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African American Art In The Marketplace: The Path To Inclusion

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“African American Art in the Marketplace: The Path to Inclusion”



Quashelle Curtis, *At the Auction Block*. 1999

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the Master's Degree in Museum Professions
Seton Hall University

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Quashelle Fannie Curtis

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When I was sixteen, my natural father passed away but God blessed me with a caring mentor and friend, William Hodge. I sincerely thank you for your nurturing steering voice of clarity. I can always depend on you to support and love me through my most difficult times of life, the truest definition of a father.

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to examine the inclusion of African American art in the general art market place. I began by asking one simple question: Why is there a limited amount of African American art being sold at auction? I answered it by means of an investigative study of how frequently African American art works comes up for auction, how its prices are being set at auction and how these works are viewed in the art market. In referring to the art market, I mean, a network of artists, collectors, historians, gallery directors, and museums professionals. This network is loosely referred to as the art world. By defining this group as a market, my aim is to examine how a variable monetary value becomes attached to art within this system. Beginning with the historical context of African American art at auction and ending with a look at its current trends in the marketplace, the study dissects the auction sector in relationship to the advancement of this genre. In addition, the study analyzes the development of this field, at auction, since the emergence of e-commerce on the Internet. I argue that trade on the Internet has provided the window of opportunities through which African American art has gained entry into the more dominant structure. At the same time, electronic trade has expanded the conventional procedures in which these works are sold. My thesis positions the African American Art market in a historical and political context in the burgeoning online market during the 1999-2001 period.

David Driskell states, "Only 20 years ago, works by major African American artists such as Tanner, White, Lawrence, and Romare Bearden were, 'all but unnoticed in so-called mainstream institutions, with the expectation of one or two pieces hidden away.' Now, amid a surge of research and scholarship, museums have publicly made it a

priority to acquire and exhibit both historical and contemporary works by African American artists.”¹ Since the late 1970s, collecting African American art has formed into a concentrated initiative that is flourishing into diversification plans throughout the marketplace. In using the term diversification, I mean the inclusion of equal representation of Americans of various descents in the artworld. Art Historian Halima Taha states that, “As we approach the millennium, an expanding awareness of African American history and culture, increasing prosperity, and an integrated community of artists, arts professionals, entrepreneurs, and patrons of the arts have fueled the burgeoning interest in African American art.”² This enthusiasm has bloomed into a collecting faction that has promoted inclusion in homes, corporations and museums. My thesis aims to document the efforts made by historians, collectors, and scholars to transform the mainstream exclusion of African American art and artwork by artists of African descent, often referred to as African Diasporic art, into a collecting movement. It began as a quiet brigade that literally went substantially undocumented until the late 1990s. Prior to Halima Taha’s pioneering book *Collecting African American Art* hit the stands in the late 1990s, limited documentation existed on the topic. The catalogue catapulted the collecting movement into national and international attention, similarly as Samella Lewis’ book *Black Artists on Art* had done for the genre in the late 1960s. With the creation of online auctions, collecting African American art, has taken on a new face in the 21st century. In addition, my thesis demonstrates how technology has afforded the genre access and visibility in a global art market.

1. Halima Taha, *Collecting African American Art*, (New York: Crown Publishers, Inc., 1998). 1.

2. Kelly Devine Thomas, “Collecting in Cyberspace,” *ArtNews Magazine*, 99, no. 1 (January 2000): 132.

In the mid 1990's, at the dawn of the 21st century, the United States economy was robust and thriving. The Internet was uncharted fertile ground for innovative start-up companies and businesses feverishly began to sprout up for every presumable human necessity. From common items such as food, stamps, and gas to lavishly luxurious items such as houses, art and real estate, all were available online. The Internet revolutionized shopping and swiftly became known as the new consumer phenomenon.

Savvy entrepreneurs seized the momentum in promoting internet-based commerce and virtually everything appeared to be a viable venture in cyberspace. Concerns for copyright and patent rights all took a back seat to the fast pace business launchers who were set to make millions on their ingenious ideas and boast to naysayers after they actualized their vision. In January 2000, *ArtNews* magazine reported that, "Forrester Research, a technology research firm in Cambridge Massachusetts, predicted that online sales will grow from \$1.4 billion in 1998 to \$19 billion by 2003."³ By the late 1990's, the art world would carve its niche in cyberspace. This time period became a critical juncture the market became fascinated with creating a collector's paradise and designing the "collecting in cyberspace" model. First, the art world began to pursue a platform that went beyond eBay and Amazon.com's infusion of bargain prices mixed with auction mania. eBay and Amazon.com's low-end auction style allowed consumers to clear out their garages and place any item up for auction including objects such as postcards, stuffed animals, reproduction prints, anonymous paintings and household appliances.

3. Eileen Kinsella, "The Rise of African American Art," *ArtNews Magazine*, 102, no. 8 (September 2003): 118.

eBay and Amazon.com's bargain style presents a distinct contrast from the art world's "fine art" model. Subsequently, the art world instrumentalized the popularity of internet-based commerce to offer a wide spectrum of sales from purchasing low-end products to purchasing record-breaking high-end six figure products: all on the Internet.

Chapter I of my thesis offers an analysis and a history of the art market, its structure and its functions. The chapter aims to provide a deeper understanding of the framework of the market's daily maneuvering and growth since its inception. My scope focuses on the years 1999 through 2001 and examines the growth of the art market into the 21st century. The analysis is critical to positioning African American art within this emergent structure.

Chapter II examines the history and trends of collecting African American art. It explores areas of achievement within the field through the strides of dealers, collectors and art historians. It aims to uncover means by which the collecting movement can be advanced further.

Chapter III reflects upon issues surrounding the exclusion of African American art and artists at auction. Examining this system is instrumental to determining the cause of stagnancy for African American art. I propose that cultural elitism, which condones segregation and minimal social interaction with artists of diverse cultural backgrounds, is a fundamental cause for the exclusion of African Diasporic art in the market place. I will support my arguments with insights gained from data about auction sales and other trends in the art market.

Chapter IV examines the impact this influx of artwork had on the market at large. It showcases the influence African American art had in the online auction market during

1999 through 2001. The chapter includes a statistical analysis that addresses the following questions: 1) Is there a difference in private auction between estimated worth versus actual hammer price for African American versus non-African American artists? 2) Is there a difference between artwork sold via the Internet for these groups of artists? It documents the transforming trends that diversified artwork offerings had in the cyber market. This chapter shows how this trend directly impacted American art, its history and museum culture.

Chapter V presents an assessment of marketplace transactions and suggests plans for progression within the structure. It discusses avenues in which inclusion of diverse artwork can be accomplished. My thesis concludes by offering means by which this philosophy can succeed in the future as well as a projection of how African Diasporic art will develop in a global marketplace. In doing so, my thesis highlights a needed change in the way African American art is viewed and valued throughout the art market.

Chapter I

The Context and Structure of the Art Marketplace

The Marketplace Simplified

As an artist, the art world and its institutions have always fascinated me. Outside of wanting to see my work featured on walls of a museum someday, I was unaware of the way institutions were governed and functioned. Questions that interested me included: “How do artists make careers for themselves, how do museums create revenue to mount an exhibition, and how do auction houses manage to sell artwork at record-breaking prices?” As it turned out – and manifested itself in the present thesis - these questions gave birth to an ongoing research project. During my recent employment at an international auction house, seeds for my thesis germinated as the job afforded me the opportunity to address these questions head on. I began with examining the organizational structure of the art world, exhibition demographics, and historical availability.

For most people, the art market breaks down in a for-profit and a non-profit sector, both areas structured by a number of trends, ups, and downs. The non-profit sector of the art world does not appear to present itself as a structured whole with clear direction and ordinances. Instead, the art world appears as a dynamic microcosm of vicarious agendas set according to trends, and slopes. The for-profit sector of the art market has a global platform that is mimicked throughout the world. Market is defined in the *Webster Dictionary* as a “region in which goods can be bought and sold, a place

where there is a demand for goods; buying and selling trade in a specified commodity the group of people associated in such trade.”⁴ While there are various elements involved in the trade of art from print shops to art galleries, the primary pillars that sustain the market’s longevity are museums and artists themselves.

Auction Houses

Auction houses operate the largest sector of the art market grossing over \$4 billion dollars in earned profit in 2002. A recent report featured in the *Wall Street Journal* noted that, “Indeed, annual art sales at auction now total nearly \$4 billion, compared with less than half that in the 1980’s.”⁵ While profits are completely dependent upon the economy, the art market has been on a consistent positive incline over the past ten years. Auction houses are responsible for the liquidation of assets such as societal heirlooms, renowned artworks, work by prestigious artists and estates. Auction houses are known for acquiring the best value for their privileged clients. Selling a rare and/or unique Picasso, Matisse, Cezanne or Monet at auction can fetch a willing client well over \$10 million. In doing so, auction houses set the market value for artwork throughout the marketplace. In a recent conversation, a Soho dealer raved that auction week is the very reason why he was in the business. He added that if auction week does not go well, it signals to everyone (the art world, mainstream, and investors) that investing their dollars

4. *Webster New 20th Century Dictionary*, Second Edition. (United States: William Collins Publishers, Inc., 1972), 1582.

5. Brooks Barnes, “Take My Art Please: Collectors Are Miffed as Museums Reject Works at Record Clip; Pissaro, Yes; Broken Toys, No.” *Wall Street Journal* (April 2002): W14.

in art is not the best financial decision for a given year. In essence, auction week is the catalyst that directs the pace of the art market.

Auction week happens during the first week of September. It is a big sales opportunity of various works in different genres and mediums that auctioneers have been searching for during the summer or holding onto since the end of the previous auction week. It takes place at the major auction houses such as Sotheby's, Christie's and Phillip's in New York City. It is an extensive sale of all the renowned artists from every influential art period that warrants the attention of major collectors. Successes of these sales are noted throughout the art world and connote how much collectors are willing to invest in art throughout the season.

A recent example surfaced in *W Magazine* over the sale of a Maurizio Cattelan piece at Christie's Contemporary auction. *The Ninth Hour* was described as, "the work comprised of yards of cardinal red carpeting on which lay shattered glass and a strikingly realistic wax sculpture of Pope John Paul II felled by a meteorite, which rested on his hip. Above him: a broken skylight. Despite what must have been an astounding impact, the Pope was still alive. Not surprisingly, the piece had generated some controversy – and publicly - in London."⁶ As with many controversial contemporary works of art, *The Ninth Hour*, became an icon. And because of its iconic status, it became a commodity worth acquiring at any cost all because it came along with the cache of saying: I bought it. *W Magazine* reported that "*The Ninth Hour* serves as a window on the (auction)

6. Julie Belcove, "To Market, To Market: How Does a Great Work of Contemporary Art End up on the Auction Block at Christies?" *W Magazine* (May 2001): 228.

house's push for a continuum of increased sale through rates, provide the latest trend and make them a premier institution to be associated with."⁷ According to critical theories on brick and mortar auction sales, trends in the auction marketplace are spearheaded and set by collectors. Collectors' need to have and/or sell an important work of art, simply put, it drives the market.

In order to understand such trends in the art market, it may be helpful to take a look at the historical formation of the brick and mortar auction format. A major collector in France was pivotal in jumpstarting the Impressionist market and setting the collector-generated auction platform. It began in 1894 with Theodore Duret. A major connoisseur, critic and launcher of the auction model, he became instrumental in augmenting the auction sales practice. Duret's stature as a collector became a significant catalyst for the rise of the art market. Duret was known as the top collector of his time. He was known for his infatuation with Impressionist paintings, beginning a trend that is a major pillar in the auction market to date. He was noted for being, "...a journalist, a critic, an inveterate itinerant in exotic lands, a 'market maker' in stock-exchange terms."⁸ Born the son of a cognac merchant in western France, Duret began his career as a journalist writing for *Le Globe* and *La Tribune*. He came to recognition in France amongst artists as a serious collector who would buy multiple paintings in one studio visit. During periods of hardship in his cognac business, he set out to sell his collection despite being ostracized by artists. While artists were devastated by his sale of

7. Julie Belcove. "To Market, To Market: How Does a Great Work of Contemporary Art End up on the Auction Block at Christies?" *W Magazine* (May 2001): 228.

8. Peter Watson. *From Manet to Manhattan: The Rise and Fall of the Modern Art Market*, (New York: Random House, 1992), 92.

Impressionist art in 1894 at the Hotel Drovat, his sale was an active component in constructing the procuring power of the art market. Prior to his successful sale, collectors were unable to recover any of their investments and were known to donate their work to museums. The danger with Duret conducting a sale was that he was the top known collector. Artists were afraid that their work would not sell and never be taken serious again. Many artists preferred the reputation of Duret owning one of their works, rather than him trying to resell them and failing. This was a fate that was common for collectors who attempted this before Duret. Peter Watson notes that, "As it turns out, the market did not collapse, pictures for which Duret had paid a few hundred francs 'now brought prices ten-fold higher.'"⁹ This sale set the platform that still proceeds today where artists only receive a one time payment for the sale of their work. It has been documented that artists were "livid" over their works being sold for ten times as much as they sold it to Duret. They felt it was unfair that they never received any proceeds from subsequent sales of their creations. A practice, that I believe, needs to be restructured still today.

The success of Duret's sale allowed art lovers during the time to inquire of his eye and expertise. Incidentally, Duret began to see the weight his collection had in the marketplace and he utilized it to become a sought after art-critic. He went on to be successful in introducing Van Gogh's work to Japan and produced monographs for Cezanne, van Gogh, Courbet, Toulouse-Lautrec and Renoir. His example began the collector-based auction sale model – a tradition that continues to this day.

9. Peter Watson. *From Manet to Manhattan: The Rise and Fall of the Modern Art Market* (New York: Random House, 1992), 94.

A fine case in point of the legacy of Duret was the introduction of the American Contemporary art market in 1973 by Robert Scull. Prior to the Scull sale, American contemporary art had not been considered a worthy investment and often sold at low-end prices. Robert Scull set the Contemporary American art market rolling and put artists such as Robert Rauschenberg and Jasper Johns on the art marketplace's radar. Author Peter Watson documents that, "Contemporary American works had been traded consistently at auction only since the Scull auction in 1973."¹⁰

As an artist, I had been taught in art school that artists make it to auction when they have become successful, are well established, recognized in their field, have been featured in major museum exhibitions, appeared in numerous pristine collections and have received critical acclaim for their artistic valor. But traditionally, the economy has dictated conditions for what sells at auction and when. Auctioneers receive the highest paid salaries in the art world next to Museum Directors. They also achieve celebrity status for their ability to sell artwork successfully at record-breaking prices. The quintessential drive behind the auction sector is the capitalistic model of supply and demand. Auction houses are at the top of the market because their drive for securing high prices for work maintains value and prestige, while setting trends mimicked throughout the marketplace. They create, demand and secure top dollar for value placed on artwork and support art's viability for collectors, bankers, brokers, appraisers, dealers and museums.

10. Peter Watson, *From Manet to Manhattan: The Rise and Fall of the Modern Art Market*, (New York: Random House, 1992) p 94.

Museum Culture

The core mission of a museum is to preserve its assets – its collections – by cultivating audiences through the successful mounting of attractive exhibitions. Museums are also instrumental in solidifying the value and prestige of well-known artworks and artists. Museums provide a physical space where collectors, banks, corporations and gallery dealers can display artwork, add prestige to work, gain critical recognition and directly connect with the public. In doing so, museums serve as a major promotional vehicle to increase the value of a collector's artwork. In many cases collectors validate the significance of their artwork through the incorporation of their pieces into a museum exhibition. While museums are defined in the American Heritage Dictionary as “a place devoted to acquisitions, study and exhibition of objects of scientific, historical or artistic value,”¹¹ recent functions of museums have expanded.

Museums have acquired procuring power, which in today's society equates to dollars and cents. Thomas Hoving, the former director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art stated in the *Wall Street Journal*, “... in an age where art buying is much more fashionable and capricious than it was a decade ago, getting your art into a museum is proof that you bought the right stuff.”¹² Virtually, museums have an incubator power capable of enhancing the creditability of artists' careers, to add fame to collectors' collections, to add fame to donors' names and to promote affiliation with corporate brands. David Carr suggests that, “For a price, they (museums) can deliver temporary fame to their benefactors, for alluring flash they can embrace entertainment at the cost of

11. *American Heritage Dictionary*, Third Edition, (New York: Dell Publishing, 1994), 539.

12. Brooks Barnes, “Take My Art Please: Collectors Are Miffed as Museums Reject Works at Record Clip; Pissaro, Yes; Broken Toys, No.” *Wall Street Journal* (April 2002): W14.

education. For survival, they can accept gifts, entertain naming opportunities, and glamorize galleries without necessarily addressing the agenda of the institution or extending reach of its mission.”¹³ This basic need for survival has forfeited the validity of the core mission of the original development of museums and has considerably diminished the commitment professionals have to the field. Consequently, the collecting of art translated into a promotion of corporate brands. At the same time, collectors vie to have their collection endorsed by a museum.

