



ALBANY MUSEUM OF ART

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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HOMETOWN BLACK HEROES TO BE RECOGNIZED AT AMA FAMILY DAY

Albany Museum of Art Event Celebrates Six Inspirational Individuals

[For Release Sept 7, 2022 – Albany, GA] — Six local individuals will be recognized for making a difference through their tireless work for civil rights, social justice, and a better community at *Hometown Black Heroes Family Day* at the Albany Museum of Art.

The event is **10 am-1 pm** on **Saturday, Sept 17**, and is free and open to the public. The AMA is located at 311 Meadowlark Drive.

Guests of honor will be the Hon. Herbert Phipps, retired Georgia Court of Appeals judge; Rutha Harris, one of the original Freedom Singers; Charles Sherrod, a former Albany city commissioner; Shirley Sherrod, executive director, Southwest Georgia Project for Community Education and a member of the newly formed U.S. Department of Agriculture Equity Commission; Darrell Sabbs, community benefits director for Phoebe Putney Memorial Hospital, and Frank Wilson, retired executive director of the Albany Civil Rights Institute.

“With the marvelous tributes to national and international difference-makers in the *Fighters for Freedom: William H. Johnson Picturing Justice* exhibition as an inspirational setting, the Albany Museum of Art is pleased to recognize and honor these six deserving individuals from our community who have positively impacted not only our Southwest Georgia region, but our state and nation,” AMA Executive Director Andrew J. Wulf, Ph.D., said. “They are true inspirations to current and future generations in our community and region.”

Fighters for Freedom: William H. Johnson Picturing Justice is organized by the Smithsonian American Art Museum. Generous support for this project is provided by Art Bridges. All artworks are from the collection of the Smithsonian American Art Museum; gift of the Harmon Foundation.

“We are happy to partner with Albany State University and the Dougherty County School System in this event that recognizes these influential individuals,” AMA Director of Education and Public

Programming Annie Vanoteghem said. "ASU students will be sharing their performing talents at the event, and DCSS students will, in the vein of William H. Johnson, display their visual tributes to our local heroes."

A special highlight of the event will be a performance by Rutha Harris, one of the original Freedom Singers formed 60 years ago at then Albany State College. The Freedom Singers, who fused church-style a cappella singing with protest songs, drew aid and support to the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee during the Civil rights Movement. Through Harris's powerful voice, the story of those turbulent times and the subsequent trials and triumphs for rights and justice have resonated in the decades since.

Also performing at Hometown Black Heroes Family Day will be the Dougherty High School Chorale and Saints of God House of Worship Choir. AMA Director of Curatorial Affairs Katie Dillard will share insights on the *Fighters for Freedom: William H. Johnson Picturing Justice* exhibition with those attending.

"The juxtaposition of the national heroes depicted in *Fighters for Freedom* with our local heroes will remind us that we can all make a difference in our communities," Vanoteghem said.

AMA EXHIBITIONS

- *Fighters for Freedom: William H. Johnson Picturing Justice* is in The Haley Gallery, Sept 1-Dec 10, 2022. Organized by the Smithsonian American Art Museum. Generous support is provided by Art Bridges.
- *Wayna: Her Dreams of Ethiopia, Works by Tracy Murrell* is in the East Gallery, Sept 1, 2022- Jan 7, 2023.
- *Georgia Artists Guild of Albany, 29th Juried Exhibition* is in the McCormack Gallery, Sept 1, 2022- Jan 7, 2023.

AMA EVENTS

- *AMA ChalkFest*, Nov 19, 2022, 10 am-5 pm, Front Street and Veterans Park Amphitheater. Admission is free. www.amachalkfest.com.

ABOUT THE ALBANY MUSEUM OF ART

The Albany Museum of Art is located at 311 Meadowlark Drive in Albany, Ga., adjacent to Albany State University West Campus just off Gillionville Road. The museum is accredited by the American Alliance of Museums. The Albany Museum of Art is open to the public 10 am-5 pm Tuesdays through Saturdays. Admission is free.

For more information about the AMA please visit our website, www.albanymuseum.com, or call 229.439.8400. Be sure to follow the @AlbanyArtMuseum on Twitter, AlbanyMuseum on Instagram, and AlbanyMuseumOfArt on Facebook.

CAPTION INFORMATION

Those attending *Hometown Black Heroes Family Day* on Sept 17 at the Albany Museum of Art will have the opportunity to view the heroes of artist William H. Johnson in the exhibition *Fighters for Freedom: William H. Johnson Picturing Justice*, which includes this painting by Johnson, *Dr. George Washington*

Carver, ca. 1945, oil on paperboard, Smithsonian American Art Museum, gift of the Harmon Foundation. Copyright: Smithsonian American Art Museum.

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