

# NEWS

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**For Immediate Release**

**PRESS RELEASE**

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[www.bu.edu/ART](http://www.bu.edu/ART)

## ***Jacob Lawrence:* Chronicles of Struggle and Hope**

***\*\*The first show of the artist's work in Boston  
emphasizing the range of his print production \*\****

**September 10 – October 24, 2004**

***Opening Reception Thursday, September 9, 2004, 6-8 p.m.***

BOSTON-- The Boston University Art Gallery (BUAG) is pleased to announce the first exhibition of the 2004-2005 season, *Jacob Lawrence: Chronicles of Struggle and Hope*, showcasing over sixty prints and paintings by Jacob Lawrence from 1963-2000. The works depict critical moments in history and the struggles of working people as they confront oppression, overcome daily adversities, educate themselves, and participate in their communities. The works on display at the BUAG include paintings, drawings, and prints from his various series, *The Legend of John Brown*, *Harriet Tubman*, and *Toussaint L'Ouverture*, as well as single prints. A highlight of the exhibition is the group of eight original gouache paintings created to accompany the 1983 deluxe edition of John Hersey's 1946 *Hiroshima*. These paintings present a visual interpretation of the moments following the atomic bomb explosion over Hiroshima.

Born in 1917, Jacob Lawrence spent his childhood in New York City, attended classes at the WPA Harlem Art Workshop and the American Artists School, and later worked for the Federal Art Project. While still in his twenties Lawrence exhibited his paintings at major museums across the country, including the Phillips Collection and the Museum of Modern Art in New York, where he became the first African American artist to have a major solo exhibition. During World War II Lawrence served in the U.S. Coast Guard; following the war he taught briefly at Black Mountain College with Josef Albers. He lived, painted, and taught in New York City until 1971, when he joined the faculty of the University of Washington. He was the recipient of numerous awards including the National Medal of Arts.

It was in 1930s Harlem that Jacob Lawrence developed his expressive cubism. The art community there, with its workshops, the Harlem Artists Guild and the Harlem Art Center, expanded Lawrence's ideas about art, its possibilities and responsibilities. One of his mentors, the painter Charles Alston, recognized the power and promise of Jacob Lawrence's work when he said in 1938: "Still a very young painter, Lawrence symbolizes more than any one I know, the vitality, the seriousness and promise of a new and socially conscious generation of Negro artists."

The prints showcased at the Boston University Art Gallery reflect both his early influences as a student and artist in Harlem and his mature signature style of tight interlocking patterns of simplified shapes with a palette of flat, pure color. Jacob Lawrence's images reflect his lifelong sensitivity to the world around him. Whether seen in museums, disseminated through limited-edition prints and posters, or reproduced in books, his works remind us that struggle, unity and hope are the best weapons to strengthen the concept of community and merge it with the aspirations of all humanity.

## **PUBLIC PROGRAMMING**

### **OPENING RECEPTION**

Thursday, September 9, 6-8 p.m.

### **PANEL DISCUSSION**

#### **On Jacob Lawrence, Langston Hughes, Alain Locke and the Harlem Renaissance**

Patricia Hills, *Exhibition Curator and Professor of Art History*, Boston University

Jeffrey C. Stewart, *Professor of History and Art History*, George Mason University

Martha J. Nadell, *Assistant Professor of English*, Brooklyn College

**Friday, October 1, 2004, 6-8 p.m.**

At the Gallery

### **GALLERY TALK**

Michelle Dubois, co-author of *Jacob Lawrence: Paintings, Drawings, and Murals (1935-1999), A Catalogue Raisonné*, will talk about Jacob Lawrence's life and work.

**Wednesday, October 13, 2004, 1 p.m.**

At the Gallery

## **IMAGES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST**

Please call the gallery or visit the BU Art Gallery website at [www.bu.edu/ART](http://www.bu.edu/ART) for events and programming information during the season. All exhibitions and events are free to the public.

### **Information**

Boston University Art Gallery

855 Commonwealth Avenue

Boston, MA 02215

TEL (617) 353-3329

FAX (617) 353-4509

Gallery Hours

Tuesday-Friday 10am –5pm

Saturday & Sunday 1 – 5 pm

[www.bu.edu/ART](http://www.bu.edu/ART)

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The **Boston University Art Gallery** (BUAG) is a non-profit art gallery geared toward an interdisciplinary interpretation of art, and committed to a culturally inclusive viewpoint that expands the boundaries of the museum. Exhibitions focus on international, national and regional art developments chiefly in the 20<sup>th</sup> century; seek to present the cultural and historical context of art, and to acknowledge the artistic contributions of under-recognized sectors of the population. BUAG is located at 855 Commonwealth Avenue, inside the College of Fine Arts at Boston University (BU West T stop on the B Green Line).

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