George E. Hein states, “The need to consider what meaning visitors make of their museum experience comes from two different sources: one is the increasing importance of the educational role of museums; the other is the mounting pressure of museums to justify their existence. The latter pressure is mainly (but not exclusively) addressed through market research; it manifests itself in efforts by museum staff to know their audiences, to develop exhibitions that will be popular and that will increase audience attendance.”¹⁴ The museum’s pertinent obligation is to cover its operating budget to create popular exhibitions. As collectors amass their collections based on viable market relevance and museum acceptance, a museum narrows the likelihood of purchasing “unpopular” works. The separation between the museum’s need to keep its doors open and its responsibility to educate the community has brought strife between museums, the government and the community. This dual agenda has become an increasingly conflicted function that is eroding the dynamics of museums’ programming and objectives. Taking

13. David Carr, “Balancing Act: Ethics, Mission and Public Trust.” *Museum News* (Sept. /Oct. 2001): 29-32 and 71-81.

14. George E. Hein, *Learning in the Museum*, (New York: Routledge, 1998), 3.

into consideration the growing costs of producing a high quality exhibition, it is difficult to rally to either side. David Carr states that society should, "Consider the museum to be a living cultural trust. It is a place that holds objects apart and displays them for interpretative engagements by users. In virtually all engaged institutions - museums, hospitals, schools, libraries - a culture of trust and integrity allows the institution to serve as a credible guide to the complex resonance of our lives, a resource to embrace for clarity in a complex culture."¹⁵ There seems to be a recurring oxymoron between the theoretical propositions museums are thought to practice and what they actually do. On one end museums' missions position them in a position of authority, providing a cultural educative experience for their constituents and on the other end, they are conformed to marketing strategies to ensure audience attendance and funding needs. George E. Hein states that, "Schools, like public museums, were part of the developing system of public expenditure for the masses. But, unlike museums, they quickly developed an accountability system – inspectors, tests, and standard curriculum as well as public discussion of what schools were for, how they should be run, and whether they were doing their intended job... Museums, although equally public institutions in most countries, did not establish similar approaches to assessing impact on their clients. It is assumed that people would learn, be enlightened, and be entertained by their visits to museums without any reference to the study of visitors' experience. The attitude that the response of the museum's audience is irrelevant still exists in many museums."¹⁶ While

15. David Carr, "Balancing Act: Ethics, Mission and Public Trust." *Museum News* (Sept./Oct. 2001): 29-32 and 71-81.

16. George E. Hein, *Learning in the Museum*, (New York: Routledge, 1998). 3.

the need for survival trickles down to keeping lights on, paying staff, producing wall text, paying for shipping and handling and maintaining climate controlled storage to name just a few, the public seems to be in the dark as to where dollars are being allocated. These expenses are areas that Museum Directors tend not to talk about because they are not the most glamorous needs of a museum. The museum's inability to communicate more successfully to the public its functions and basic needs clouds the public's ability to relate to the work. Removing the veil of this elitist tradition can be instrumental in solidifying and unifying the museum's educational initiatives and organizational requests.

Gallery Dealers

Gallery dealers are on the forefront of the spectrum as they forge ahead to make and share artists' careers by pursuing sales on the initial level, by building a collectors base for artists, by garnering media attention, and by press coverage and museum acquisitions. Dealers select artists based on clientele needs, personal preferences, and style and oftentimes the medium an artist is working in. They serve as scouts having a trained eye that should spot the next up and coming artists who will dominate the art world, molding them into the business. More affluent galleries are known for creating artists' careers and pushing them in the center of the marketplace. An article by Brooke Barnes and Robert T. Hughes reported that, "During recent months, some big names in Hollywood and the art world have shown big interest in barely dry works of art. Sales to celebrities are part of a campaign by dealers whose artists need the cachet of being in a

name collection more than usual in a down economy...It gives a higher comfort level."¹⁷ It also can begin the ball rolling and induct artists into the dynamic playing ground of the art market. Dealers have the power to make or break an artist's career as they determine whose work to endorse. The gallery sector serves as the entry level to the art marketplace. Without gallery representation, artists are not considered serious about their profession and are not recognized within the canon.

The canon, i.e the notion of commonly accepted set of successful or otherwise acknowledged artists, pervades all sectors of the art market. It includes auction houses, collectors, museums, and gallery dealers. The notion of the canon also links a network of theories, artists and stylistic movements that have become essential to fine art, art theories and the art world in general. The canon thus tends to create an environment in which artists, artworks and collectors are popular because everyone agrees with one another other and continues to support these theories and concepts financially. Thomas McEvilley suggests, "The conditioning situation does not mean that all members of one culture will agree, like identically programmed robots, but that the set of options available within the given culture, though complex, is still limited. It is also important to acknowledge that conditioning can be amended and expanded by people trying to educate themselves and to pursue their interests, and a culture's set of mental options is always changing and always to some degree up for grabs."¹⁸

17. Brooks Barnes, "Take My Art Please: Collectors Are Miffed as Museums Reject Works at Record Clip; Pissaro, Yes; Broken Toys, No." *Wall Street Journal* (April 2002): W14.

18. Thomas McEvilley, *Art & Otherness: Crisis in Cultural Identity*, (New York: McPherson and Company, 1995), 22.

Artists' Rights

Visual artists fuel the marketplace with their creativity. Their creative work creates the entire market and industry as they generate the commodity that sustains the financial foundation of the art world. Yet, they remain financially undervalued. Artists average only a small share of what the art market generates from their works. From entering the art marketplace to their first successful sale, artists lose forty to sixty percent of the value of their work in order to get started. They also do not receive additional residuals when collectors, dealers, museums and auction houses resell their works. Artists' benefits are limited because they are unable to claim royalties. Without this critical long-term feature, artists cannot gain substantial long-term financial benefit. Copyright laws state that artists maintain authenticity and image rights, but there are no royalty fees paid for merchandising usage and promotion of their work. Visual artists only maintain creative ownership. In fact, "the Copyright Revision Act of 1978 allows non-commercial broadcasting systems to use pictorial and graphic work without permission of the owner. These systems are supposed to pay royalties for such use...The Copyright Royalty Tribunal set very low rates for the royalties to be paid when such works are used. It also established rules under which records must be kept of compulsory licensing, but to date almost no fees have been paid to visual artists. It has been such a disaster that the Copyright Royalty Tribunal has recommended to Congress that it repeal this part of the law."¹⁹ Works by visual artists are utilized in many forums, but adequate compensation remains elusive.

19. Diane Cochrane, *This Business of Art*, (New York: Watson – Guptill Publications, 1988), 35.

For example, in the music industry, writers, performers and musicians each receive compensation for their creativity, while visual artists are unable to attain royalty rights for their work, after it leaves their hands. Simply put, entertainers are paid for creating their songs, they receive compensation for their songs, as well as a percentage from outlets that utilize their songs i.e. radio stations, elevators and the Internet. Ironically, visual artists seem to lose their financial creative power when their original work leaves their hands, instead of providing a continuous income to sustain future creativity. These basic creative rights do not exist within the art market and they leave the artist often penniless and financially depressed; the complete opposite of fellow creative individuals, collectors, dealers and/or auction houses. Perhaps, visual artists have not figured out their worth and how to preserve their economic position in the larger scheme of the market as musicians have.

E-commerce and Art

A fairly new addition to the art world, the Internet, came on the scene in the mid-1990s. Originally, it was merely a tool that many questioned. Its usage was undefined and its potential remained unrealized for quite sometime. In the same fashion, as the Spanish who traveled in the thirteenth century to the American Southwest in search of the mythological Seven Cities of Gold, entrepreneurs began to pioneer various functionalities of the Internet and the value of E-commerce. The Internet quickly became potentially a money making venture that a select few were willing to step out and risk pioneering the terrain. Harry S. Dent, Jr., stated, "With the Dow roaring from under 4000 in late 1994

to near 9000 recently, most people can't imagine a brighter investment picture." He went on to add, "... we are on the brink of the most exciting boom period since the Roaring Twenties, I call it the Roaring 2000s, because it will usher in the kind of sweeping economic and social changes that turned post-World War I America upside down.

During the Roaring Twenties, new technologies, industries, products and services seemed to burst forth virtually overnight."²⁰ During the late 1990's, the world was beginning to dissect the implication of the Internet and E-commerce; predictions of its revolutionary power emerged and prompted investors to diversify their portfolios with tech-stock. As the Internet surged, it began the latest buzz and the fastest growing market for investors. Entrepreneurs and businesses were literally hatched overnight. The art world's joining of the cyber world was loosely carved out. Most sites simply featured educational and directional platforms for organizations, museums and artists. In January 2000, *ArtNews* reported gallery dealers' feelings towards the "Internet in Collecting in Cyberspace," it stated, "It's a tool like anything else. It's not a panacea. As a tool, the Internet provides a gallery with as many options as a Swiss army knife. It can serve as an advertisement, an index, an archive, a catalogue, a window, a rack, a magnet, and as an assistant who keeps the gallery open 24 hours a day, takes messages and never intimidates visitors. It's another venue of activity we plan to utilize."²¹ Although gallery dealers' impression of the platform was fundamental.

20. Harry S. Dent, Jr. *The Roaring 2000s: Building Wealth and Lifestyle you desire in the Greatest Boom in History*, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1999), 27-29.

21. Kelly Devine Thomas, "Collecting in Cyberspace" *ArtNews Magazine*, 99, no. 1 (January 2000): 133.

Auction houses began to see the revolutionary power they could have in the art marketplace. Auction houses acknowledged Internet utilization, began to shape the progress of E-commerce and its inclusion to the art market. *ArtNews* reported in January 2000 that, "On January 19, 1999, when Sotheby's officially announced that it was investing \$25 million to develop Internet auctions on its Sothebys.com website, its stock leaped to \$41 per share. If dealers and auction houses had previously paid little attention or given little credence to Internet companions such as eBay – the flea market style, person-to-person auction site whose stock rose from \$18 a share to \$296 3/8 a share between September and December 1998 - Sotheby's bold move made the trade take notice."²² With artnet.com leaping into cyber auctions in May 1999, before Sotheby's reported projection, the market began to show tremendous potential with groundbreaking sales of fine art and literally had every major auction house scrambling to stake its claims in the new online market.

The Market's Direction

So, what makes one artist's work rage on the market, sell at auction while still wet, while another artist's work barely generates close to its net-worth? What makes dealers promote an artist's one work over another? Who determines which collections will be featured at the Metropolitan Museum of Art or at the Brooklyn Museum for that matter? After looking at the business models within the art marketplace, I found that there was no

22. Kelly Devine Thomas, "Collecting in Cyberspace" *ArtNews Magazine*, 99, no. 1 (January 2000): 133.

clear way for determining this process. It was simply empirical. There is no clear barometer to gauge the market because auction houses are strictly driven by supply and demand. Museums are loosely following their mission statements because their goals are overshadowed by their pertinent financial needs. Gallery dealers are driven by their need to fulfill spending habits of their clients and visual artists' rights are placed last. We are left with no clear path for artists seeking to enter these institutions to follow in order to ensure their selection, participation, and success.

With the institution's needs dictating patterns and trends within the marketplace and consequently the mainstream, there is no major system of checks and balances that protect the rights of artists. I began to wonder, could diversity be a part of the art world's strategic agenda, in particular, within auction houses? Since, the art world is heavily swayed by supply and demand, I began to wonder if a diversified approach could exist within this structure. Since auction houses worldwide control the direction of the marketplace, standing as the pacesetter, and the armory for progression of art within the marketplace, I began my research by taking a look at the state of African American art within the art market.

Chapter II

Collecting: The Formation of a Market

As Fredrick Douglass so eloquently said, “If there is no struggle, there is no progress. Those who profess to favour freedom and yet depreciate agitation are men who want crops without plowing up the grounds. They want the ocean without the awful roar of its many waters. Their struggle may be a moral one; or it may be a physical one; and it may be both moral and physical; but it must be a struggle. Power concedes nothing without demand. It never did and it never will.”²³ In many ways, the African American art market was founded on this incisive philosophy. This was the very incentive that became the catalyst for the movement that has now flourished into the current booming market. The infrastructure of the African American art marketplace is made up of gallery dealers, collectors, scholars, artists and institutions. They have all been instrumental in promoting, educating and validating the work of African Diasporic art. In doing so, it has become a vibrant market. A recent article in *Art News* reported that, “Prices have increased dramatically after a decade of focused scholarship, exhibitions and collecting.”²⁴ Countless catalogues, articles, symposiums, panel discussions and scholarship attributing to African American art’s role in society have set a tone in the art world that African American art is more than just an additional category. This

23. Douglass, Fredrick. “Letter to an Abolitionist Associate, 1849.” (Accessed 7-02); Available from <http://www.howard.edu> and <http://www.growkansas.com>

24. Eileen Kinsella, “The Rise of African American Art”, *Art News Magazine*, 102, no. 8 (September 2003): 118.

progression has come about through multiple efforts in critical areas in the field. It has been a tactical pursuit that is yielding plenteous fruit.

The collecting initiative has been reported to have begun as early as 1868 with the Hampton University Museum collecting its first works. The museum's goal was set to document and preserve the works of African Americans and Native Americans art works and artifacts. The Hampton University Museum is now noted for having the largest collection of African American work in the United States. The institution's holdings include Henry Ossawa Tanner, Elizabeth Catlett, John Biggers and Jacob Lawrence, to name just a few, and it is "recognized internationally as one of America's outstanding cultural resources."²⁵

Historical Black Colleges and Universities art departments, galleries and museums have been pivotal in preserving African Diasporic art and its history. These institutions literally had the foresight and belief in the achievement of descendants of African descent to invest finances, time and resources, and create educational programming around these standards. Institutions such as Howard University, Clark Atlanta University and Fisk University now house the strongest body of work by African American masters and site specific works. Kinshasha Holman Conwill states that, "For more than one hundred years, historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) have been in the forefront of the preservation of African American history and culture. Much as the Civil Rights movement of the late 1950s and the 1960s launched major museums dedicated to African American culture and history, the post Civil War era signaled the

25. Jeanne Zeidler, "Hampton's Renowned Museum Collection Growing with the University," *Annual Report* (1990-1991): 11.

rise of a host of institutions of higher learning founded specifically for former slaves and free blacks. In the period following the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863, many black colleges and universities were created. Some of the earliest of those institutions began to assemble important collections of African American art and artifacts as well as significant holdings of European and American modernism, African American and Native American art.”²⁶

In the same way that institutions have preserved the heritage of the genre through their fiscal support of educators, artists and its history, collectors have validated the genre through their pointed purchases. Significant collectors such as Paul Jones, David Driskell, Bill Cosby and Walter O. Evans have paved the way by safeguarding historical African American masters and mid-career artists work. Through their investments, they established significant collections and contextualized African American art history through the documentation rendered from their collections. It was reported in *Valentine New York Magazine* “...the collector now has a successional position. As the role of the artist becomes tactical, so does the collector. The collector has a unique position within the art world. Through collecting, the collector has the ability to promote, preserve and determine the value of African American art and its creators.”²⁷ I can remember when I was taking painting classes at Spelman College under the tutelage of Dr. Arturo Lindsay; we were instructed on the importance of collecting works of art from our classmates. It was part of my education to understand that we all support each other. I can also remember reading during my studies that David Driskell was instructed to do the

26. Kinshasha Holman Conwill, *To Conserve a Legacy: American Art from Historically Black Colleges and Universities*, exh. cat. The Studio Museum in Harlem (Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1999), 11.

27. Quashelle Curtis, “The Heart of Collecting” *Valentine New York Magazine*, I, Issue II, (2002): 30.

same thing during his studies at a historical black college, now his collection is one of the most well known collections of African American art. Educated collectors helped to construct the African American art market. Being a collector has become an advocacy position laden with responsibility and expertise. The average collector generally just purchases work and enjoys its placement on his or her wall. The informed collector of African American art has picked up a piece of legacy and the opportunity to take on an active role in moving the genre further along in the art world.

Sharon Patton states, "Collecting fine art and owning certain types of fine art are important signs about class and wealth; to function as such, groups of paintings, sculpture, prints, etc., must not be accessible or must be only minimally accessible to certain groups of people. Owning art gives a collector prerogative to interpret and determine what and subsequently what does not have cultural significance. Collecting as a political enterprise denotes an exercise of power and the political capacity to negotiate change."²⁸ While some collectors are known for their historically noteworthy collections, others are known for bringing about political changes in the mainstream art world because of their passion for the genre. Significant collectors such as Derrick Beard, Richard Clarke, Merton Simpson and Samella Lewis, have done just that. When you speak to many collectors, they state that they started out purchasing a piece that they had interest in and consequentially found out about the status of the African American art market and its value in the mainstream art world. It was at that point, that they began collecting with a new agenda. As Quashelle Curtis wrote in *Valentine NY Magazine*,

28. Sharon Patton, "A History of Collecting African American Art", *Narratives of African American Art and Identity: The David Driskell Collection*, (Maryland: University of Maryland, 1998), 45.

“Mr. Clarke believes that collecting provides him an underlying sense of heritage. This lineage allows collectors the opportunity to take their passion beyond the formal definition of the phrase. For Mr. Clarke, collecting began transitioning into cultivating ways for African American art and artists to gain prominent exposure during the late 1970s. In 1971, his personal philosophy began taking form, when he joined the Board of Directors of the Studio Museum in Harlem, which was under the direction of Ed Spriggs at the time. Through his position, he was instrumental in acquiring the museum’s present historical home on 125th Street. After a twelve-year tenure on the board of the museum, Governor Carey appointed him to the New York State Council for the Arts for 12 years. Clarke’s resignation from the council, to make time for pursuing collecting- his first-passion-was short-lived, as he was asked to consider joining the Board of Trustees for the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Through the recommendation of Dr. Lowery Sims, he became a trustee for the museum in 1996, an appointment he currently holds.””

In addition to spending their money, collectors expend their belief, time and personal devotion sending a message that the work is valuable and a viable investment.

Purchasing power is a critical tool used to sustain the potency of the market’s value.

Collectors and gallery dealers have been pertinent to driving the African American art market’s incline. By these means, collecting has become a tool that collectors have used to elevate the value placed on work they collected.

