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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**  
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***Katonah Museum of Art Announces Spring 2024 Exhibitions  
March 17 – June 30, 2024***

*There Is A Body: Legacy of the Ancestral Arts in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*  
*Stellar Reverberations: African Masks in Outer Space*

**Katonah, NY, March 17, 2024** – The Katonah Museum of Art is pleased to present two new Spring exhibitions: *There Is A Body: Legacy of the Ancestral Arts in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* and *Stellar Reverberations: African Masks from Outer Space*, on view from March 17 to June 30, 2024.

***There Is A Body: Legacy of the Ancestral Arts in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century***

The Mary L. Beitzel Gallery and the Sally and Volney Righter Gallery

Guest curated by the artist John Edmonds, and organized by the KMA, *There Is A Body* highlights an intergenerational group of contemporary artists from the Black Diaspora—David O. Alekhuogie, Sanford Biggers, Lyle Ashton Harris, and Matthew Angelo Harrison—who are forging connections to the continent of Africa and deconstructing colonialist representations of traditional African art and culture within the western art canon.

*There Is A Body* will occupy the Museum’s main galleries and includes sculpture, photography, works on paper, and mixed media. A reading room featuring video interviews with the participating artists and a curated selection of readings by them are presented in the spot gallery. This timely exhibition champions the impact and legacy of the arts of Africa within our contemporary global society and provides valuable immersive and educational experiences for art connoisseurs, students, and the general public alike, through its presentation and accompanying public programs.

*There Is A Body* was inspired by “The Legacy of the Ancestral Arts,” a 1925 essay written by philosopher and art critic Alain Locke. Locke, often lauded as the “Father of the Harlem Renaissance,” proposed what was then a radical idea: that the arts of African civilizations were worthy of the same regard as the arts of classical antiquity, and that recognition of their aesthetic value should be independent of their influence on European modernism. He also encouraged Black artists to look to these “ancestral arts” for inspiration.

As the 100-year anniversary of Locke's text approaches, *There Is A Body* reflects on its meaning today; bringing together works by Alekhuogbe, Biggers, Harris and Harrison that both support and critique Locke's argument, affirming its relevance for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

*There Is A Body: Legacy of the Ancestral Arts in the 21st Century* is supported by the Director's Circle of the Katonah Museum of Art: Mike Davies, Isabelle Hannoncourt Feigen, Vida Foubister, Nisa Geller, Virginia L. Gold, Linda Nordberg, Amy Parsons, Yvonne S. Pollack, Rochelle C. Rosenberg, Rebecca Samberg, and Richard and Audrey Zinman. In kind support has been generously provided by Salon 94, New York. The Katonah Museum of Art is proud to be a grantee of ArtsWestchester with funding made possible by Westchester County government with the support of County Executive George Latimer.

### ***Stellar Reverberations: African Masks in Outer Space***

Pollack Family Learning Center

*Stellar Reverberations: African Masks in Outer Space* is a site-specific installation created for the Katonah Museum of Art by Newark-based artist Damien Davis. Building upon Davis's interest in challenging historical portrayals of Black identity, the exhibition uses visual symbols to create a dialogue between African heritage and the cosmic wonder of outer space. Through an Afrofuturist lens, Davis employs familiar silhouettes and icons to celebrate cultural narratives and scientific thinking.

For The Pollack Family Learning Center, Davis found inspiration in NASA astronaut Mae Jemison, who in 1992 became the first African American woman to visit outer space. On her voyage, Jemison brought with her a West African Bundu statue. Davis plays out Jemison's story, creating an imaginary intergalactic environment populated with freeform symbolic African masks. Young learners can engage with parts of the kinetic installation by turning, twisting, and rearranging larger-than-life moving parts that represent cultural artifacts floating in "zero gravity." Visit The Pollack Family Learning Center to explore the exhibition and related drop-in artmaking activities that invite young visitors to reflect on themselves, their heritage, and imagined futures.

## **RELATED PROGRAMMING**

### **Artists in Conversation: Sanford Biggers**

**Saturday, April 27, 4:00-5:30 PM**

Artist Sanford Biggers speaks with Guest Curator John Edmonds about his practice and process as they relate to themes relating to mythologies, social justice and the inherent tensions between history and cultures. Reception to follow.

