and an extraordinary artist whose works were recently featured in the exhibition *Rhythmic Impulses: The Art of Floyd Coleman and Hayward Oubre*. He will be sorely missed by his family, former students, and colleagues. His legacy lives on through his scholarship and the profound artworks he leaves behind. My life has been enhanced simply by being in his presence.

Thank you!

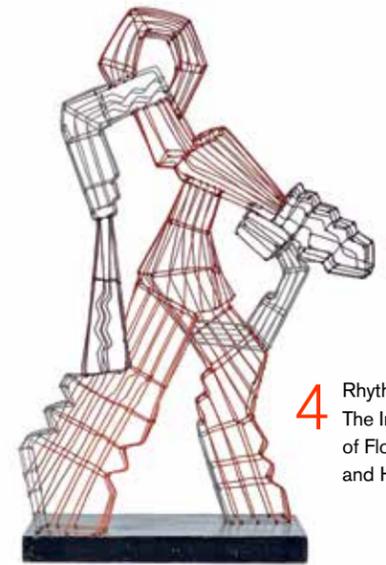
Myrtis Bedolla, Chair, Art Advisory Board  
University of Maryland University College

**UMUC ARTS PROGRAM MISSION STATEMENT**

The UMUC Arts Program is dedicated to furthering the university’s objectives by creating a dynamic environment in which our diverse constituents, including students and the general public, can study and learn from direct exposure to our art collections, exhibitions, and educational programs.



2 Spotlight: Linn Meyers and Henry Isaacs



4 Rhythmic Impulses: The Intersecting Art Worlds of Floyd W. Coleman and Hayward L. Oubre



16 Maryland High School Juried Art Exhibition

**ON THE COVER**



**Rhythmic Impulses**

This recent exhibition featured works by Floyd Coleman and Hayward Oubre. Find out more about their similar career paths and shared musical inspiration on p. 4.

Floyd Coleman, *Naima*, 2016, acrylic on plexiglass and paper, 15 x 20 inches

**In Every Issue**

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CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: *Work* (detail) by Linn Meyers; Hayward Oubre’s *Untitled* wire sculpture; *Maryland High School Juried Art Exhibition* opening reception (left to right, front row): award winners Hailey Feller, Kaya Abramson, Zelda Littlejohn; (back row) UMUC president Javier Miyares, jurors Joan Bevelaqua and Christopher Harrington, award winner Ben Hough, UMUC Arts Program director Eric Key

# COLLECTION SPOTLIGHT

LINN MEYERS AND HENRY ISAACS

BY JON WEST-BEY



Linn Meyers, *Work*, 2003, acrylic and ink on canvas, 78 x 60 inches, International Collection, Gift of Evelyn J. Bata

The UMUC Arts Program is pleased to add two stunning new works to its International Collection, thanks to a generous donation by Evelyn J. Bata. Bata, a member of the UMUC Board of Visitors, has been a longtime art collector and supporter of the Arts Program.

Bata donated Linn Meyers's *Work* (2003), a large canvas on which repeated blue lines with subtle breaks give the illusion of waves. Meyers is a Washington, D.C., native who focuses on large-scale drawing in diverse mediums. She received a Master of Fine Arts from the California College of the Arts and a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art. Her work has been shown at institutions including the Hammer Museum (Los Angeles, California); the Phillips Collection, Smithsonian American Art Museum, Corcoran Gallery of Art, and National Museum

of Women in the Arts (Washington, D.C.); and The Frick Collection (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania).

The donation also includes *Spring Creek* (2008), a charming impressionist lakeside scene by Maine artist Henry Isaacs. Isaacs concentrates on landscapes and still lifes, employing a neo-impressionist style that features broken brushwork and a palette of soft primary colors. Isaacs received a Higher Diploma in Fine Arts in printmaking from the Slade School of Fine Art in London and a Bachelor of Fine Arts in painting from the Rhode Island School of Design. His work is in numerous private and public collections, including those of George Washington University and the American Institute of Architects (both in Washington, D.C.) and the University of California at Davis and at Santa Barbara.



Henry Isaacs, *Spring Lake*, 2008, oil on canvas, 24 x 36 inches, International Collection, Gift of Evelyn J. Bata



SPRING 2019

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Magazine Editor  
Arts Program  
University of Maryland University College  
3501 University Boulevard East  
Adelphi, MD 20783-8007  
Phone 301-985-7937 • Fax 301-985-7865

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DID YOU KNOW? ■ ■ ■ ■

## LITTLE-KNOWN FACTS ABOUT ARTISTS AND ARTWORKS IN THE UMUC PERMANENT COLLECTION

By Eric Key



### Did you know . . .

**Kristin Helberg's** works are inspired by her fascination with folk artist Anna Mary Robertson Moses, known as Grandma Moses.



**Jules Horelick** graduated from the University of Illinois in 1937 with a Bachelor of Science degree in ceramic engineering.

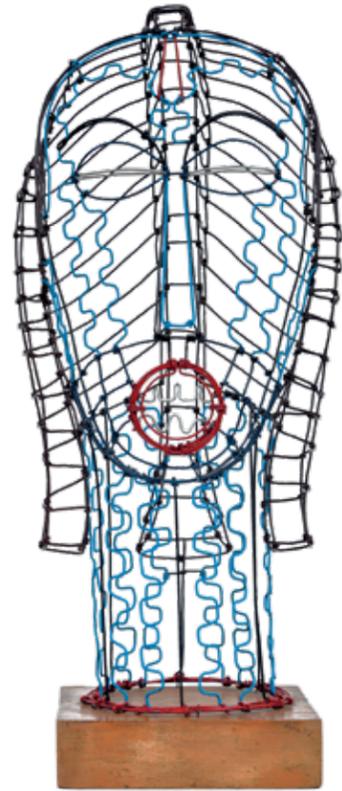


**Mindy Weisel** was born in a displaced persons camp in Bergen-Belsen after World War II, and her parents were Holocaust survivors.



**Peter Gordon** studied painting and art history in Florence, Italy, before receiving his MFA from the University of Maryland, College Park.