While this undercurrent of collecting and preservation has been actively buzzing

29. Quashelle Curtis, “The Heart of Collecting” *Valentine New York Magazine*, I, Issue II (2002): 30.

in the United States since the 17th century, the intra-national and global markets are disjointed. The monetary value placed on the art work of artists of African descent within the national art market does not match its merit. Disproportionate value placed on works of art has proven to be a stammering obstacle to progression of the (net) worth of the genre. Value is the backbone of all markets. Value is defined as, “Monetary and material worth. Worth as measured in usefulness or importance; merit.”³⁰ As a result, collectors, educators and scholars of African American art, strategies to raise the value within the marketplace have shaped the way many including myself now perceive value. What is value? Who determines what is valuable? According to Derrick Beard, “Deriving value in general is no exact science and deriving value for original works of art is even more inexact... Often African American art is sold into a very uninformed market place of potential buyers. In contrast, major works by white artists are sold in a very informed market place. The buyers are generally very knowledgeable about the work which also been repeatedly studied by countless scholars. That amount of scholarships has not been developed in the marketplace for African American art is not marketed extensively on a national level because most auction houses and galleries handle very little of this work. The auction venue at the moment, therefore, is not the place to render price comparisons for the art.”³¹ Halima Taha states in *Valentine NY Magazine* that, “African American art is American art, but like Outsider and Tribal Art it has its own distinct market. Consequentially, the art historical lexicon and commerce of work produced by Americans of African descent continues to be separate in its evaluation,

30. *American Heritage Dictionary*, Third Edition. (New York: Dell Publishing, 1994), 539.

31. Derrick Joshua Beard “What is Value?” *Comprehensive Guide to African American Art: The International Review of African American Art*, 14, no 4 (1998): 17.

documentation and marketing.”³² There still remain two separate markets attesting to the value of African American art. 1.) The mainstream market that needs to be convinced of African American art value. 2.) The African American market that thrives without the validation of the mainstream. As a result, you can sale a Romare Bearden lithograph for \$2,500 at a traditional auction house such as Christie’s, Sotheby’s or Phillip’s or for \$16,500 on the African American market. According to Art News Magazine, “Bearden’s public auction at a major house – set at Christie’s in 1999 for *At the Savoy*, a 1974 acrylic and collage on board with lacquer—is \$85,000. (New York art dealer Michael Rosenfeld, however, bought a Bearden collage in 1999 for \$145,500 at James D. Julia Auctioneers and Appraisals in Fairfield, Maine...)”³³ As a result of the separatism in the market, African American art has not actualized its truest value.

In addition, the documentation of the history of collecting African American art is fairly underdeveloped. It has emerged as a point of interest through the efforts of famous collectors who established the significance of their collection in the art world. But, the documentation that exists portrays the perspective of the collector. These catalogues generally depict the impact their collecting has had in the art world and highlights their collections. There still much scholarship needed on collecting, the movement and the impact it had on the art market. Besides a few articles and a catalogue titled *Collecting African American Art* written by Halima Taha – giving an insightful instructional approach to purchasing African American works on canvas, works on paper,

32. Halima Taha, “African American Art: Basics to Appraising an Asset & Commodity” *Valentine New York Magazine*, 1, Issue III, (2003): 32.

33. Eileen Kinsella, “The Rise of African American Art”, *Art News Magazine*, 102, no. 8, (September 2003): 119.

prints and sculpture – the subject remains wide open. By this I mean there are no periodical listings, price logs, and/or catalogues that give a price range of artworks and/or the price progression of this movement. Much scholarship and analysis is needed in this area. More importantly, there's no chronological report on the sales of the work. Thus far, gaps exist. For example, auctions results of African American art sold by arts organizations, museums and institutions are often not compiled and documented. These sales are a significant component of the collecting movement. Without a central place to locate the sales records, contextualizing and authenticating the progression of African American art becomes impractical. As a result, the African American art market has not taken its rightful place within the American auction sector and the global art market.

While gallery dealers report that African American art is on a rise and that they have been waiting for the level the work is at to even out with the market, there is still no consistent way to confirm that. Little documentation exists on the impact dealers have had on collectors and on the market. It is an area I feel needs further investigation. It would be interesting to hear the projections of dealers for the market as well as take a look at where the market has come from to its current price point. Further documentation on the market will help to shape it. With the lack of annual reports of where sales records are by any given artists, there remains much proving to be done on behalf of the African American market. Currently, it is just a verbal dialogue and awareness amongst the community of the record-breaking occurrences and the impressions of the progression gathered through the growing awareness of the field. It is with great due that this has come about, but cataloguing would be helpful to solidify this incline. *Art News Magazine* reports that, "Michael Rosenfeld has seen, and helped, the market soar in a

decade of mounting annual group shows of 'African American Masterworks.'"³⁴ *Art News Magazine* reports that, "There is a considerable gap between prices recorded at public auctions and prices that private dealers report."³⁵

Why is there a gap between the value placed on the work of artists of African descent in the market and the auction sector? What is preventing the integration and progression of the two components? In many ways the answers to these questions is the crux of my thesis, which I tackle in Chapter III. I feel that addressing these questions will become pivotal to moving the documentation of auction records and sales history along. This is a quintessential component because without it, a battle forms of proving African American art valuation. Overall, African American art has not broken ground in the traditional auction sector, which is a major sector of validating collecting initiatives. "We just haven't had the activity at auction. If the record is \$85,000 and you want to sell a work at auction, you're going to start it lower.' 'This is a whole market that is privately driven.' says Riehlman. 'It's also been in the flux from the early collectors who were able to buy and build big collections – but at much lower prices – to the new collectors.'"³⁶ Taha also states, "Inasmuch as sales records for African American art exist, they remain inconsistent because quality work is not included in every American art sales, thereby creating gaps in recorded auction values. Therefore many results tend to be lower than what collectors are actually spending and what dealers are selling for."³⁶ This inconsistency lowers the awareness and market value of African American art and remains a frontier for future pursuits.

34. Eileen Kinsella, "The Rise of African American Art", *Art News Magazine*, 102, no. 8, (September 2003): 119.

35. Eileen Kinsella, "The Rise of African American Art", *Art News Magazine*, 102, no. 8, (September 2003): 119.

36. Halima Taha, "African American Art: Basics to Appraising an Asset & Commodity" *Valentine New York Magazine*, 1, Issue III, (2003): 36.

CHAPTER III

Separatism within the Auction Sector

While the American art market began in the late 1800s with the influx of Impressionist art into the country, it has proven to be a viable marketplace. Record-breaking sales, renowned international exhibitions, and numerous historical texts regarding the significance of American art all supported its growth since the days of wanting to follow in the footsteps of European artists. Artists such as Sean Scully, Andy Warhol, Mark Rothko and Jacob Lawrence have been instrumental in demystifying the dogmatic impression of American art being unoriginal. This chapter seeks to determine how African American art is viewed within this market, at auction, how its presence at auction affects its value globally and what affect this has in the marketplace. To begin, I surveyed the works of several renowned African American, American and European artists whose works were created during the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, with similar subject matters and educational backgrounds. I documented how often these foundational works came up for auction over the past ten years. The survey covered major international auction houses including all branches of Christie's, Sotheby's, and Phillips. Renowned African American (non-traditional) artists included Edward Mitchell Bannister, Robert Scott Duncanson, William Henry Johnson, Edmonia Lewis and Henry Ossawa Tanner. Renowned American and European (traditional) artists included Thomas Cole, Winslow Homer, Edouard Manet, Claude Monet and Auguste Rene Francois Rodin.

Comparatively, I found that most of the African American artists I surveyed experienced major obstacles due to their racial status and were unable to pursue their career goals to the fullest extent due to it. The same level of appreciation did not exist for artists of color who painted during the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century. While the aforementioned artists mostly worked, lived and created during the same time period, attended the same institutions and competed in the same venues there are distinct differences between their biographies, career paths and records of accomplishment. Obstacles such as racism, discrimination, economic deprivation and inequality prevented them from pursuing careers of the same magnitude and stagnate their appreciation in the market.

As I began to research how often African American art works came up for auction, I found that, on average, works by African American masters were appraised low. (See **Appendix A**) In addition, most works seldom came up for auction. Low estimates implied that there was a low expectation for those works to sell or fair well at auction. In my study, I found that American and European art sold for greater than four times the value of African American art, resulting in their having tremendously higher estimates and sell through rate. Sell through rate is defined as the frequency at which an artist sells. It can range from 100% to 120% of its value because their works are ranked and averaged every time they come up for auction. If they have a low sell through rate, they appear less at auction.

Appendix A is a compilation of actual sales of pieces by Edward Mitchell Bannister, Robert Scott Duncanson, William Henry Johnson, Edmonia Lewis, Henry Ossawa Tanner, Thomas Cole, Winslow Homer, Edouard Manet, Claude Monet and

Auguste Rodin. The list enabled me to perform a (visual) analysis of trends taking place in the marketplace. Comparatively, I evaluated the ratio between the estimated value and the hammer price. I found that European and American artists generate sales in the million-dollar range and African American artists generate sales in the low thousands of dollar range. The highest record set for a work by an African American artists occurred in May 2000, for Robert Duncanson's 1848 oil on canvas *Still Life with Fruit* at Phillip's Auction House for \$222,500. In the 21st century there remains a gap between the sale ratio of African American, American and European art at auction.

Henry O. Tanner had a total of sixteen works come up for auction from 1986 – 1999, while Winslow Homer had eighty pieces up for auction from 1994 – 2000. Robert S. Duncanson had a total of sixteen works come up for auction from 1994 – 2001, while Thomas Cole had fifty-one records listed from 1986 - 2002. William H. Johnson had a total of four records listed from 1991 – 1992, while Claude Monet had eighty records from 2000 - 2002. Edward M. Bannister had a total of ten records listed from 1987 – 1998, while Edouard Manet had sixty-seven auction records listed from 2001 - 2002. Comparatively, African American artists' work do not come up as frequently as European and American artist and their works do not net a quarter as much as their European colleagues. Edmonia Lewis had five auction records listed from 1994 – 1996, while Auguste Rodin had eighty listings in a twelve-month period from 2001 – 2002. This means that the ratio of auction and frequency sells is 80 to 1 for American and European to African American art. I believe that there is a direct correlation between setting low estimates and actual sales of the work. Sale through rate is referred to as the average expectation of the actual sale of the work. It is calculated by averaging how

often work comes up for auction and how often it actually sells at auction. African American art is unable to have a higher sale through rate due to its low frequency of auction offerings and low estimates placed on works, which translates into a low expectancy for its success.

I conducted a statistical treatment of auction data from both private gallery/auction houses versus Internet art sales for American and European vs. African American artists. (See **Appendixes A-F**) Two statistical treatments compare ratio averages of estimated value and hammer price of artworks for both groupings of artist sold at auction vs. works sold on the Internet. This ratio is the mathematical quotient of the estimated value divided by the hammer price for each piece used in the study. Use of a ratio, normalized the actual dollar values facilitating the statistical treatment of data. In lay terms, two questions were being asked in the statistical assessment. First, is there a difference between auction vs. internet sale pricing for art created by American and European vs. African American artists? with the assumption that there is none. This is known in statistics as the “null hypothesis.” And second, how confident can one be in accepting the results of the statistical treatment? The statistical treatment of choice for this type of study is a comparison of two separate population averages or means. This type of study is performed when the mean or the average is numerical and two groups are being compared. Auction result data for approximately twenty randomly selected pieces were subjected to standard statistical variance of average analysis. The treatment examines data gathered in Appendix A of American, European and African American artwork sold at traditional brick and mortar auction houses. The second in Appendix B examines the data for American, European, and African American artwork sold in online

auctions. The results are listed in Appendix C and the statistical analysis is listed in Appendix E. Performing these statistical evaluation assuming no difference in populations, mathematically determines the likelihood of the population being significantly different or not.

An eyeball review of ratios for private auction sales reveals that one-third of the African American artists' pieces sold at auction from 2 to 14 times their estimated value. (See **Appendix F**) This is significant as this alone suggests questionable data. Are works of African American artists appropriately evaluated to determine their estimated values? One questions the adequacy for the estimated value of the pieces. These estimated values were art agents' determined values: the equivalent to "manufacturers suggested retail price." The comparison of averages for the auction data show that the ratio average for American and European artists was 1.06 with a variance of 0.17, while for African American artists the ration average was 3.15 with variance of 12.72. Translated, this relationship states that on average artworks of American and European artists sell at 106% of their estimated value and pieces created by African American artists sell 315% percent times their estimated value. With respect to the variance figure, the statistical rule is "the lower the numerical value of the variance the greater the likelihood of the data being aligned with the assumed null hypothesis," i.e. there is zero difference in the group data. Results here suggest that American and European artists adhere to the null hypothesis and are not different statistically. By contrast, African American artist, with a variance of 12.72, score significantly different. Comparison of the variances to each other or the $P(F \leq f)$ value shown, indicates that the likelihood of the two means being related is 0.00000000000041 to 1. Statistically, any value below would justify rejecting

the null hypothesis. The null hypothesis must be rejected for auction data. The data is not similar. The same aforementioned question surfaces with this perspective on the data. There is a factor accounting for the difference in populations. I contend this bias is cultural. The cultural bias is stipulated through the belief in the “value” of the work. Through the comparison, we can see how it saturates the traditional brick and mortar auction houses. As mentioned in Chapter II, value is affixed by the community governing the merit. As a result, if the work is viewed from a menial position it is going to be placed in a lower expectancy category, regardless if the assumption is factual. The statistical treatment has proven that African American art regresses, due to fact that it has not been placed in a populace where it can thrive.

Once these results were obtained from the statistical treatment indicating nonconformity to the null hypothesis and there being unequal variances, it only remained for the second question to be asked and answered: How reliable are the results? As it was determined that the averages were statistically different, a statistical t-test was performed to evaluate the goodness or confidence level of the assessment. The t-test result was 2.53 with equates to a 98% confidence level in the treatments results.

The same statistical treatment for Internet sales of American and European vs. African American artists was performed. There was no significant difference in the mean ratios. The means for Internet sales were almost identical for the two groupings at .879 and .870 respectively. (See **Appendix E**) Comparison of variances was again nearly identical at 0.03 and 0.02 respectively. As the means in this case were nearly the same, the t-test was performed assuming equal variance. The mathematical result confirmed the null hypothesis. The null hypothesis is accepted and there is no difference in the two

populations. A statistical t-test was performed to evaluate the goodness or confidence level of the assessment. The t-test result was -0.8 which equates to a 98% confidence level in the treatments results. The findings of test F and T substantiated that estimated values influence the sale through rate and final hammer price. When African American art was sold online, the ratio was equal to the sale through rate to works by American and European artists. The only conclusion is that art dealers working in conjunction with private galleries and auction houses grossly underestimate the value of art created by African American artists. While the opportunities for African American art has broadened with African Americans coming to prominent recognition such as Jacob Lawrence and Romare Bearden, there is still a gap between the sale of artwork by artists of African descent and American and European artists in the auction sector.

E-commerce and Online Auctions

Diversity staggered the Internet world for quite some time and for various reasons. Societal perceptions, myths, demographics and statistics played an instrumental role in obstructing the path to having a more homogeneous cyber world. These misconceptions consisted as general stereotypes to chilling theories such as, not having an ample amount of online users of ethnic descent or consumers interested in diversified content, to projections that investors would not see enough return on their start-up capital for ethnic-based ventures and companies. These views shadowed the progress of African, Latin, and Asian - American CEO's, entrepreneurs and businesses. In addition, they hindered the advancement of ethnic-gearred products and companies. While start-up

capital was virtually easy to find in the first five years of the online business boom, ethnic-based businesses struggled to find financial support and believers until late 1999. In 1996, *TBWT.com* (The Black World Today. Com) became the first website online to center on ethnic based content offering surfers global news and happenings on people of African descent. In 1999 Donna Thompson reported on the availability of this content. She stated that thirteen web sites online offered content geared specifically toward African American art and culture.

The Industry Standard reported that, "The issue of the digital divide has often camouflaged the viable and hungry market in African American Internet Services and content."³⁷ In January 2000, the market began to open as the industry followed the simple rule of thumb: supply and demand. The report also states that "Six months ago, portals geared in minorities couldn't get funded; investors just didn't believe the audience could sustain the market. Talk of the "Digital Divide," the gap between Internet users and nonusers, seemed to bolster their fears. Now that research seems to show income, not race, determines Internet users, investors are rushing to get in on the action."³⁸ As research determined that digital divide fears limited African American owned and geared sites, societal pressure began to foster diversified content online.

In July 1999, Artnet.com made history as the first Internet based company to offer African American and Caribbean fine art online. This was a pivotal moment in the global art market, as it demonstrated the significance of the genre and its artists in a transnational setting. In doing so, artnet.com outperformed its competitors, Sotheby's,

37. Kenneth Li, *Its' Economics, Stupid!* *The Industry Standard*, (January 10-17, 2000): 104-105.

38. Kenneth Li, *Its' Economics, Stupid!* *The Industry Standard*, (January 10-17, 2000): 104-105.

Christie's and Phillip's, to offer the art world and the global market this phenomenal concept.

Artnet.com was founded in late 1989 as a fax transmittal company for art auction results. Clients would purchase auction results from international sales. It was founded by Hamburg art dealer Hans Neuendorf. Artnet.com launched its website in 1995 and began selling fine art online in March 1999. The website consists of advertising space for galleries and artists, a database with over 1.8 million auction sales prices, an online bookstore, online magazine, and online auctions. Upon its launch, the site was reported in *Art and Auction*, "The market doesn't have a full appreciation of what were doing. We were pioneers trying to change people's attitude toward the art market, and that's difficult. People are taking a wait-and-see attitude, wondering: Will art really sell on the Internet?"³⁹

The definitive factor that propelled integrated artworks offered on the Internet was simply; supply and demand. In 1999, online business models struggled to define what exactly was going to yield its investors a solid return. Companies as vast as eBay.com and Amazon.com compiled marketing strategies and drafting company revenue projections to estimate how they would secure consistent revenue from their online platform. The evolution of new technologies allowed Internet companies to conduct sales transactions online and positioned e-commerce robustly in the market. E-commerce is the transferring of electronic-commerce online. In simple terms, E-commerce is sales-transactions that take place online from beginning to end.

