

PRESS RELEASE

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SEATTLE ART MUSEUM (SAM) ANNOUNCES EXHIBITIONS FOR FALL 2020-SUMMER 2021

Shows dedicated to Jacob Lawrence, Claude Monet, and Seattle art legends Barbara Earl Thomas & Virginia Wright

SEATTLE, WA – The Seattle Art Museum (SAM) announces four major exhibitions and installations planned for the downtown museum from fall 2020 through summer 2021.

The museum's three sites—the Seattle Art Museum, the Asian Art Museum, and the PACCAR Pavilion at the Olympic Sculpture Park—are closed until further notice, in order to support Seattle's efforts to limit the spread of COVID-19 and safeguard the health and safety of the community.

"As everyone at SAM, in Seattle, and across the world is doing all they can to help their communities during this pandemic, work for the museum safely continues," says Amada Cruz, Illsley Ball Nordstrom Director and CEO. "That includes remotely planning upcoming exhibitions. We are so proud to present this line-up of exhibitions that will inspire hope and celebrate the local as well as the global."

EXHIBITIONS

City of Tomorrow: Jinny Wright and the Art That Shaped a New Seattle

October 15, 2020–January 10, 2021



Virginia "Jinny" Wright (1929-2020) played a pivotal role in the cultural development of Seattle and the Pacific Northwest. Along with her husband Bagley (1924–2011), Jinny (as friends called her) wanted to make the region a better place to live through the arts, generously supporting numerous cultural institutions, including SAM. *City of Tomorrow* tells the story of her future-focused efforts and intuitive eye as a collector. Landmark modern and contemporary

paintings, sculptures, drawings, and photographs from the illustrious Wright collection are complemented by historical ephemera that trace formative moments, including the organization of the Contemporary Arts Council that brought major contemporary exhibitions to the Fine Arts Pavilion in the 1960s. Over the years, she collected work by then lesser-known artists who are now considered icons, including Carl Andre, Helen Frankenthaler, Philip Guston, David Hammons, Jasper Johns, Franz Kline, Robert Rauschenberg, Mark Rothko, Frank Stella, Cindy Sherman, Andy Warhol, and many more.

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Barbara Earl Thomas: The Geography of Innocence

November 14, 2020–June 13, 2021



Seattle-based artist Barbara Earl Thomas draws from history, literature, folklore, and biblical stories to address what she calls the plagues of our day, from pervasive violence against Black men and youth, to gun violence, to the climate crisis.

In this exhibition, the artist will create a suite of new works for two adjacent galleries, including cut-paper portraits and an immersive environment of light and shadow—inhabited by large-scale narrative works in cut paper and glass—that addresses our preconceived ideas of innocence and guilt, sin and redemption, and the ways in which these notions are assigned and distorted along cultural and racial lines.

Jacob Lawrence: The American Struggle

February 11–May 23, 2021



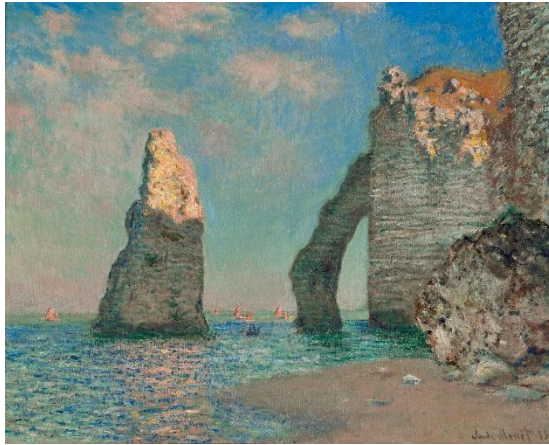
This exhibition reunites Jacob Lawrence's revolutionary thirty-panel series *Struggle . . . from the History of the American People* (1954–56) for the first time since 1958. One of the greatest narrative artists of the twentieth century, Lawrence (1917–2000) is best known for *The Migration Series* (1940–41), exhibited at SAM in 2017, which tells the story of the mass exodus of African Americans from the rural South to the industrial North following World War II. *Struggle* is also a narrative work in series and engages key moments from the American Revolution and the early decades of the republic to address, as Lawrence put it, “the struggles of a people to create a nation and their attempt to build a democracy.”

