

Boston 12 Black Artists
12 Black Artists from Boston
artists from Boston Rose Art Museum

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Jerry Pinkney Calvin Burnett Brandeis University

from Boston 12

Dana Chandler Henry deLeon Babaluaiye S. Délé
Gary Rickson Al Smith

Black artists from

Leo Robinson Lovett Thompson
Richard Stroud

12 from Boston

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artists from

John Wilson 12 Brandeis University

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The Afro-American Organization Presents

12 BLACK ARTISTS FROM BOSTON

**ROSE ART MUSEUM
BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY
WALTHAM, MASSACHUSETTS**

JULY 20 — AUGUST 31, 1969

This exhibition, inspired by and developed from the exhibition **Local Afro-American Artists**, presented at the Elma Lewis School of Fine Arts, shows the work of twelve significant Black artists who are currently working in the Boston area. These are but a few of the exciting young people who are enriching the American scene with a hitherto untapped source of creative energy. Here the viewer will find a great variety of artistic expression. However, there is one expression common to all of these painters and sculptors: the effect of the Black experience on the subject matter which they have chosen.

I am proud of the large numbers of artists who are being stimulated to creative action by the example of these dedicated artists. I am sure that those who view this exhibition will have a new dimension added to their understanding of the visual arts, and consequently to their understanding of human beings.

Elma Lewis
Director,
Elma Lewis School of Fine Arts

I can't claim any great pleasure in being involved in, and serving as catalyst for, this art show at this point in Black history. It unfortunately seems like too little, too late. Perhaps this appears as a harsh statement, but when one considers the caliber of some of the contributing artists, such a show is recognized as long overdue. I do not take issue with the Rose Art Museum, but with the American white art world **in toto**. The Rose Art Museum at least has understood that such a show is about fifty years overdue (if you don't think we had great Black artists then, look at the work of Henry Ossawa Tanner and compare him with Sargent!) and acted upon this knowledge.

It is sad that this country is going into another era of oppression, especially of new voices for change relevant to poor Blacks and Whites. But it's a fact. Artists generally have never received their proper due in this country. Perhaps that is why so many resort to sensationalism and irrelevance to make a name for themselves. Black artists, no matter what they have accomplished, still do not receive their due in recognition of their major contribution to the Black arts. The greats like Charles White, Jacob Lawrence and Romare Bearden, and local greats like John Wilson and Calvin Burnett still have not attained the stature of a Ben Shahn, Leonard Baskin or, locally, a Jack Wolfe. Why? Racism, and racism alone. Someone is perpetuating the myth that Black art is not a salable commodity: thus we Blacks are forced to work in other areas, often for far less than we're worth, in order to get the materials for the survival of our families and our art. Because we must often work forty or fifty hours in other capacities, we can put only a part-time effort into our art, and then when we are too overtired to give it proper attention. What a loss this has been for our people! And the system which miseducates our children into thinking that art is a craft, a hobby, a

plaything, deprives us of value to our community and makes our loss double — no time to work and few to respect what we do create. How long can this go on?

Whites do not know that there are brilliant Black artists. Blacks never receive the education in the Black arts to know that we exist at all, let alone are brilliant. The time we must spend in educating them is an additional drain from our work. But at least it's worth it to see a Black child's eyes light up when he or she discovers a new reason for pride in Blackness.

I deeply believe that for our four hundred years of suppression of mind and body we are owed any monies necessary to pursue our chosen profession, without having to worry about our bills or measuring up to white aesthetic values. We should be able to do our own thing for our people or for all people if that is our need. Black artists, as you can see, generally produce functional art: art with a message. I guess it's a part of our African heritage. I believe that Black art should reflect the needs of the community and be an integral part of the day-to-day existence of our people, relating to life in the way our African heritage in art does. When we as Black artists can continue that which our ancestors began for us in Africa, when "good-hearted white liberals" understand that our need as a people is not for love, compassion, friendship or other intangibles, but for all of the food, education, money, land, power and machinery that we are owed, **then** we will have the kind of progress that will enable me to exhibit at the Rose Art Museum and others with a good deal of pride.

Yours in Black Power,

Dana Chandler, Jr., Black Artist

In a recent symposium of Black artists sponsored by The Metropolitan Museum of Art, the subject of the existence of a "Black art" was raised. The issue was not resolved, for though all seven participants were deeply concerned with support for Black artists and for art relevant to the Black community, they, like artists of other groups, are individualists in their choice of forms, subject matter and style. That an art of Black origins, Black subjects and Black resurgence should arise in this period, however, is to be expected, welcomed and encouraged.