ARTWORK ABOVE (left to right): Kristin Helberg, *The Arabber* (detail), 2004, acrylic on canvas panel, Maryland Artist Collection; Jules Horelick, *Head of Herman Maril*, n.d., bronze, Maryland Artist Collection; Mindy Weisel, *The Travelers*, 1986, oil on canvas, International Collection; Peter Gordon, *Fall Turnover*, 2006, oil on canvas, Maryland Artist Collection

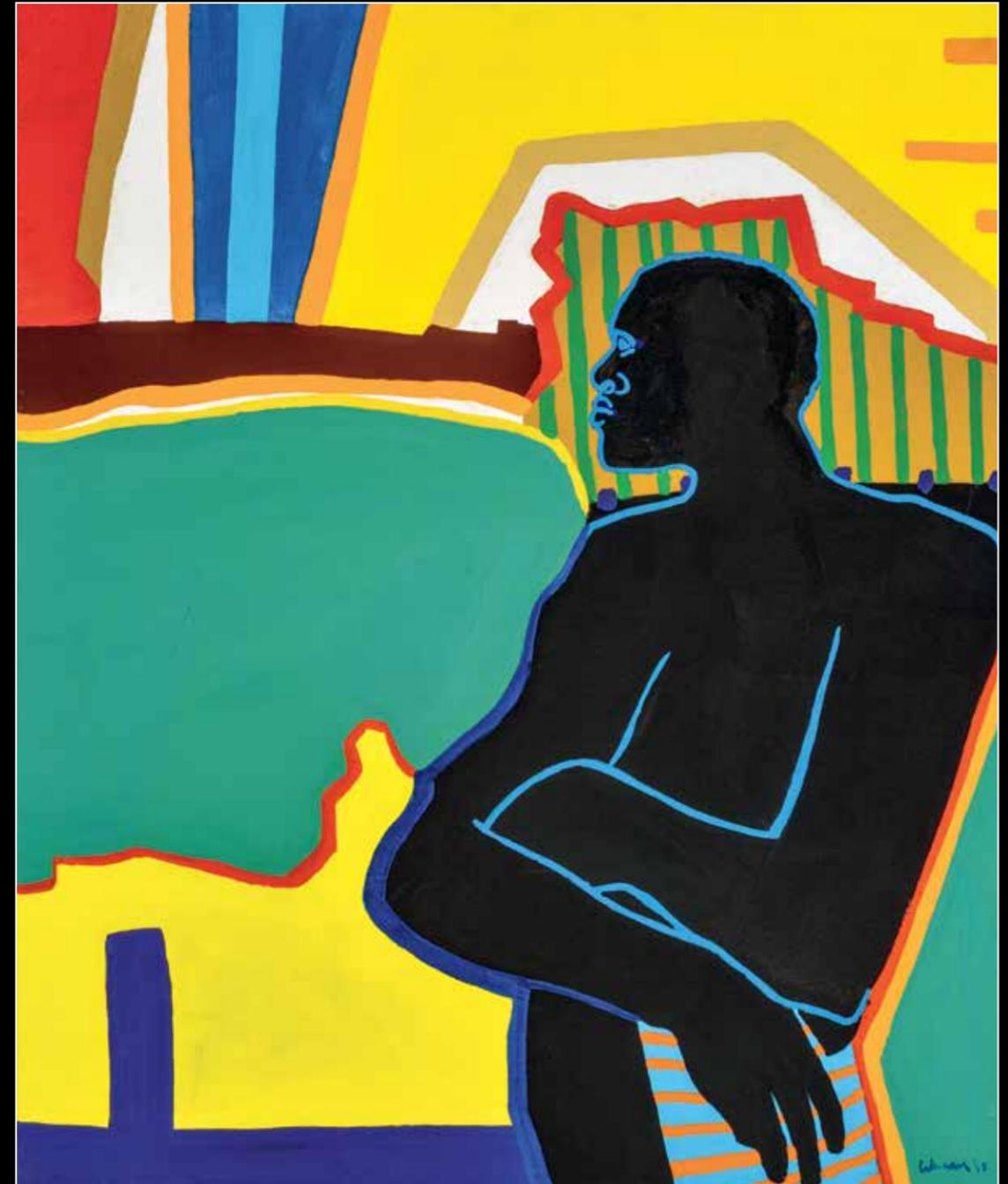


# RHYTHMIC IMPULSES

## THE INTERSECTING ART WORLDS OF FLOYD W. COLEMAN AND HAYWARD L. OUBRE

BY JERRY LANGLEY

Floyd Coleman and Hayward Oubre followed similar career paths, which intersected at critical points. Both spent most of their careers in academia, where they provided artistic training to the next generation of leading artists, art critics, and art historians, sometimes to the detriment of their callings as creative artists. This dedication to promoting African American art and developing young artists might be reason enough for them to be remembered, but they also produced notable artworks that reveal their experiences and cultural influences, including the inspiration they both found in music, particularly jazz.



Floyd Coleman, *Contemplation of the African Past*, 1968, oil on cotton canvas, 38 x 31 1/2 inches, Collection of Dr. M. Keith and Mrs. Donna Rawlings

LEFT: Hayward Oubre, *African Maiden*, 1957, metal wire on wood base, 30 x 12 1/2 x 14 1/4 inches

**FLOYD COLEMAN: UNBOUNDED TALENT,  
INSPIRED BY JAZZ**

**As an artist, scholar, educator, and administrator,**

Floyd Coleman (1939–2018) dedicated his life to art. In doing so, he made significant contributions to the field and became a towering figure in the world of American art, especially as it relates to African American art and artists.

Born on January 13, 1939, Coleman grew up near the small rural community of Sawyerville, Alabama. He was attracted to art at an early age and sought to capture on paper the beauty of nature he observed while fishing and wandering in the woods. He was also encouraged to draw by his father, who was a carpenter and often drew pictures of houses he wanted to build.

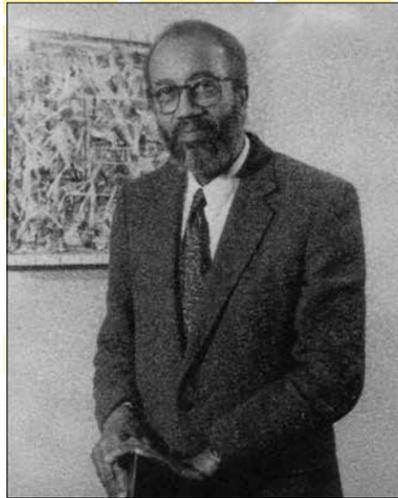
By the time Coleman graduated from the local segregated high school (Hale County Training School in Greensboro) in 1955, he knew he wanted to become an artist. However, he was unsure how to proceed since blacks were not encouraged to further their education (or “training,” as black schooling was called then) until he learned about Alabama State College (now Alabama State University) in Montgomery. There, he studied art under Hayward Oubre, a pioneering artist and educator who became his mentor.

Under Oubre’s tutelage, Coleman began to understand that creating art was an intellectual as well as an aesthetic undertaking. Coleman stated that Oubre demanded that his students understand the fundamentals of drawing, design, and perspective and have a good knowledge of art history. In his studio courses, Oubre always discussed art history. Since mainstream art literature rarely covered African American art and artists, he frequently showed works by black artists from his own collection as examples for his students to see and appreciate.

Following Oubre’s instruction to gain a broad knowledge of art history, Coleman went to the library stacks often and read many art books, including James A. Porter’s *Modern Negro Art* and Alain Locke’s *The New Negro*. In them, he discovered artwork by many talented African American artists, such as Hale Woodruff, Frederick C. Flemister, and Charles Alston, who were not mentioned in the mainstream art world literature.