The thirty 12- x 16-inch panels that comprise *Struggle* feature the words and actions of not only the founding fathers, but also of enslaved people, women, and Native Americans to address the diverse but mutually linked fortunes of all American constituencies engaged in the struggle. Taken as a whole, this remarkable series of paintings interprets and expresses the democratic debates that defined early America and resonate today. New work created for the exhibition by Derrick Adams, Bethany Collins, and Hank Willis Thomas reinforce the timeliness of *Struggle* by engaging themes such as democracy, justice, truth, and the politics of inclusion.

Jacob Lawrence: The American Struggle is organized by the Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, Massachusetts. This project is supported in part by the National Endowment for the Arts.

Monet at Étretat

May 8–August 29, 2021



Inspired by Claude Monet's 1885 painting *Fishing Boats at Étretat* from SAM's permanent collection, this single-venue exhibition features eleven paintings by Monet, exploring the artist's engagement with the town of Étretat on the Normandy Coast of France in the mid-1880s. Installed in a spacious gallery on the museum's third floor, this focused exhibition places SAM's single Monet painting within the context of artistic ambition and frustration at a key moment in his career, as well as the changing relationship between

society and landscape in late 19th-century France. Paintings of Étretat by several of Monet's contemporaries—including Gustave Courbet and Eugène Boudin—will also be on view, as well as period photographs and ephemera that bring to life Monet's experience of the coastal town.

Additional support provided by Christie's.

Image credits: Installation view of *Cross Section*, 1956, Franz Kline, and *Untitled*, 1954, Philip Guston, in the home of Virginia Wright, 2020, Promised gifts of the Virginia and Bagley Wright Collection, in honor of the 75th Anniversary of the Seattle Art Museum, photo: Eirik Johnson. *Grace*, 2019, Barbara Earl Thomas, American, cut paper and hand-printed color, 26 x 40 in., photo: Spike Mafford. *We have no property! We have no wives! No children! We have no city! No country! —petition of many slaves, 1773*, Panel 5, 1955, Jacob Lawrence, from *Struggle: From the History of the American People, 1954–56*, Collection of Harvey and Harvey-Ann Ross, © 2019 The Jacob and Gwendolyn Knight Lawrence Foundation, Seattle / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York. *The Cliffs at Étretat*, 1885, Claude Monet, French, 1840-1926, oil on canvas, 25 5/8 x 32 in., Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, 1995.528

ABOUT SEATTLE ART MUSEUM

As the leading visual art institution in the Pacific Northwest, SAM draws on its global collections, powerful exhibitions, and dynamic programs to provide unique educational resources benefiting the Seattle region, the Pacific Northwest, and beyond. SAM was founded in 1933 with a focus on Asian art. By the late 1980s the museum had outgrown its original home, and in 1991 a new 155,000-square-foot downtown building, designed by Venturi, Scott Brown & Associates, opened to the public. The 1933 building was renovated and rededicated as the Asian Art Museum in 1994, and it reopened on February 8, 2020 following an extensive renovation and expansion. SAM's desire to further serve its community was realized in 2007 with the opening of two stunning new facilities: the nine-acre Olympic Sculpture Park (designed by Weiss/Manfredi Architects)—a “museum without walls,” free and open to all—and the Allied Works Architecture designed 118,000-square-foot expansion of its main, downtown location, including 232,000 square feet of additional space built for future expansion. The Olympic Sculpture Park and SAM's downtown expansion celebrated their tenth anniversary in 2017.

From a strong foundation of Asian art to noteworthy collections of African and Oceanic art, Northwest Coast Native American art, European and American art, and modern and contemporary art, the strength of SAM's collection of approximately 25,000 objects lies in its diversity of media, cultures, and time periods.