

**TACOMA  
ART  
MUSEUM**

**The  
Kinsey**  
African American Art & History  
**Collection®**

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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[IMAGES AVAILABLE]

## The Kinsey African American Art & History Collection Coming This Summer to Tacoma Art Museum

*Opening July 31, this groundbreaking exhibition features over 150 works of art, photographs, rare documents, and more, celebrating the achievements and contributions of Black Americans from 1595 to the present day.*



**June 16, 2021 (Tacoma, WA)** Tacoma Art Museum is pleased to present the widely acclaimed exhibition, **The Kinsey African American Art & History Collection**, celebrating the achievements and contributions of Black Americans from 1595 to present times. Considered one of the most comprehensive surveys of African American history and culture outside the Smithsonian Institution, the exhibition will feature over 150 of the shared treasures amassed by Bernard and Shirley Kinsey during their five decades of marriage. The collection includes masterful paintings and sculptures, photographs, rare books, letters, manuscripts, and more. The exhibition at TAM, which will include some works from the Kinsey Collection that have not been shown before, will run July 31 – November 28, 2021.

The exhibition has been cited in three national awards, including the National Medal for Museum and Library Service. Garnering national media attention and experienced by more than 15 million people, the groundbreaking exhibition has toured 30 cities in the U.S. and internationally, including the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of

American History, The National Underground Railroad Freedom Center, EPCOT Walt Disney World, the University of Hong Kong Museum and Gallery, and California African American Museum, to name a few. Currently, the exhibition is at the Greenwood Cultural Center and Gathering Place in Tulsa as part of events marking the 100th anniversary of the Tulsa Race Massacre through June 27.

Representing the intersection between art and history, the exhibition covers the lives, accomplishments, and artistry of African Americans from the 16th century through the years of slavery and emancipation to the civil rights movement and today. Important objects include bills of sale, advertisements, letters, and legal papers documenting the slave trade; hand-colored tintypes from the Civil War era; art and literature from the Harlem Renaissance; and items spotlighting key moments in the civil rights movement, including the Woolworth store boycotts and the 1963 March on Washington. A history of African Americans in art is charted through works by numerous celebrated artists, including Grafton Tyler Brown, Bisa Butler, Elizabeth Catlett, Robert S. Duncanson, Sam Gilliam, Augusta Savage, Alma Thomas, Charles White, and many more.



Bernard and Shirley Kinsey, Floridians by birth and graduates of Florida A&M University, began collecting to remember their travels. Soon their collection became a repository for African American intellectual, historical, and artistic works. The Kinseys believe their collection helps give a well-rounded look at the African American experience and the integral roles African Americans played in building this country, providing new perspectives on chapters of the nation's history which have been ignored. Bernard and Shirley's son, Khalil Kinsey, serves as General Manager and Chief Curator for the collection and exhibitions.

"The Kinsey Collection strives to give our ancestors a voice, a name, and a personality, enabling the viewer to understand the challenges, obstacles, triumphs, accomplishments, and extraordinary sacrifice of African Americans in building this country," said Bernard Kinsey. Khalil adds, "This is an American story, and most people only know a fraction of it."

While this exhibition has been shown in numerous locations across the United States, this will be the first time the exhibition has been presented in the Pacific Northwest. According to Bernard Kinsey, "The collection at TAM is an opportunity for people in the Pacific Northwest and surrounding areas to see historical artifacts and artworks that are extremely rare and vitally important to the story of America."

David F. Setford, TAM's Executive Director, said, "When I traveled to Dallas in September 2019 to see this exhibition and meet the Kinseys, I was overwhelmed. I was amazed by the power of the documents and works of art on display, by their ability to tell an untold story, and by the commitment of the Kinseys to share that story. I resolved that we needed to share this story at TAM."

The exhibition's presentation at TAM and related community programming is being developed in collaboration with an exhibition advisory committee comprised of 18 Black leaders, artists, educators, and activists from the greater Tacoma area. Special tours, performances, talks, educator workshops, school tours, youth programs, and more will be hosted at TAM and virtually during the exhibition.

TAM and the Kinsey family are also excited to collaborate with, highlight, and celebrate Black-owned small businesses in Tacoma. The TAM Cafe is partnering with Black-owned restaurants to host rotating pop-ups with menu offerings from local favorites, including Uncle Thurms Soul Food, Hamhock Jones, Lizzie Lou's, Southern Kitchen, Campfire Coffee, Only Oatmeal Cookie Creations, and more. The TAM Store will also share dedicated space to feature an exclusive exhibition-inspired retail experience that includes limited-edition merchandise and a capsule collection by Tacoma-based eTc clothing company.

