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Two exhibitions celebrating African American history and visual storytelling open at the Bullock Museum on June 19 — the 150th anniversary of Juneteenth. At left, 'Juneteenth' (2012) courtesy Renee Allen.

Exhibitions reveal 400 years of African American history through quilts, artworks

Bullock Museum commemorates Juneteenth's 150th

JUNE 17, 2015 (AUSTIN, TX) — To commemorate the 150th anniversary of Juneteenth, also known as Emancipation Day, the Bullock Texas State History Museum will celebrate the opening on June 19, 2015, of two exhibitions that share the longstanding tradition of African American storytelling through artistic expression: "And Still We Rise: Race, Culture and Visual Conversations" and "Reflections: African American Life from the Myrna Colley-Lee Collection."

This year marks the sesquicentennial of General Gordon Granger's decree given in Galveston, Texas, two years after President Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation. It was a signal to African American men, women and children that they were finally free from enslavement. In 1980, Texas became the first state to mark emancipation day as an official state holiday.

This year, Texas Gov. Greg Abbott has issued a proclamation to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the holiday that will be read at the Bullock Museum on the opening day of two exhibitions featuring works by African American artists that underscore the power of history and memory passed down through generations as expressed in paintings, works on paper and fiber arts.

"We are proud to have these exhibitions on view at the Bullock Museum this summer," Director Dr. Victoria Ramirez said. "They share the story of Texas while reflecting a national narrative and offer visitors a chance to see art that's beautiful and meaningful."

"And Still We Rise: Race, Culture and Visual Conversations" is organized by the Women of Color Quilters Network in partnership with Cincinnati Museum Center and National Underground Railroad Freedom Center. It will be on view at the Bullock Museum from June 19 through Aug. 30, 2015.

This exhibition features 69 beautifully handcrafted quilts created by an international group of artists from the Women of Color Quilters Network. The quilts narrate the history of the African American experience, capturing the stories of freedom's heroes, ranging from Frederick Douglass to Thurgood

Marshall to the first African American President. Dr. Carolyn Mazloomi, guest curator and member of the Women of Color Quilters Network, created the exhibition to showcase a diverse range of fiber art techniques mixed with our rich American history.

"The exhibition gives voices to personal, authentic and unique histories of African American men and women – from relating painful stories of enslaved ancestors, to highlighting contemporary political leaders and drawing attention to social challenges our nation continues to face today," Mazloomi said.

"Reflections: African American Life from the Myrna Colley-Lee Collection" is organized by International Arts & Artists, Washington, DC in collaboration with the office of Myrna Colley-Lee. It will be on view at the Bullock Museum from June 19 through Aug. 23, 2015.

"Reflections" is comprised of 55 paintings, photographs, textile pieces and works on paper from the collection of Myrna Colley-Lee, pioneer costume designer, professional artist and arts advocate. It features an array of work, such as rural landscapes captured by Maude Schulyer Clay, Gerald DeLoach, Randy Hayes and Tom Rankin; urban landscape paintings by Ernest Crichlow and Rod Ivey; studio portraits by celebrated photographer James Van Der Zee; photography of Roland Freeman, Milly Moorhead and Eudora Welty; works by collage masters Romare Bearden and James Denmark, and a rare painting by famed artist Charles White. Other artists include: Elizabeth Catlett, Gwen Knight, Betye Saar, John Scott and Hale Woodruff.

"The artists featured in both exhibitions have created works of art that are beautiful and that poignantly express life, culture, and mark events in history," Ramirez said.



Above, a rare painting by Charles White, 'Untitled,' is part of the 'Reflections' exhibition on view this summer at the Bullock.

The exhibitions are part of the Bullock Museum's "100 Days of Stories," a full summer lineup of exhibitions, films and events that encourage visitors to celebrate the many stories of Texas and to tell their own. For more information, visit TheStoryofTexas.com.

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MEDIA Images and Assets at <http://bit.ly/Juneteenth2015>

About the Bullock Museum

The Bullock Texas State History Museum in downtown Austin includes three floors of exhibitions, an IMAX® theater, a 4D special-effects theater, café and museum store. The Museum collaborates with more than 700 museums, libraries, archives and individuals to display original historical artifacts and produce exhibitions that illuminate and celebrate Texas history and culture. Located at 1800 N. Congress Avenue. For more, visit TheStoryofTexas.com or call (512)936-8746.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

A. Juneteenth's Texas Origins

Bullock Texas State History Museum

One hundred fifty years ago, General Gordon Granger gave a decree in Galveston, Texas. The announcement came at the end of a brutal civil war, two years after President Abraham Lincoln had signed the Emancipation Proclamation. African American men, women, and children finally knew for certain that they were free from enslavement.

The day of the announcement, June 19th became known as Juneteenth. Filled with jubilation and tribute, commemorating African American struggles and resilience, it was a celebration that would spread from Texas to other states and beyond. In 1979, Al Edwards, a Representative from Houston, introduced a bill to declare Juneteenth a Texas state holiday, campaigning for a day when "white, brown, and blacks can celebrate freedom together." When the legislature passed the bill into law in 1980, Texas became the first to mark emancipation as an official state holiday.

B. Proclamation in honor of 150th Anniversary of Juneteenth

STATE OF TEXAS
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
A Message from the Governor:

I am pleased to join my fellow Texans in recognizing the 150th anniversary of Juneteenth. Especially during this milestone year, Juneteenth is an important day of remembrance, not just for African-Americans, but for all Texans.

Commemorating the day when Major General Gordon Granger came to Texas to enforce the Emancipation Proclamation that had legally freed all slaves more than six months earlier, the story of Juneteenth is a portrait in miniature of the history of African-Americans in this country: a story of freedom long delayed but, thank God, no longer denied.

Today, we can all rejoice that freedom is now the birthright of all Americans. The Lone Star State joins with you in celebrating your heritage, remembering the somber legacy of slavery and taking pride in a people that has overcome great obstacles.

It is my hope that, on this day and all others, Texans of all races, creeds and ethnicities will look forward, as a house united, to our shared future. With optimism and diligence, the possibilities for the future generations of the Lone Star State are limitless.

First Lady Cecilia Abbott joins me in sending best wishes for a joyous celebration.

Signed by Governor Greg Abbott

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