Unfortunately, white society has not offered equality to Black artists. It has been denied them on every level from subsistence and housing to education and professional opportunities. If those in positions of authority in museums, galleries, universities and art schools are to invalidate the charges that articulate spokesmen like Dana Chandler level at us, we must repeatedly demonstrate our openness, good

faith and belief in human brotherhood. It is not enough to accept Black artists, in our minds, on an equal and undifferentiated basis. We must recognize, as we do in the great sculpture of Africa, those beauties that are unique to Black people. Whether we agree with all of Dana Chandler's specifics or not, we must strive constantly to alter the structure of discrimination that has in the past denied training, opportunity and a wide public to the Black artist.

We welcome to the Rose Art Museum this group of Boston artists, on their own terms and without the imposition of "white aesthetic values," and profoundly hope that they will some day agree that the Rose Art Museum is a place where the term "racist" does not apply.

William C. Seitz
Director, Rose Art Museum and
Poses Institute of Fine Arts



CALVIN BURNETT

Calvin Burnett was born in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 1921. He holds degrees from the Massachusetts College of Art, where he is now associate professor of graphic design and from Boston University, where he is currently a doctoral candidate in Instructional Technology. He is the author and designer of a number of books and articles and the recipient of many awards. His one-man shows include those at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Marlboro College, Wheelock College, West Virginia State College, the Weeden Gallery, Boston, and the Gropper Gallery, Cambridge. His work has been exhibited by the Smithsonian Institution in the United States, and has been shown in Mexico and Germany. He was selected for a State Department-sponsored traveling exhibition.



DANA C. CHANDLER, JR.

Dana Chandler was born in Lynn, Massachusetts, in 1941. He graduated from the Massachusetts College of Art with a B.S. in Education in 1967. His work in the Black community includes the illustration of many pamphlets for a number of organizations and the painting of two murals "Walls of Respect". He has lectured throughout the United States on "Black Revolution in Art". In addition to various group exhibitions with Black organizations, Mr. Chandler has exhibited with the Boston Negro Artists Association, **Artists Against Racism and the War** and the Lawrence Cultural Art Festival. His major one-man exhibitions have been seen at Boston College, the University of Massachusetts, the Massachusetts College of Art, Wheelock College, Rhode Island School of Design, Rhode Island Governors College, Grahm Junior College and the Emerson Gallery, Arlington Street Church, Boston.



BABALUAIYE S. DÉLÉ (Stanley Pinckney)

Babaluaiye S. Délé was born in Boston in 1940. He is a graduate of the Famous Artists School in Westport, Connecticut, where he studied commercial art under a four-year scholarship from Norman Rockwell. He is a 1967 graduate of the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, where he majored in painting and received numerous prizes and scholarships. Mr. Délé was recently awarded a Fifth-Year Traveling Scholarship from the School of the Museum of Fine Arts. He plans to travel and study in Africa.



HENRY DE LEON

Henry de Leon was born in Puerto Rico in 1945 and moved to the United States with his family when he was four years old. They settled in East Harlem. In 1964 he came to Brandeis University largely through the efforts of a friend associated with the Florence Heller School for Advanced Studies in Social Welfare. He graduated with a B.A. in Spanish Literature in 1968 and is currently working toward an M.F.A. degree at Brandeis. In addition to scholarships, Mr. de Leon received the Deborah Josepha Cohen Memorial Award for Sculpture in 1968. Photography and film-making are his current artistic interests; at present, he is making films with Blackside, a Black-owned film production company, which attempts to deal with the Black point of view in a realistic manner.



JERRY PINKNEY

Jerry Pinkney was born in Philadelphia in 1939 and studied design at the Philadelphia Museum College of Art. In 1960 he moved to Boston to begin his career as a designer-illustrator; and in 1961 he and two other illustrators founded the Kaleidoscope Studio. Mr. Pinkney has illustrated many children's books, among them *Babushka* and *the Pig* by Ann Trosimuk. He is now free-lancing and his work appears in many national magazines. In 1964 his illustrations were exhibited in The American Institute of Graphic Arts exhibition. He has received awards in the New York Illustrators show and honors in the New York, New Jersey, Providence, and Boston Art Directors' shows (1965-1969).