Coleman graduated from Alabama State College in 1960 with a BA in painting and earned an MS in art education with a concentration in painting and printmaking in 1962 from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, which did not offer a professionally oriented degree in art. Having developed a solid foundation in the visual arts, he embarked on a professional career as both an artist and scholar that lasted more than 50 years.

Coleman had already begun to engage in political activism in the late 1950s while he was at Alabama State College during the civil rights movement. He marched in demonstrations,



Floyd W. Coleman, early 1990s

participated in the 1960 lunch counter sit-ins in Montgomery, and had to make a hasty exit from Sawyerville when his father told him that a group of white men were looking for him. During this period, he was also searching for his own artistic voice. By the mid-1960s, he had found the answer—abstraction influenced by the rhythms of jazz.

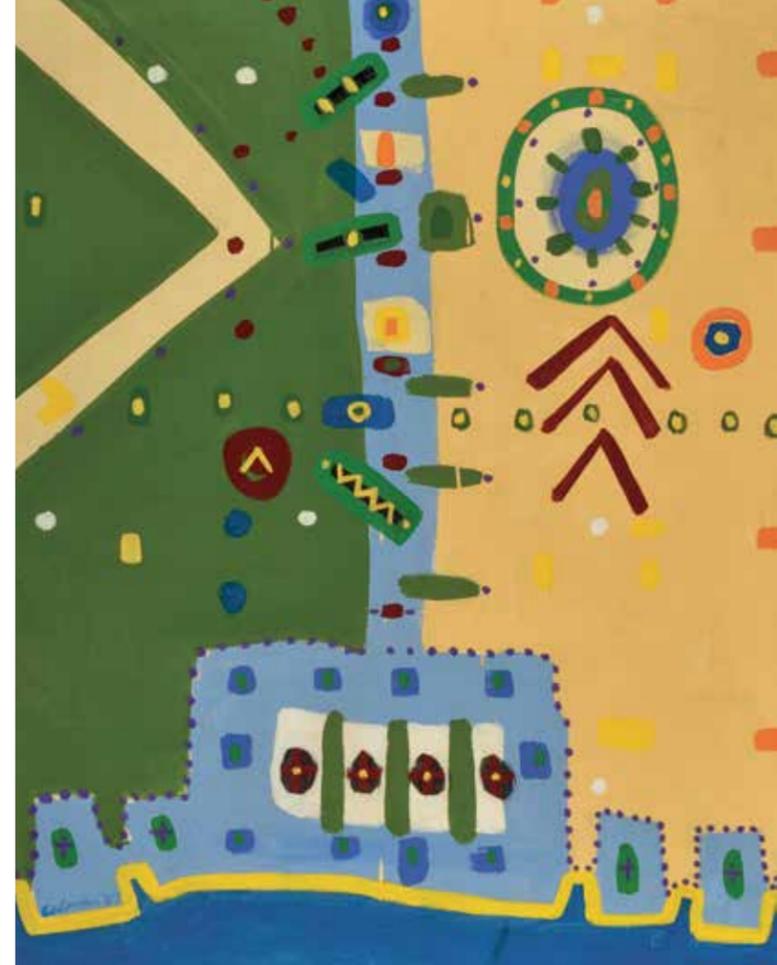
Having long enjoyed the influence that both blues and jazz music had on his creative perspective, Coleman began to understand that the improvisational and rhythmic patterns of jazz gave him the greatest inspiration to capture the spirit of the moment. It greatly influenced the colors, lines, and shapes he employed to render visual images in his artwork. He also concluded that abstraction was the most creative way for him to present visually his perspective of the images and events he witnessed and experienced.

As the civil rights struggle intensified following the March on Washington in 1963, Coleman found that the improvisation of jazz music, such as that produced by saxophonists John Coltrane and Ornette Coleman, enabled him to sense the tensions and urgency of the times. He listened intently to their music and other jazz as he created *Thinking Music* in 1967. After that, the combination of jazz as his inspiration and abstraction for his approach was key to how Coleman created most of his paintings.

Coleman’s paintings and works on paper include quite a few pieces from his Black Arts Movement (BAM) series that allude to the pervasive discrimination and violence against blacks in Alabama, including *Memories of Alabama* (1968) and *Alabama Again* (1970–71). He also paid tribute in his artwork to people important to him and to African American history, including his wife, Floretta Yvonne Boyd; civil rights leaders Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Jessie Jackson; artists Jeff Donaldson, EJ Montgomery, Lorna Simpson, Carrie Mae

Weems, and Emma Amos; jazz musicians John Coltrane, Cannonball Adderley, Ornette Coleman, and Sun Ra; and comedians Pigmeat Markham and Moms Mabley.

In his writings, Coleman stated that the most pivotal point in his artistic development occurred during his visit to West Africa in the summer of 1970 on an ESSO Foundation grant. He was greatly impressed by the “repose, dignity, and formal structure” of traditional African sculpture and textile designs. On his return, he created a series of more than 30 paintings and works on paper inspired by those designs, and he continued to be influenced by African culture. As an artist, Coleman exhibited his works in more than 121 exhibitions, including at least 21 solo exhibitions. Several of his works were submitted to the legendary *Atlanta University Annual Exhibition of Paintings, Sculptures and Prints by Negro Artists of America*. Two of these works—*Before the Mayflower* (watercolor, 1964) and *Garden* (oil, 1965)—won awards. A retrospective of his work was also held at Spelman College in 1995. His artwork can be found in the collections of Chicago’s DuSable Museum of African American History and Atlanta’s High Museum of Art, as well as those of at least 15 colleges and universities and many private individuals around the country.



Floyd Coleman, *Thinking Music*, 1967, acrylic on canvas, 44¾ x 35½ inches, UMUC Permanent Collection, Maryland Artist Collection, Gift of the artist



LEFT TO RIGHT: Floyd Coleman, *Alabama Again*, 1970–71, acrylic on cotton canvas, 59¼ x 59¼ inches, UMUC Permanent Collection, Doris Patz Collection of Maryland Artists; Floyd Coleman, *Memories of Alabama*, 1968, acrylic on canvas, 60 x 60 inches

While Coleman stayed active as an artist throughout his professional career, he was employed as an art professor and administrator from 1962 to 2010 at four institutions of higher learning. He was an art instructor and associate professor at Clark College in Atlanta (1962–1971); art professor and associate dean of Graduate Studies and Research at Southern Illinois University in Edwardsville (1971–1983), during which he earned a PhD in art history and criticism from the University of Georgia (1975); professor and chair of the art department at Jackson State University (1983–1987); and art professor and chair of the art department at Howard University (1987–2010).