39. Steven Vincent, "Does Christie's Want to Buy Artnet? Does Anybody?" *Art & Auction* (2000): 22.

Numerous obstacles that had to be negotiated to cultivate consumers' trust levels, to garner and build clientele, to secure inventory and establish means to distribute it as well as solidifying a constituent source of revenue. As obstacles mounted, Internet companies had to develop and market simultaneously while convincing the cyber community that the E-commerce platform was secure to divulge such personal data as social security numbers, home addresses and credit card data. In addition, trust had to be built between the consumer and the company that items purchased over the Internet would be guaranteed, delivered and returnable; trust that most Fortune 500 companies had decades to establish. Another obstacle was that emerging Internet companies had no face. Consumers were unfamiliar with CEOs of Internet-based companies and had no point of reference to anchor their trust. Consumers also had no possible means of researching for themselves especially when many Internet companies were dispersed nationwide and internationally. Through the development of e-commerce, pioneers began to whittle away at societal fears and built a model that has proven itself to be stable and dependable. E-commerce gained tremendous ground and stabilized society's confidence in the Internet. In the midst of building this new economic foundation, Artnet.com emerged with its new strategy for online sales. Patti Hartigan reported that, "Until recently, the great global garage sale spawned by online auction sites like eBay was limited to low-price items with no guarantee of authenticity. The art world, which is elitist by definition, resisted the populist realm of cyberspace, turning up its nose at the consumer-driven media. But suddenly, prestigious galleries and auction houses are racing to get on line faster than you can say, 'Ready, fire, aim'-an industry term that describes the urgency of Internet Startups. The art market is one of the last unexploited areas of e-commerce-and

that's changing at breakneck speed. The trend began earlier this year when Artnet held its first on-line auction and the venerable Sotheby's and Christie's announced plans to enter the market. In recent weeks, there has been a mad scramble to get into the competitive business of 'accessible luxuries.'"⁴⁰ The inclusion of African American art at auction proved to be a monumental movement that set several trends. It literally revolutionized the marketplace and the thinking of the "mainstream" art world. The news of this venture excited collectors and deemed the Internet to be the instrument of the future. Interest from online-collectors rose and general awareness grew in society, as did the art world's receptiveness to the inclusion of this body of work. The art marketplace quickly followed suit as the trend to include diverse works began to rise in auction houses, galleries and museums. Artnet.com set a trend in the marketplace and mobilized a movement – that the collecting diverse works is essential. Through this initiative, collectors reassessed their collections and noted that they were missing significant artists of color.

Impact of Diverse Artwork Produced in the Marketplace

Artnet.com began its online auctions offering American and European masterpieces. In August 1999 it embarked on diversifying its selections and made history by being the first auction in the art market to offer African American and Caribbean art within their American category. (See Endnote 1) *City Style and Suburban Magazine*

40. Patti Hartigan, "Art of the E-deal: Dealers Rush to lure collectors on line," The Boston Globe, November 1999.

reported, "With the 21st century approaching the information superhighway and technology are making the global village accessible, literally at the flip of a switch-or, the click of the mouse. Buying products on the Internet is essential. Today art collectors, once the exclusive province of the wealthy and powerful, are quickly becoming another commodity easily accessed online...Quashelle Curtis describes this history-making step, representing the first online service of its kind focused on African American art, as long overdue. She adds, this will help ensure that the works of African Americans receive its rightful place 'recognition in art history.' Curtis' venture will also help diversify the global market and expose the diverse, majestic beauty of African American art to wider audiences."⁴¹ The inclusion of African American art at auction proved to be a monumental shift that set trends throughout the marketplace. Once the online collector became aware of this venue, they became excited and deemed the Internet to be a transforming tool of the future. Since the offering of contemporary American art in 1973, the casual offering of Jean Michel Basquiat, Jacob Lawrence and Romare Bearden were the consistent representatives of works by artists of the African Diaspora. Prior to Artnet.com's initiative, African American art appeared sparingly at auction, selling substantially lower than American artists from the same genre, time period and with limited selections.

The insertion of African American and Caribbean art at online auctions at Artnet.com revolutionized marketplace and art world. Dealers and collectors began to realize that this genre had a potential to be profitable. They began to take notice of the movement and wanted to know more about the trends and results developing from this

41. Stan Evan Smith, "Artnet.com", *City & Suburban Styles* (2000): 17.

global spur. Halima Taha states, “Critical attention has positioned the work of African American artists among the most actively purchased and affordable American art because of its conceptual and aesthetic spheres of interest. Not only does black art in America possess a unique global characteristic by virtue of the rich contributions by artists from the African continent, the Caribbean, and the Americas, but it is in itself an exciting study of cultural diversity at its very best.”⁴² Other art marketplace’s entities followed suit as the trend increased in auction houses, galleries and museums. Artnet.com set a trend in the marketplace and mobilized a movement – that collecting diverse work was essential.

The art world began to embrace the diversity plan garnered through the Internet. The impact this inclusion had in the marketplace was being discussed at educational programming, museums’ and universities.’ On March 23, 2000, The Studio Museum in Harlem held its annual panel titled, *The Elements of Collecting*, which featured prominent scholars instrumental in furthering the progress of the movement. The panel emphasized the relevance of educating consumers on collecting African American art. This formed new incentives for corporations and museums to diversify their collections and their significance. (See **End Note 2**) On November 17, 2000, The Ruth Hall Hodges Gallery at Morris Brown College in Atlanta, Georgia, created a special lecture series that investigated *Collecting in the New Millennium*. (See **Endnote 3**) The lecture series addressed topics such as, how one begins to purchase artwork online and the advantages and systematic approaches to collecting online. The Brooklyn Museum of Art and the Newark Museum developed strategies to further introduce their audiences to diversified content via the Internet. In addition, they began to build alliances with companies and

42. Halima Taha, *Collecting African American Art: Works on Paper and Canvas*, (New York: Crown Publishers, Inc., 1998), 2.

organizations whose objectives focused on building a diversified membership base. It became trendy to want to include works that dealt with hip trends that consumers were into at the time. Whether it was hip-hop, graffiti or Caribbean festivals, museum marketers were beginning to seek out alliances with organizations that could produce audience numbers and bring in exhibits, panel discussions, and seminars that were current topics aided in doing so. The commitment of Brooklyn Museum of Art to this initiative became prominent with fascinating exhibitions such as *Hip-Hop Nation* (2000) and *Committed to the Image* (2001). (See **End Note 4**)

Auction houses made a tremendous shift; from primarily overlooking the genre's appeal and value to a substantial growth in sales that focused on the genre and establishing sales. After the influx of African American and Caribbean artwork onto the auction platform by Artnet.com in 1999, works by artists of African descent were set at more accurate price points and began to rank within the value point of their fellow American artists. (See **Appendix B**) While the auction model allots for significant value rates by discounted prices, African American works throughout auction history sold at 90% less than their worth. (See **Appendix C**) This was a travesty to the genre itself and stagnated its progress for years. Selling African American art at such undervalued prices sent a message to the art market that this work had little value. On May 23, 2000, Robert Scott Duncanson's 1848 oil painting entitled *Still Life with Fruits and Nuts* sold for \$222,500 at Philips New York in the American art sale, its estimate was \$20,000-\$30,000. This was a record-breaking event. This sale was the highest amount paid for an African American masterpiece. It was groundbreaking because it finally catapulted

works by African American masters into a higher price range with American and European artists. The Philips' sale made auction history. This was a tremendous feat considering that the most Duncanson's work sold for at auction was \$35,650 and the average price point before this record was between \$2,000 - \$4,000. Sotheby's quickly followed Artnet.com's example in launching online auctions with special sales dedicated to works by African Americans. (See **Endnote 5**) Sotheby's followed artnet.com's lead and placed these works in their American category and provided educational support material to explain to its clients the significance of the genre. They also went on to examine African American artists' contributions to Folk Art. In doing so, Sotheby's began to explore the contributions African Americans made in folk art and prepared it for a brick and mortar sale. This created a strong indication that an awareness of this material, its potential, and significance to the art world existed long before Artnet.com's venture, but the trend ignited by Artnet.com propelled the auction sector to regard it with higher veneration. (See **Endnote 6**) In addition, they ventured into doing thematic sales similar to Artnet.com and centered them on African American content and artists. (See **Endnote 7**)

Chapter IV

Exclusion of Diverse Artwork in the Mainstream

"But one hundred years later, the Negro still is not free. (My Lord) One hundred years later, the life of the Negro is still sadly crippled by the manacles of segregation and the chains of discrimination. One hundred years later, the Negro lives on a lonely island of poverty in the midst of a vast ocean of material prosperity, one hundred years later (My Lord), the Negro is still languished in the corners of American society and finds himself an exile in his own land. And so we've come here today to dramatize a shameful condition."⁴³

- Martin Luther King, Jr.

In 1963, Martin Luther King, Jr. described the pain felt by the African American community. He shouted the belly of need for equality to prevail in the United States. One is left to ask why has it taken so long for the equality movement to happen in the art world? What prevented its progression? As Thomas McEvilley states, "There is a second avenue of approach to the question, not through history but in terms of cultures that coexist in time. Here again one sees striking regional variations in the notion of quality. The idea of a "good" picture changes from Kinshasa to New York to Beijing to Alice Springs. The same alternatives that followed from reflections on historical change follow here: either some cultures are right and others wrong, or quality is not an unchanging universal but a subjective reality projected outward onto things."⁴⁴ These "regional variations" coexist within the United States and consequentially within the art world.

43. Martin Luther King, Jr. "I Have A Dream." *March on Washington Address*, 1963.

44. Thomas McEvilley, *Art and Otherness: Crisis in Cultural Identity* (New York: McPherson and Company, 1999), 19.

These “regional variations,” as mildly suggested by Thomas McEvelley have established themselves as dominant value systems within the art world and limited the cultural variety, amongst the arts. Considering that the art world is no stranger to discrimination, I believe we need to evaluate perpetual discriminatory mannerisms that exist within its structure. By mannerism, I mean the attitude by which the art world functions. Peter Watson candidly states, the art marketplace is simply made up of, “art, money, and snobbery.”⁴⁵ This is a blunt way of putting it, but it only touches the surface. Once we challenge ourselves to dig deeper and search for the cause I believe we will find a culture of elitism and classism. What prevented African American and Caribbean art from coming up for auction prior to 1999? In seeking to answer the question I proposed in my thesis, I ended up facing the nucleus of the stagnancy: human perception.

As we viewed in Chapter III, a comparative survey that highlights the cultural bias that takes place in traditional auction houses and online services. Appendix A allows us to see the grave differences in valuation. The way “value” is assigned between African American and American and European artists, but Appendix E and F allows us to visualize and quantify the discriminatory actions responsible for the outcome of numbers in Appendix A. Altering the component in one venue produced a substantial change in the genre’s sales. Some might argue that the Internet was that faceless component and probably go on to state that is why the content sold. By contrast, I would add why did a faceless venue finally produce change?

In simple terms, it is the human component, the everyday people who are involved in bringing artwork up for auction, encouraging sales of work and designing

45. Peter Watson, *From Manet to Manhattan: The Rise and Fall of the Modern Art Market* (New York: Random House, 1992), xxiv.

exhibitions. Cultural biases shape, dictate and alter the perception of diversified art in the marketplace. Thomas McEvilley says, "So what are value judgments for? Socially, they serve to define and bond groups – communities of taste – in ways that are often useful and always dangerous, because by bonding some people they exclude others. Because of this danger there is an urgency to the whole question; for when one community of taste attempts to enforce ideas (and expectations) of quality on another, an irrational and dangerous act is performed that can only arise from hidden, perhaps violent motives."⁴⁶

Mannerism of A Closed Network

Elitism and classism denote philosophies that are intricately woven into the common practices of the marketplace. There are two major threads that uphold the existing structure: money and taste. If the art world was similar to an engine, there are two substances that are essential to the locomotion of a vehicle: gas and oil. Without these two components the car will not start. Similarly, taste and money fuel philosophies of elitism and classism that make up this sector of the art world. As discussed in Chapter I, money allows the canon within the art world to maintain its same group of artists, dealers and collectors. As McEvilley suggests, taste is utilized in the art world as a closed network that does not allow for open interpretation of the term. I would add that taste dictates in the art world what is popular and becomes attractive to collectors. Elitism and classism cannot exist without the presence of money and taste.

46. Thomas McEvilley, *Art and Otherness: Crisis in Cultural Identity* (New York: McPherson and Company, 1999), 19.

Therefore, money separates classes and taste defines its boundaries in forming an insular society.

The very definition of classism, allows for no agility. Members are simply born into a certain bracket and marry up. Class is defined in the American Heritage Dictionary as, “a division based on quality or grade, a social or economic stratum whose members share similar characteristics.”⁴⁷ Classism is rooted in a capitalistic foundation. Henry De Soto states that, “The Western nations have so successfully integrated their poor into their economies that they lost the memory of how it was done, how the creation of capital began back when, as the American historian Gordon Wood has written, ‘something momentous was happening in the society and culture that released the aspirations and energies of common people as never before in American history.’ The ‘something momentous’ was that Americans and Europeans were on the verge of establishing widespread formal property law inventing the conversion process in that law that allowed them to create capital. This was the moment when the West crossed the demarcation line that led to successful capitalism-when it ceased being a private club and became a popular culture, when George Washington’s dreaded ‘banditti’ were transformed into the beloved pioneers that American culture now venerates.”⁴⁸ The American Heritage Dictionary defines Capitalism as, “an economic system in which the means of production and distribution are privately or corporately owned and development is proportionate to

47. *American Heritage Dictionary*, Third Edition. (New York: Dell Publishing, 1994), 162.

48. Hernando Soto, *The Mystery Capital; Why Capitalism Triumphs in the West and Fails Everywhere Else*, (New York: Basic Books, 2000), 10.

the accumulation and reinvestment of profit gained in a free market.”⁴⁹ When you analyze the structure of the art market within its economic system, you are able to understand its mannerism. It was fascinating to uncover that the global art market could not exist independent of the capitalistic structure. Classism plays a critical role because it does not allow the market to leave the hands of its owners. What one can afford is what deems one as a significant elite collector and what one chooses to collect classifies one’s taste as an exquisite or just average connoisseur. Literally, art purchases rank you as an amateur or a professional.

W Magazine reported that, “The rarefied world of auction houses is, after all, a peculiar blend of serious connoisseurship, big money and flat-out theater. Traditionally, the auction houses have been filled with the socially connected and offspring thereof.”⁵⁰ In the 21st century art marketplace, the amount of money one can afford to spend, determines one’s rank in the market. Being known as a serious collector begins with the ability to drop top dollar on high-ticket items. Additionally, in this venue, labels are now used to rank the taste of collectors. By labels, I am referring to where one purchased their work, which museum collection it was featured in, and whether it is considered a good or bad piece of art. These labels stratify collectors into groups associated with “highbrow” or “lowbrow art.” Therefore what artwork one decides to purchase and ultimately places on the wall can have an intrinsic power, cultural value, and social ramification. It can represent financial power, educational achievement, social awareness

49. *American Heritage Dictionary*, Third Edition. (New York: Dell Publishing, 1994), 162.

50. Julie Belcove, “To Market, To Market: How Does a Great Work of Contemporary Art End up on Auction Block at Christie’s?” *W Magazine* (May 2001): 228.

and class status.

Where one decides to purchase one's artwork is just as critical for one's social and economic status. Name recognition of auction houses and artists' work is synonymous with branding strategies to infuse Nike's logo with Michael "Air" Jordan's motto. Who can tell the difference anymore? If you ask the average person who their favorite artist or to even name an artist that they know, they instantaneously say, "Picasso!" If you ask them if they own one of his works, they would reply with an astonishing, "No!" If you ask them, "Why?" They would note that they can't afford his work, but they would be unable to tell you just how much it cost. The average consumer has limited information as to why Picasso is their favorite artist or why his work is valued at its perceived price.

Classification of Patrons

Sidney J. Levy states "Elitism seems an ineluctable aspect of the arts. They are deemed to require a refinement or elevation of taste, a capacity to understand and appreciate (appraise, evaluate, enjoy) in a sensitive manner. Those who have these qualities, aspire to them or are willing to mimic them are proud and feel superior to those who do not... Taking part in a high status activity confers on the participant a certain cachet literally stamped on the hand at the Old Town Art Fair in Chicago to indicate a paid admission. It means one has arrived at the higher levels of the cultural life of the community, mingles with the right people and knows what is going on in the art world or

in an important segment of it.”⁵¹ Classism perpetuates a division between groups and allows the upper class to disconnect itself from the concerns, theories, and achievements of the perceived lower classes. This is a primary function of the art world. To date, African American consumers yield over \$688 billion dollars in buying power, making them first amongst ethnic groups. This economic reality flies in the face of misconceptions that insist that, “Black people don’t have that type of money.” But these statistics are overlooked because African Americans are not collecting Pablo Picasso and Edouard Manet. In fact, it is assumed that African Americans are not collecting at all, while it is not being registered that they are indeed collecting the works of Edward Bannister and William H. Johnson, annually. This is where snobbery becomes a factor. Snobbery is perpetuated because auction houses, gallery dealers and museums are not concerned with trends being set by African Americans in the art marketplace. Therefore the artists’ works one decides to buy becomes a functioning element of furthering separatism within the marketplace.