Members \$10. Non-members \$15.

### **Writers in Conversation: Dr. LaRuth Gray**

**Friday, May 17, 2024, 5:30-7:30 PM**

On the occasion of the 70th Anniversary of the landmark civil rights case *Brown v. Board of Education*, Dr. LaRuth H. Gray, author and KMA Board of Trustee Emerita, will discuss her new book, *School*

*Desegregation and U.S. Presidents: How the Role of the Bully Pulpit Affected Their Decisions.* Reception to follow.

Following the program, Dr. Gray will be available to sign copies of her book and attendees may view the current exhibitions *There Is A Body: Legacy of the Ancestral Arts in the 21st Century* and *Stellar Reverberations: African Masks in Outer Space.*

Members \$25. Non-members \$30. Includes a copy of the book and refreshments.

**Artists in Conversation: David O. Alekhuogie**

**Thursday, June 13, 5:30-6:30 PM**

**VIRTUAL**

Join us online for a stimulating conversation between artist David O. Alekhuogie and KMA Executive Director Michelle Yun Mapplethorpe to discuss the artist's investigations into socio-political issues relating to race, gender, and power within his work.

*Free with registration.*

\*KMA Members receive a discount on all fee-based programs. For pricing and registration information, please visit [katonahmuseum.org/events](http://katonahmuseum.org/events).

eNews: Sign up for email updates at [katonahmuseum.org](http://katonahmuseum.org)

Social: Keep up with the latest KMA news by following @katonahmuseum

**FAMILIES**

**Family Day: Symbols, Stories, and Self**

**Saturday, May 4, 12:00-3:00 PM**

Construct, create, and reflect alongside artist Damien Davis as we explore ideas of self, community, and art! Davis will collaborate with young visitors on a kinetic sculpture project in the KMA's Marilyn M. Simpson Sculpture Garden. Other projects throughout the Museum include unexpected portraits, multimedia sculptures, and imagined collages. All ages welcome! *Registration recommended.\**

KMA Members: Free. Non-members: Adults \$12. Seniors, students, and children (12 and under) \$6.

*Family Day is made possible with support from Aaron & Terry Goodman.*

**School's Out / Art's In**

**Tuesday, April 2 – Friday, April 5**

**Workshops at 10:00 AM, 11:30 AM, 1:00 PM**

In this series of artsy school vacation workshops, Museum educators introduce new projects each day of the week. Explore creative masks, kinetic artworks, mixed-media sculpture, and more! Ages 3-12.

*Registration recommended.*

### **Creative Community Fridays**

**April 19, May 17, June 21**

Every third Friday of the month, friends and neighbors enjoy the Museum through tours, activities, and conversation. *Free with Museum admission. Registration recommended.*

**Stroller Tours at 9:30 AM:** Share your baby's first Museum experience with other parents and caregivers in the community. Experience the KMA's latest exhibitions and light refreshments before the Museum opens to the public.

**Artful Families at 10:30 AM:** 2- to 5-year-olds engage in story time, a look at exhibition artworks, and hands-on art projects.

**Senior Socials at 1:00 PM:** Seniors enjoy a guided tour of the exhibitions followed by light refreshments and conversation.

### **About the Katonah Museum of Art**

The Katonah Museum of Art (KMA) promotes the understanding and enjoyment of the visual arts for diverse audiences. The Museum presents exhibitions that explore ideas about art, culture, and society – past and present – through innovative exhibition and education programs. A non-collecting arts institution, the KMA is recognized for a dynamic exhibition and education program that spans artistic disciplines, cultures, and historical periods. Housed in a modernist building designed by architect Edward Larrabee Barnes, the KMA was established in 1953 with a mission of spotlighting exceptional art from different cultures and time periods, while also responding to the most critical issues of our time through a bold and vigorous lens. Located in Katonah, New York, the KMA is the anchoring cultural institution in Westchester County, drawing visitors from throughout the Tri-State region.

Museum hours: Tuesday-Saturday: 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM; Sunday: 12:00 PM – 5:00 PM; Monday: closed.  
General admission: \$12 adults, \$6 seniors and students. Members and children under the age of 12 always enter free. For more information about the Katonah Museum of Art, visit [katonahmuseum.org](http://katonahmuseum.org) or call (914) 232-9555.