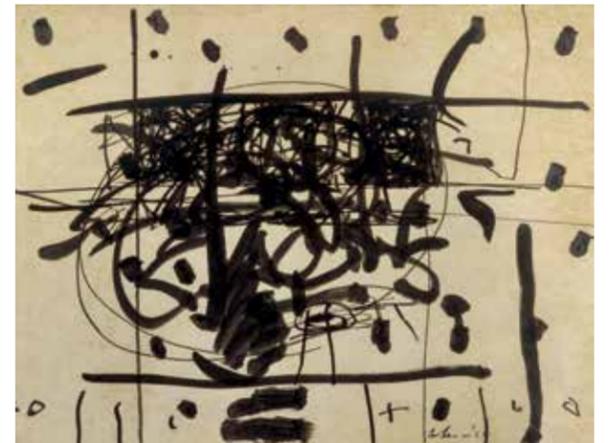
While associate dean at Edwardsville, Coleman provided the lead article in the first issue of Hampton University's art journal *Black Art: An International Quarterly* (now the *International Review of African American Art*) in 1976 as it began to review and chronicle the history of African American art. His contributions to art criticism continued throughout his academic career and into retirement. During his time at Howard University, he

made significant contributions to the study and assessment of African American art, which brought him lasting recognition. When he arrived at Howard, he was a visionary who believed there was an urgent need to expand the awareness and critique of African American art in view of the vast amount of "fantastic" works that had been produced by African American artists since the 1960s. He also thought that there were too few African American historians and critics to help identify many of these artists.

As chair of the art department, he made several major changes to address those concerns, with full support of the senior faculty. He led the development of new courses that provided for the study of Caribbean art and trends in African American art and thesis seminars in theory and criticism that focused on contemporary art, including African American art. He also established greater interaction and collaboration with the programs of major art institutions in the area (including the Smithsonian Museums) and across the country.



Floyd Coleman, *Garden*, 1965, oil on canvas, 38 x 41 inches, Collection of Clark Atlanta University Art Museum



LEFT TO RIGHT: Floyd Coleman, *Family*, 1969, mixed media on paper, 16 x 11 3/4 inches; 1, 2, 3, *Jazz series*, 1967, acrylic and ink on paper, 17 3/4 x 24 inches



"I explored various types of abstraction, inspired by African textiles and jazz music. It was because of Oubre that I saw that art was an intellectual enterprise and that artists didn't make marks just to be making marks. They . . . related to culture in a very significant way."



In his most sweeping effort, Coleman established, with encouragement and support from colleagues Jeff Donaldson and Tritobia Hayes Benjamin, an annual national forum at Howard University for in-depth scholarly analysis of African American art and art from the African diaspora. The renowned James A. Porter Colloquium on African American Art held its first annual conference in 1990. Named for the distinguished former chair of the university's art department, who had authored the first detailed history of African American art, this colloquium has addressed many leading-edge subjects and advanced African American cultural criticism through the participation of the country's most noted art professionals.

Coleman coordinated the arrangements for the first 20 years of the colloquium with little funding and minimal staff, often using his own money for its operations. However, he did receive major support from many others. David C. Driskell and Coni Porter-Uzelac donated substantial monetary gifts yearly, and key support was provided by committed volunteers and affiliated institutions. Under Coleman's leadership, the colloquium became a major national event and the leading forum for art historians, interdisciplinary scholars, artists, collectors, and others interested in African American art and art from the African diaspora. He coordinated his last presentation of the Porter Colloquium in 2009 and then passed the baton to others who have continued to maintain its effectiveness and appeal. In 2010, Coleman retired from his full-time position at Howard University after 23 years of dedicated service. He received many awards and honors over the years, including being recognized as an honoree at the 2010 Porter colloquium gala and having a colloquium lecture named after him. He established a strong legacy in the field of African American art and mentored a large cadre of art scholars who continue his legacy of studying, critiquing, and promoting African American art.

**HAYWARD L. OUBRE:  
IMPROVISATIONS WITH WIRE**

**Skilled in art, science, engineering, and education,** Hayward L. Oubre Jr. (1916–2006) created extraordinary works of art and guided many aspiring artists to successful careers. Despite his achievements, he became angry and disappointed that his artwork was largely overlooked over the years. However, belated recognition at the end of his life gave him joy as well as hope for a brighter day in the art world.

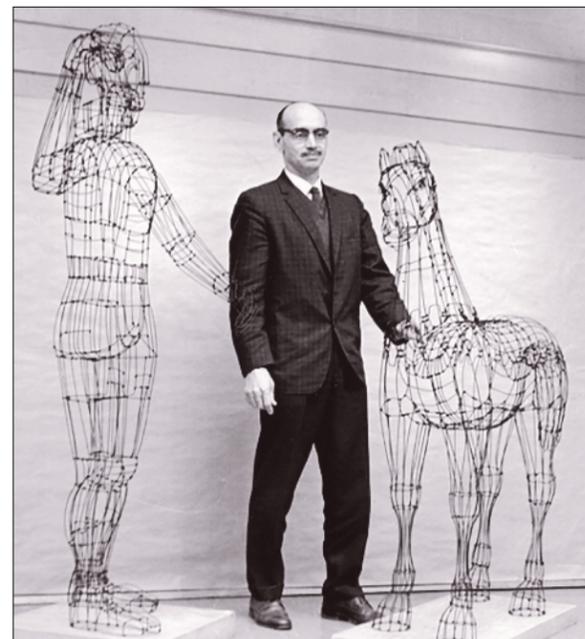
Oubre grew up in New Orleans, Louisiana, where he attended Dillard University. He graduated in 1939 with the first Bachelor of Fine Arts degree awarded by the school. Unable to find a job—during the Great Depression there were few employment opportunities for blacks, especially those with art degrees—he went to Atlanta University (now Clark Atlanta University) to study under two noted artists, painter Hale Woodruff and sculptor Nancy Elizabeth Prophet. Because the university's art department did not have a graduate degree program, Woodruff and Prophet put together a program designed specifically for Oubre, exposing him to a variety of works and styles. He studied there for eighteen months, until he was drafted into the Army at the start of World War II.

Oubre served in segregated Army units between 1941 and 1943. While he never served on the front lines, he was one of about 3,700 black soldiers in the engineering units sent to Alaska to help build the 1,500-mile Alcan Highway, which was intended as an overland military supply route to Alaska.

