

Release Date: March 1, 2018

John Wilmerding Symposium on American Art and Community Celebration Explores American Storytelling with World-Renowned Artists and Engaging Free Programs, March 23, 25



Jacob Lawrence's *Sidewalk Drawings* (1943) is the inspiration for a large-scale, community art-making activity on Sunday, March 25.

Washington, DC—This spring welcomes the second annual John Wilmerding Symposium on American Art and Community Celebration. Named for the Gallery's retired curator, deputy director, trustee, and chairman, as well as one of the nation's leading scholars in American art, the symposium and weekend celebration will explore the expanding and ever-changing stories of American art and the Gallery's dynamic role in sharing those stories. The symposium and community celebration are made possible by a grant from the Walton Family Foundation.

All programs are free and open to the public. The symposium will take place on Friday, March 23 from 10:30–5:00 in the East Building Auditorium and the community celebration will take place on Sunday,

March 25 from 11:00–6:00 across the entire East Building.

The symposium will bring together noted artists Janine Antoni, Byron Kim, and Glenn Ligon, who will discuss [*Bodies of Work*](#), the East Building installation featuring Kim's [*Synecdoche*](#) (1991-present), Ligon's *Self-Portrait (VIII)* and *Self-Portrait (X)* (1996), and Antoni's [*Lick and Lather*](#), (1993). Among other subjects to be discussed at the symposium are the complete reinstallation of a West Building gallery with portraits of women in white, featuring Gilbert Stuart's [*Catherine Brass Yates \(Mrs. Richard Yates\)*](#) (1793/1794), one of the first objects to enter the Gallery's collection in 1941; Hiram Powers' [*The Greek Slave*](#) (1846); George Bellows's [*Both Members of This Club*](#) (1909); Archibald Motley's *Portrait of My Grandmother* (1922), presented by artist and scholar David C. Driskell; and a major gift of Dorothea Lange's evocative [*photographs*](#) of American migrant workers taken in the 1930s and 1940s. Visit [nga.gov/calendar/lectures/symposia.html](https://www.nga.gov/calendar/lectures/symposia.html) for a detailed schedule of Friday's events.

DC- based performance artist Holly Bass will participate both in the symposium and community celebration. On March 23, Bass will discuss the importance of audience engagement as it relates to her current practice and the larger national conversation on equity, diversity, and inclusion. Beyond the Friday symposium, she will invite visitors to create and share their personal stories as part of a collective American narrative during the community celebration on March 25. Specifically, Bass will present a new community-driven performance piece by leading visitors in a story chorus with live musical accompaniment and a literary score composed of personal vignettes from local residents.

Additionally, visitors will have the opportunity at the weekend celebration to draw and write together on a large-scale paper path inspired by Jacob Lawrence's painting *Sidewalk Drawings* (1943), on view in the current exhibition [*Outliers and American Vanguard Art*](#). Local educators and artists, including painter David Ibata and playwright Mary Hall Surface, will demonstrate creative storytelling based on their personal art forms and inspired by works of art in the East Building. Gallery educators will offer engaging pop-up talks on various works of art centered on the theme of storytelling. Leading up to and throughout the weekend, all are encouraged to share their American story via the hashtag #AmericanStoriesNGA and #myngadc. For more information about the weekend community celebration visit [nga.gov/community](https://www.nga.gov/community).

Press Contact:

Christina Brown, (202) 842-6598 or cm-brown@nga.gov

General Information

The National Gallery of Art and its Sculpture Garden are at all times free to the public. They are located on the National Mall between 3rd and 9th Streets at Constitution Avenue NW, and are open Monday through Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Sunday from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The Gallery is closed on December 25 and January 1. For information call (202) 737-4215 or visit the

Gallery's Web site at www.nga.gov. Follow the Gallery on Facebook at www.facebook.com/NationalGalleryofArt, Twitter at www.twitter.com/ngadc, and Instagram at <http://instagram.com/ngadc>.

Visitors will be asked to present all carried items for inspection upon entering. Checkrooms are free of charge and located at each entrance. Luggage and other oversized bags must be presented at the 4th Street entrances to the East or West Building to permit x-ray screening and must be deposited in the checkrooms at those entrances. For the safety of visitors and the works of art, nothing may be carried into the Gallery on a visitor's back. Any bag or other items that cannot be carried reasonably and safely in some other manner must be left in the checkrooms. Items larger than 17 by 26 inches cannot be accepted by the Gallery or its checkrooms.

For additional press information please call or send inquiries to:

Department of Communications

National Gallery of Art

2000B South Club Drive

Landover, MD 20785

phone: (202) 842-6353

e-mail: pressinfo@nga.gov

Anabeth Guthrie

Chief of Communications

(202) 842-6804

a-guthrie@nga.gov

Subscribe to Our E-mail Newsletters

Stay up to date with the National Gallery of Art by [subscribing to our e-mail newsletters](#): Web, educators, family programs, fellowships/internships, films, lectures, music programs, and teen programs. Select as many updates as you wish to receive. To edit your subscriber information, please go to our [subscription management page](#).

AVAILABLE PRESS IMAGES

Press Images

To order publicity images: Click on the link above and designate your desired images using the checkbox below each thumbnail. Please include your name and contact information, press affiliation, deadline for receiving images, the date of publication, and a brief description of the kind of press coverage planned.

PRESS KIT

Press Release

ONLINE RESOURCES

[John Wilmerding Symposium on American Art](#)

[John Wilmerding Community Celebration of American Art](#)

PRESS CONTACT

Christina Brown
(202) 842-6598
cm-brown@nga.gov

Questions from members of the media may be directed to the Department of Communications at (202) 842-6353 or pressinfo@nga.gov

The public may call (202) 737-4215 or visit www.nga.gov for more information about the [National Gallery of Art](#).

RSS (NEWS FEED)

http://www.nga.gov/content/dam/ngaweb/press/rss/press_feed.xml

NGA NEWSLETTERS:

Stay up to date with the National Gallery of Art by [subscribing to our e-mail newsletters](#): Web, educators, family programs, fellowships/internships, films, lectures, music programs, and teen programs. Select as many updates as you wish to receive. To edit your subscriber information, please go to our [subscription management page](#).