GARY RICKSON

Gary Rickson was born in Boston in 1942. A lecturer and a philosopher in environmental art, he is president of the Boston Negro Artists Association and one of its founders. He is a member of the National Conference of Artists, and executive director and cultural chairman of the Malcolm X Foundation. He is also active in The ACT (Artistic, Craft, Technology) Now Workshop of the Institute of Contemporary Art. He is executing a wall mural for *Summerthing*, Boston's neighborhood summer festival.



LEO ROBINSON

Leo Robinson was born in 1938. He attended the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture and the Corcoran School of Art. In 1963 he graduated from Howard University (cum laude) with a B.A. in painting. He received his M.F.A. from Cranbrook Academy of Art in 1966. In 1963 he was awarded first prize in the Washington Inter-Collegiate Art Exhibition sponsored by Catholic University. In addition, he has been the recipient of awards from the Skowhegan School, the Savery Gallery of Talladega College, Dartmouth College and Howard University. He has been an instructor at Morgan State College in Baltimore, and the Potter's House Workshop in Washington, D.C. From 1966 through 1968 he held the position of lecturer in art at Howard University. Mr. Robinson moved to Boston in 1968 to teach at the Cambridge Center for Adult Education and the DeCordova Museum School. He has had one-man shows at Talladega College, Dartmouth College and Howard University, and has exhibited in group shows in Washington, D.C., and Texas.



AL SMITH

Al Smith entered Boston University in the Fall of 1966, and was honored twice there for his superior work in art. In the summer of 1967 his works and poems were published in *Readers and Writers Magazine*. In the summer of 1968 Mr. Smith executed a wall mural in Roxbury. He has recently exhibited at the North Jersey Community Art Center, Newark, New Jersey. He also participated in the Show **Collaboration**, organized by the Institute of Contemporary Art in Boston. He is currently working as a coordinator on the Boston neighborhood program **Summerthing**.



RICHARD STROUD

Richard Stroud was born in 1940 and attended the National Academy of Design in New York and the art school of the Brooklyn Museum of Fine Arts. He received a B.A. from the New York School of Social Research, after which he studied at the Cummington School of Art and the School of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. He was the recipient of a one-year traveling scholarship from the Museum School. Mr. Stroud has taught at a number of institutions in the Boston area: the DeCordova Museum School, Emerson College and the Boston Museum School. He is currently teaching at the M.I.T. Student Center art studios.



LOVETT THOMPSON

Lovett Thompson was born in Georgia and attended school in Boston. "Technical High School taught him how to use his hands. Libraries taught him how to use his mind." For eight years he wandered across the country from ghetto to ghetto, where he sought out and studied with various street artists. He recently returned to Boston and is working here as a sculptor and poet as well as a painter.



JOHN WILSON

John Wilson was born in 1922 in Boston and graduated from the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, in 1944. In 1947 he received a B.S. in Education from Tufts University. Further study included work in art schools in Mexico City and Paris. Since 1964 he has been an assistant professor at Boston University. He has been the recipient of an impressive number of honors, awards and fellowships. Outstanding among these are the Best Lithograph Award in the **First National Print Exhibition**, an award for the Best Cover Design from the International Federation of the Periodical Press in Paris, and a Merit Citation in the Society of Illustrators National Exhibition. He has received three fellowships for study abroad. Mr. Wilson is currently listed in **Who's Who in American Art**. He has shown in numerous group exhibitions and has presented one-man exhibitions in the Boston area at the Boris Mirski Gallery, Art Wood Gallery, Gropper Gallery and Simmons College.



RICHARD YARDE

Richard Yarde was born in 1939 in Boston and attended the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. He received a B.F.A. (cum laude) in 1962 and an M.F.A. in 1964 from Boston University. Since 1966 he has been an instructor of drawing and painting at Boston University. In addition to honors from Boston University, he has received invitations to the Yaddo Corporation in 1964, 1966 and 1969, and to the McDowell Colony in 1968. He has also held the position of Artist-in-Residence at the Harlem Summer Arts Project, Saxton River, Vermont. In 1964, he was a participant in the documentary film *That's Where I'm At*, and he has been a lecturer for the Dover Human Rights Commission, Dover, Massachusetts. Some of the important exhibitions in which Mr. Yarde has participated are **The Emancipation Proclamation Centennial** (1962), **Artists Against Racism and the War** (1968), **Collaboration** at the Institute of Contemporary Art in Boston (1969), and **Boston Images** at Boston City Hall (1969).

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