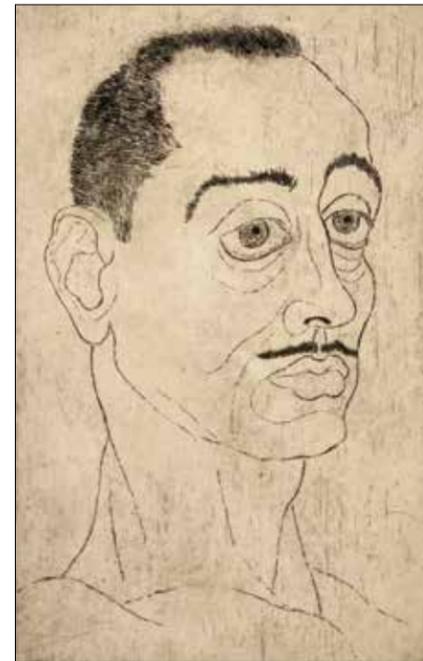
At the time, many people said this engineering feat couldn't be done. Yet despite brutal weather—sometimes 70 degrees below zero—and harsh living conditions, the soldiers completed the road in eight months. Fifty years later, in 1993, Oubre and other survivors were honored at the Pentagon for this amazing achievement. Through the years, Oubre valued the engineering skills he developed in the Army and utilized them in creating his art.

Following his Army service, Oubre took advantage of the GI Bill to attend the University of Iowa in 1946 for a Master of Fine Arts degree. Although the university had a strong art department, it had awarded the MFA to only two African Americans—Elizabeth Catlett and Houston E. Chandler—before then. Now married, Oubre chose to live with his wife Juanita in a barn rather than in the university's segregated dormitory. He was the only black student in his classes, in which students often made racist remarks. He responded to the racism through a sketch (later a print) entitled *Entanglement* (1947). The piece shows a black man with a hatchet in his hand, which is raised to kill a snake.

At Iowa, he also created other well-known prints, including *Self Portrait* (1948), one of which is in Clark Atlanta University's collection; *Aftermath* (1947), which depicts the destruction of the bomb Japan dropped on Pearl Harbor during World War II; and *Silent Sentinel* (1947), which depicts the destruction of the bomb the United States dropped on Hiroshima. *Silent Sentinel* received a second-place award in Atlanta University's annual art exhibition in 1947.



LEFT TO RIGHT: Hayward L. Oubre with two of his wire sculptures, early 1960s; Letter from Oubre to TV host Dave Garroway introducing his wire sculptures made from clothes hangers

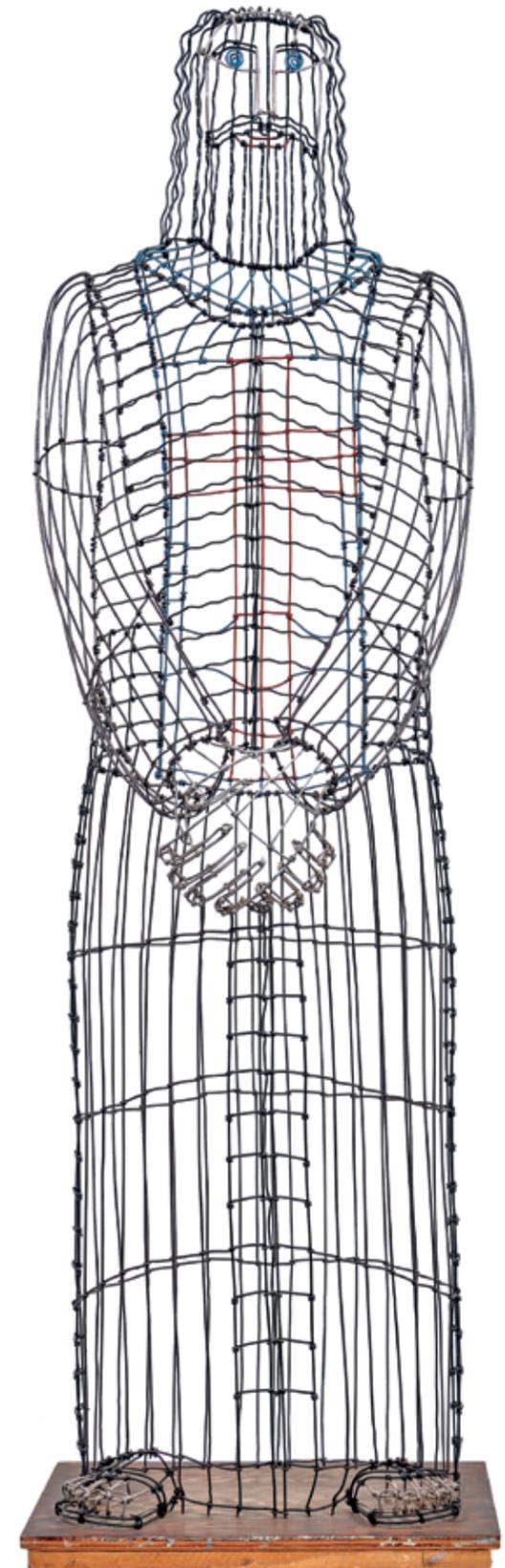


Hayward L. Oubre, *Self Portrait*, 1948, etching, 22½ x 14½ inches

When Oubre completed his MFA coursework in 1948, he was proficient in four areas: drawing, painting, sculpture, and etching. Since Catlett and Chandler had earned their MFA degrees in sculpture, he chose to pursue his in painting so that African Americans artists would not be “stereotyped as good sculpture artists because they came from Africa.”

After Iowa, Oubre devoted more than three decades of his life to developing art departments and mentoring aspiring artists at historically black colleges and universities. He taught and served as chair of the art departments at Florida A&M University (1948–1949); Alabama State College, now Alabama State University (1950–1965); and Winston-Salem State University (1965–1981). Following his retirement from teaching at Winston-Salem State University, he was awarded the Order of the Long Leaf Pine by the governor of North Carolina. It is one of the highest honors extended to outstanding North Carolinians for extraordinary service to the state.

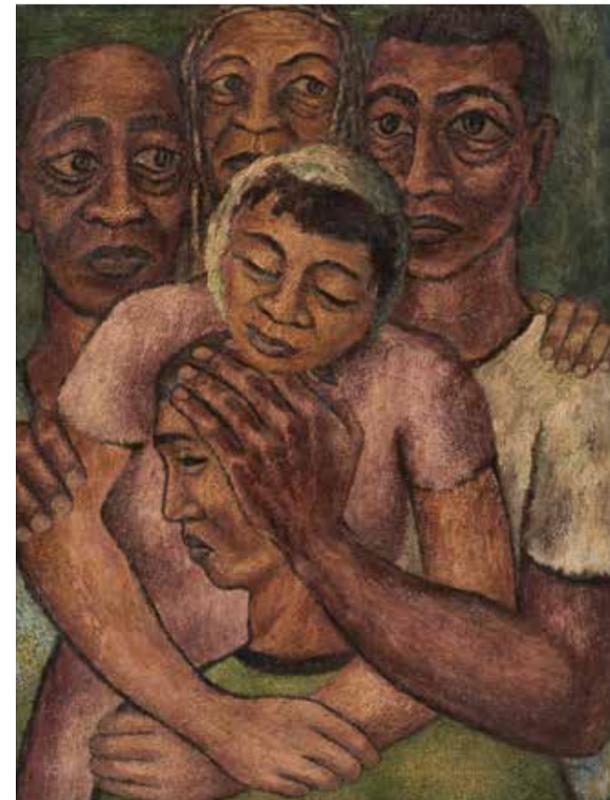
Many of Oubre's students, including Floyd W. Coleman, William Anderson, John W. Feagin, Harper T. Phillips, Arthur L. Britt, Paul Gary, and Herman “Kofi” Bailey, achieved recognition as talented artists and educators. Their artwork was displayed along with Oubre's in a 2003 exhibit at the University of Delaware entitled *The Magnificent Seven: Hayward Oubre's Students*. The exhibit clearly showed his impact on twentieth-century African American art. The quality of the artwork displayed and the respect and appreciation the artists expressed in the exhibition catalog reflect Oubre's profound influence on the careers of many African American artists. He counseled his