Major collectors such as Bill Cosby, Oprah Winfrey, Russell Simmons and Juanita Jordan are collecting works by artists of the Diaspora. African American entrepreneurs are seeking to be educated on collecting these works. Hip-hop moguls are investing heavily in the market. Still, the mainstream art world’s awareness of these developments remains dismal. Elitism rears its head when art professionals are unfamiliar, unconcerned and snobbish regarding the trend of the spending habits of African American collectors.

Juliette Harris reported that, “(Bill Cosby) had a particular intent to create a new

51. Sidney J. Levy, *Art Consumers and Aesthetic Attributes*, Marketing the Arts, 37.

interest in art created by African American artists by expanding and nurturing a new audience."⁵² Cosby has been intricately involved in expanding this collector base for over twenty years, but news of this thrust has only been reported in African American outlets. Aljira, Contemporary Art Center, located in Newark, New Jersey, has held an annual auction of African American art for the past ten years, but records of its activities are not housed in any auction database including the database at Artnet.com. Throughout the years, gallery dealers, scholars and archivists have expressed to me that they felt the reason why full integration had not taken place in all sectors of the art world is because the art market (which includes auction houses, museums and gallery dealers that do not handle artists of diverse cultures) are not concerned with activities happening in other communities. These segregated patterns reinforce the heritage of this country.

52. Juliette Harris, "25 Who Made a Difference" *The International Review of African American Art*, 18, no. 1, (2001), 25.

Chapter V

Time is Long: Steps Toward a Diverse Market

“Are we to be one people bound together by common spirit sharing in a common endeavor or will we become a divided nation? For all its uncertainty, we cannot flee the future. We must not become the new puritans and reject our society. We must address and master the future together. It can be done if we restore the belief that we share a sense of national community, that we share a common national endeavor. It can be done. There is no executive order; there is no law that can require the American people to form a national community. This we must do as individuals and if we do it as individuals, there is no President of the United States who can veto that decision. As a first step, we must restore our belief in ourselves. We are a generous people so why can't we be generous with each other? We need to take to heart the words spoken by Thomas Jefferson: 'Let us restore to social intercourse the harmony and that affection without which liberty and even life are but dreary things.' A nation is formed by the willingness of each of us to share the responsibility for upholding the common good.”⁵³

- Barbara Jordan

I pray that the eloquent words of Late Senator Barbara Jordan, spoken at the Democratic Convention in 1976, can serve as a point of entry for the progression of creating a diverse arts community. Barbara Jordan, a physically challenged African American woman, believed in the greater good of society becoming evident in her lifetime and consequentially change would occur. There are many notable and ordinary individuals that did the same. From African American chemists, doctors, treasurers, pilots to painters such as Robert Scott Duncanson and Henry Ossawa Tanner, they were just ordinary men and women utilizing their gifts given to them by God to express themselves, their genius and their culture – unconcerned with the recognition, the

53. Barbara Jordan, “Who Then Will Speak for the Common Good?” *Democratic Convention Keynote Address*, 1976.

historical ramifications and prestige; just the sheer passion for their craft. Tanner was noted as only wanting to be a painter in light of his family's pressure to pursue a defined career path. He was raised in a middle-class family; his sister was a doctor and his father an African Methodist Episcopal minister. After returning from ministry school, Tanner announced to his family that there was nothing else that he was created to be, but a painter. As we know, he went on to create such brilliant pieces as *Daniel in the Lion's Den* (ca.1916), and *The Thankful Poor* (1894). Outside of the aesthetic qualities of these pieces, what I have always found inspirational about his life is his dedication to the calling on his life. How much easier could it have been to just be a minister, his father already carved it out for him? How much easier would it have been for him to suppress his passion and blend in with society and just do the menial jobs lawfully attributed to people of his skin tone? But he did not. This is what fascinates me about the founding African American artists, their need to pursue tenaciously that deeper calling within. Edward Bannister was also noted for saying that he didn't want to die without achieving what God placed him on this earth to do, he was often disappointed because society had limited his ability to complete this calling. This commission was far more complex in his lifetime, than those of say Romare Bearden and Jacob Lawrence (to a degree), but I believe it was by the grace of God that they all persevered. In Proverbs Chapter eleven verse 27a it states that, "He that diligently seeketh good procureth favour."⁵⁴ This has proven to be true, in light of the obvious obstacles the African American community has to face in the United States, good has persevered and continues to do so. While the consciousness of this society has taken longer to catch up with the beliefs pursued by

54. Proverbs 11:27, *The Holy Bible, Kings James Version*, 984.

pioneering African Americans and the community at large, the present state lends itself to a hopeful future. As Barbara Jordan stated, “A nation is formed by the willingness of each of us to share the responsibility for upholding the common good.”⁵⁵ I believe the same.

In 1998 there was a law passed by the United States Congress, to erect a Memorial for Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. on the National Mall – its placement “on a four-acre site in a direct line between the Lincoln and Jefferson Memorials.” It goes without saying that the first African American statute mounted on the mall is monumental indeed. Its monumentality would manifest itself spiritually, collectively, historically, and inspirationally. I honestly cannot put into words what it symbolizes to my community, but I can wholeheartedly say that its ramifications will send a message to the world that the struggle for progress was not in vein.

On a recent trip to Ghana, West Africa, with the NCA (National Conference of Artists) tour we visited Accra, Kumasi, and Cape Coast. We traveled with renowned scholars, artists and historians such as Dr. Leonard and Rosalind Jeffries, Dr. Mabel Asante, Paul Goodnight, Betty Blayton and Dr. Margaret Burroughs. In the robust city of Accra, we frequented historical sites such as the Kwame Nkrumah Mausoleum, the W.E.B Dubois Center and the National Museum. Along the route, we picked up insight to inspiration from the perils of our past and gained wisdom from the rich culture of our ancestors. The inscription marking W.E.B. Dubois’ Mausoleum particularly moved me as it read, “One thing alone I charge you. As you live and progress to greater, broader and fuller life. The only possible death is to lose belief in this truth simply because the

55. Barbara Jordan, “Who Then Will Speak for the Common Good?” *Democratic Convention Keynote Address*, 1976.

great end comes slowly, because time is long.” Being in Ghana helped me to realize just that. My concepts for success and achievement have expanded because of my visit home. As they now include a deeper awareness of my heritage and its transcontinental roots.

The Cape Coast region utterly took my breath away. Words escape me when I think back on summarizing my time there. Mystical and surreal, our journey culminated in the group’s visit to the Cape Coast slave dungeon and the Elmina Castle. The Cape Coast slave dungeon was a traditional European structure with massive stones, heavy metal bars and a laden legacy. The castle’s power stupefies every human being that walks through its doors. Taking you along the detailed trail outlining the savage treatment Africans, both male and female, faced on that dark and horrendous path. A display of shackles, feeding quarters and feces markings are left behind as monuments in the dungeons’ stonewalls. The exit led you to the Atlantic Ocean and was marked as “the door of no return.” As we exited through those very same doors, where former enslaved Africans were once led through, we marked another generation of Africans returning home.

Forever etched in my mind is the Elmina Castle, it served as the headquarters for the governor and his entourage. The castle included lavish rooms and spacious dining areas for his excellency. The disheartening slave quarters were located on the ground floor and below ground levels of the castle. It was disconcerting to know that they were holding church services within earshot from where dying Africans were imprisoned. Africans labeled as troublemakers were left to die in tiny airtight cells, marked with a black skeleton and a bone-shaped “X,” chiseled into the stone above the cell’s door. It was disturbing to envision how any human being could conceive of such atrocities, yet

alone function; eating daily, dancing, partying and procreating, while Africans were mutilated, raped, starved to death and tortured all around them.

As I left the Cape Coast region, I found it hard to make sense out of it all, and I can honestly say that it's still unresolved within me. But I understand why DuBois said, "Time is long!" It has proven to be rewardingly long for my foremothers and forefathers, who left the shores of Ghana hundreds of years ago, as progress is inevitable and I have returned to work towards our unified future. In the same regard, in the near future, my great-grandchildren will visit Dr. Martin Luther King's Memorial on the Mall in the United States and find closure to the atrocities of slavery, injustices and inequalities in this country because this documentation stands as an entry point into public reconciliation and healing. In the same way, in 1999, Artnet.com became the first auction house to offer African American art online and, as a result, the art world was changed. It symbolizes that artists' pursuits to be recognized amongst their colleagues within their country's institutions is possible. I consider these actions to fall in line with the common good of our society that Barbara Jordan was referring to. The art world has the inherent ability to create this by taking our society into a new realm of equality, unity and cultural diversity.

While there are many areas still awaiting diversification, in terms of the inequalities being discussed in my thesis, there is still much effort being put forth for the advancement of African American art, history, and scholarship and in this our hope lies. A recent article in *Art News Online* by Robin Cembalest discussed the pertinent issues facing museums' disconnect with the public. James Cuno, the former director of the Harvard University Museums and current director of London's Courtauld Institute of Art,

formed a lecture series and roundtable discussion with other notable museum directors to formally discuss the concerns of both the directors and the public. While the full transcripts will be published sometime next month, the article stated that, “The diagnosis reached by the participants was dire. The Adelphia and WorldCom scandals had rocked the corporate world; and the Brooklyn Museum of Art’s ‘Sensation’ controversy and just about every policy of Guggenheim Museum director Thomas Krens were threatening to sully their own field. ‘The more art museums look like multinational corporations and the more their directors sound like corporate CEOs, the more they risk being cast by the public in the same light, warns Cuno.’”⁵⁶

This roundtable discussion and agenda proves to be a progressive outlook on museums taking a look within to adjust the lack of communication in public trust between their institutions and the public. This panel took the direction that I would like to see infused into an intra-institutional agenda. By this I mean, roundtable discussions that incorporate institutions with diverse collections to contribute to the discussion in order to promote inclusion. The article mentions high-profile museums, but institutions such as The Studio Museum in Harlem and the Hampton University Museum were not mentioned. As we move into the future, I suggest we evaluate our value judgments of institutions with diverse collections. Will they still be considered to be separate institutions with separate agendas and constituents, or resources to institutions that are still learning about these cultures?

In addition, the public voice needs to be heard. In *Learning in the Museums* it states that, “In order for visitors to grow and learn for their museum experiences, we need

56. Robin Cembalest, *A Matter of Trust*, www.artnewsonline.com, 2003.

to understand these experiences sufficiently so that we can shape them. We need to understand what meaning visitors make of their museum experiences. How, exactly, do their ordinary responses to visits, as well as the occasional, powerful, epiphanies affect our visitors? How can the educative value of experience be enhanced? But exploring the educational value and potential of museums is more complex and deserves to be analyzed at some length.”⁵⁷ Much is said about what the public thinks, but little is asked of what the public wants, needs and is interested in viewing. In doing so, we can remove the veil of separation between the community and the institution, ultimately stripping the elitist stature. Taking a look beyond just questionnaires and surveys to gather an assessment of museums’ educational effect would begin to broaden the museums communication with the public, perhaps even building a bridge between the two.

Diversification through Education

Dewey states, “The belief that all genuine education comes from experience does not mean that all experiences are genuinely or equally educative. Experience and education cannot be directly equated with each other. For some experiences are mis-educative. Any experience is mis-educative that has the effect of arresting or distorting growth of further experience.”⁵⁸ Our cultural differences need to be celebrated in the field of art history, art education, and visual art, making the art world unique and original. On a recent trip to Kingston, I viewed the “Wall of Honor” in Jamaica. Its depiction of

⁵⁷ George E. Hein, *Learning in the Museum*, (New York: Routledge, 1998), 2.

⁵⁸ George E. Hein, *Learning in the Museum*, (New York: Routledge, 1998), 2.

notable descendents epitomized the value of visual history. By visual history, I mean that art was used as a functional tool for the advancement of its people. It visually told a story of their nation and descendants of it. In its simplest terms it means that they visually depicted their history. Through the "Wall of Honor," I learned of the history of this nation's pioneers, achievers and educator. While in the United States, these same visual tools exist, they seldom include variation. It is almost like a formula where there are one or two African American contributions and the rest is Euro-American. This barely only scratches at the surface of African American contributions in the United States. Oftentimes, there is no mention of Caribbean, Asian, and Native American contributions unless you go to institutions that specialize in that culture. Generally, this approach is not exclusive to museums' depiction of art history, it is here where we can take a closer look at the way we formalize our approach to history making. Out of the nearly two hundred colleges and universities that offer Art History, Education and/or Studio Art courses, less than half of them offer a minimal of one course in African American art. If we were to really dig deeper as Historical Black Colleges and Universities have, art professionals and educators would find out that there are various artistic styles, art historical movements, visual languages, philosophies and aesthetic movements that exist within the African Diasporic community that are often overlooked in basic courses. Recently, I was interacting with a small group of seven-year olds that attending a preparatory school located on the Upper East Side of Manhattan. We were creating Egyptian facemasks. I began by asking them who was their favorite artist and they replied with the traditional answer. I went on to ask them who was their favorite African American artist and one student said "Jacob Lawrence," but no one else knew who he was and his contribution to

American art history. The educational process of integration of diverse cultures not only needs to start on college campuses, but in elementary schools where the foundation for the appreciation for art begins. In addition, I took a look at the children's shop of the Metropolitan Museum Store to see what type of diversified educational tools and toys did they featured in their shop and there was none dealing with African American art and artists and four dealing with Egyptian art and African culture. There clearly is much development that needs to take place to raise the educational awareness of the significance of African American art. In viewing the "Wall of Honor," the crux of historiography became simple – inspire the next generation by providing them with thought-provoking information about their pasts, to enlighten and awaken them into creating our futures. The United States' present approach to molding the next generation has to be re-examined, as it is detrimental to the progress of this nation. We consistently restrict our nation's progression because of our segregated psychosis, by passing on our divided approach to examining our past achievements, ultimately re-writing history without achievers of non-European descent.

As David Carr eloquently states, art institutions are a "living cultural trust." These are also the places where we can reshape the prestigious mannerisms that dominate the art world. This "cultural trust" remains our largest entity of responsibility and it provides an arena in which to communicate verbally and visually with all contributing communities that make up the United States. There are numerous nationalities and traditions that need to be incorporated into the agenda of the art world's focus. Museums, galleries, artists and auction houses are accountable for the cultural interaction of this country. Our educational achievement in this field is not for our own

consumption, but rather it is to bring about a cultural alertness to different cultures and experiences.

APPENDIXES

Appendix A is a chart composed of American, European and African American artists. These artists work sold at traditional brick and mortar auction houses. Listed beside each artist is the title of their work, the name of the auction house that sold their work, the date the auction took place, the estimated value of the expected sale and the final hammer price of the sold piece. The artists surveyed in this appendix are classified as foundational artists and worked during the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Appendix B is a chart comprised of African American, American, and European artists. These artists work sold in online auction during 1999-2001. Listed beside each artist is the title of their work, the name of the auction house that sold their work, the date the auction took place, the estimated value of the expected sale and the final hammer price of the sold piece. The artists included in this section are considered both master and contemporary artists.

Appendix C compares data compiled in Appendix A. The chart differentiates between African American artists (Non-Traditional) and American and European artists (Traditional) work sold at brick and mortar auction houses. This terminology is used to graph the statistical analysis. Listed beside each artist is the title of their work, the name of the auction house that sold their work, the date the auction took place, the estimated value of the expected sale, the final hammer price of the sold piece and the ratio of the piece. The ratio is determined by averaging the estimated value and hammer price.

Appendix D compares data compiled in Appendix B. The chart differentiates between African American artists (Non-Traditional) and American and European artists (Traditional) work sold in online auction. This terminology is used to graph the statistical analysis. Listed beside each artist is the title of their work, the name of the auction house that sold their work, the date the auction took place, the estimated value of the expected sale, the final hammer price of the sold piece and the ratio of the piece. The ratio is determined by averaging the estimated value and hammer price.

Appendix E provides a statistical analysis of data collected in Appendix C. The chart depicts that a statistical treatment for brick and mortar auction sales of American and European vs. African American artists. The study concludes the ratio average for American and European artists was 1.06 with a variance of 0.17 (106%), while for African American artists the ration average was 3.15 with variance of 12.72 (315%).

Appendix F provides a statistical analysis of data collected in Appendix D. The chart depicts a statistical treatment for Internet sales of American and European vs. African American artists. The study concludes that the means for Internet sales were almost identical for the two groupings at .879 and .870.

