

# contemporaryartsmuseum houston

5216 Montrose Blvd Houston, TX 77006-6547  
t (713) 284-8250 f (713) 284-8275 www.camh.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
December 21, 2009

MEDIA CONTACT  
Connie McAllister  
Communications and Marketing Manager  
t (713) 284-8255 cmcallister@camh.org

## The Contemporary Arts Museum Houston presents paintings and photographs by American artist Barkley L. Hendricks

### ***Barkley L. Hendricks: Birth of the Cool***

Opening reception: Friday, January 29, 2010, 7:00-10:00 p.m.

Artists/Scholars Talk: Barkley L. Hendricks and Trevor Schoonmaker, Saturday, January 30, 2:00 p.m.

On view: January 30-April 18, 2010



Barkley L. Hendricks, *Misc. Tyrone (Tyrone Smith)*, 1976. Oil and magna on linen canvas, 72 x 50 ¼ inches. Courtesy the artist and Jack Shainman Gallery, NY.

Houston, TX—Best known for his life-sized portraits of ordinary people living mostly in the urban northeast, Barkley L. Hendricks's bold portrayal of his subject's attitude and style elevates the common man and woman to celebrity status. Organized by Trevor Schoonmaker, curator of contemporary art at the Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University, *Barkley L. Hendricks: Birth of the Cool* is the first painting retrospective of the American artist, and includes over 50 works from 1964 to the present. For CAMH's presentation, a series of photographic works by the artist from a related exhibition, *Walkin' with Walker: Narrative Photography of Barkley L. Hendricks*, will be included. Spanning four decades of work, *Walkin' with Walker* was organized by The African American Museum in Philadelphia and co-curated by Barkley L. Hendricks and Richard J. Watson, curator of exhibitions.

Hendricks's stylistic renderings connect the art movements of American realism and post-modernism, occupying a space between contemporary portraitists like Chuck Close and Alex Katz and pioneering black painters such as Romare Bearden and Beauford Delaney. The exhibition is composed primarily of full-figure portraits, as well as lesser-known early works and the artist's more recent portal-like paintings of the Jamaican landscape, where he returns annually to do outdoor *en plein air* painting.

"Barkley Hendricks has always been ahead of his time," says Schoonmaker. "His work touches upon many of the movements of the '60s and '70s—pop art, photorealism, minimalism, and black nationalism—but he has always done his own thing and avoided easy categorization. His groundbreaking work is as fresh today as it was thirty and forty years ago, and a generation of young artists is deeply indebted to him."

Included in CAMH's presentation is *Walkin' with Walker*, an installation of black-and-white and color photographs taken by the artist over the last forty years. Influenced by legendary American photographer Walker Evans, Hendricks has amassed an extensive body of street scenes and candid portraits, some of which have been used as, what he terms, "mechanical sketches," or as source material for his paintings. The photographic work is presented in conjunction with FotoFest 2010 Biennial, an international biennial of photography and photo-related arts that takes place in Houston, March 12-April 25, 2010.

"Hendricks is a sophisticated practitioner who combines impressive references, forms, and techniques in renderings that seem to cut to the core, to reveal his subjects as vulnerable individuals even as they self-consciously pose in displays of hipness," says Janet Koplos (as reviewed in *Art in America*, November 2008).

The Contemporary Arts Museum Houston is the final touring venue for *Barkley L. Hendricks: Birth of the Cool* after stops at the Studio Museum in Harlem, NY; Santa Monica Museum of Art, CA; and Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts in Philadelphia.

## **ABOUT THE ARTIST**

Barkley L. Hendricks was born in Philadelphia in 1945. He studied at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia, and earned his bachelor's and master's degrees in fine arts from Yale University, New Haven, CT. He is a professor of art at Connecticut College in New London, where he has been teaching since 1972.

Hendricks made his mainstream museum debut at the Whitney Museum of American Art, NY, in the 1971 show *Contemporary Black Artists in America*. In 1980, the Studio Museum in Harlem, NY, organized his first major solo show. In 1994, his work was part of the Whitney's *Black Male: Representations of Masculinity in Contemporary American Art*. A large solo show, *The Barkley L. Hendricks Experience*, 2001, was organized by the Lyman Allyn Art Museum, New London, CT. And in 2005, Hendricks's work was included in *Back to Black—Art, Cinema and the Racial Imaginary* at Whitechapel Art Gallery, London.

His work is represented in numerous public collections, including the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; Philadelphia Museum of Art, PA; Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia; Columbus Museum of Art, OH; Chrysler Museum, Norfolk, VA; Studio Museum in Harlem, NY; Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, CT; and Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University, Durham, NC.

## **PUBLICATION**

*Barkley L. Hendricks: Birth of the Cool* is accompanied by a fully illustrated, 140-page color catalogue, distributed by Duke University Press, that includes contributions from Hendricks; Trevor Schoonmaker, curator of contemporary art at the Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University; Richard J. Powell, John Spencer Bassett Professor of Art and Art History, Duke University; Thelma Golden, director and chief curator of the Studio Museum, NY; and Franklin Sirmans, curator of contemporary art, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, CA. Available in the Museum Shop at CAMH. \$39.95

## **PUBLIC PROGRAMS**

All events are free and open to the public, and take place at the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston unless otherwise noted. For complete listings and current information, please check [www.camh.org](http://www.camh.org).

**Friday, January 29, 7:00-10:00 p.m.**

### **Opening reception: *Barkley L. Hendricks: Birth of the Cool***

Join us for the opening reception of the first painting retrospective of this American artist. The exhibition is comprised of over 50 works, including full-figure portraits and lesser-known early works. Organized by the Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University. CAMH's presentation also includes the photographic installation, *Walkin' with Walker: Narrative Photography of Barkley L. Hendricks*. Soular Grooves presents a special edition of Steel Lounge Underground and curates a talented lineup of DJs to set this exhibition to music. Reception with cash bar.