*Prophet*, 1958, metal wire on wood base, 71½ x 22¼ x 17¼ inches, Collection of William C. Robinson III



*Proud Rooster*, 1956,  
metal wire on wood base,  
21¼ x 10¾ x 17 inches,  
Collection of Larry and  
Brenda Thompson



ABOVE: Hayward L. Oubre, *Pondering*, 1955, plaster,  
20½ x 12 x 13 inches

LEFT: Hayward L. Oubre, *Prodigal Son*, 1956, oil on canvas,  
34¾ x 26 inches, Private collection

students like a father on various aspects of life while teaching them the fundamentals of making art. As a serious art scholar and fiercely independent thinker, Oubre often challenged convention during his career. One accomplishment that gave him particular pleasure was his revision of the color triangle devised by the German writer Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and long used by artists for mixing colors. Oubre employed mathematics on a computer to devise a new three-intensity color wheel. He copyrighted his approach and new color wheel in 1975.

Throughout his artistic career, Oubre produced artwork in diverse media: drawing, etching, painting, collage, and sculpture (plaster, bronze, wood, and wire). His artwork was presented in a number of exhibits, primarily in the South, from the late 1950s through the 1970s. He won a number of awards at various competitions, including eight awards and two honorable mentions during the Atlanta University annual art competitions between 1946 and 1969.

As he created his artwork, Oubre was fond of listening to blues and jazz. He loved listening to Erroll Garner, Sarah Vaughan, and Dinah Washington. Among his favorites were Garner's "Misty" and Washington's "This Bitter Earth." The blues calmed him, and the improvisational rhythms of jazz inspired him to create impressive and unusual works of art. Among his paintings are several remarkable figurative oils: *Cotton Picker* (1949); *Prodigal Son* (1956); and *Man with*

*a Push Cart* (1946), also known as *Street Vendor*, which was inspired by the street scenes in Atlanta when he was studying with Prophet and Woodruff. He addressed a broad spectrum of subjects in his oils. These include *Big Bang* (1963), a painting depicting the explosion that created the universe, and *Lunar Robot* (1966), relating to the exploration of the moon by the United States and Russia. Two examples of his most compelling plaster sculptures are *Stevedore* (1945) and *Pondering* (1955).

Although Oubre was proficient in many media, he received the most recognition and acclaim for his wire sculptures. Armed with only a pair of pliers and a wire cutter, he produced life-size sculptures. As Oubre used to say, "I use old wire clothes hangers like a tailor uses thread." In creating these works, except his first wire sculpture, he simply fastened the wires by twisting them together, using the engineering skills he learned in the Army. He equated the structures to bridges and skyscrapers, because they are strong, flexible, and mostly hollow. Oubre began creating his wire sculptures after being disappointed with the quality of art that was selected for first prize at one of Atlanta University's annual art exhibitions. He wanted to create something unusual and used wire clothes hangers to create a lifelike sculpture of a rooster, using solder for the eyes. It was the only time he used heat and solder in the creation of his wire sculptures. He entered this sculpture, *Proud Rooster* (1956), in the Atlanta annual exhibition that same year. Although it was

rejected, he was not discouraged. The next year, he created and submitted another wire sculpture, *Crown of Thorns* (1957), which won first prize. It is now part of Clark Atlanta University's permanent collection.

Over the years, Oubre created at least 40 multicolored wire sculptures in the forms of plants, people, and animals. He always had plenty of clothes hangers. At Winston-Salem State University, students and others saved hangers to sell to him—two for a nickel. Most of his wire sculptures appear to be life-size. Among the most extraordinary are *Prophet* (1958), a robed, Moses-like figure that stands 5 feet, 11 inches; and *Young Horse* (1960), an incredible sculpture of a young colt that was so well constructed it supported the weight of a child who unexpectedly mounted it during an exhibition. As you look at their size, symmetry, and inner space, these sculptures appear to be alive with their own spiritual personality.

Another one of his wire sculptures, *Topless No More* (1961), reflects the humor that Oubre incorporated in his artwork from time to time. In that piece, a topless waitress covers her top but bares her bottom in protest of an ordinance against toplessness.

Oubre was very proud of his artwork, but despite his creative achievements, he became bitter and disillusioned over the years. The racism he routinely encountered angered him. And he was outraged that his artwork had been largely overlooked by the art world. In particular, he felt that the white art establishment ignored his art because he refused to produce the "primitive" art they wanted. Furthermore, he believed that black writers and historians who were aware of his talent blackballed him when he refused to focus his artwork on black culture and concerns.

He also disliked marketing his artwork through galleries, because he thought they would dictate where and how it would be displayed and then take too much of the profit. As a result, he did not market his artwork widely. A proud man, Oubre valued his independence and sought to make sure that no one controlled him or took advantage of him and his art. Many interested in his art had difficulty dealing with him and, in turn, avoided him and his art. He exhibited his artwork infrequently after the 1970s.

In his last years, most of Oubre's artwork, especially his wire sculptures, remained in his home, surrounding him like



*Crown of Thorns*, 1957, metal wire on wood base 21 x 12½ x 12¼ inches, Collection of Clark Atlanta University Art Museum



"My art consists of paintings, prints, and sculpture, especially wire sculptures. My art is a reflection of my community experiences. I am not a lesser-known artist. I am established as a master artist. . . . You are not going to see another artist that can do this type of wire sculpture."

