

CRAFT & FOLK ART MUSEUM

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TIMOTHY WASHINGTON: LOVE THY NEIGHBOR

January 26 - April 27, 2014

Opening reception: Saturday, January 25 | 6:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Media preview: Friday, January 24 | 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

CRAFT & FOLK ART MUSEUM PRESENTS LONG OVERDUE SOLO EXHIBITION OF MULTI-DISCIPLINARY LEIMERT PARK ARTIST TIMOTHY WASHINGTON

LOS ANGELES –The Craft & Folk Art Museum presents *Timothy Washington: Love Thy Neighbor*, the first solo museum exhibition of Los Angeles artist Timothy Washington. Born in 1946 and raised in the largely Black communities of South Los Angeles, Washington is a notable contemporary of Southern California's canon of Black assemblage artists that broke ground in the 1960s and 1970s, including David Hammons, Betye Saar, and John Outterbridge. *Timothy Washington: Love Thy Neighbor* will be on view from January 26 through April 27, 2014.

The exhibition traces the significance of the human form in Washington's dynamic aluminum etchings and monumental assemblage sculptures, beginning from the 1960s to present day. Long overdue, this exhibition offers the most complete view to date of this independent voice in the art history of Los Angeles. This exhibition brings together a rare opportunity to see a large and diverse selection of Washington's works from private collections, as well as from the permanent collections of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) and the California African American Museum.

Washington is a graduate of the Chouinard Art Institute (later merged with CalArts), where he gained a firm foundation in realism and figurative abstraction. Between the 1970s and 1980s, he exhibited at now-legendary art spaces Gallery 32 in MacArthur Park and Brockman Gallery in Leimert Park. Both galleries were notable for cultivating the careers of prominent Black artists in Los Angeles. While he went on to build a career as a studio set painter for NBC and Disney, Washington continued to create a prolific body of work that reflected his personal spirituality, social vision, and political critique.

An interdisciplinary artist, the materials and content within Washington's work often contain nuanced messages reflective of the contemporary moment. A series of aluminum etchings from the 1960s and 1970s depict the human form in reaction to social and political events of the time. The etching "1A" (1972) combines dry-point etching with found-object collage and depicts Washington and his brother as young men. With their fingers outstretched both are rejecting Washington's draft card, collaged onto the aluminum plate, that branded him as immediately available for service in Vietnam. His unusual choice of showing the aluminum plates as completed objects, rather than using the plates to create prints, led LA Times art critic Henry Seldis to characterize Washington's work as "technical unorthodoxy" in the 1980s.

The same "technical unorthodoxy" led him to develop a proprietary method of creating sculptures from a mixture of cotton and glue. His method includes a complex layering process that begins with a metal armature covered in cotton and glue, then completed with countless found objects and symbolic trinkets.



Old and New, Timothy Washington,
mixed media assemblage, 2012.
Photo: Noel Bass



1A, Timothy Washington,
drypoint on aluminum, leather,
paper draft card, 1972.
Photo: Noel Bass



Several Faces, One Race,
Timothy Washington,
cotton, glue, luan wood,
acrylic, metal, found objects.
Photo: Noel Bass

The historic associations of cotton are not lost on Washington who has quipped, "I am still picking cotton."

Washington is never didactic, moralizing, or stringent in his messages, preferring to subtly convey messages of social justice and humanism. However, his ongoing social concerns of present day are also reflected in works such as "Sitting Duck" (2013), an assemblage washboard pertaining to the recent tragedy of Trayvon Martin's death and George Zimmerman's trial.

The countless objects embedded on the surfaces of his assemblage sculptures hold symbolic meaning for Washington, who can "read" and translate the significance in his choice of objects. The exhibition title, *Love Thy Neighbor* is borrowed from his 1968 sculpture of an imposing, large-scale female figure. Though the daunting figure has an extraterrestrial appearance and is composed of harsh materials such as scrap metal and nails, it skillfully conveys Washington's humanist messages of love, compassion, and unity, even towards the unfamiliar.

Washington's work has been included in museum exhibitions such as *Three Graphic Artists: Charles White, David Hammons, Timothy Washington and Los Angeles, 1972: A Panorama of Black Artists*, both at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art in 1971 and 1972; *19 Sixties: A Cultural Awakening Re-evaluated 1965-1975* in 1989 and *Inside my Head: Intuitive Artists of African Descent* in 2009, both at the California African American Museum, Los Angeles.

CAFAM members will be able to preview *Timothy Washington: Love Thy Neighbor* on Saturday, January 25 starting at 12:00 p.m. The opening reception will take place on Saturday, January 25 from 6:00 - 9:00 p.m. The reception is open to the public for a \$12 admission fee.

This exhibition is partially supported by the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs.

Additional images available upon request.

Public Programs:

CAFAM will offer exhibition-related workshops and events in conjunction with the exhibition, including CraftLab family workshops on the second Sunday of each month from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m.

Artist Talk with Timothy Washington
Sunday, March 16 | 3:00 p.m.

The Craft & Folk Art Museum (CAFAM) is Los Angeles' only institution exclusively dedicated to exhibiting contemporary craft, design, and folk art. Located on the city's historic Museum Row, CAFAM's dynamic exhibitions feature established and emerging artists whose works create thoughtful and provocative visual exchanges between craft and contemporary art. CAFAM's regular programs and events provide opportunities for the public to participate in artmaking and engage with exhibiting and local artists. In addition to the exhibitions on view, the Shop at CAFAM features fair-trade art and handicrafts from both local and global artists and artisans.

Location: 5814 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90036

Admission: FREE on the first Wednesday of every month

Regularly: \$7 for adults; \$5 for students, seniors, and veterans; free for CAFAM members

Hours: Tuesday-Friday, 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.; Saturday & Sunday, 12:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.; closed Mondays.