APPENDIX A

Auction Results

Artists Name	Auction House	Auction Date	Title, Medium and Date	Est. Value	Hammer Price
1. Tanner	Christie's NY	May 1986	<i>The Good Shepherd</i> (1930) Oil on Board	\$5,000-7,000 USD	\$4,400
a. Tanner	C-NY	May 1987	<i>Moroccan Man</i> (nd) Oil on Panel	\$3,000-5,000 USD	\$7,700
b. Tanner	C-NY	June 1997	<i>Street Scene in Tangiers</i> (nd) Oil on Canvas	\$30,000-50,000 USD	\$52,900
c. Tanner	C-NY	Dec. 1998	<i>Shepherd with Herd</i> (nd) Oil on Board	\$20,000-30,000 USD	\$101,500
d. Tanner	C-NY	May 1999	<i>The Visitation</i> (nd) Oil on Canvas	\$20,000-30,000 USD	\$211,500
2. Homer	C-NY	May 1994	<i>On Guard</i> (1864) Oil on Canvas	\$500,000-700,000 USD	\$508,500
a. Homer	C-NY	May 1994	<i>The Whittling Boy</i> (1873) Oil on Canvas	\$1,200,000-1,800,000 USD	\$1,102,500 *
b. Homer	Sotheby's -- NY	May 1999	<i>Woodchooper in the Adirondacks</i> (ca 1870) Oil on	\$400,000-600,000 USD	\$992,500

			Canvas		
c. Homer	C-NY	May 2000	<i>Girl reading under an oak</i> (1879) Oil on Canvas	\$2,000,000-3,000,000 USD	\$1,876,000
d. Homer	S-NY	May 2000	<i>Uncle Ned at Home</i> (1875) Oil on Canvas	\$2,000,000-3,000,000 USD	\$2,865,750
3. Duncanson	William Doyle Galleries	Nov. 1994	<i>River Valley Landscapes</i> (1851) Oil on Board	\$3,000-5,000 USD	12,075
a. Duncanson	Fraser-Pinneys Auction	Dec. 1994	<i>Canoe and Figures in a mountainous landscape</i> (nd) Oil on Canvas	7,000-8,000 CDND	6,000 CDND
b. Duncanson	Phillip's-NY	May 2000	<i>Still Life w/Fruit</i> (1848) Oil on Board	\$20,000-30,000 USD	\$222,500
c. Duncanson	Bonhams & Brooks Knightsbridge	March 2001	<i>Figures Working in a River Valley</i> (nd) Oil on Canvas	\$2,000-3,000	Bought In
d. Duncanson	P-NY	May 2001	<i>Watermelons and Peaches</i> (ca 1849) pastel	\$30,000-50,000 USD	\$23,000
4. Cole	C-NY	Dec. 1986	<i>Study for a view in Catskill</i> (Ca 1844) Oil on Canvas	\$30,000-50,000 USD	\$37,400
a. Cole	S-NY	Dec. 1988	<i>Cabin in the</i>	\$100,000-	\$75,000

			<i>woods</i> (nd) Oil on Canvas	150,000 USD	
b. Cole	C-NY	June 1997	<i>View of Boston</i> (nd) Oil on Canvas	\$1,000,000- 1,500,000 USD	\$1,102,500
c. Cole	S-NY	Dec. 1999	<i>The Tomb of general Brock</i> 1830 Oil on Canvas	500,000- 750,000 USD	Bought In
d. Cole	S-NY	May 2002	<i>Catskill mountain house</i> (1843-1844) Oil on Canvas	\$800,000- 1,200,000 USD	Bought In
5. Johnson	C-South Kensington	Jan. 1991	<i>Fishing Boats on a lake at sunset</i> (1888) Pencil and Watercolor	Not Listed	\$86.00
a. Johnson	P-Scotland	June 1991	<i>Childhood</i> (1889) Oil Painting	\$509-849 USD	\$1,529
b. Johnson	Bukowskis Copenhagen	April 1992	<i>Langegade</i> (nd) Watercolor	\$1,553- 2,329 USD	Bought In
c. Johnson	Bukowskis Copenhagen	Nov. 1992	<i>Solsikker</i> (nd) Oil on Canvas	\$6,528 USD	Bought In
d. Johnson	No	Additional	Work	Listed	
6. Monet	C-NY	Nov. 2000	<i>Les Peupliers</i> (1891) Oil on Canvas	\$7,000,000- 10,000,000 USD	\$7,046,000
a. Monet	C-NY	Nov. 2000	<i>Voillers</i> (1864) Oil on Canvas	\$1,000,000- 1,500,000 USD	\$1,106,000

b. Monet	C-London	June 2002	<i>Vetheuill</i> (1880) Oil on Canvas	\$3,644,315- 5,102,041 USD	\$7,539,658
c. Monet	S-London	June 2002	<i>L'aiguille vue a travers la porte d'amont</i> (1885-1886) Oil on Panel	\$291,545, - 437,317 USD	\$271,801
d. Monet	C-London	June 2002	<i>Le Pont Japonais</i> (1918-1924) Oil on Canvas	\$1,749,271- 2,332,362 USD	\$1,974,182
7. Bannister	C-NY	Oct. 1987	<i>New England Coast</i> (1891) Oil on Canvas	\$6,000- 8,000 USD	\$5,500
a. Bannister	C-East	Oct 1989	<i>Gathering Clouds</i> (1881) Oil on Canvas	\$3,000- 5,000 USD	\$1,650
b. Bannister	Mystic Fine Art	Jan. 1997	<i>Crows in the Cornfield</i> (1875) Oil on Canvas	\$3,500- 4,500 USD	\$7,840
c. Bannister	Mystic Fine Art	Nov. 1997	<i>River Landscape</i> (nd) Oil on Canvas	\$3,000-5000 USD	\$7,280
d. Bannister	William Doyle Galleries	Jan. 1998	<i>Two women in a wooded landscape</i> (nd) Oil on Canvas	\$800-1,000 USD	\$12,650
8. Manet	S-NY	May 2001	<i>La Brune au seins nus</i>	\$1,800,000- 2,500,000	\$3,965,750

			1872 Oil on Canvas	USD	
a. Manet	P-London	June 2001	<i>La Femme aux chiens</i> (nd) Oil on Canvas	\$254,093- 310,559 USD	\$294,159
b. Manet	C-London	June 2001	<i>Jeune femme aux cheveux defaits</i> (ca 1873) Oil on Canvas	\$169,395- 254,093 USD	Bought In
c. Manet	C-London	Feb 2002	<i>Portrait de mademoisell e isabelle lemonier</i> (ca 1879) Oil on Canvas	\$2,824,859- 4,237,288 USD	\$2,335,805
d. Manet	C-NY	May 2002	<i>Le peintre animalier la rochenoire</i> (1882) Pastel on Canvas	\$400,000- 600,000 USD	\$779,500
9. Lewis	S-NY	March 1994	<i>The old Indian Arrow Maker and his Daughter</i> (1866) Marble	\$30,000- 50,000 USD	\$87,750
a. Lewis	S-NY	Sept. 1994	<i>Poor Cupid</i> (nd) Marble	\$8,000- 12,000 USD	\$9,775
b. Lewis	Dunning's	Feb. 1995	<i>Forever free</i> (nd) Marble	Not Listed	\$1,610
c. Lewis	S-NY	Sept. 1995	<i>The marriage of Hiawatha</i> (nd)	\$8,000- 12,000 USD	\$39,100

			Marble		
d. Lewis	S-NY	Sept. 1996	<i>The old Indian Arrow Maker and his Daughter</i> (1860-1867) Marble	\$40,000-60,000 USD	\$85,000
10. Rodin	C-NY	Nov. 2001	<i>Andrieu d' Andres</i> (1895) Bronze w/Brown Patina	50,000-70,000 USD	\$64,625
a. Rodin	C-NY	Nov. 2001	<i>Jean d'aire</i> (1885) Bronze w/ Black Patina	50,000-70,000 USD	\$39,950
b. Rodin	S-London	June 2002	<i>Le pensuer</i> (ca 1880) Bronze	100,000-150,000 BP	155,150 BP
c. Rodin	S-London	June 2002	<i>Jean d'aire</i> (1886) Bronze	25,000-35,000 BP	59,750 BP
d. Rodin	S-London	June 2002	<i>L'eternal printemps</i> (1884) Bronze	120,000-150,000 BP	138,650 BP

- Auction records listed courtesy of artnet.com

In the study listed above you will find the hammer price selected works sold for, the dates that they came up for auction, medium, title and auction house they were sold at. All work surveyed are original works on canvas and/or board. The survey highlights five-auction records from each artist. Records go in order from oldest listing to most current record available during the time of my search. I selected these artists based solely on their ethnicity, name recognition and the time period of which they created their work.

APPENDIX B

Auction Results

The following auction records are a chronology of artnet.com online sales of African American art from August 1999 through December 2000

Artists Name	Auction Date	Title, Medium and Date	Average Est. Value	Hammer Price	Ratio
Romare Bearden	Sept. 2000	<i>Pepper Jelly Lady</i> (1975) Lithograph	\$2,500 USD	\$2,500.00	1
Romare Bearden	Sept. 2000	<i>Morning of the Rooster</i> (1980) Lithograph	\$2,500 USD	\$2,500.00	1
Romare Bearden	Aug. 2000	<i>Morning</i> (1979) Lithograph	\$2,500 USD	\$2,000.00	.8
Romare Bearden	Feb. 2000	<i>Odysseus Leaves</i> (1979) Lithograph	\$1750 USD	\$1500.00	.86
Romare Bearden	May 2000	<i>Come Sunday</i> (1976) Lithograph	\$2350 USD	\$2200.00	.94
Romare Bearden	Sept. 1999	<i>From the Airplane</i> (1982) Watercolor	\$7,000 USD	\$7,000	1
Romare Bearden	Aug. 1999	<i>Carolina Memory</i> (1970-72) Serigraph	\$4,000 USD	\$2500	.6
Zwelethu Mthetwa	Aug. 2000	<i>Waiting</i> (1996) Hand-colored Digital printed image	\$825 USD	\$750.00	.91
Prosperre Pierre Louis	Aug. 2000	<i>Saint with Angels</i> (1983) Oil on Canvas	\$650 USD	\$600.00	.92
Laurent Casimir	Aug. 2000	<i>Matire Corbeau</i> (ca.1980) Oil on Canvas	\$550 USD	\$500.00	.87
Laurent Casimir	Aug.	<i>Carnival</i>	\$550 USD	\$400.00	.73

	2000	(ca.1980) Oil on Canvas			
Gerard Valcin	Aug. 2000	<i>Ceremony</i> (nd) Oil on Canvas	\$625 USD	\$600.00	
Gerard Valcin	Apr. 2000	<i>Maritime Musicians</i> (nd) Oil on Board	\$850 USD	\$750.00	
Gerard Valcin	April 2000	<i>Lady of Sirens</i> (nd) Oil on Canvas	\$700 USD	\$600.00	
Louizane Saint Flourant	Aug. 2000	<i>Mother and Child with Bird</i> (1983) Oil on Canvas	\$550 USD	\$500.00	
Adger Cowans	May 2000	<i>John Coltrane</i> (1998) Gelatin Silver Print	\$850 USD	\$750.00	.88
Adger Cowans	May 2000	<i>Sarah Vaughan</i> (1961) Gelatin Silver Print	\$850 USD	\$750.00	
Michael Cummings	May 2000	<i>African Jazz #10</i> (1990) Cotton throw	\$450 USD	\$300.00	
Beuford Smith	May 2000	<i>Two Bass Hit</i> (1971) Gelatin Silver Print	\$750 USD	\$600.00	
Chuck Stewart	May 2000	<i>Billie Holiday</i> (1955) Gelatin Silver Print	\$2100 USD	\$1250.00	
John Biggers	Jan. 2000	<i>Metamorphosis</i> (nd) Lithograph	\$1250 USD	\$800.00	.64
John Biggers	June 2000	<i>Star Gazers</i> (1988) Lithograph	\$650 USD	\$550.00	
Jean Enguerrand Gourque	Jan. 2000	<i>Village Boy</i> (nd) Oil on Canvas	\$1300 USD	\$900.00	

Gerard Paul	Feb. 2000	<i>Yard Scene</i> (nd) Oil on Canvas	\$775 USD	\$700.00	
Henry Thezume	Feb. 2000	<i>Milot</i> (nd) Oil on Canvas	\$925 USD	\$900.00	
Henry Thezume	March 2000	<i>Cap Haitien</i> (1985) Oil on Canvas	\$625 USD	\$600.00	.96
Michael Ray Charles	Feb. 2000	<i>You Only Live Once</i> (nd) Screenprint	\$1150 USD	\$900.00	
Michael Ray Charles	Feb. 2000	<i>Bang Bang</i> (1995) Screenprint	\$1150 USD	\$1000.00	
Michael Ray Charles	Feb. 2000	<i>Twenty-Four Seven</i> (1995) Screenprint	\$1150 USD	\$990.00	
Yves Etienne	Feb. 2000	<i>Garden Party</i> (nd) Oil on Canvas	\$350	\$350.00	
Edouard Jean	Feb. 2000	<i>Parade</i> (nd) Oil on Canvas	\$950 USD	\$900.00	.95
Pierre Joseph Valcin	Feb. 2000	<i>Coming Home</i> (nd) Oil on Board	\$1150 USD	\$800.00	
Elizabeth Catlett	Feb. 2000	<i>Survivor</i> (1983) Linocut	\$650 USD	\$250.00	
Howardena Pindell	March 2000	<i>Untitled</i> (1976) Lithograph	\$1150 USD	\$800.00	
David Driskell	March 2000	<i>Black Crucifixion</i> (1964) Oil on Canvas	\$13,500 USD	\$8,000.00	
Richard Mayhew	Dec. 1999	<i>Spiritual Tree</i> Scenes #7 (1995) Watercolor and Pastel	\$1575 USD	\$1,103.00	.7
Chris Ofili	Oct 1999	<i>Untitled</i> (1999) Watercolor on Paper	\$2350 USD	\$1,290.00	

Chris Ofili	Oct 1999	<i>Untitled</i> (1999) Watercolor on Paper	\$2350 USD	\$1,323.00	
Chris Ofili	Oct 1999	<i>Untitled</i> (1999) Watercolor on Paper	\$2350 USD	\$1,890.00	
Bernard Hoyes	Nov. 1999	<i>Sanctified Joy</i> (1998) Oil on Canvas	\$17,000 USD	\$11,250.00	
Prefete Duffaut	March 2000	<i>Untitled</i> (1976) Oil on Canvas	\$950 USD	\$900.00	.95
Jacob Lawrence	Oct. 1999	<i>New York Transit II</i> (1998) Silkscreen	\$7000 USD	\$4,875.00	
Lawrence Finney	Dec. 1999	<i>Joy of Life</i> (1999) Graphite on Paper	\$450 USD	\$347.00	
Lawrence Finney	Dec. 1999	<i>Languid Afternoon</i> (1998) Graphite on Paper	\$350 USD	\$301.00	
Lawrence Finney	Dec. 1999	<i>Quiet Thoughts</i> (1997) Acrylic on Canvas	\$3,500 USD	\$3,045.00	
Louis Delsarte	Dec. 1999	<i>Homage to Dance</i> (1994) Monoprint	\$1075 USD	\$750.00	.71
Sam Gilliam	Sept. 1999	<i>Bouy Landscape I</i> (1982) Intaglio	\$350 USD	\$225.00	
Sam Gilliam	Sept. 1999	<i>Lattice I</i> (1982) Intaglio	\$350 USD	\$441.00	
Sam Gilliam	Sept. 1999	<i>Lattice II</i> (1982) Intaglio	\$350 USD	\$245.00	
Sam Gilliam	Sept. 1999	<i>Lattice III</i> (1982) Intaglio	\$350 USD	\$270.00	
Sam Gilliam	Sept. 1999	<i>Lattice IV</i> (1982) Intaglio	\$350 USD	\$340.00	

Sam Gilliam	Sept. 1999	<i>Bouy Landscape II</i> (1982) Intaglio	\$350 USD	\$260.00	
Sam Gilliam	Sept. 1999	<i>Bouy Landscape III</i> (1982) Intaglio	\$350 USD	\$270.00	
Sam Gilliam	Sept. 1999	<i>Bouy Landscape IV</i> (1982) Intaglio	\$350 USD	\$285.00	
Sam Gilliam	Sept. 1999	<i>Bouy Landscape V</i> (1982) Intaglio	\$350 USD	\$245.00	
Sharon Bourke	May 2000	<i>Branches</i> (1998) Etching	\$275 USD	\$220.00	
Richard Hunt	July 2000	<i>Untitled</i> (1975) Lithograph	\$900 USD	\$800.00	.89
Seymour (S.E.) Bottex	July 2000	<i>The Haircut</i> (nd) Oil on Board	\$450 USD	\$400.00	
Ellis Wilson	Dec. 1999	<i>Still Life W/ Fruit</i> (nd) Oil on Canvas	\$4,500 USD	\$4000.00	
F. Augustin	March 2000	<i>Boy Scout</i> (nd) Oil on Board	\$550 USD	\$550.00	1
Steve Martin	May 2000	<i>Shadow Portrait</i> (1995) Color Photograph	\$450 USD	\$440.00	
Sam Nhlengethwa	Sept. 2000	<i>The Blue Window</i> Frame (1998) Lithograph	\$850 USD	\$600.00	
Andy Warhol	May 2000	<i>Marilyn</i> (1967) Print	\$40,000 USD	\$34,650.00	.87
Marc Chagall	May 2000	<i>Red Maternity</i> (1980) Print	\$22,500 USD	\$22,050.00	.98
Roy Lichtenstein	May 2000	<i>Sweet Dreams Baby</i> (1965) Print	\$19,000 USD	\$18,900.00	.99

James Rosenquist	May 2000	<i>House of Fire</i> 1988-89 Print	\$25,000 USD	\$18,900	.76
Andy Warhol	May 2000	<i>Rebel Without A Cause</i> (1985) Print	\$11,000 USD	\$16,593	1.51
Haim Steinbach	May 2000	<i>Tailored Cut</i> (1985) Unknown	\$17,000 USD	\$12,404	.71
Oldenberg	May 2000	<i>Whitehall XIII</i> (1975) Unknown	\$13,000 USD	\$9,450	.70
Boetti	May 2000	<i>Resta Solo Cio...</i> (1988-89) Unknown	\$8,000 USD	\$5,789	.72
Dan Christensen	May 2000	<i>Red Window</i> 1998 Acrylic on Canvas	\$4,500 USD	\$4,200	.93
Dan Christensen	May 2000	<i>Jack Blues</i> 1992	\$3,500 USD	\$3,150	.90
Roni Horn	May 2000	<i>When Dickinson Shuts her Eyes</i> 1993 Solid Plastic and Aluminum	\$34,000 USD	\$27,300	
Alexander Calder	May 2000	<i>Pyramids and Circles</i> 1971	\$11,000 USD	\$10,053	.91
Joseph Cornwell	May 2000	<i>Untitled 1968</i> Collage	14,000 USD	\$7,500	
Zhao Zhen Hua	May 2000	<i>Nude</i> 1999 Oil on Canvas	\$7,000 USD	\$6,725	
Segal	May 2000	<i>Girl on Air</i> 1970 Unknown	\$5,000 USD	\$4,200	
Charles Pickering Townsley	May 2000	<i>Grand Canyon from East of El Tovar</i> c. 1915 Oil on Panel	\$6,000 USD	\$7,500	
Aaron Bohrod	May 2000	<i>Burnout</i> 1982 Oil on panel	\$6,000 USD	\$7,000	
Grayden	May 2000	<i>Cottonwood</i>	\$3,000	\$4,500	

Foulger		<i>Stream</i> 1990 <i>Oil on Canvas</i>	USD		
Mo Harvey	May 2000	<i>Nous 120 Avons</i> <i>Vu le Soleil & la</i> <i>Lune</i> 1991 <i>Acrylic on</i> <i>Canvas</i>	\$1,600	\$1,200	
Joseph John Jones	May 2000	<i>Fall Landscapes</i> c. 1940 <i>Oil On Canvas</i>	\$1,600	\$1,125	.68
Manuel Carillo	May 2000	Photographs of Mexico 1960 50 Gelatin Silver Prints	\$13,500	\$8,500	
Paul Strand	May 2000	Wall Street 1915 Gelatin Silver	\$9,000 USD	\$7,300	
Horst	May 2000	Mainbotcher Corset 1939 Gelatin Silver	\$8,000	\$6,800	
Ruth Orkin	May 2000	An American Girl in Italy 1952	\$6,000	\$6,064	
Adam Fuss		Untitled 1991 Unique Cibachrome Photogram	\$7,000	\$5,000	.71

* Auction records courtesy of Quashelle Curtis

APPENDIX C

Auction Results ratio prior to online auctions.