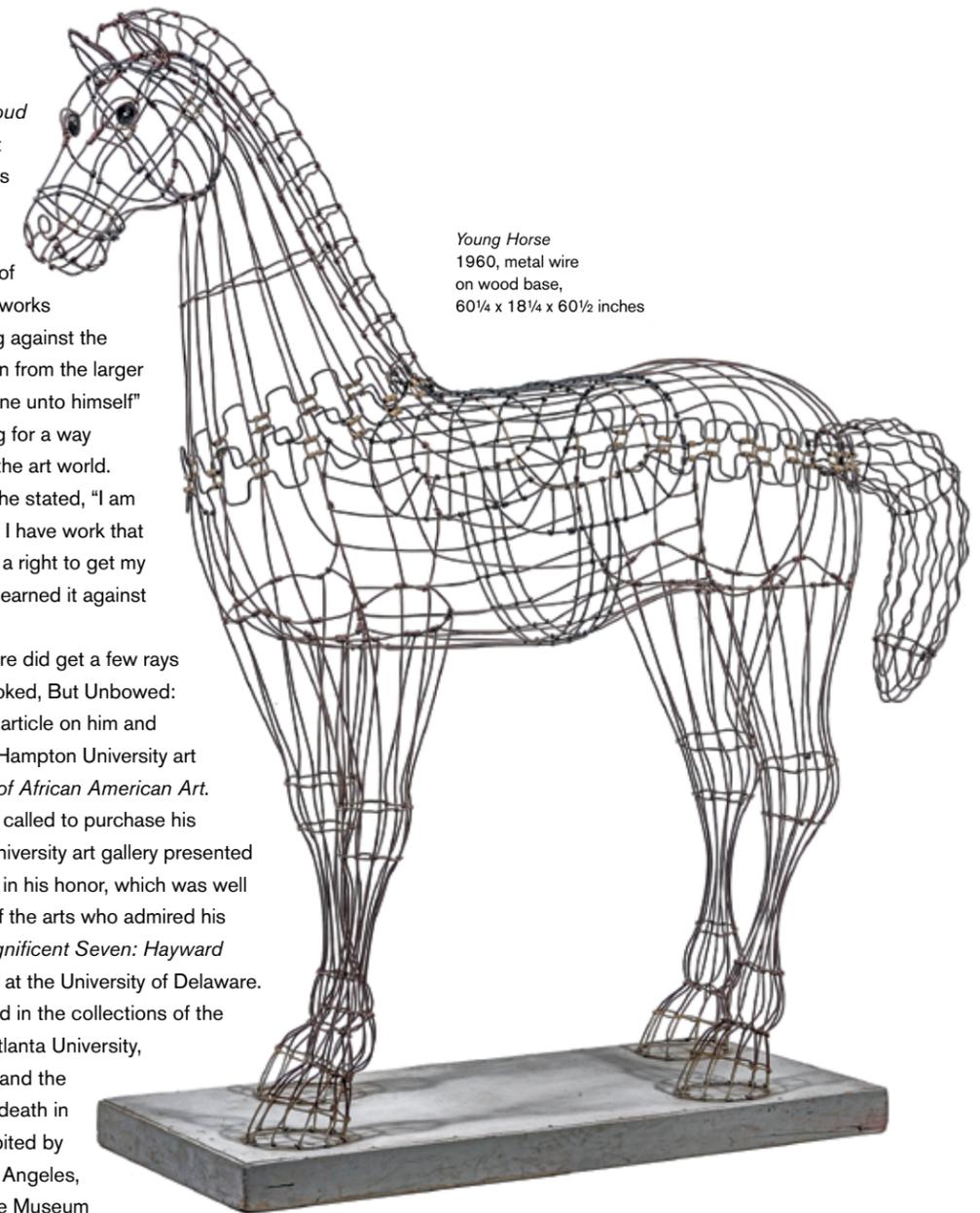
Hayward L. Oubre

family. His wife had died in 1976, and his daughter Amelie had left home to attend the University of Iowa and embark on a career. *Proud Rooster* sat attentively in the front window of his house, *Prophet* was positioned against the wall facing the front door like a guard, *Young Horse* stood boldly in the middle of his basement, and the rest of the works were either mounted on or resting against the walls. While Oubre had withdrawn from the larger world to what some called a "shrine unto himself" in his home, he was still searching for a way to achieve greater recognition in the art world. When I interviewed him in 2000, he stated, "I am established as a master artist. . . . I have work that can go in any museum. . . . I have a right to get my spot in the sunlight, because I've earned it against the odds."

Before he died in 2006, Oubre did get a few rays of that sunlight. In 2001, "Overlooked, But Unbowed: Hayward L. Oubre," my extensive article on him and his artwork was published in the Hampton University art journal, the *International Review of African American Art*. In response, a number of readers called to purchase his artwork. In 2003, Clark Atlanta University art gallery presented a special exhibition of his artwork in his honor, which was well attended by artists and patrons of the arts who admired his artwork. That same year, *The Magnificent Seven: Hayward Oubre's Students* exhibit opened at the University of Delaware.

Oubre's artwork can be found in the collections of the High Museum in Atlanta, Clark Atlanta University, Winston-Salem State University, and the University of Alabama. Since his death in 2006, his artwork has been exhibited by Steve Turner Contemporary (Los Angeles, California) in 2010, the Greenville Museum (South Carolina) in 2013, Debra Force Fine Art Inc. (New York City) in 2013, and at Art Basel (Miami Beach, Florida) in 2017.

**During busy academic careers,** Coleman and Oubre both found time to create works of art that spoke to the social issues of their time as well as works that were purely artistic. In creating their art, Coleman and Oubre retained distinct styles. Coleman often used the mediums of paint, pencil, and watercolor and occasionally ceramics, while Oubre chose paint, print, wire, wood, and bronze as his mediums. No matter the path, no matter the medium, Coleman and Oubre remained steadfast to creating works of art to the backdrop of music. ■



*Young Horse* 1960, metal wire on wood base, 60¼ x 18¼ x 60½ inches

Jerry Langley is a freelance writer on African American art. A retired lawyer, Langley transformed his passion for African American art into his work as a researcher and writer on the subject. Langley has written articles for the *International Review of African American Art*, the Clark Atlanta University Art Museum, and other UMUC Arts Program exhibition catalogs.

Adapted from the UMUC exhibition catalog *Rhythmic Impulses: The Art of Floyd Coleman and Hayward Oubre*

Reception Highlights

# RHYTHMIC IMPULSES

The Art of Floyd Coleman and Hayward Oubre

The opening reception for *Rhythmic Impulses: The Art of Floyd Coleman and Hayward Oubre* on October 7 was packed with artists, art patrons and collectors, and Arts Program supporters. The exhibition ran from September 30, 2018, until January 20, 2019, and highlighted more than 70 works from the two artists spanning more than 60 years.

A panel discussion at the reception featured Floyd Coleman; UMUC Arts Program Director Eric Key; and Mervin "Tony" Green, Oubre's son-in-law and heir to his estate. The group talked about the inspirations for the artists' work, Oubre's mentoring relationship with Coleman, and the messages and symbolism in their work. Brenda Thompson, art collector and patron, also spoke about Oubre's work and her friendship with him. Thompson, along with her husband Larry, has amassed a remarkable collection of art by African American artists from around the nation. She generously lent artwork from her collection for the exhibition.

Coleman, a renowned art historian, passed away in December. He spent more than 60 years teaching art at various universities,

including Howard University. Oubre also taught at various universities in the South, mentoring Coleman and countless other students. He died in 2006. ■



Floyd Coleman (left) and Tony Green (right) respond to questions at the *Rhythmic Impulses* artists talk.

