

PRESS RELEASE

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LAST CHANCE TO SEE FIGURING HISTORY: ROBERT COLESCOTT, KERRY JAMES MARSHALL, MICKALENE THOMAS AT SEATTLE ART MUSEUM

Exhibition offering bold perspectives on Black culture and representation closes May 13

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SEATTLE, WA - The Seattle Art Museum's major exhibition, *Figuring History: Robert Colescott, Kerry James Marshall, Mickalene Thomas* closes Sunday, May 13. Organized by SAM, the exhibition brings together these three leading American artists from three different generations for the first time. The 25 monumental paintings on view challenge a Western painting tradition that historically erases or misrepresents people of color, offering narratives centered on Black experiences and perspectives.

Kerry James Marshall and Mickalene Thomas both created new paintings specifically for the exhibition. Thomas also presents a popular "living room" installation that visitors can interact with, filled with seating, plants, and books by Black authors. The exhibition also includes a library of books related to its themes; the full list of titles is available on SAM's website.

"*Figuring History* poses crucial questions about artistic, social, and political narratives," says Catharina Manchanda, SAM's Jon & Mary Shirley Curator of Modern & Contemporary Art. "Who represents—and who is represented in—history? And how do we reassess and go forth with these histories that we have all inherited? It's been a privilege to be a part of the engaged conversations that these extraordinary paintings have sparked."

EXHIBITION ORGANIZATION AND SUPPORT

Figuring History: Robert Colescott, Kerry James Marshall, Mickalene Thomas is organized by the Seattle Art Museum.

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Photo credits: Installation view of *Figuring History: Robert Colescott, Kerry James Marshall, Mickalene Thomas* at the Seattle Art Museum. © Seattle Art Museum, Photo: Natali Wiseman.

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 reopened as the Asian Art Museum in 1994. 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 celebrate 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.