Private Gallery/ Auction Data								
Non Traditional Artists Data 1995 to 2001					Traditional Artists Data 1994 to 2002			
	Name/Artist	Average Estimated Value	Hammer Price	Ratio	Name/Artist	Estimated Value	Hammer Price	Ratio
1	Tanner, <i>The Good Shepherd</i> (1930) Oil on Board	6,000.00	4,400.00	0.73	Homer, <i>On Guard</i> (1864) Oil on Canvas	600,000.00	508,500.00	.85
2	Tanner, <i>Moroccan Man</i> (nd) Oil on Panel	4,000.00	7,700.00	1.93	Homer, <i>The Whittling Boy</i> (1873) Oil on Canvas	1,500,000.00	1,102,000.00	.74
3	Tanner, <i>Street Scene in Tangiers</i> (nd) Oil on Canvas	40,000.00	52,900.00	1.32	Homer, <i>Woodchooper in the Adirondacks</i> (ca 1870) Oil on Canvas	500,000.00	992,500.00	1.99
4	Tanner, <i>Shepherd with Herd</i> (nd) Oil on Board	25,000.00	101,500.00	4.06	Homer, <i>Girl reading under an oak</i> (1879) Oil on Canvas	2,500,000.00	1,876,000.00	.75
5	Tanner, <i>The Visitation</i> (nd) Oil on Canvas	25,000.00	211,500.00	8.46	Homer, <i>Uncle Ned at Home</i> (1875) Oil on Canvas	2,500,000.00	2,865,750.00	1.15
6	Duncanson, <i>River Valley Landscapes</i> (1851) Oil on Board	4,000.00	12075.00	3.02	Cole, <i>Study for a view in Catskill</i> (Ca 1844) Oil on Canvas	40,000.00	37,400.00	.94
7	Duncanson, <i>Canoe and Figures in a mountainous landscape</i> (nd) Oil on Canvas	5025.00	4000.00	.80	Cole, <i>Cabin in the woods</i> (nd) Oil on Canvas	125,000.00	75,000.00	.60
8	Duncanson, <i>Still Life w/Fruit</i> (1848) Oil on Board	25,000.00	222,500.00	8.9	Cole, <i>View of Boston</i> (nd) Oil on Canvas	1,250,000.00	1,102,500.00	.88
9	Duncanson, <i>Watermelons and Peaches</i> (ca 1849) pastel	40,000.00	23,000.00	.58	Monet, <i>Les Peupliers</i> (1891) Oil on Canvas	8,500,000.00	7,046,000.00	.83
10	Johnson, <i>Childhood</i> (1889) Oil Painting	680.00	1529.00	2.27	Monet, <i>Voillers</i> (1864) Oil on Canvas	1,250,000.00	1,106,000.00	.88
11	Bannister,	4,000.00	1,650.00	.4	Monet, <i>Vetheuill</i>	4,373,178.00	7,539,658.00	1.73

	Gathering Clouds (1881) Oil on Canvas				(1880) Oil on Canvas			
12	Bannister, New England Coast (1891) Oil on Canvas	7000.00	5,500.00	.79	Monet, <i>L'aiguille vue a travers la porte d'amont</i> (1885-1886) Oil on Panel	364,431.00	271,801.00	.75
13	Bannister, Crows in the Cornfield (1875) Oil on Canvas	4000.00	7,840.00	1.96	Manet, <i>La Brune au seins nus</i> 1872 Oil on Canvas	2,150,000.00	3,965,750.00	1.84
14	Bannister, River Landscape (nd) Oil on Canvas	4,000.00	7,280.00	1.82	Manet, <i>La Femme aux chiens</i> (nd) Oil on Canvas	282,326.00	294,159.00	1.04
15	Bannister, Two women in a wooded landscape (nd)	900.00	12,650.00	14.05	Manet, <i>Portrait de mademoiselle isabelle lemonier</i> (ca 1879) Oil on Canvas	3,531,073.00	2,335,805.00	.65
16	Lewis, <i>The old Indian Arrow Maker and his Daughter</i> (1866) Marble	40,000.00	87,750.00	2.19	Manet, <i>Le peintre animalier la rochenoire</i> (1882) Pastel on Canvas	500,000.00	779,500.00	1.56
17	Lewis, <i>Poor Cupid</i> (nd) Marble	10,000.00	9,775.00	.98	Rodin, <i>Andrieu d' Andres</i> (1895) Bronze w/Brown Patina	60,000.00	64,625.00	1.08
18	Lewis, <i>The marriage of Hiawatha</i> (nd) Marble	10,000.00	39,100.00	3.91	Rodin, <i>Jean d'aire</i> (1885) Bronze w/ Black Patina	60,000.00	39,950.00	.67
19	Lewis, <i>The old Indian Arrow Maker and his Daughter</i> (1860-1867) Marble	50,000.00	85,000.00	1.70	Rodin, <i>Le penseur</i> (ca 1880) Bronze	125,000.00	155,150.00	1.24

APPENDIX D

Internet Sales								
Non Traditional Artists Data from August 1999- December 2000					Traditional Artists Data from May 2000			
	Name/Artist	Average Estimated Value	Hammer Price	Ratio	Name/Artist	Estimated Value	Hammer Price	Ratio
1	Romare Bearden <i>Pepper Jelly Lady, (1975)</i> Lithograph	\$2,500 USD	\$2,500.00	1	Andy Warhol <i>Marilyn (1967)</i> Print	\$40,000 USD	\$34,650.00	.87
2	Romare Bearden <i>Morning of the Rooster, (1980)</i> Lithograph	\$2,500 USD	\$2,500.00	1	Marc Chagall <i>Red Maternity (1980)</i> Print	\$22,500 USD	\$22,050.00	.98
3	Romare Bearden <i>Morning, (1979)</i> Lithograph	\$2,500 USD	\$2,000.00	.8	Roy Lichtenstein <i>Sweet Dreams Baby (1965)</i> Print	\$19,000 USD	\$18,900.00	.99
4	Romare Bearden <i>Odysseus Leaves (1979)</i> Lithograph	\$1750 USD	\$1500.00	.86	James Rosenquist <i>House of Fire 1988-89</i> Print	\$25,000 USD	\$18,900	.76
5	Romare Bearden <i>Come Sunday (1976)</i> Lithograph	\$2350 USD	\$2200.00	.94	Andy Warhol <i>Rebel Without A Cause (1985)</i> Print	\$11,000 USD	\$16,593	1.51
6	Romare Bearden <i>From the Airplane (1982)</i> Watercolor	\$7,000 USD	\$7,000	1	Haim Steinbach <i>Tailored Cut (1985)</i> Unknown	\$17,000 USD	\$12,404	.71
7	Romare Bearden <i>Carolina Memory (1970-72)</i> Serigraph	\$4,000 USD	\$2500	.6	Oldenberg <i>Whitehall XIII (1975)</i> Unknown	\$13,000 USD	\$9,450	.70
8	Zwelethu Mthetwa <i>Waiting (1996)</i> Hand-colored Digital printed image	\$825 USD	\$750.00	.91	Boetti <i>Resta Solo Cio... (1988-89)</i> Unknown	\$8,000 USD	\$5,789	.72
9	Prosper Pierre Louis <i>Saint with Angels (1983)</i> Oil on Canvas	\$650 USD	\$600.00	.92	Dan Christensen <i>Red Window 1998</i> Acrylic on Canvas	\$4,500 USD	\$4,200	.93
10	Laurent Casimir	\$550 USD	\$500.00	.87	Dan Christensen	\$3,500 USD	\$3,150	.90

	<i>Matire Corbeau</i> (ca.1980) Oil on Canvas				<i>Jack Blues</i> 1992			
11	Laurent Casimir <i>Carnival</i> (ca. 1980) Oil on Canvas	\$550 USD	\$400.00	.73	Alexander Calder <i>Pyramids and Circles</i> 1971	\$11,000 USD	\$10,053	.91
12	Adger Cowans <i>John Coltrane</i> (1998) Gelatin Silver Print	\$850 USD	\$750.00	.88	Joseph John Jones <i>Fall Landscapes</i> c. 1940 Oil On Canvas	\$1,600 USD	\$1,125	.68
13	John Biggers <i>Metamorphosis</i> (nd) Lithograph	\$1250 USD	\$800.00	.64	Adam Fuss Untitled, 1991 Unique Cibachrome Photogram	\$7,000 USD	\$5,000	.71

APPENDIX E

Statistical Treatment for Artnet.com Internet Auctions

<i>Traditional Artists Ratios</i>	<i>Non- traditional Artists Ratios</i>
0.87	1
0.98	1
0.99	0.8
0.76	0.86
0.71	0.94

1.51	1
1.02	0.6
0.9	0.91
0.92	0.92
0.75	0.87
0.84	0.73
0.79	0.88
0.7	0.64
0.99	0.96
0.69	0.95
0.72	0.7
0.93	0.95
0.9	0.71

0.91	1.1
0.71	0.89

F-Test Two-Sample for Variances

	<i>Traditional Artists</i>	<i>Non- traditional Artists</i>
Mean	0.8795	0.8705
Variance	0.034184	0.017837
Observations	20	20
Df	19	19
F	1.916508	
P(T<=f) one-tail	0.08267	
t Critical one-tail	2.16825	

t-Test Two-Sample Assuming Equal Variances

	<i>Traditional Artists</i>	<i>Non- traditional Artists</i>
Mean	0.8795	0.8705
Variance	0.034184	0.017837
Observations	20	20
Pooled Variance	0.02601	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0.05	
Df	38	
t Stat	-0.80392	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.213223	
t Critical one-tail	1.685953	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.426445	
t Critical two-tail	2.024394	

APPENDIX F

Statistical Treatment for Sotheby's Auction

Non Traditional Artists	Traditional Artists			
0.4	0.6			
0.58	0.65			
0.73	0.67			
0.79	0.74	F-Test Two-Sample for Variances		
0.8	0.75			
0.98	0.75		Non Traditional Artists	Traditional Artists
1.32	0.83	Mean	3.151053	1.061579
1.7	0.85	Variance	12.72982	0.17867
1.82	0.88	Observations	19	19
1.93	0.88	Df	18	18
1.96	0.94	F	71.24783	
2.19	1.04	P(F<=f) one-tail	4.1E-13	
2.27	1.08	F Critical one-tail	2.217199	
3.02	1.15			
3.91	1.24	t-Test: Two-Sample Assuming Unequal Variances		
4.06	1.56			
8.46	1.73		Non Traditional Artists	Traditional Artists
8.9	1.84	Mean	3.151053	1.061579
14.05	1.99	Variance	12.72982	0.17867
		Observations	19	19
		Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
		Df	19	
		t Stat	2.534988	
		P(T<=t) one-tail	0.010096	
		t Critical one-tail	1.729131	
		P(T<=t) two-tail	0.020191	
		t Critical two-tail	2.093025	

ENDNOTES



Net works

More than 100 works by African-American artists can be viewed and purchased at www.artnet.com, which organizers say is the biggest online selection of African-American art.

"We have a loyal and growing audience of collectors," says Artnet's Quashelle Curtis. "In most cases, they're African-Americans who are passionate about their culture. But I'm also seeing a growing number of traditional collectors who are just discovering the beauty and depth of these works."

During Black History Month, artnet.com will prominently feature African-American artists throughout its site. Click on the "Embrace Heritage" link to see them.

— M.A.

The Studio Museum in Harlem
March 23, 2000

The Fine Art of Collecting Part I:

“The Elements of Collecting”

Moderator: Thelma Golden, Deputy Director of Exhibitions and Programs,
The Studio Museum in Harlem

Panelists:

Peg Alston has been involved with collecting art for over 25 years. In 1972, she established **Peg Alston Fine Arts** which specializes in works by artists of African descent. In addition to conducting seminars on collecting art by African-American artists and curating exhibitions, Ms. Alston has appeared on television and radio, and in magazines such as *Black Enterprise*, *Essence*, *National Scene*, and *Art & Auction*. She is a consultant to the Arts Committee of the New York Coalition of 100 Black Women, a member of *ArTable*, and is on the Board of the Private Art Dealers Association.

Michael R. Chisolm has been a member of the Appraisers Association of America since 1983. Since 1972, Mr. Chisolm has taught courses at the college level in the areas of African Art, History of Western Art, Modern Art, and African American Art. He has curated numerous exhibitions and has written essays for a variety of exhibition catalogues. In addition to lecturing on collecting art, Mr. Chisolm has served on several arts committees including: Percent for Art: New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, and the African Burial Ground Committee.

Quaschelle Curtis heads the African American and Folk Art category for online auctions at *artnet.com*. This website is recognized as the premier site on the Internet for art content and e-commerce. In her position as African American and Folk art specialist, Ms. Curtis has set out to both develop awareness and re-position artists of African descent in a global market. Previously, Ms. Curtis worked extensively with arts programs and institutions in both New York City and Atlanta, GA.

Halima Taha is recognized as a leading authority on collecting African American art and arts management. For more than 15 years, she has contributed to the field as an art advisor, educator, and lecturer. She is the author of the best-selling book: *Collecting African American Art: Works on Paper and Canvas* (Random House, January 1999). Ms. Taha also heads **halima ink.**, a professional arts and education company that provides art advisory, curatorial, conference, workshop, seminar, and lecture services for corporate, civic, cultural, and academic institutions.

Press Release Press Release

TO: News Media:

FM: *Lamar Wilson*, Director
The Ruth Hall Hodges Art Gallery
Morris Brown College
569 Martin Luther King Jr. Dr. at Maple Street
1 block West of Vine City MARTA Station

TEL: (404) 739-1400 Gallery
(404) 739-1405 Fax

The Ruth Hall Hodges Art Gallery will present a special lecture by Ms. Quashelle Curtis, who is the senior African American and Folk Art specialist for artnet.com. She will be speaking on "Collecting in the New Millennium" as well as purchasing and selling online. Ms. Curtis is a graduate of Atlanta College of Art and is currently studying for a master's degree in Fine Arts from Seton Hall University. Ms. Curtis, also a fine artist, is one of the 13 new age artists featured in the current exhibition at the Hodges Art Gallery entitled "*Modern Art in Atlanta Today*." Running concurrently in the gallery is "*Black Artists of Georgia*" from the permanent collection of the Harriet Tubman Museum in Macon, Georgia. This exhibition is endorsed and supported by Governor Roy Barnes. The lecture for Ms. Curtis will be held on Friday, November 17, 2000 from 6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. in the art gallery. The lecture is free and open to the public.

Hip-Hop Nation Event Offerings

Prepared for artnet.com

October Hip-Hop ThinkFILM Series

This series is part of the Brooklyn Museum of Art's ThinkFILM program, with two screenings every Saturday at noon and 2 PM. This series attracts a very diverse audience of 18-45 year olds, and is held in the BMA's beautiful 460-seat auditorium. Sponsorship fees run about \$2,500 per screening, negotiable if there is interest in volume sponsorship or a tax-deductible contribution to the Museum for general operating support. We invite sponsors to place signage within the Museum, and would be pleased to partner with artnet.com in promoting the programs through palm cards, flyers, and the BMA and artnet's respective web sites. Sponsor representatives are invited to set up a table to greet visitors and provide artnet literature or interactive activities, where appropriate.

October 7

Noon-- *Beat Street*, 1984, dir. Stan Lathan, 105 minutes. Loosely termed a documentary, this landmark hip-hop film tells the story of an aspiring DJ from the South Bronx trying to break into showbiz. *Beat Street* stars some of the hottest breakdancers and musicians of the 1980s and 1990s, including the New York City Breakers.

2 PM-- *Krush Groove*, 1985, dir. Michael Schultz. A feature film about hip-hop artists trying to make it big, *Krush Groove* showcases some of hip-hop's most famous musicians, often playing themselves: Run DMC, Jam Master Jay, the Fat Boys, Kurtis Blow, Debbie Harry, Sheila E. and Joseph Simmons.