Additionally, a richly illustrated book with a foreword by Douglas A. Blackmon, the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *Slavery by Another Name: The Re-Enslavement of Black Americans from the Civil War to World War II*, accompanies the exhibition and will be available for sale in the TAM Store.

### **Advisory Committee**

- Dionne Bonner, Visual Artist
- Pastor Gregory Christopher, Shiloh Baptist Church
- LaNesha DeBardelaben, Executive Director/Board President - Northwest African American Museum, Association of African American Museums
- Tafona Ervin, Executive Director - Foundation for Tacoma Students
- Klair Ethridge, Executive Director - Tacoma Urban Performing Arts Center (T.U.P.A.C.)
- Dexter Gordon, Professor - University of Puget Sound
- Moe'Neyah Holland, TAM Teen Art Council Alum
- Linda H. Ishem, Emeritus Senior Lecturer at UW Tacoma School of Urban Studies
- Lourdes Jackson, Artist/Designer
- Fahren Johnson, Director of Strategic Initiatives - Greentrike
- Kenzie Jones, TAM Teen Art Council Alum
- Jackie Jones-Hook, Executive Director - Buffalo Soldiers Museum
- Jacqueline Justice, Attorney - Gravis Law, PLLC, TAM Board of Trustees
- T'wina Nobles, President and CEO - Tacoma Urban League
- Dona Ponepinto, President and CEO - United Way of Pierce County, TAM Board of Trustees
- Lyle Quasim, Black Collective
- Wayne Williams, Community Advocate
- Victoria Woodards, City of Tacoma Mayor

### **Exhibition Dates**

July 31 – November 28, 2021

### **Press Tour**

Thursday, July 29 at 10 am

Please contact Michelle Sievers ([MSievers@TacomaArtMuseum.org](mailto:MSievers@TacomaArtMuseum.org)) for more information.

### **Public Programs**

#### **Opening Block Party**

Saturday, July 31, 1 - 8 pm, Free admission, Free parking

Everyone is welcome to the opening block party with performances, live music, food trucks, local artists, and more!

## **The Kinsey African American Art & History Collection - The Myth of Absence**

Sunday, August 1, 2 pm, [Registration](#) required (\$5, free to members and students)

*Through a powerful and engaging interactive presentation, Bernard, Shirley, and Khalil Kinsey will introduce audiences to the "Myth of Absence" concept that has played a significant role in shaping America's view of African Americans and challenge thought processes regarding race and contributions to America's culture.*

### **Ticketing Information - Effective July 1, 2021**

#### Museum Hours

- Closed Monday & Tuesday
- Wednesdays 10 am to 5 pm
- Thursday - Saturday 10 am to 8 pm
- Sundays 10 am to 5 pm

#### Daily Prices

- \$18 Adult
- \$15 Senior (65+)
- FREE - Children 18 and under
- FREE - Active-duty military, reservists, veterans, and their families
- FREE - TAM Members

#### Special Prices

- Thursday Neighborhood Nights – FREE to all
- Sundays – “Pay What You Will” through November 28, 2021

### **Exhibition Organization and Support**

This exhibition is curated by Khalil B. Kinsey and organized by The Bernard & Shirley Kinsey Foundation for Arts & Education and KBK Enterprises, Incorporated

This exhibition is generously supported by Presenting Sponsor Propel Insurance; Leadership Sponsors JP Morgan Chase, Bamford Foundation, and Columbia Bank; and leading Foundation Sponsor Tacoma Urban League.

For more information, visit [TAM's website for The Kinsey African American Art & History Collection.](#)

**Image credits:** *The Cultivators*, Samuel L. Dunson, Jr. Courtesy of The Kinsey African American Art & History Collection; Portrait of Bernard, Shirley, and Khalil Kinsey. Courtesy of The Kinsey African American Art & History Collection.

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#### **About Tacoma Art Museum**

Celebrating over 85 years, Tacoma Art Museum is the leading resource for art of the Pacific Northwest and greater Western region. TAM's mission is to transform our communities by sharing art that inspires broader perspectives and cultivates a compassionate future. TAM's collection contains more than 5,300 works, with an emphasis on the art and artists of the Northwest and broader Western region, 25% of which consists of studio glass. The collection includes the largest retrospective museum collection of glass art by Tacoma native Dale Chihuly on permanent view; the most significant collection of studio art jewelry by Northwest artists; key holdings in 19th century European and 20th century American art; and one of the finest collections of Japanese woodblock prints on the West Coast. TAM is in the heart of Tacoma's vibrant Museum District, which consists of six museums, including the Museum of Glass and the Washington State History Museum.

**CONTACT** – 253-272-4258 / [www.tacomaartmuseum.org](http://www.tacomaartmuseum.org)