**Saturday, January 30, 2:00 p.m.**

### **Artists/Scholars Talk: Barkley L. Hendricks and Trevor Schoonmaker**

Hendricks's stylistic renderings connect the art movements of American realism and post-modernism while touching upon many of the art movements of the 1960s and 1970s—pop art, photorealism, minimalism, even black aesthetic nationalism. Join **Barkley L. Hendricks** and organizing curator **Trevor Schoonmaker**, curator of contemporary art at the Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University, for a discussion of the artist's work.

**Thursday, February 4, 6:30 p.m.**

### **Artists/Scholars Talk: Franklin Sirmans**

**Franklin Sirmans**, curator of contemporary art, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and contributing author to the exhibition catalogue *Barkley L. Hendricks: Birth of the Cool* (available in the Museum Shop) discusses the artist's work.

**Thursday, February 18, 6:30 p.m.**

### **Loft Concert: Musiqa**

Musiqa, a contemporary music group that takes a fresh look at the concert experience, presents a selection of compositions inspired by *Barkley L. Hendricks: Birth of the Cool*.

**Sunday, March 7, 1:00-4:00 p.m.**

### **Family Day**

The whole family can enjoy hands-on art activities and family tours of *Barkley L. Hendricks: Birth of the Cool*. All activities are free and art supplies are provided.

**Saturday, March 13, 2:00 p.m.**

### **Artists/Scholars Talk: Valerie Cassel Oliver**

In conjunction with FotoFest 2010 Biennial, CAMH Curator Valerie Cassel Oliver will discuss *Walkin' with Walker: Narrative Photography of Barkley L. Hendricks*. Best known for his iconic painted portraits of ordinary people, Barkley L. Hendricks proves himself to be an equally masterful photographer. Heavily influenced by the work of legendary American photographer Walker Evans, Hendricks has used his 4x5 format camera as a "mechanical sketchbook" to skillfully record the landscapes and people he has encountered in daily life, weaving a narrative reflective of life's fleeting moments, frozen in time.

## **EXHIBITION FUNDING AND SUPPORT**

*Barkley L. Hendricks: Birth of the Cool* is sponsored in part by the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc.; National Endowment for the Arts, which believes that a great nation deserves great art; Mary Duke Biddle Foundation; and North Carolina Arts Council with funding from the State of North Carolina.

This exhibition has been made possible by the patrons, benefactors and donors to the Museum's Major Exhibition Fund: Major Patron - Chinhui Juhn and Eddie Allen, Fayez Sarofim, Michael Zilkha; Patrons -

Mr. and Mrs. A. L. Ballard, Mr. and Mrs. I. H. Kempner III, Elisa and Cris Pye, Ms. Louisa Stude Sarofim, Leigh and Reggie Smith; Benefactors - City Kitchen Catering, George and Mary Josephine Hamman Foundation, Jackson Hicks / Jackson and Company, Marley Lott, Beverly and Howard Robinson, Susan Vaughan Foundation, Inc., Swift + Company, Mr. and Mrs. Wallace Wilson; Donors - Baker Botts, L.L.P., Bergner and Johnson Design, Susie and Sanford Criner, Elizabeth Howard Crowell, Marita and J.B. Fairbanks, Jo and Jim Furr, Barbara and Michael Gamson, Mr. and Mrs. William Goldberg / Bernstein Global Wealth Management, Louise D. Jamail, King & Spalding L.L.P., KPMG, LLP, Judy and Scott Nyquist, Lauren Rottet, David I. Saperstein, Karen and Harry Susman, John and Becca Cason Thrash, and Martha Claire Tompkins.

Additional support generously provided by Houston Museum of African American Culture.

### **EDUCATION SUPPORT**

The Museum receives support for its education programs from: Anonymous, Baker Botts L.L.P., Baker Hughes Foundation, Chevron U.S.A. Inc., Ruth Dreessen, Louise D. Jamail, Mr. and Mrs. I.H. Kempner III, Kinder Morgan Foundation, M.D. Anderson Foundation, Marian and Speros Martel Foundation Endowment, Nordstrom, Inc., and 20K Group, LLC. Teen Council is supported by Baker Hughes Foundation and Baker Botts L.L.P.

### **GENERAL SUPPORT**

The Museum's operations and programs are made possible through the generosity of the Museum's trustees, patrons, members and donors. The Contemporary Arts Museum Houston receives partial operating support from the Houston Endowment, Inc., the City of Houston through the Houston Museum District Association, National Endowment for the Arts, and Texas Commission on the Arts.

Continental Airlines is the official airline of the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston.

### **CAMH MISSION**

The Contemporary Arts Museum Houston is an idea and a place shaped by the present moment. The Museum exemplifies the dynamic relationship between contemporary art and contemporary society through its exhibitions, public and educational programs, and publications. The CAMH provides the physical and intellectual framework essential to the presentation, interpretation, and advancement of contemporary art; it is a vibrant forum for artists and all audiences, and for critical, scholarly, and public discourse.

ALWAYS FRESH, ALWAYS FREE

### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

The Contemporary Arts Museum Houston is located at 5216 Montrose Boulevard, at the corner of Montrose and Bissonnet, in the heart of Houston's Museum District. Hours are Tuesday to Saturday, 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Thursdays to 9:00 p.m., and Sundays noon to 5:00 p.m. Admission is always free. For more information, visit [www.camh.org](http://www.camh.org) or call (713) 284-8250.