October 14

Noon & 2 PM-- *Breath Control: History of the Human Beatbox*, 1999, dir. By Joey Garfield, 20 minutes. Documentary on the evolution of beatboxing, the art of making music with your mouth. This film includes performances by beatbox greats, including Rahzel, the Fat Boys, and Doug E Fresh. Possible Q&A with Joey Garfield and Doug E Fresh.

***Nobody Knows My Name*, 1999, dir. Rachel Raimist, 60 minutes.** Digital video documentary that takes an intimate journey into the lives of women living their passion for hip-hop as poets and performers. They share inspiring successes and heartbreaking disappointments in hip-hop, including recording artist Leschea, who hails originally from Bedford-Stuyvesant in Brooklyn. Possible Q&A with Rachel Raimist after the screening.

October 21

Noon— *Wild Style*, 1982, dir. Charlie Ahearn, 82 minutes. Feature film starring legendary graffiti artist Lee Quinones as Raymond, who is suddenly discovered by wealthy art connoisseurs. Footage presents classic performances by Rock Steady Crew, the Cold Crush Brothers and others. Q&A with Charlie Ahearn following the screening.

2 PM— *Style Wars*, 1983, dir. Tony Silver and Henry Chalfont, 60 minutes. Documentary featuring Crazy Legs of Rock Steady Crew and other hip hop "heads". Q&A with Tony Silver and Harry Chalfont following the screening.

October 28

Noon & 2 PM— *Great Day in Hip-Hop*, 1998, dir. Nelson George. Documentary inspired by a history-making photo session shot by Gordon Parks with Slick Rick, Busta Rhymes, Mos Def, Grandmaster Flash, Debby Harry, Wyclef, Shaquille O'Neal and others of the 177 rap heavyweights who turned up for the shoot on September 29, 1998. Parks' work, which later appeared on the cover of *XXL*, represents a fresh take on Art Kane's famous jazz pictorial, "A Great Day in Harlem," which brought together 57 jazz icons on a stoop on 125th Street. Parks' photo uses the very same brownstone. Book signing and Q&A with Nelson George following the screening.

Hip-Hop Seminar, Friday, October 20 and Saturday, October 21

The Brooklyn Museum of Art presents a two-day hip-hop symposium in conjunction with the exhibition *Hip-Hop Nation: Roots, Rhymes and Rage*. Panel discussions, film screenings and Q&A sessions will explore the impact hip-hop has had on art, style, language, politics and society during the past 25 years.

Speakers at the symposium will include hip-hop pioneers and contemporary artists, as well as activists, scholars, journalists and cultural historians. Panelists invited to participate include hip-hop artists Mos Def, Crazy Legs, Kuttin Kandi, Grandmaster Caz, Chairman Mao, Ross Baraka and Danja Mouth; graffiti legends and fashion designers Zulu and Brue from PNB Nation; scholars Tricia Rose (NYU), Robert Ferris Thompson (Yale), Tony Medina (LIU), and Dr. William Eric Perkins (UPenn); journalists Robin Kelly and Ann Powers (*New York Times*), Danyel Smith (*Time*) and Raquel Cepeda; authors Harry Allen, Nelson George and William Wimsatt; and media professionals Lisa Evers (*Hot 97*), Mecca (*88HIPHOP*) and Selwyn Hinds (*360degrees*).

Sessions will address questions that are important to all of us – from devoted hip-hop "heads" and activists, to parents, grandparents and teachers: What is hip-hop? How did it evolve? What made hip-hop influential in our politics, our society, our streets? How is hip-hop expressed? Does hip-hop unite cultures, races, ethnic groups, generations and genders, or does it push them farther apart? What is the future of hip-hop?

Saturday's session includes screenings of two landmark hip-hop films: *Wild Style* and *Style Wars* (see ThinkFILM description above). Panels are scheduled from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. both days. Tickets for each day of the symposium are \$6 General Admission, \$4 for Members/Students/Seniors. Tickets include Museum admission and entrance to the *Hip-Hop Nation* exhibition.

This Hip-Hop seminar represents an extraordinary opportunity for artnet.com to reach an incredibly diverse, young, affluent audience in a direct, meaningful, and memorable way.

Other Hip-Hop Event Sponsorship Opportunities

The Museum continues to seek creative ways to partner with sponsors on a variety of exciting projects. What follows is an outline of opportunities for single-event sponsorships, each appealing to a specific demographic, and each presenting myriad branding and marketing opportunities.

Hip-Hop Workshops, November 4-5

A two-day event featuring four workshops on the four elements of hip-hop: the MC, the DJ, the breakdancer, and the graffiti artist. Workshops involve master classes, demonstrations and some interactive sessions led by renowned hip-hop artists, including breakdancing stars Crazy Legs and Mr. Wiggles, and MC Grandmaster Caz. Workshops will be aimed at a multigenerational audience, so that parents can bring kids and learn more about hip-hop artistry.

Title Sponsorship: \$30,000

Step into a World: Hip-Hop Literary Event, Sunday November 5

The most important writers of the hip-hop generation will conduct readings of their work. Authors invited include Brooklyn's own Joan Morgan and Edwidge Danticat, Junot Diaz, formerly of Brooklyn, and Danyel Smith, reading work from *Step Into a World: A Global Anthology of the New Black Literature*, to be released November 1st by John Wiley. Authors will sign books in the Hip-Hop Museum shop from 4 PM to 5 PM, followed by readings, spoken word performances and music in the Museum's 460-seat auditorium from 5 - 6 PM. A festive author's cocktail reception will cap off the evening.

Hospitality Sponsorship: \$5,000

Uprocking: A Brooklyn Original, December

Of all the hip-hop art forms (MCing, DJing, breakdancing and graffiti), only uprocking can be truly said to be a Brooklyn original. Invented in the streets of Brooklyn as a way to express intense emotions as an alternative to verbal or physical aggression, uprocking was invented by teens, but quickly swept through the neighborhoods to become a dance craze in the 70s and early 80s. This event brings together uprockers (many of them now in their late 30s and 40s!) with their children for an exciting, nostalgic dance event.

Title Sponsorship: \$10,000.

From Hip to Hip-Hop: A History of Hip-Hop Fashion, Date TBD

Legendary breakdancer Fable brings his exhaustive collection of old-school and new-school hip-hop clothing to the Brooklyn Museum of Art. A multimedia event, this fashion show will feature live music, dance and slide projections.

Title Sponsorship: \$10,000

Hip-Hop Young Scholars Series, October 7-December 26

Hip-hop history and culture is one of the hottest topics on high-school and college campuses across America. As part of our *Hip-Hop Nation Talks & Tours* series, the Brooklyn Museum of Art presents a series of talks by young hip-hop scholars every Saturday and Sunday afternoon from October through December. Students from New York schools, as well as their professors, share their perspectives on hip-hop art forms, language and culture.

Title Sponsorship: \$5,000

Founding Fathers of Hip-Hop, Date TBD

Kool Herc, Grandmaster Flash, and Afrika Bambaata gather to share their wisdom and knowledge of the evolution of hip-hop and its future.

Title Sponsorship: \$40,000

For more information, please contact:

Kate deRosset, Corporate Development Coordinator, 718.638.5000, ext. 323
Mona Smith, Manager of Public Programs, 718.638.5000, ext. 233

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Hog Caller Blues Study, 1996, oil and collage on paper

During the last decade, the creativity of African-American artists has been presented to the public in a variety of venues, resulting in an increasingly sophisticated understanding of and appreciation for these works in the art world. Such works inherently and simultaneously speak to two cultural contexts – one specifically African-American, and the other intrinsically American.

Though many important – and beautiful – museum exhibitions have played their part in this expanding perception, it has been the sustained dedication of first a few, then many, art dealers which has been the most important factor in this experience. With this in mind, we are extremely grateful to those of our Associates who have participated in the growth of African-American art and who are now carrying the message forward to

our Internet auction community by offering fine works from their collections.

The works in this sale have been created by African-Americans and generally concern a specifically African-American experience; thus the historical narratives of Jacob Lawrence and Faith Ringold, and the photographs by Gordon Parks. Many of the works — like *Hog Caller Blues Study*, a 1996 oil and collage on canvas by Benny Andrews — also address wider cultural issues than those pertaining exclusively to the African-American community. And other works have wider art-historical implications. For example, while Romare Bearden's compositions tend to be populated with African-Americans, their imaginative photo-montage construction also makes them

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press releases

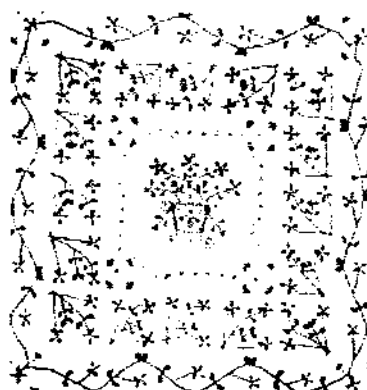
SOTHEBY'S FALL 2000 AMERICANA AUCTION ILLUMINATES AFRICAN-AMERICAN ACHIEVEMENTS IN FOLK ART

—Two Rare African-American Quilts —

—Two Drawings by Bill Traylor —

—A Limestone Sculpture by William Edmondson —

All Offered at Sotheby's New York October 13, 2000



Rare pieced calico and cotton quilt top made by the enslaved African known as "Yellow Bill," (estimate \$20/40,000)

New York, NY — Sotheby's Fall Americana sale is enhanced by significant African-American contributions to the field of folk art. From a quilt sewn in 1852, to a sculpture carved in the 1940s, there are distinct examples of African-American achievements waiting to be discovered. In addition, there is a rare quilt made by an enslaved African man, an intriguing early 20th century memorial quilt, two drawings by Bill Traylor, and a carved sculpture by William Edmondson.

The first quilt offered has an extremely well documented provenance. This rare pieced calico and cotton quilt top which was made by the enslaved African known as "Yellow Bill," was a gift for Catharine W. Dean on the occasion of her marriage to William Dean in New Orleans, Louisiana, March 18, 1852 (estimate \$20/40,000). Not only is it unusual to find a quilt sewn by a man, but it is extremely rare to find one accompanied by information that identifies its maker, date of creation, and purpose. Too many quilts made by enslaved Africans were never documented or identified, making this piece a significant link in the story of African-American cultural traditions. Writing in the preface to her 1990 catalogue "Stitched from the Soul," the American folklore scholar and collector Dr. Gladys-Marie Fry notes that African-American quilts "express the personal philosophy and religious beliefs of their makers, creating permanent but unwritten records of events large and small, of pain and loss, of triumph and tragedy in the makers' lives. And each piece of cloth became the focal point of a remembered past."

Yellow Bill's quilt is a lively and colorful work, with a central flowerpot pattern in red calico flowers and entwining vines. As this piece was intended for a new bride, the design also includes fertility symbols in the shape of four floral cutouts recognized as snakes — believed by many West African tribes to be powerful forces of creation. Further African-derived symbolism appears in the center of the quilt, where an eight-pointed star, symbolic of God in West Africa, is stitched into the form of the flowerpot. Flowers themselves are associated with the West African Goddess of love and nature, Erzulie. The entire composition of this quilt radiates with vibrant symbols of life, creation, and regenerative spirit.

Although the maker of the second quilt is unknown, the story it tells reveals a family's grief at the loss of two young daughters. The rare appliqued and pieced cotton, flannel and velvet memorial quilt was done in the Baltimore Album tradition around 1900 — 1910 (est. \$12/18,000), in which individual panels are arranged in a narrative sequence to tell a story. This quilt illustrates the events in the life of one African-American family with symbolism and colors from their African heritage. The story the quilt tells is the death of two young sisters who perished in an epidemic that hit Baltimore at the turn of the century.



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At the center of the quilt's detailed composition are the small figures of two young girls, wearing matching white gowns and pearl necklaces, lying next to each other on either side of a bold red cross. Flower garlands and winged angels surround the two girls, suggesting their final resting place. At the head of the quilt are the girls' parents, the mother carrying a small bouquet of flowers and the father carrying a small satchel, like those used by sailors when going out to sea. The father is dressed in velvet pants and a sailor's striped smock, leading scholars to think of him as a seafaring man, since Baltimore was a busy port town. At their feet lies a velvet "laying out" sofa, a reminder of the family's loss.

The woman who made the Baltimore quilt was a skilled seamstress who expressed her sorrow over the girls' death through the fine stitches in this exemplary quilt. She did this with her adept handling of needle and thread, and by including distinct African design motifs in her composition. The vibrancy and range of bright colors in the floral applique betrays the sadness felt over the girls' deaths. Throughout the quilt are bright whites, suggesting the African world of the ancestors, and vivid reds, representing the Shango cult of the Yoruba people. The attention to detail in this quilt is evidence of the maker's great care in memorializing the two young victims.



Bill Traylor and William Edmondson, both Southerners who discovered their artistic talents late in life, nevertheless went on to gain the attention of national and international audiences. The 1930s saw each man start down his own creative path: Traylor began drawing at the age of 85 and Edmondson first picked up a carving tool when he was 62. From Traylor there are two powerful drawings, *Self Portrait* (est. \$30/50,000) and *Bird* (est. \$10/15,000). Each is done in characteristically bold geometric fields of flat color on salvaged remnants of cardboard. Edmondson's talents as a stone carver are evident in his carved limestone *birdbath* (est. \$150/200,000), an exceptional piece of garden statuary that shows influences from Western and African influences. Edmondson included a pair of resting doves along the basin, softening its stark, minimalist composition.

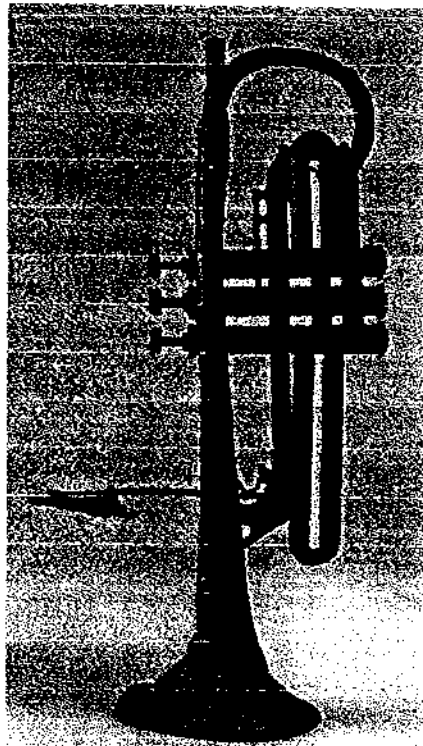
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press releases

A BLAST FROM JAZZ'S PAST IN SPECIAL "JAZZ LEGENDS" AUCTION

**-LOUIS ARMSTRONG'S BOYHOOD CORNET, THE INSTRUMENT ON WHICH HE LEARNED TO PLAY -
- HANDWRITTEN LYRICS BY BILLIE HOLIDAY FOR "LADY SINGS THE BLUES" -**



New York, New York - From October 1-15, Sothebys.com will offer a special selection of memorabilia and photos from the great Jazz Legends. The cornerstone of this sale is Louis Armstrong's Boyhood Cornet from the Collection of George Finola, which is particularly timely in light of the August centenary celebration of Armstrong's birth in New Orleans. The cornet is expected to bring between \$80,000 to \$100,000.

This historic instrument is the cornet on which Armstrong, one of the most famous Jazz musicians in history, was first taught to play. A very young and wayward Louis was doing time (1913-1915) at the Colored Waif's Home for Boys in New Orleans for shooting off a pistol during a New Year's celebration. Music instructor Peter Davis began to nurture his talents with discipline, self-respect and lessons on this cornet. Armstrong's life turned around, and in a short time he was leading the Home's band. A few years later he found himself in Chicago, and by the late 1920's he had risen from juvenile delinquent to rising star.

Davis kept the instrument after Armstrong left the home and used it to teach other young musicians who had a penchant for mischief. George Finola, himself a well-respected musician, scholar, curator of the New Orleans Jazz Museum and founding member of the Jazz Institute of Chicago, acquired the instrument in the 1960s from the Davis family and displayed it at the New Orleans Jazz Museum.

Also featured in the Jazz Legends sale will be Billie Holiday's handwritten working lyrics for the 1956 composition "Lady Sings The Blues" (estimate: \$8/12,000), also the title of her 1956 autobiography. Holiday was the only major jazz diva of her time to compose her own lyrics, and this talent was reflected in some of her other best known and loved songs - "Fine and Mellow," "Don't Explain" and "God Bless the Child." In April 1956, William Dufty, Holiday's autobiography co-author, brought the music of pianist Herbie

Nichols to Holiday as they were writing the book at his home. This tune inspired her lyrics and resulted in the song that not only became one of Holiday's greatest hits, but also served as the sad refrain for the darker side of Holiday's life, which was shortened by her chronic drug and alcohol addictions. It was the only piece of Holiday memorabilia that Dufty saved after Holiday's death in 1959. This working set of lyrics provides a rare glimpse into one of the greatest female vocalists of all time.

This online auction will also feature a collection of vintage jazz photos from legendary photographers such as William Gottlieb, Beuford Smith, Adger Cowans, Chuck Stewart, Frank Stewart and Anthony Barboza, as well as a variety of other jazz memorabilia including Frank Sinatra's "Look" Award.

The Armstrong cornet will be on display in Chicago during the exhibition for the auction of Musical Instruments, September 30 through October 3. The lyrics are available for view in New York by appointment. Inquiries should be directed to Shawn Marsh in Chicago, 312-396-9563, shawn.marsh@sothebys.com; or Leila Dunbar in New York at 212-606-7146, leila.dunbar@sothebys.com.

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