Save the Date



Mark your calendar for **Saturday, June 8, 2019**, for the Arts Program's annual bus trip. This year we'll be traveling to Hagerstown, Maryland, for the opening of the exhibition *The Blues and the Abstract Truth: Voices of African American Art* at the Washington County Museum of Fine Arts. This exhibition will feature selected works from the UMUC collections and the David C. Driskell Center for the Study of the Visual Arts and Culture of African Americans and the African Diaspora at University of Maryland, College Park. We'll also visit Glenstone, a modern and contemporary art museum in Potomac. More information will be available soon.

Upcoming Events

**MARYLAND HIGH SCHOOL JURIED ART EXHIBITION**

UMUC Arts Program Gallery, Lower Level  
February 17–April 28, 2019

Featuring works in all mediums by high school artists from Maryland, the *Maryland High School Juried Art Exhibition* is the jewel among statewide visual arts competitions. Designed to bring attention to the talents of local high school students, the exhibition showcases 55 pieces chosen by jurors from nearly 200 submissions to represent the finest student artwork from across the state.



Jena Tolley, *Main Street, Maryland*

**YUMI HOGAN: CULTURAL TRADITIONS UNBOUNDED**

Dorothy L. and Henry A. Rosenberg Jr.  
Painting Gallery  
May 6–June 30, 2019

**Opening Reception**  
May 8, 2019, 5–7 p.m.



Yumi Hogan, *Breath of Dawn 3*

Korean-born Yumi Hogan, first lady of Maryland, creates abstract landscapes in Sumi ink and mixed media on traditional Hanji paper. She combines traditions of Korean culture and memories of the farmlands of her homeland with depictions of her current environment to reflect her response to the natural world. Her work has been featured in art shows and museums in Maryland, Virginia, the District of Columbia, and South Korea.

**R. BEN JONES: RECORDING THE WORLD IN PAINT**

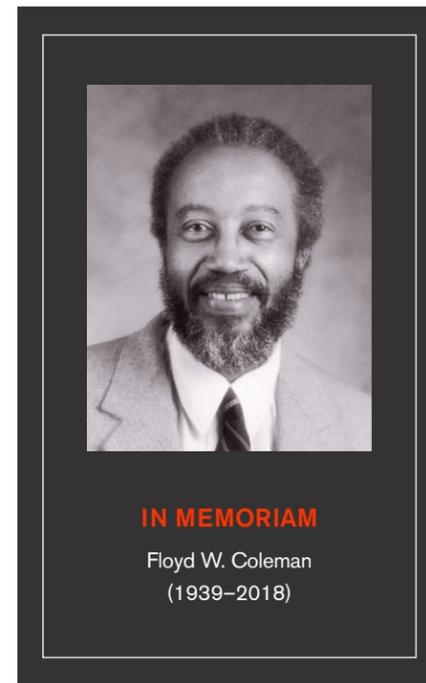
UMUC Arts Program Gallery, Lower Level  
May 26–August 18, 2019

**Opening Reception**  
June 9, 2019, 3–5 p.m.



R. Ben Jones, *Tannery Truck*

A Maryland native, R. Benjamin Jones created works of art that represented his own experiences. Through his realist paintings and drawings, he documented the environment in which he lived and traveled. Jones portrayed rural scenes of Maryland, Pennsylvania, and New England, seeking to communicate the gentle beauty he saw in the world.



**IN MEMORIAM**  
Floyd W. Coleman  
(1939–2018)



Statewide Arts Competition Winners Announced

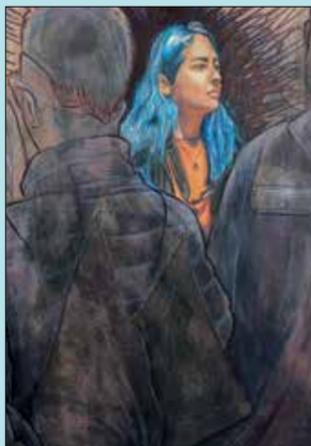
Winners of the *Maryland High School Juried Art Exhibition* were announced at the exhibition's opening reception on February 17. Chosen by guest jurors Joan Bevelaqua, Christopher Harrington, and Preston Sampson, the selected artworks demonstrated skill and vision in formal qualities and content. Awards—including the top prize of \$5,000—were presented to the winning artists and their schools.



Clockwise from above:  
**FIRST PLACE / PRESIDENT'S AWARD**  
Kaya Abramson, George Washington Carver Center for Arts and Technology, *Safe Space*

**SECOND PLACE / DIRECTOR'S AWARD**  
Gabriel Windsor-Reedy, Howard High School, *Prisoners of War*

**THIRD PLACE / CURATOR'S AWARD**  
Zelda Littlejohn, Albert Einstein High School, *Common Cause*



Above, left to right:  
**HONORABLE MENTION**  
Hailey Feller, Quince Orchard High School, *Through the Shadows*  
Ben Hough, Towson High School, *I'm Board*



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## Make an Annual Contribution to the Arts Program

Art enthusiasts in the UMUC community help make the university's visual arts exhibitions, educational lectures, book signings, symposiums, and meet-the-artist receptions possible.

Through the Friends of the Arts program, our biggest supporters enjoy a variety of benefits as a thank-you for helping UMUC's Arts Program become one of the most recognized in Maryland.

Simply commit to making an annual contribution at one of the following levels and you can join our growing list of friends.



### Associate (\$35)

Name recognition in the arts newsletter, invitation to exhibition openings

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Above benefits, plus 10 percent discount on specialty items produced by the Arts Program, 10 percent discount on tickets to nonfundraising events, Arts Program lapel pin

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Above benefits, plus autographed poster from the Arts Program collection

### Silver-Level Friend (\$250)

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### Gold-Level Friend (\$500)

Above benefits, plus full-color art catalog from a major UMUC art exhibition

### Platinum-Level Friend (\$1,000)

Above benefits, plus VIP invitation to dinner with the guest artist and the university president, 10 percent discount at The Common (the restaurant at the College Park Marriott Hotel & Conference Center at UMUC)

### Citrine-Level Friend (\$2,500)

Above benefits, plus corporate name and logo listing on UMUC Arts Program webpage, name and logo listing on all printed materials for exhibitions and public relations materials for the season

### Sapphire-Level Friend (\$5,000)

Above benefits, plus a corporate art exhibition by a local artist coordinated by UMUC (Special requirements apply; see [umuc.edu/art](http://umuc.edu/art) for details.)

Visit [umuc.edu/art](http://umuc.edu/art) and click on "Friends of the Arts Program" or call 301-985-7937.

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Send your e-mail address to [arts@umuc.edu](mailto:arts@umuc.edu).

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(JULY 1, 2017–DECEMBER 31, 2018)

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