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North Carolina Museum of Art Announces 15 New Acquisitions Highlighting Diverse Voices and Compelling Narratives

Raleigh, NC – The North Carolina Museum of Art (NCMA) has acquired 15 significant works that enhance the Museum’s commitment to presenting a more expansive, inclusive, and accurate narrative that represents artists, ideas, and histories that have previously been underrepresented or overlooked.

“We are delighted to introduce these spectacular new acquisitions, which provide our visitors with fresh opportunities to engage with the NCMA’s permanent collection,” says Director Valerie Hillings. “These remarkable additions, featuring varied perspectives and engaging stories, strengthen our role as a cultural destination for the people of our state and beyond.”

Four works by contemporary Amerian Indian artists Steven Paul Judd (Kiowa/Choctaw), Virgil Ortiz (Cochiti Pueblo), Rose B. Simpson (Santa Clara Pueblo), and Preston Singletary (Tlingit) illustrate their deep connection to cultural heritage, blending traditional techniques with modern media. Each artist tells significant cultural stories. Judd’s large-scale dice installations that challenge traditional European and American portraiture, Ortiz’s futuristic narratives of the 1680 Pueblo Revolt, Simpson’s emotionally layered clay figures, and Singletary’s Tlingit mythologies in glass collectively bridge the past and present, transforming traditional narratives into powerful modern expressions.

New additions to the ceramics collection include the works of Lakea Shepard, Magdalene Odundo, and Dave (David Drake), which share common elements through their masterful use of traditional techniques and the cultural significance embedded in their clay creations. Shepard’s “head sculptures” use traditional African textile techniques to reference the juxtaposition between harm and healing within the Black American experience. Odundo’s vessels emphasize form and texture, showcasing the natural beauty of the material. Dave’s utilitarian stoneware jars, produced under the oppressive conditions of slavery, are marked by their durability and functionality. These works collectively transcend their utilitarian origins to become vessels of cultural and historical narratives.

The textile art of Basil Kincaid, John Paul Morabito, April Bey, Estelle Witherspoon, and Leola Pettway share commonalities through the use of fabric to explore cultural, historical, and social themes. Bey’s immersive installations blend Afrofuturism with imagery from her Bahamian heritage, using textiles to address themes of queerness, feminism, and postcolonial identity. Witherspoon and Pettway, as part of the Gee’s Bend collective, created quilts that embody the rich tradition of patchwork quilting in rural Alabama, using fabric scraps to craft pieces that reflect the history and endurance of their community from slavery through the civil rights era. These artists utilize textile art to convey complex narratives and cultural critiques, transforming everyday materials into powerful expressions of identity and resilience.

Ruth Asawa and Gwendolyn Knight studied at or interacted with Black Mountain College, a hub of avant-garde and experimental art education in the mid-20th century in North Carolina. Asawa's abstract sculptures and lithographs reflect Josef Albers's emphasis on form, repetition, and meticulous precision, while Knight's sculptures embody the modernist tendencies and African art influences promoted by figures like Alain Locke during the Harlem Renaissance. Both artists incorporated these influences into their works, demonstrating technical mastery and a deep engagement with their cultural and educational heritage.

The works of Larry Bell, Jiab Prachakul, and Rashid Johnson share a common theme of exploring identity through perception, personal narrative, and cultural context. Bell's *Cube #25* uses transparency and illusion to challenge viewers' perceptions of space and objects; Prachakul's *Girlfriends* examines the construction of identity within the Asian diaspora; and Johnson's *My World* addresses the complexities and challenges of Black identity in society through motifs of surveillance and historical trauma. Each artist uses their medium to create multifaceted and thought-provoking explorations of identity.

To learn more about the Museum's newest acquisitions, please visit [Recent Acquisitions](#). To request high resolution images, please contact Lizzi Newton at lizzie.newton@dncr.nc.gov.

About the North Carolina Museum of Art

The North Carolina Museum of Art's collection spans more than 5,000 years, from antiquity to the present, making the institution one of the premier art museums in the South. The Museum's collection provides educational, aesthetic, intellectual, and cultural experiences for the citizens of North Carolina and beyond. The 164-acre Museum Park showcases the connection between art and nature through site-specific works of environmental art. The Museum offers changing special exhibitions, classes, lectures, family activities, films, and concerts. The Museum is located at 2110 Blue Ridge Road in Raleigh and is home to the People's Collection. It is the art museum of the State of North Carolina, under the auspices of Governor Roy Cooper; an agency of the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources, guided by the direction of Secretary D. Reid Wilson; and led by Director Valerie Hillings. For more information, please visit ncartmuseum.org.

About the North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources

The NC Department of Natural and Cultural Resources (DNCR) manages, promotes, and enhances the things that people love about North Carolina—its diverse arts and culture, rich history, and spectacular natural areas. Through its programs, the department enhances education, stimulates economic development, improves public health, expands accessibility, and strengthens community resiliency.

The Department manages over 100 locations across the state, including 27 historic sites, seven history museums, two art museums, five science museums, four aquariums, 35 state parks, four recreation areas, dozens of state trails and natural areas, the NC Zoo, the NC Symphony, the State Library, the State Archives, the NC Arts Council, the African American Heritage Commission, the American Indian Heritage Commission, the State Historic Preservation Office, the Office of State Archaeology, the Highway

Historical Markers program, the NC Land and Water Fund, and the Natural Heritage Program. For more information, please visit ncdcr.gov.