



# “From Africa To Abstract: Journey of a People through Art and Image” Celebrates Black History Month

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by Pat Rogers

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**SOUTHAMPTON, NY-**

The group show of art by African Americans is meant to be uplifting—inspiring by a people’s ability to overcome—but also hard hitting, hopeful, joyful and optimistic. Through art, exhibition curator and artist Tina Andrews hopes to impart a historical journey that leads into the future.

Featuring a diverse range of mediums made by six artists, “From Africa to Abstract: Journey of a People Through Art and Image” does not flinch from African-American’s slavery past nor from the injustices from the 1900’s. But it doesn’t remain there either.

“We have been on a journey,” said Andrews of African-Americans. “So much has happened- there’s been so much progress...with so much more happening ahead, so much progress ahead. I feel joy when I look at the art and have a viscera response. Like everything is happening to you.”

The exhibition features works by Brent Bailer, Rosa Hanna Scott, Jacquelyn Flowers, Tina Andrews, Dianne Smith, and Danny Simmons. It was guest curated by Andrews, who exhibits sculpture in the show. The show has an Opening Reception tomorrow (Feb. 1) from 4 to 6 p.m. It remains on view through March 4.

One of the ways joy radiates throughout is from vibrant colors used in many of the works, said Andrews. The exhibition seems to showcase a bright palette with lots of reds, yellows and vivid blues. These rich colors also helps channel soulfulness and the intense heart Andrews believes are integral parts of African American culture.

“This is a fabulous show,” said Andrews. “It speaks to the culture. There’s lots of color in the show. Why not? We are a soulful people...We have a rich history of vibrant colors in our art and our culture.”

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“Black is Back” by Danny Simmons. Oil on canvas, pigment, African textile, 36 x 36 inches. Photo by Guenter Knop.



"Untitled Woman's Head" by Brent Bailer. Pastel, 19 x 24 inches.  
Photo by the artist.

Intense texture is another way the artwork channel vivaciousness, said Andrews. The sculpture and paintings that make use of texture entice viewers to come closer and experience the ways the work reverberates within the viewer.



"TransAtlantic Negro" by Dianne Smith.  
Denim, wood, nails, staples, and shipping  
bags, 67 x 13 x 10 inches. Photo by the  
artist.

"From Africa to Abstract: Journey of a People Through Art and Image" is curated to hopscotch through history with art depicting the slavery years as the show's first look with a chronology of different time periods following. Artists were invited to exhibit in the show that could express different experiences and emotional fabrics, said Andrews. Some of the works were made expressively for the show while other artists were already making art that channel African American experiences.



"Unchain My Heart" by Tina Andrews. Clay, plaster,  
plastic, 36 x 13 x 12. Photo by the artist.

The eclectic group of artists present art from realism to abstraction. Painting and sculpture are represent a variety of methods and mediums. The artists were selected to provide a mix of known and unknown artists to East End audiences, said Andrews. Exhibiting artists hail from Harlem, Washington, D.C., Brooklyn and the East End.

[Rosa Hanna Scott](#) is Hamptons-based. Her work has been seen locally at Crazy Monkey Gallery

(Amagansett), Ashawagh Hall (East Hampton), Guild Hall (East Hampton) and others. [Brent Bailer](#) and [Danny Simmons](#) have both exhibited at the Southampton Cultural Center previously. Art by [Jacquelyn Flowers](#), [Dianne Smith](#) and [Tina Andrews](#) may be relatively unknown on the East End.



“Beauty For Ashes” by Jacqueline A. Flowers. Acrylic, mixed media, 31 x 32 inches. Photo by the artist.

Andrews hopes people view the show and enjoy this rare convergence of artistic visions which, taken together, provide insight into the African American experience.

“I hope everyone comes out and takes a look and sees it,” said Andrews. “I think it’s quite powerful.”



“Untitled” by Rosa Hanna Scott. Photograph, 18 x 24 inches.

“From Africa to Abstract: Journey of a People Through Art and Image” is one way the Southampton Cultural Center is celebrating Black History Month. Another way is with “Coretta: Promise To The Dream”. Once again placing Tina Andrews in the driver’s seat, Andrews appears in the one-woman show she wrote and produced. Andrews is a well-known screenwriter, television producer, actress, author and playwright. Reclaiming her focus as a visual artist is a relatively newer creative path.

“Coretta: Promise To The Dream” is a multi-media play chronicling the life of Coretta Scott King, widow of slain civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King. The piece portrays her struggle to continue Dr. King’s “Dream” after his assassination. The play opens on Feb. 7 and continues through Feb. 23.

**BASIC FACTS: “From Africa To Abstract: Journey of a People through Art and Image”** has an Opening Reception on Saturday from 4 to 6 p.m. The exhibition remains on view through March 4 at the Southampton Cultural Center. The show is curated by Tina Andrews.

**“Coretta: Promise To The Dream”** will be held from Feb 7 to 23. Performances take place on Thursdays at 7:30 p.m.; on Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m., and on Sundays at 2:30 p.m. Tickets are \$22 for adults, \$12 for students under 21 with ID, and \$20 for seniors on Fridays only. Seating is general admission.

The Southampton Cultural Center is located at 25 Pond Lane, Southampton Village, NY 11968.

[www.southamptonculturalcenter.org](http://www.southamptonculturalcenter.org).

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